

From Islamic to Christian Donation: Gifts to the Church after the Conquest of Granada

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This article examines how the Castilian conquest of Granada and the conversion of its inhabitants to Christianity affected the Catholic Church; specifically, it analyses the role played by parish churches as recipients and administrators of religious donations, first from Muslims and later from converts. This study shows that the Church was not the only beneficiary of the donations it received, since these gifts were part of a strategy on the part of converts to be accepted as legal members of Castilian society and on the part of the Crown in its campaign for the unity of the kingdom.

It is no easy task to assess the Church's situation in the kingdom of Granada during the transition from the late Middle Ages to the start of the early modern age. It was a period of great complexity, marked by the definitive Christian conquest of al-Andalus and the joining of the Nasrid kingdom of Granada – the last Muslim redoubt in the Iberian Peninsula – to the Crown of Castile in 1492 and the subsequent conversion to Christianity of all the Granadan Muslims – thereafter called *moriscos* – in 1501. The goal of the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, was to integrate this minority population of converts fully into Castilian society, so as to achieve the religious unity of their entire realm. From this perspective, the 'morisco question' was not only a religious issue, but also a political one, so that Christianisation formed a pretext for Castilianisation.¹

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¹ Spanish historiography has maintained an unbroken interest in Islamic and *morisco* Granada. For an overview of the kingdom see a work that remains authoritative:

The nascent ecclesiastical structures in the newly conquered territory were not prepared for the complex challenges that they now faced. One must remember that, in the first post-conquest years, Christians went from being an insignificant minority to suddenly becoming the absolute majority of the kingdom's population. As a further problem, most of the conversions were not sincere: Muslims accepted forced baptism under the threat of expulsion, but internally they continued to profess Islam. Faced with that situation, Granada's church authorities had to assimilate the converts and teach them the Christian creed, so as to include them in their religious practices, while also imbuing them with the culture and way of life of the ruling Castilian minority. Once mass baptisms had accomplished the actual conversions, the Church in Granada began to reorganise itself. One essential aspect of this restructuring was the building of parish churches, enacted on 15 October 1501. The system of parishes was crucial to the new organisation of the territory, since parishes became the building blocks of new dioceses, and formed an essential network through which the population could more effectively be controlled for religious and political ends.²

The present study is situated within that general historical framework. It examines how the new political and institutional system affected the Catholic Church in the kingdom of Granada, more specifically in the Alpujarra region,³ in matters of property. The focus of its analysis is the process by which the possessions of former Muslims, and later *moriscos*, were transferred to parishes in the Alpujarra during this period of profound transformation in every sphere. On the one hand, this work explores not only how those possessions fared within the Castilian legal framework, but also how they functioned internally in their new historical context. On the other hand, it also considers who were the indirect beneficiaries of the testamentary bequests made by the converts.

The documentary basis is an inventory of ecclesiastical possessions drawn up in 1530, part of the rich series of Castilian documents produced after the Christian conquest of Nasrid Granada. It is a listing of *bienes habices*: like all books of its genre, it records in exhaustive detail

R. Peinado Santaella and M. Barrios Aguilera (coords), *Historia del reino de Granada*, Granada 2000.

² J. García Oro, *La Iglesia en el reino de Granada durante el siglo XVI: reyes y obispos en la edificación de una nueva Iglesia hispana*, Granada 2004, 21–63; A. Garrido Aranda, *La organización de la Iglesia en el reino de Granada y su proyección en Indias*, Sevilla 1979; R. Marín López, 'La Iglesia y el encuadramiento religioso', and F. J. Martínez Medina, 'La Iglesia', in Peinado Santaella and Barrios Aguilera, *Historia*, i. 668–75; ii. 258–66; J. Suberbiola, 'La erección parroquial granatense de 1501 y el reformismo cisneriano', *Cuadernos de Estudios Medievales* xiv–xv (1985–7), 115–45.

³ The Alpujarra is the area that occupies the southern slopes of the Sierra Nevada and now includes parts of the modern provinces of Granada and Almería. It is an extensive, largely rural region bounded by that mountain range and by the Mediterranean.

the real estate that had formed part of Muslims' pious endowments (*habices*),⁴ as will be seen. Here one must bear in mind that, upon the general conversion of the *moriscos*, their properties were confiscated by the Crown of Castile and transferred to various institutions. Some were donated to the Church and the city council (*cabildo*) of Granada, while others were reserved for the Crown. In the case of the Church, on 14 October 1501 the Catholic Monarchs granted to the various parishes of the archbishopric of Granada the *habices* formerly destined for maintaining centres of Muslim worship, although in the Alpujarra region the parish churches did not receive a similar donation until 14 May 1502. In any event, the actual transfer did come into effect until 1 January 1506, the date on which their management and collection fell to the chief accounting office (*contaduría mayor*) of the diocese.⁵ Those properties reverted to the Church in recognition of the services that the institution had rendered to the monarchs during the war for Granada and in thanks to God for granting them victory over the last bastion of peninsular Islam.⁶

The Crown's donation of the Islamic *habices* to the Church carried certain conditions: the properties in question had to be used for the same purpose intended for them in Andalusí times; they could not be reassigned without prior authorisation by the monarchs; and any legal issues arising from them had to be adjudicated in royal, not ecclesiastical, courts. None the less, the shift from Islamic to Christian administration lent itself to fraud. In the new context, *habices* declined sharply on account of administrative confusion, usurpation of lands by clergy and powerful local authorities, tenants' failure to maintain properties in good condition and the economic changes that took place during the sixteenth century.⁷ Further, some

⁴ *Habices* (from Arabic *ḥabīs*) consisted of donations in perpetuity of the use or usufruct of a property, destined for the immediate or future benefit of a pious institution. These foundational properties came to generate rich economic resources that helped to sustain social, economic and cultural life by supporting a broad array of activities and institutions. These included clearly religious entities (mosques and cemeteries), charities (aid to the poor and sick, ransoming of captives, manumission of slaves), physical infrastructure (fortresses, walls, roads, bridges, water fountains, cisterns and wells) etc. See A. M. Carballeira Debasa, *Legados píos y fundaciones familiares en al-Andalus (siglos IV/X–VI/XII)*, Madrid 2002, 67–202, and A. García Sanjuán, *Hasta que Dios herede la tierra: los bienes habices en Al-Andalus (siglos X–XV)*, Huelva 2002, 169–254, and *Till God inherits the earth: Islamic pious endowments in al-Andalus (9–15th centuries)*, Leiden–Boston 2007, 184–292.

⁵ G. Rayo Muñoz, 'La gestión de las rentas eclesiásticas en el reino de Granada: el caso de las parroquias de la Alpujarra (1501–1526)', *EDAD MEDIA: Revista de Historia* xxi (2020), 385–413 at p. 391.

⁶ For more information on this royal donation see C. Villanueva Rico, *Habices de las mezquitas de la ciudad de Granada y sus alquerías*, Madrid 1961, 16–20.

