

**Religious spaces and their pious donations
in late Nasrid Granada:
the district of Andarax in the Alpujarra***

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Abstract: This work deals with the religious spaces and the pious donations associated with them in late Nasrid Granada and, more specifically, in the rural area of the Alpujarra. Our territorial scope of study is limited to the district of Andarax where numerous traces are documented that reveal the implementation of spaces linked to the official religion, popular religiosity and religious practices (mosques, *rābiṭas*, *zāwiyas*, *muṣallās*...). This analysis allows to know, from a concrete context, the features adopted by Islam in the Alpujarran region. For this purpose, a Castilian inventory of ecclesiastical goods—former Islamic pious donations (*habices*)—from 1530 is taken as the main documentary basis. A retrospective analysis allows us to examine the proportion and geographical distribution of the Islamic religious buildings as well as the abundant *habices* that they received from the Muslim faithful, showing the pious disposition of the individuals who instituted them and, thereby, the important exercise of the Muslim faith in the area under study.

Keywords: Mosques, *rābiṭas*, *waqf/hubs*, Nasrid Granada, Alpujarra.

Introduction

In the Nasrid kingdom of Granada, the last Islamic bastion in the Iberian Peninsula, Islam was the official and dominant religion. Not only was it the religion of the State, but virtually the entire population was Muslim, with only a small number of Christians and a somewhat greater number of Jews, both communities generally Arabized. The two processes of Islamization and Arabization developed in al-Andalus from the eighth century CE onward, but at different rates, more intensely and rapidly in cities; nonetheless, in Nasrid Granada they encompassed a large proportion of the population from the beginning, in both urban and rural settings. Andalusis increased their religious homogeneity, feeling pressure from the Christian territorial advances from the north; both sides made of their faiths a justification for the conflict. At the same time, religious fervor grew in the Nasrid kingdom with the rise and consolidation of the Sufi movement which had emerged and developed in earlier times; one consequence was the spread of ascetic and mystical tendencies at all levels of the population.¹

In light of the dominant religious presence in Nasrid Granada, it is natural for it to have left its mark on the urban and rural landscape with characteristic buildings. The present study will attempt to promote better understanding of religious spaces and their pious legacies toward

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¹ There have been many studies about the religiosity of Andalusis. See a synthesis in María Jesús Viguera, “La religión y el derecho”, in María Jesús Viguera (coord.), *El reino nazarí de Granada (1232-1492). Sociedad, vida y cultura*, in José María Jover (dir.), *Historia de España de Menéndez Pidal*, VIII-IV, Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 2000, 168-174. More detailed and up-to-date information may be found in the bibliography of María Ángeles Navarro and Bilal Sarr, *Arabización, islamización y resistencias en al-Andalus y el Magreb*, EUG, Granada, 2020. There is also a growing body of work about the spread of Sufism in al-Andalus; see, among others, Miguel Cruz Hernández, *Historia del pensamiento en el mundo islámico. Vol. II. El pensamiento de al-Andalus (siglos IX-XIV)*, Alianza, Madrid, 1996, 628-639; Rachid El Hour (ed.), *Hagiografías, sufismo, santos y santidad en el Norte de África y Península Ibérica*, Academia Scientiarum Fennica, Helsinki, 2020; Amina González Costa and Gracia López Anguita, *Historia del sufismo en al-Andalus. Maestros sufíes de al-Andalus y el Magreb*, Almuzara, Córdoba, 2009.

the end of the Nasrid emirate, with special attention to the Alpujarran region.² The precise area of our study will be the district of Andarax, in the center of this rural region, because, in the Nasrid period, it contained a large concentration of buildings having a clear religious purpose in all its *alquerías*: Alcolea, Guarros, *Yniça*, Bayárcal, Paterna, Laujar, *Hiçan*, *Hormica*, *Camaçin*, *Codva*, Benecid and Fondón.³ Our analysis, based on a concrete context, will help to identify the particular features adopted by Islam throughout the Alpujarra.⁴