⁷ M. Barrios Aguilera, *Granada morisca: la convivencia negada*, Granada, 2002, 109–10; Á. Galán Sánchez, *Los mudéjares del reino de Granada*, Granada 1991, 82–9, 186–9.

habices originally transferred to the Church were reassigned for life to members of the former Muslim oligarchy in recognition of their conversion to Christianity, with a clearly propagandistic intent.⁸

So that all this patrimony might be properly registered and appropriately exploited by the various parishes, Christian authorities charged scribes with visiting the properties and drawing up cadastral reports containing all the relevant information about them.⁹ The book of *bienes habices* of the Alpujarra from 1530¹⁰ contains an account of properties owned by the Church in the settled areas and their legal jurisdictions of Ugíjar and Andarax, two Alpujarran *tahas* or districts, at that date.¹¹ On the one hand, it lists the *habices* of the former Islamic religious centres that, after the mass conversions, were assigned to Christian churches in those *tahas*.¹² On the other, it also contains a list of properties that entered into *bienes de fábrica*, funds possessed by parish churches in part as a result of testamentary

⁸ Á. Galán Sánchez, 'Poder cristiano y colaboracionismo mudéjar en el reino de Granada (1485–1501)', in J. E. López de Coca (ed.), *Estudios sobre Málaga y el reino de Granada en el v centenario de su conquista*, Málaga 1988, 277–89; P. Ortego Rico, 'Cristianos y mudéjares ante la conversión de 1502: mercedes a moros: mercedes de bienes moros', *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma: Serie III: Historia Medieval* xxv (2011), 279–318; L. L. Padilla Mellado, 'Privilegio de *habices* de las iglesias y la merced a un moro que se tornó cristiano', *Estudios sobre Patrimonio, Cultura y Ciencias Medievales* xi–xii (2009–10), 139–48.

⁹ C. Álvarez de Morales, 'Romanced documents, bilingual documents and books of *habices*', in P. M. Sijpesteijn, L. Sundelin, S. Torallas Tover and A. Zomeño (eds), *From al-Andalus to Khurasan: documents from the medieval Muslim world*, Boston 2006, 3–21.

¹⁰ A. M. Carballeira Debasa, *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530: edición, estudio e índices de un manuscrito del Archivo Histórico Diocesano de Granada*, Helsinki 2018. The volume consists of 356 folios written on both recto and verso. It is preserved in Granada's Archivo Histórico Diocesano (AHDG) with the signature Libros de Archivo, caja 45 (2).

¹¹ During the *morisco* period, the Alpujarra was divided into administrative units, created under the Nasrids, called *tahas*. The ecclesiastical structure of this region was largely adapted to this organisation. The so-called Alpujarra Alta comprised the *tahas* of Orgiva, Poqueira, Ferreira, Jubiles, Ugíjar, Andarax, Lúchar, Alboloduy and Marchena, while the Alpujarra Baja comprised the *tahas* of Los Céjeles, Berja and Dalías: C. Trillo San José, *La Alpujarra antes y después de la conquista castellana*, Granada 1994, 15, 132, 140, 236, 238. The *tahas* under study here are only those of Ugíjar and Andarax, at the centre of the Alpujarra. The book of *habices* allows us to determine how many localities made up these two *tahas*. Of the two, Ugíjar contained more population centres: the village of Ugíjar itself, *Anqueyra*, Lucainena, Cherín, *Vnqueyar*, Sopron, Picena, Laroles, *Vnduron*, Júbar, Mairena, *El Fex*, *Almavçata*, *Tarchelina*, Nechite, Mecina Alfahar, Torrillas, Escariantes and Darrícal. Andarax contained only half as many: Alcolea, Guarros, *Yniça*, Bayárcal, Paterna, Laujar, *Codva*, Benecid and Fondón. (Names in italics are those of localities that no longer exist.)

¹² This situation may be extrapolated to other *tahas* in the Alpujarra, since other books of *habices* are preserved. See, for example, L. L. Padilla Mellado, *Libro del apeamiento de los habices del Alpujarra: tahas de Ferreyra, Poqueyra y Jubiles, que los apeó Benito de Carrión: año 1527*, Granada 2019.

bequests made by *moriscos* in the first decades of the sixteenth century. There is no doubt that this book of *habices* is unusual within its genre, as it offers valuable data not only about pious endowments from the Andalusi period, but also about religious bequests made later by converts. It is rare for such a documentary source to include information about pious donations by *moriscos*, making this particular inventory unique.¹³ Properties bequeathed by New Christians are more commonly included in specific lists inserted at the ends of accounts of the *habices* of a given locality.

The present article is based on earlier analyses in general studies of *habices* in al-Andalus,¹⁴ to these should be added certain specific publications on pious endowments established in the Nasrid period.¹⁵ In a recent article the emotions that led Muslims and converts to make donations to their respective centres of worship were explored, as a way of shedding light on the complex shift in mentalities that occurred during Granada's passage from Islamic to Christian.¹⁶ In this present study the picture is filled out by the use of previously unpublished data and new perspectives. Here is

¹³ For example, the 1527 book of *habices* of the Alpujarra (see n. 12), covering the three *tahas* named in its title, contains only three marginal references to pious bequests from *moriscos*, which went to parish churches in three localities, all in the district of Jubiles: Padilla Mellado, *Libro del apeamiento*, fos 122r, 130r, 286v. These bequests are mentioned only when the *habices* border on *bienes de fábrica* to aid in identifying them in physical space; probably, more of them existed in fact. One can infer from these isolated cases that, at least in the Jubiles district, converts also made these types of bequests. Perhaps those donations were listed in other documents unknown to us today.

¹⁴ A. M. Carballeira Debasa, 'The role of endowments in the framework of Andalusian society', in M. Borgolte (ed.), *Stiftungen in Christentum, Judentum und Islam vor der Moderne: auf der Suche nach ihren Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschieden in religiösen Grundlagen, praktischen Zwecken und historischen Transformationen*, Berlin 2005, 109–21; 'Aproximación a las donaciones piadosas en el Islam medieval: el caso de al-Andalus', in A. García Leal (ed.), *Las donaciones piadosas en el mundo medieval*, Oviedo 2012, 385–406; and 'Poverty and charity in al-Andalus: the case of pious and family endowments', in V. Klemm and N. al-Sha'ar (eds), *Sources and approaches across disciplines in Near Eastern studies: proceedings of the 24th Congress, Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, Leipzig 2008*, Louvain–Paris–Walpole, MA 2013, 221–32.

¹⁵ A. M. Carballeira Debasa, 'Pauvreté et fondations pieuses dans la Grenade nasride: aspects sociaux et juridiques', *Arabica: Revue des Études Arabes* lii/liii (2005), 391–416; A. M. Carballeira Debasa and C. Álvarez de Morales, 'Some remarks on the books of *habices* and Islamic Granada', in A. Cilaro (ed.), *Islam and globalisation: historical and contemporary perspectives: proceedings of the 25th Congress of L'Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, Louvain–Paris–Walpole, MA 2013, 155–65; A. M. Carballeira Debasa and Y. M'hir El Koubaa, 'La realidad de los bienes habices en el ocaso de la Granada nazari', in F. Toro Ceballos and F. Vidal Castro (coords), *Al-Andalus y el mundo cristiano: relaciones sociales y culturales, intercambios económicos y aspectos jurídico-institucionales: homenaje a Francisco Javier Aguirre Sádaba*, Alcalá la Real 2018, 115–23; and A. M. Carballeira Debasa, 'Contribución al estudio de los *habices* alpujarreños de mezquinos y cautivos (siglos xv–xvi)', in M. Aguiar Aguilar, A. M. Cabo González and J. P. Monferrer Sala (coords and eds), *Labore et constantia: estudios andalusies: ensayos selectos*, Córdoba 2022, 247–80.

emphasised the role played by the Church as recipient and administrator of religious endowments, first from Muslims of Nasrid Granada and later from new converts, and how the Church in the Alpujarra benefitted, both indirectly and directly, from pious donations from inhabitants of the *tahas* of Ugíjar and Andarax, both before and after their conversion to Christianity. The article goes further by postulating that the Church was not the only beneficiary of the donations it received, since these gifts were part of a strategy to strengthen the status of the donors in their respective communities. In the specific case of the converts, their acceptance as legal members of Castilian society was thus promoted, which also benefitted the interests of the Crown; it should be borne in mind throughout that the monarchy advocated the political-religious unity of the entire kingdom. First, however, one must consider certain aspects of the transition between these two historical periods in that region.

From Islamic to Christian religious spaces in population centres

With the creation of parishes in the early sixteenth century, a new era began, one that sought to endow cities, towns and villages in the kingdom of Granada with a Christian character. To this end, mosques were converted into churches; after minimal physical changes,¹⁷ the buildings were immediately reconsecrated. But when the edifice was small or poorly built, a finer structure was called for, and construction began on new churches that would suit the needs of the Christian liturgy better than former mosques could do. P. Cressier has noted the campaign to build semi-fortified churches in the Alpujarra between 1501 and 1568: a church was the symbol and ultimate bulwark of power¹⁸ in the face of

¹⁶ A. M. Carballeira Debasa, 'De la caridad islámica a la cristiana: actitudes piadosas en una comunidad rural granadina antes y después de la conversión de los moriscos', in L. M. Jreis-Navarro (ed.), *Emociones nazaries: la crónica de una transición* (forthcoming).

¹⁷ In Nasrid times, every locality was centred on a mosque; large villages might even boast several. Under Christian rule, there was usually one church per locality, though a large village might have more than one neighbourhood church. On the conversion of mosques into churches see T. Arera-Rütenik, *Transformation von Moscheen zu Kirchen auf der Iberischen Halbinsel*, Saint Petersburg 2017; M. de Epalza, 'Mutaciones urbanísticas debidas a la transformación de mezquitas en iglesias', in *Actas del IV Simposio Internacional de Mudejarismo: economía (Teruel, 17-19 de septiembre de 1987)*, Zaragoza 1992, 501-18.

¹⁸ P. Cressier, 'Églises et châteaux dans l'Alpujarra à la fin du Moyen-Age: l'implantation d'un pouvoir', in *Sierra Nevada y su entorno: actas del Encuentro Hispano-Francés sobre Sierra Nevada: la historia, la tierra y el poblamiento de Sierra Nevada y su entorno, organizado por la Casa de Velázquez de Madrid y la Universidad de Granada*, Granada 1988, 104-12. However, some scholars suggest that no churches were built until the early 1520s, to the extent that only seven had been constructed by 1530:

the threat posed by the *morisco* population to the few Old Christians who lived there.¹⁹ When the manuscript analysed was compiled in 1530, the former mosques were largely ruined and abandoned; perhaps in part because of their inferior materials and poor construction, their new owners had not bothered to maintain them. Some churches founded in old buildings were closed, and worship moved elsewhere; sometimes the lack of a church forced religious ceremonies to be held for a time in private houses.²⁰ It is important to note that the construction of a new church did not necessarily mean demolition of the earlier mosque; occasionally, it was preserved, with the church and cemetery occupying the rear of the site.²¹ Mosques did not always, however, continue to serve a religious purpose: some were converted to living space, while others were abandoned due to a lack of interest in renting them.²² Parcels of land once occupied by mosques might also be repurposed into Christian cemeteries, or turned to the cultivation of crops.²³

In contrast, the manuscript contains not a single case of a Christian church or shrine being sited at a former Islamic *rābīta*. These small oratories (from Ar. *ribāt*) might be located in a settled area or on its periphery; in the latter case, they were associated with certain ascetic and mystical practices.²⁴ Close study of the document demonstrates that in the Uġġar-Andarax area in Islamic times such buildings were abundant, particularly in population centres.²⁵ By 1530, however, when the inventory was

see, for instance, J. M. Gómez-Moreno Calera, 'Las primeras iglesias construidas en la Alpujarra: aportación documental', *Cuadernos de Arte de la Universidad de Granada* xx (1989), 189–94.

¹⁹ There was scarcely any resettlement by Christians in the Alpujarra, since the majority of *moriscos* continued to live there after the mass conversions. Unlike other areas of the kingdom of Granada, the region had not been conquered by force of arms, but had surrendered.

²⁰ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 161r, 330v.

²¹ *Ibid.* fo. 314v. In the city of Granada, however, the Church chose to raze mosques that had already been reconsecrated and to build new temples on their former sites or on others: M. T. Martínez Pérez, 'Las mezquitas de Granada en los libros de *habices*', *Andalucía Islámica* iv–v (1983–6), 203–35. Perhaps the greater limitations of urban space drove this process.

²² *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fo. 310v.

²³ *Ibid.* fos 161v, 180r.

²⁴ On the *rābitas* of Granada see M. Espinar Moreno, 'Las *rābitas* de las tierras granadinas en las fuentes documentales: arqueología y toponimia', in F. Franco Sánchez (coord.), *La rābīta en el Islam: estudios interdisciplinarios (Congresos internacionales de Sant Carles de la Rāpita, 1989, 1997)*, Sant Carles de la Rāpita–Alicante 2004, 211–30; J. M. Rodríguez López and L. Carra Barrionuevo, 'El fenómeno místico religioso rural en los últimos siglos del Islam andalusí: introducción al estudio arqueológico de las *rābitas* alpujarreñas', in *Almería entre culturas: siglo XIII al XVI*, Almería 1990, i. 225–54; and C. Villanueva Rico, 'Rābitas granadinas', *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* iii (1954), 79–86.

compiled, most of the *râbitas* were in a (semi-)ruinous state. P. Cressier asserts that their poor construction and their neighbours' hostility contributed to their swift disappearance.²⁶ Not all were demolished by the conquerors, however; the few that remained were often absorbed into adjacent buildings.²⁷ There are abundant references to plots of land that had contained such a structure in Islamic times and Christians repurposed many of them, converting them into dwellings or attaching them to nearby farm fields.²⁸

The documentation also shows that where there was an Islamic centre of worship there were other religious manifestations in the form of *moçalas* (Ar. *muṣallā*) or open-air oratories²⁹ and *macáberes* (Ar. *maqābir*) or cemeteries. After the conquest, the Christians often built churches and cemeteries on those sites. In both eras, thus, there existed a tendency to concentrate religious constructions within one sacred space.

As the habitat changed from Islamic to Christian, just as mosques were transformed into churches, so the Nasrid *macáberes* had to be closed; converts were now to be interred in sites blessed by the Church.³⁰ Some *morisco* communities acquired new spaces for their everlasting rest, as can be seen from a reference in the *habices* to a cemetery for New Christians in the village of Ugijar, next to the new church.³¹ This detail suggests that, in that locality, tombs of Old and New Christians did not share a single site.³² The text makes clear that in the Alpujarra Old Christians did not convert Islamic burial grounds to cemeteries of their own.³³

²⁵ There are occasional references to localities and even neighbourhoods that contained more than one *râbita*; it was a sign of the locality's importance within the Alpujarra region: *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 293v–320r.

²⁶ Cressier, 'Églises et châteaux dans l'Alpujarra', 95–112.

²⁷ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 121v, 296r.

²⁸ *Ibid.* fos 25v, 147v, 205r, 317v.

²⁹ L. Torres Balbás, "'Muṣallā" y "ṣarī'a" en las ciudades hispanomusulmanas', *Al-Andalus* xiii (1948), 167–80.

³⁰ In 1500, by royal decree, the Islamic cemeteries in the city of Granada were dismantled and new converts were urged to perform Christian burials: A. García Pedraza, *Actitudes ante la muerte en la Granada del siglo XVI: los moriscos que quisieron salvarse*, Granada 2002, 598–603; A. Díaz García and J. Lirola Delgado, 'Nuevas aportaciones al estudio de los cementerios islámicos en la Granada nazari', *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* iii (1989), 103–26; L. Torres Balbás, 'Cementerios hispanomusulmanes', *Al-Andalus* xxii (1957), 131–91.

³¹ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fo. 21r.

³² Though this reference in a source is highly unusual, it is not unique: in the sixteenth century, the *moriscos* of the city of Granada also tried to acquire a cemetery space for themselves: García Pedraza, *Actitudes ante la muerte*, 642.

³³ In the 1527 book of *habices* of the Alpujarra is registered a unique reference to the reuse of an Islamic *macáberes* as a Christian cemetery in the locality of Pórtugos in the *taha* of Ferreira: *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1527*, fo. 101v. Likewise, there is evidence that, in the city of Granada, in the first decades of the sixteenth century, some *macáberes*

Most former *macáberes* were devoted to secular purposes, as cultivated land or sometimes as public spaces like village squares.³⁴ In any event, most Christian cemeteries came to be located near *macáberes*,³⁵ while Islamic burial grounds were situated near former Islamic oratories, either inside a settled area or on its outskirts.³⁶ For lack of descriptions, the size and layout of these *macáberes* are not known; the same can be said of Christian cemeteries, though clearly they sometimes contained a chapel.³⁷

Because the documentary source analysed also includes abundant information about domestic architecture, one can reconstruct, in general terms, a map with the different spaces of the settled areas in the *tahas* of Ugijar and Andarax. These spaces were typical of the Alpujarra region in the early sixteenth century and continued in many respects an age-old Islamic tradition. In the configuration of this new landscape, the parish churches acquired a special role as recipients of real estate property. In the following pages, the terms of the property transfer from Muslim and *morisco* hands will be examined, as well as the consequences that this process had not only for the Church, but also for the donors themselves and, ultimately, for the Castilian Crown.

The transfer of real estate to parishes in the Alpujarra

Islamic bienes habices

This section explores the pious endowments made by inhabitants of the Alpujarran *tahas* of Ugijar and Andarax to their mosques and *rábitas* under Islamic rule. The properties included in these donations were transferred to the parish churches of those districts after their confiscation by the Christians. Having lost their original purpose of benefitting an Islamic institution, they of course had to be adapted to the new Christian context.

The identity of the *habices'* donors in the Islamic period is unknown, as the book of *habices* of 1530 does not record their names, and the endowment deeds have not been preserved; the only exceptions are names of well-known figures (sovereigns or their entourages) through testimony of Andalusí literary sources. Also, these latter do cast light on the motives that led Andalusí Muslims to make such donations. Acts of charity might arise from sincere religious faith; in Islam, almsgiving is a sign of living a

were consecrated so as to serve as cemeteries for Christians, for instance in the Albaicín neighbourhood: García Pedraza, *Actitudes ante la muerte*, 629.

³⁴ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 88v, 100r, 118v, 244v bis.

³⁵ *Ibid.* fos 109r, 294r.

³⁶ *Ibid.* fos 65v, 151r, 155v, 161v, 224r.

³⁷ *Ibid.* fo. 117r.

devout life, a path to the forgiveness of sins and a key to achieving eternal salvation. Beyond the religious dimension, an endowment could also obey an altruistic impulse and even a wish for personal aggrandisement, since charity was a powerful social and political tool for gaining fame.³⁸

As for the properties themselves, this inventory of *habices* reveals that these former Islamic holdings – now under Church ownership – consisted of real estate: while some were directly connected to agriculture (fields, trees, watercourses), others were built structures (houses, shops, ovens). The creation of the inventory was preceded by a crier's public announcement of the actions to be taken; then a cadastral survey was drawn up, assigning the properties to population centres and their legal jurisdictions. The scribe, so as to identify each building or space correctly, would name its neighbourhood or rural district; he also listed all the neighbouring properties, together with their owners and any roads or paths that gave access to them. The description usually included the surface area of the terrain and its agricultural yield, as well as any water sources and the conditions of their use. If a deed of rental existed, a record was preserved of the property's tenants and the rents that it produced annually for the Church. The extent of our knowledge about these properties that increased the resources of the Alpujarran parishes will be analysed below.

The volume shows that in the *habices* now assigned to the Church that had formerly belonged to the centres of Muslim worship in the *tahas* of Ugjjar and Andarax, edifices were included: beside a considerable number of houses, there were also outbuildings such as corrals, stables and horse stalls. Immediately around the houses, there were also productive areas such as vegetable gardens.³⁹ Groups of houses might include *açaquifas* (Ar. *al-saqīfa*), communal public shelters where people could gather socially while protected from the elements.⁴⁰

This documentary source also proves that ecclesiastical *habices* profited from commercial and industrial establishments. In addition to shops,⁴¹ one can find two essential components of processing agricultural products in the Alpujarran economy: bread ovens⁴² and mills for both flour and olive oil.⁴³ Likewise, the *habices* include other constructions linked to a

³⁸ In this regard, see, for example, A. M. Carballeira Debasa, 'Forms and functions of charity in al-Andalus', in Y. Lev and M. Frenkel (eds), *Charity and giving in monotheistic religions*, Berlin–New York 2009, 203–16; 'Caridad y poder político en época omeya', in A. M. Carballeira Debasa (ed.), *Caridad y compasión en biografías islámicas*, Madrid 2011, 85–130; and 'The use of charity as a means of political legitimization in Umayyad al-Andalus', *Journal of the Economic and the Social History of the Orient* 1x/3 (2017), 233–62.

³⁹ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, passim.
⁴⁰ Ibid. fos 259r, 278v. *Habices* from agricultural areas also mention private *açaquifas*, shelters where tools could be stored or animals protected from the weather.

⁴¹ Ibid. fos 28v, 29r, 259r. ⁴² Ibid. fos 25v, 39r, 101v, 192v, 258v, 310v, 349v.

⁴³ Ibid. fos 22v, 53r, 64v, 170r, 202r, 218v, 222r.

supremely important industry in the region: the cultivation of mulberry trees for silk production; in this sense, there are mentions of *nagüelas* (Ar. *nawwāla*), where silk was spun.⁴⁴ The text makes clear that these were small huts connected to sericulture, though some scholars interpret them as elements of the spinning machinery itself.⁴⁵

Undoubtedly, however, the greatest number of religious *habices* involve plots of land and groves of trees – hardly surprising, since agriculture was the chief pursuit of the Ugijar and Andarax districts. There are many references in the *habices* to irrigated lands.⁴⁶ Dry farming was a complementary activity, and there are occasional mentions of threshing floors for grain (*eras*);⁴⁷ grapevines were also cultivated extensively and are often cited as another type of *habiz*.⁴⁸

In the *tahas* of Ugijar and Andarax, species of trees and shrubs play the greatest role in the religious *habices*. Those that are documented, in decreasing order of frequency, are mulberries, olives, live oaks, grape arbours, figs, hackberries, cherries, poplars, pomegranates, ashes, plums, pears, wild olives, rowans, apples, apricots, oleanders, almonds, willows, tamarisks, walnuts, blackberries, chestnuts and carobs. Within this wide variety, the greatest proportion by far consisted of mulberry trees, whose leaves nourished the silkworms.⁴⁹

From this inventory it is clear that *habices* might be split up, since minifundia predominated in the agriculture of the Alpujarra. Therefore, trees included in the endowments might grow in parcels that themselves were a *habiz*,⁵⁰ or might be planted independently of one.⁵¹ Aside from the distinction between the land itself and the trees, some trees belonged to more than one owner: *habices* may list only portions of the tree, in the form of fractions, feet, trunks or branches.⁵² Further, the object of the *habiz* was not always the tree itself or a part of it, but could include only a proportion of its yield – in leaves or oil, for example. The document often registers amounts of the agricultural product of plants that were *habices*, above all mulberry and olive trees, both of which contributed significantly to the Alpujarran economy.⁵³ While the volume provides a series of observations

⁴⁴ Ibid. fos 233r, 297r.

⁴⁵ Á. de la Torre Bravo, ‘Aspectos geográficos, históricos, urbanísticos y culturales en el “Libro de Apeos” de Bérchules de 1573’, in J. M. Carabaza Bravo and L. C. Makki Hornedo (coords), *El saber en al-Andalus: textos y estudios*, V: *Homenaje a la profesora Dña. Carmen Ruiz Bravo-Villasante*, Sevilla 2011, 275.

⁴⁶ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, passim.

⁴⁷ Ibid. fo. 193r.

⁴⁸ Ibid. fos 40r, 85v, 111r, 124r, 140r, 166v, 225v, 290v.

⁴⁹ Ibid. passim.

⁵⁰ Ibid. fos 74v, 122r, 157r, 182v, 255v, 286r, 309r.

⁵¹ Ibid. fos 92r, 118v, 179r, 210r, 268r, 313r.

⁵² Ibid. fos 42v, 59r, 71r, 121r, 130r.

⁵³ See recent studies on the topic: A. M. Carballeira Debasa, ‘Nuevos datos sobre metrología morisca en el reino de Granada a partir de un manuscrito de *habices*

on each locality and its respective sphere of influence, the data are often inexact and, therefore, hard to quantify.

Because irrigated land depended on strict control of water sources, it is natural to find ponds and springs among the religious *habices*.⁵⁴ The possession of water was usually independent of possession of land, so that water could comprise a separate *habiz* and be redirected to cultivation on church properties.⁵⁵

Aside from agriculture, the book contains little information about ecclesiastical *habices* related to herding. There are isolated references to donations that affected paths traversed by flocks, or structures where animals could be sheltered in winter. Curiously, the manure left in those places could form part of a *habiz*, because of its value as fertilizer.⁵⁶ Beekeeping is also mentioned, since one *habiz* in a mountainous area included some hives.⁵⁷

The documentation reveals that the parish churches of every locality in the *tahas* of Ugíjar and Andarax benefitted from *habices* to some degree. Andarax enjoyed 53.27 per cent of all the donations, even though it contained fewer settlements than Ugíjar, which received 46.73 per cent. Probably, this is due to the fact that the villages of Andarax were more populous than those of Ugíjar, which is logically reflected in the percentages obtained.

Morisco properties

Among the property transfers from New Christians to Old Christians in Granada at the start of the sixteenth century, one can find references in the book of *habices* from 1530 to pious testamentary bequests made by *moriscos* to parish churches in the Alpujarra.⁵⁸ Since these donations were made after the conversions to Christianity, they do not technically qualify as *habices*, but rather as *bienes de fábrica*, funds devoted to the repair and daily functioning of a church.

This source reveals that most of the parish churches in the *tahas* of Ugíjar and Andarax received pious donations from the converted population. In Ugíjar that occurred in thirteen out of nineteen localities, and in Andarax in every one of its nine villages. Just as with the *habices*, Andarax enjoyed a

alpujarreños', in J. M. Carabaza Bravo and M. Benítez Fernández (eds), *Ciencias de la naturaleza en al-Andalus: textos y estudios*, x, Madrid 2019, 226–30, and 'Agrarian measures in the kingdom of Granada before and after the Castilian conquest: the lands of the Alpujarra', *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* xxxiii/1 (2022), 61–73.

⁵⁴ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 57r, 252v.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* fos 30v, 100r, 115v, 116r.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* fos 180r, 323r.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* fo. 221v.

⁵⁸ Unfortunately, there exist no wills for these *moriscos*, which would have completed the picture of this population that is merely sketched in the inventory of 1530. In the city of Granada, on the other hand, wills containing *morisco* bequests have been better preserved. They are examined in García Pedraza, *Actitudes religiosas ante la muerte*.

majority of the *morisco* bequests, 53.84 per cent, while Ugjíjar had 46.15 per cent, for the same reasons already outlined.

In contrast to the donors of *habices*, whose identity does not appear in this type of documentation, *morisco* testators from Ugjíjar and Andarax, both men and women, are usually named in the text, together with the properties they were bequeathing. When the giver was unknown, the fact was noted with the phrase ‘it was not known who ordered it’.⁵⁹ Such identification was made easier because the registry was written fairly soon after the bequests. There were, moreover, advantages for donors in having their pious acts recorded in writing and made available to the public.

The inventory shows that most of the *morisco* donors were male: 72.16 per cent, as against 27.84 per cent female. In spite of this disparity, the *moriscos* of Ugjíjar and Andarax in the Alpujarra were clearly in control of their own property and able to bequeath it to the Church.⁶⁰ As will be seen below, these were almost always bequests by individuals, made personally by one man or one woman; in fact, the bequeathed property (or a portion thereof) usually belonged to a single owner. Nevertheless, there were also donations made jointly by two owners of community property.⁶¹ The document does not mention the specific purpose of these bequests, though they might have been destined for saying masses for the souls of the testators or their relatives.⁶²

It may seem surprising that converts should bequeath property to the Catholic Church, since the sincerity of their attachment to the Christian faith was questionable. But the very act of making a will, like religion itself, carried symbolic meaning as an element of social cohesion; testaments occupied a prominent place in Castilian social life.⁶³ Clearly, some

⁵⁹ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fo. 318v.

⁶⁰ On the role of Alpujarran women in performing acts of charity see A. M. Carballeira Debasa, ‘De nazaríes a moriscas: el mundo alpujarreño en clave femenina’, in M. M. Birriel Salcedo and R. Ruiz Álvarez (eds), *De nación morisca*, Granada 2020, 287–302, and ‘Islamic heritage and Morisco identity: women and property in rural Granada at the dawn of the sixteenth century’, *Hawwa: Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World* xxi (2023), 82–104.

⁶¹ Community property was usually held by persons who had inherited family holdings: *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fo. 117r. See also C. Trillo San José, ‘Mujer y familia en el reino nazarí (siglos XIII–XV): expresión en el espacio de una unidad social’, in C. Trillo San José (ed.), *Mujeres, familia y linaje en la Edad Media*, Granada 2004, 255.

⁶² That was the case elsewhere in the Crown of Castile, where bequests by *moriscos* are also recorded. See, for example, E. Utrillas Valero, ‘Apuntes sobre la asimilación de los moriscos en la ciudad de Teruel: el caso del ollero Miguel Sebastián’, *Studium: Revista de Humanidades* iv (1997), 367–95.

⁶³ Islam also encourages the making of wills, though without granting the practice the same significance it enjoyed among Christians: García Pedraza, *Actitudes religiosas ante la muerte*, 261–78.

moriscos of the Alpujarra, of both sexes, tried to adapt to their new social circumstances by assuming Christian modes of conduct, including having their bequests accepted by parish churches.⁶⁴ These donations identified one's religious confession, so their presence or absence in a will could be seen as a sign of the convert's acceptance of, or resistance to, the behaviour of normative Christians. Since both *moriscos* and *moriscas* were viewed with suspicion, it was logical for them to make a show of their Christianity.⁶⁵ Probably, in most cases, this would serve as an insurance policy against a political and institutional threat: the pious bequests of this first generation of Alpujarran converts were part of a strategy to have the testators accepted as legal members of Castilian society, while also sheltering their families and their property.⁶⁶

These legacies should be seen in the framework of the assimilationist policy not only of the Castilian Crown, but also of the Church, with positive effects for both institutions. Indeed, the latter, like the former, placed great emphasis on the practice of making a will. Theological motives aside, the Church had a powerful motive for promoting testamentary practice and religious bequests among the faithful: they brought a great deal of money into its coffers.⁶⁷ The book of 1530 makes clear that the parish churches in the *tahas* of Ugijar and Andarax received such economic benefits. It is, therefore, a witness to how the *moriscos* were integrated into their parishes, since their bequests are identified with specific churches.

The volume contains abundant information about both the quality and the quantity of the properties bequeathed by *moriscos* in Ugijar and Andarax that went to increase the patrimony of local churches in the form of *bienes de fábrica*. As for the types of property included in their

⁶⁴ Pious bequests were made not only to churches, but also to monasteries, brotherhoods and other religious institutions. These donations constituted a devout gesture, a work carried out in service to God. Such charitable acts were more influenced by solidarity with institutions or customs than were, for instance, alms given to the poor; the latter evinced a more spontaneous and voluntary spirit: *ibid.* 755–6.

⁶⁵ In the book of 1530 it is often stressed that an individual died embracing the faith, with the formula 'who died a Christian' (for instance, fos 44v, 186r, 309r) – clearly, a way of declaring one's adherence to the religious norm. But the source also proves that conversion was not universal: it is said of certain individuals, named because their properties bordered on religious *habices* that they 'died a Moor' (fos 102r, 261v, 292r). One can wonder whether this public notice of their resistance to conversion was meant to produce social and economic consequences. The documentation leaves no doubt that in 1530 the distinction between Old and New Christians was still strongly present in the collective imagination.

⁶⁶ Although perhaps a large percentage of converted *morisco* testators in the Alpujarra continued to embrace Islam in private, some of their conversions may have been sincere, as has been shown for the city of Granada: García Pedraza, *Actitudes religiosas ante la muerte*, 917–18.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 278–319.

bequests, that mostly consisted of mulberry trees. Since most properties were minifundia, agricultural land was divided into many small parcels. Therefore, just as with *habices* in Islamic times, pious bequests often affected only a part or fraction of a tree: usually, a half (with the other half endowed as a *habiz* to the same church⁶⁸ or still in the hands of a private owner),⁶⁹ sometimes, a third;⁷⁰ and rarely, even smaller proportions.⁷¹ On occasion, the donor specified only a certain part of a mulberry tree or stand of trees – feet, trunks or branches.⁷² Further, a bequest might consist of a portion of the harvest of mulberry leaves obtained annually from certain trees;⁷³ or the testator could specify a part of the harvest without reference to particular trees, to be taken from the general inheritance of his or her heirs.⁷⁴ Although mulberries were the almost universal subject of these bequests, olive trees could also be donated either in whole⁷⁵ or in part.⁷⁶ As with *habices* from Islamic times, *morisco* bequests usually consisted of the agricultural products of mulberry and olive trees; other plant species forming part of such donations have not been found. It is significant that, unlike Alpujarran Muslims before them, the *moriscos* donated almost no cultivated land⁷⁷ or built structures (houses and ovens);⁷⁸ maybe these latter properties were worth more than tree species. The *moriscos'* religious motivation might have been weaker, so that they gave only the bare minimum required for social acceptance, or perhaps they simply belonged to a humbler social category⁷⁹, although it is not possible to confirm this point, since there is no record of the socio-professional status of the donors.

In order to provide the most comprehensive view of this subject, an examination of the functioning and management of the ecclesiastical goods from the Islamic *habices* and the pious bequests of the converts is now in order.

Management of church properties

The book of the Alpujarran *habices* also names a considerable number of persons, thus informing us, albeit briefly, about how the Church was organised in the kingdom of Granada in the first decades of the sixteenth century. At the start of that century, in the Alpujarra, a network of parish

⁶⁸ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 44v, 94v, 110v, 242r, 287r.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* fos 101v, 191r, 249v, 319r. ⁷⁰ *Ibid.* fos 62r, 286r. ⁷¹ *Ibid.* fo. 191r.

⁷² *Ibid.* fo. 293r. ⁷³ *Ibid.* fos 292v, 353v, 354r. ⁷⁴ *Ibid.* fo. 210r.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* fos 141v, 339v, 342r. ⁷⁶ *Ibid.* fos 21r, 141r, 141v, 226r.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* fo. 19r. ⁷⁸ *Ibid.* fo. 101v.

⁷⁹ It is possible that, after conversion, the *moriscos* saw their wealth reduced through confiscation by the Castilians. On the other hand, the Alpujarra at this time contained very few Old Christians, and *moriscos* remained in possession of real estate that bordered on *habices* donated to the Church, as the documents make clear.

churches had been established, that was well endowed with both material and human resources.⁸⁰ The manuscript mentions various individuals who held ecclesiastical posts at the time of its composition. At the top of the hierarchy was the archbishop of Granada, Gaspar de Ávalos, who delegated some of his functions to his vicar-general in the Alpujarra, the *visitador* Francisco de Ávila.⁸¹ Another position was that of abbot of the abbey in the village of Ugíjar, occupied, as often happened, by some member of the urban oligarchies.⁸² The same was true of priestly benefices, so called because its occupant benefitted from an ecclesiastical property that paid him rents and required certain duties. However, he might not occupy his benefice in person, if he had other occupations or did not like the assigned location; in that case, he could appoint a vicar. While in canon law parish benefices were honorary and pecuniary, without priestly duties, in these newly created parishes the holders were named by the Crown and were supposed to be ordained to the priesthood within a year of their appointment.⁸³ In effect, the book of 1530 reveals a general tendency to unite in one individual the holder of a benefice and the parish priest. A single cleric might be in charge of two different parishes; sometimes, but not always, it is stated that he held first one position and later the other.⁸⁴ Priests and sacristans performed different pastoral tasks; unlike benefice-holders, they were named by the bishop or, in his absence, by a cathedral council (*cabildo*). Priests could administer the sacraments; sacristans trained the acolytes and oversaw all the materials required for worship.⁸⁵ The document also mentions holders of minor offices such as administrators (*mayordomos*), secretaries and servants. In particular, the post of *mayordomo* was created to oversee, and report on, the finances of each parish church. Although in theory he was to be named by the parishioners, in practice he received his office from the bishop or the *cabildo*. The job provided a supplementary income and, therefore, was much sought after.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ See n. 2 above.

⁸¹ Archbishop Gaspar de Ávalos led the Church in Granada between 1528 and 1542: García Oro, *La Iglesia en el reino de Granada*, 201; Martínez Medina, 'La Iglesia', 276.

⁸² Barrios Aguilera, *Granada morisca*, 126–7.

⁸³ On the system of benefices in the ecclesiastical province of Granada see García Oro, *La Iglesia en el reino de Granada*, 23–8, 55–6; Marín López, 'La Iglesia y el encuadramiento religioso', 674; and G. Rayo Muñoz, 'Patronato regio y sistema benefical en el reino de Granada: la definición de un nuevo modelo de Iglesia (1501–1526)', *Humanista* xliii (2019), 138–52.

⁸⁴ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 139v, 211r, 212r, 294v.

⁸⁵ García Oro, *La Iglesia en el reino de Granada*, 53; Marín López, 'La Iglesia y el encuadramiento religioso', 676; Martínez Medina, 'La Iglesia', 283–4.

⁸⁶ García Oro, *La Iglesia en el reino de Granada*, 53; Marín López, 'La Iglesia y el encuadramiento religioso', 675, and 'Un memorial de 1528 al arzobispo de Granada Gaspar de Ávalos sobre las rentas y la administración del Arzobispado', *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* xxiii (1996), 357–83. The manuscript under study here also tells of the

This inventory is eloquent on the subject of the management and administration of church property. Throughout the text, the Church shows its determination to keep properties of different origin distinct from each other: thus, it is repeated that *habices* on the one hand, and *bienes de fábrica* of parish churches on the other, were administered separately, with each employing its own administrators who formalised rental contracts and collected rents.⁸⁷ This segregation between *habices* and *bienes de fábrica* in a single parish reached an extreme when the two shared a certain asset, such as a mulberry tree – each portion of the tree would be managed individually.⁸⁸ Likewise, registries of rents generated by ecclesiastical *habices*⁸⁹ prove that this type of property was kept apart from the Church's other assets and was administered independently far beyond the sixteenth century – in fact, until well into the nineteenth. The term *habices* was preserved until that date, keeping the memory of these Islamic donations alive in the collective Christian memory for several centuries.⁹⁰

As to how the church properties functioned and were exploited economically, a basic premise is that the Church represented a powerful group of owners whose assets were exploited indirectly. The documentary source analysed shows that use of the property was normally transmitted through rental. One can learn that the Church rented out much land and many trees in the *tahas* of Ugíjar and Andarax,⁹¹ districts full of ecclesiastical properties; there are also occasional references to structures such as houses, shops, ovens and mills.⁹² Normally, the name of the tenant appears, together with the amount of the rent. The rental contract (*carta de çenso*) was often presented to the scribe who had drawn up the list of *habices*, so that he could witness its presence (or absence). The book documents the creation of emphyteutic contracts in which the tenants transmitted their rights to their heirs. In order to transfer the property to a third party, the tenant had to receive permission from the landlord, to whom

organisation and functioning of Islamic religious centres; under the Nasrids they were staffed by men who led the prayers (imams, muezzins) and administrators of their income, whose salaries were paid out of the *habices*.

⁸⁷ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 101r, 109r, 126r, 167v, 190v, 210r, 223r, 233v, 249r, 291v, 318v, 328v, 339r. ⁸⁸ See n. 68 above.

⁸⁹ There is a collection of volumes containing rents from *habices* in the Archivo Catedralicio and, especially, the Archivo Histórico Diocesano in Granada. See the catalogue by C. Villanueva Rico and A. Soria Ortega, 'Fuentes toponímicas granadinas: los libros de bienes *habices*', *Al-Andalus* xix/2 (1954), 456–62.

⁹⁰ Most ecclesiastical *habices* may have fallen victim to the disestablishment policy of the liberal Spanish state in the nineteenth century: A. M. Carballeira Debasa, 'From *ahbās* to *habices*: continuity and transformation of pious endowments after the Castilian conquest of Nasrid Granada', in M. Marcos Cobaleda (ed.), *Artistic and cultural dialogues in the late medieval Mediterranean*, London 2021, 189–204.

⁹¹ *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530*, fos 18r, 40r, 153v, 175r, 297v, 304v, 309r, 316r. ⁹² *Ibid.* fos 18v, 28v, 144v, 295v.

he was obliged to pay a fee. The volume reveals how the Church, as landlord, kept the rights to the physical property, but ceded its use to the *morisco* peasant, who acted as tenant by paying an annual sum in cash.⁹³ There are barely any explicit references to short-term rentals, in which usufruct was granted for a period of years, after which the rent might be raised.⁹⁴ Parish churches applied this income to their needs, such as the salaries of the clergy, physical repairs and celebrations of the liturgy.⁹⁵ It would seem that this ecclesiastical wealth was an important benefit for Christian churches,⁹⁶ just as it had been for Islamic religious centres in the past.⁹⁷

Because there exist no endowment deeds of Islamic *habices*, or *morisco* testamentary texts, the comprehensive information found in the book of *habices* of 1530 helps us to clarify the status of ecclesiastical properties in the jurisdictions of the *tahas* of Ugíjar and Andarax in the Alpujarra during the early decades of the sixteenth century: it contains an exhaustive listing of the possessions of the Catholic Church in that region at the date in question. It reveals that, in those districts, parish churches owned many pieces of property; most of them were species of plants distributed throughout the cultivated areas.

In fact, this inventory contains two different registers of properties that were included in pious donations: on the one hand, *habices* instituted by Muslims to benefit their centres of worship and, on the other, the so-called *bienes de fábrica* that arose in part from pious bequests by *moriscos* after the mass conversions. It is actually an inventory of Church properties, consisting largely of *habices*—its principal object—throughout the Alpujarra region, hence its title. One should bear in mind, however, that, in contrast to the almost 4,500 *habices*, there are no more than about

⁹³ For examples of emphyteusis see *ibid.* fos 30r, 78r, 121v, 140v, 162r, 211v, 294v.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* fo. 314r. The Crown used the system of temporary rentals for exploiting the *habices* it had reserved to itself. On both types of rentals see P. Hernández Benito, *La Vega de Granada a fines de la Edad Media según las rentas de los habices*, Granada 1990, 42.

⁹⁵ The accounting books reveal that the main expense assumed by the parishes during the first third of the sixteenth century was the payment of their benefice-holders and sacristans; surprisingly, despite the ecclesiastical wealth, scarce resources were devoted to repairs or any type of ornamentation: Rayo, 'La gestión de las rentas eclesiásticas', 402–7.

⁹⁶ Besides the *habices*, the other rents that made up the ecclesiastical tax system in the Alpujarra were the tithes. On the fiscal organisation of the churches of this region see Á. Ortega Cera, 'Fisco, legitimidad y conflicto en la Alpujarra granadina (1494–1500)', *Mainake* xxxvi (2016), 351–64, and Rayo, 'La gestión de las rentas eclesiásticas', 385–413.

⁹⁷ Through both the Islamic and the Christian eras, the way of making religious *habices* productive was maintained. On the rental of this type of property in al-Andalus see Carballeira Debasa, *Legados píos y fundaciones familiares*, 297–309, and García Sanjuán, *Hasta que Dios herede la tierra*, 131–7, and *Till God inherits the earth*, 132–41.

250 bequests by *moriscos*. Donations to mosques made in Islamic times reflect, of course, the length of the Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula. By 1530, *morisco* donations to the Church were still scanty, since only three decades had passed since that group had become New Christians. None the less, in most localities in the *tahas* of Ugíjar and Andarax, the churches enjoyed *bienes de fábrica* from pious donations, indicating a fairly general practice in this regard during this period.

The Christian conquest of the Nasrid kingdom of Granada affected the possession of property. *Bienes habices*, of Andalusí origin, were incorporated into Christian society and adapted to the new situation. After the conversions, not a few mosques in the *tahas* of Ugíjar and Andarax were converted into churches, which were then endowed generously from the many *habices* belonging to Islamic religious centres. While there exist little data about religious architecture, it is clear that many mosques were destroyed: the book shows explicitly how mosques were either abandoned or transformed into churches. Former Islamic places of prayer came to serve different ends: some were reconsecrated for Christian use, while others were incorporated into other buildings or attached to neighbouring parcels of land. The resulting purpose might be either sacred or profane. Unlike mosques, however, *macáberes* and *rábitas* do not seem to have been reused for religious ends. This manuscript is essential to our knowledge not only of what happened to pious *habices* in the *morisco* period, but also of their history under the Nasrids, as parish churches inherited the assets of mosques and *rábitas*.

At the same time, the Church became the beneficiary of pious donations by converts, and those bequests enriched the *bienes de fábricas* of individual parishes. The documentary source analysed illustrates the testamentary practices of Alpujarran *moriscos* in the early sixteenth century: one can learn how often New Christians of Ugíjar and Andarax made pious bequests at this time. Their small number, in an area occupied by few Old Christians and a massive majority of converts, suggests that not many New Christians were making wills and that only a minority of the population chose this form of donation. Perhaps it was a practice that would later spread and establish itself, but was still in its infancy.⁹⁸ It is also clear that *morisco* bequests were more modest than the *habices* of their Muslim forebears. On the other hand, these testaments might be seen as the best proof of *moriscos'* adherence to belief in Jesus Christ. They were officially Christian, but most continued to practice Islam in secret and to observe its rites, precepts and customs; making a will became, therefore, the only means of allaying suspicions about a convert's sincerity. It was an individual choice, so that a pious bequest reflected the *morisco* or

⁹⁸ In the city of Granada, in contrast, by the early sixteenth century many *moriscos* were making their wills: García Pedraza, *Actitudes religiosas ante la muerte*, 672–914.

morisca's personal intent. The source casts light on how converts of both sexes from Ugíjar and Andarax were integrating into the new reality, and what mechanisms they were employing to assimilate to Christian religious practice. From a broader perspective, it informs us about the religious mentality of Alpujarran society shortly after the mass conversions.

In the new Castilian legal framework, *bienes habices* and *bienes de fábrica* belonging to the Church were segregated, even when they were inventoried in a single document. The surviving documents have shown us that *habices* assigned to the Church in the sixteenth century, though now adapted to new circumstances, enjoyed their own legal status: not only were they not combined with other ecclesiastical assets such as individual churches' *bienes de fábrica*, but they maintained their distinctive character over time. Each type of asset was administered separately, by different persons and with its own accounting. This aspect gives us an insight into how the Church managed its rich patrimony in this period.

In the *morisco* era, churches in the districts of Ugíjar and Andarax were led by priests and sacristans who served their congregations, as well as administrators who managed their financial affairs. Property was most often transmitted through rental, the chosen method for exploiting ecclesiastical holdings and extracting funds to cover the needs of parish churches. Most rental contracts were held for the lifetime of the tenant and could be inherited. If the economic importance of this type of asset was viewed in a more general context, it would seem that this income provided the parishes (as it had done earlier for Islamic places of worship) with significant funds for meeting their operational needs. But the Church was not the sole beneficiary of these bequests: the inhabitants of the *tahas* of Ugíjar and Andarax also gained social capital by donating to their local parishes, first as Muslims and later as converts, thereby solidifying their status in their respective communities. There is no doubt that both of them sought a similar purpose in order to reinforce their identity. Moreover, in the case of the Alpujarran converts, the fact that the inhabitants of this remote rural area channelled their last wishes through pious testamentary bequests confirms the positive results in the policy of integration of the *moriscos* in the new Castilian world as part of the campaign promoted by the Catholic Monarchs for the unity of the kingdom. It is evident that the Church, the Crown and the converts themselves benefitted from these testamentary bequests.