Our chief source of documentation is an inventory of ecclesiastical properties drawn up in 1530;⁵ it forms part of the rich written legacy in Castilian produced after the Christian conquest of Nasrid Granada in 1492. It is a list of assets containing exhaustive information about pious donations (*habices*)⁶ assigned to formerly

² The Alpujarra is a rural area located on the southern slopes of the Sierra Nevada, occupying parts of the modern provinces of Granada and Almería. This broad territory is bounded by that mountain chain and the Mediterranean Sea. The Alpujarra was divided into administrative districts created in the Nasrid period: the so-called Alpujarra Alta (Upper) included the districts of Órgiva, Poqueira, Ferreira, Jubiles, Ugíjar, Andarax, Lúchar, Alboloduy and Marchena, while the Alpujarra Baja (Lower) was made up of the districts of Los Céjeles, Berja and Dalías. Each district contained small population centers called *alquerías* (Ar. *qarya*) and many of those centers were further divided into neighborhoods with some distance between them. See Carmen Trillo, *La Alpujarra antes y después de la conquista castellana*, EUG, Granada, 1994.

³ The names in italics are of villages that no longer exist today.

⁴ This topic has been discussed in some general works like those of M. Espinar and C. Trillo which will be cited throughout the present article. But there is still no publication that focuses exclusively on religious establishments and their pious legacies in the Alpujarran district of Andarax. I hope here to enrich the picture provided by earlier studies with new perspectives.

⁵ Ana María Carballeira Debasa, *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra de 1530. Edición, estudio e índices de un manuscrito del Archivo Histórico Diocesano de Granada*, Academia Scientiarum Fennica, Helsinki, 2018. The documentary source consists of 356 folios written on both recto and verso. The manuscript is kept in the Archivo Histórico Diocesano of Granada with the signature: Libros de Archivo, caja no. 45 (2).

⁶ In al-Andalus, *habices* (from Ar. *ḥabīs*, in turn from *ḥubs*, pl. *aḥbās*) were donations of usufruct made to benefit some pious purpose: maintenance of religious institutions or buildings (mosques, cemeteries), maintenance of infrastructure used by the public (fortresses, walls, roads, bridges, fountains, cisterns, wells) and financing of pious activities (aid to the poor and the sick, ransoming of captives,

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Islamic religious centers in the population nuclei and the whole area under their jurisdiction in the Alpujarran district of Andarax (and that of Ugíjar) at that date. After the mass conversions to Christianity of the Granadan Muslims—thereafter called Moriscos—in 1501, those assets were confiscated and transferred to Christian churches that had already been converted from mosques.⁷ So that all these properties could be duly registered, the Christian authorities sent scribes into the localities concerned to record in writing all the information that could be collected about them.

Although the source is neither Arabic nor Islamic, because of its nearness in time, this documentation of *habices* is unquestionably relevant to our understanding of pious endowments in the Nasrid period immediately preceding the Christian conquest. As Morisco Granada is strongly reminiscent of late Andalusí society, this type of documentation offers great promise towards retrospectively analyzing Islamic religious centers and the pious donations they had received in

freeing of slaves). See Ana María Carballeira Debasa, *Legados píos y fundaciones familiares en al-Andalus (siglos IV/X-VI/XII)*, CSIC, Madrid, 2002, 67-102; Alejandro García Sanjuán, *Hasta que Dios herede la tierra. Los bienes habices en Al-Andalus (siglos X-XV)*, UHU, Huelva, 2002, 169-254; Alejandro García Sanjuán, *Till God Inherits the Earth. Islamic Pious Endowments in al-Andalus (9-15th Centuries)*, Brill, Leiden, 2007, 184-292.

⁷ Tobias Arera-Rütenik, *Transformation von Moscheen zu Kirchen auf der Iberischen Halbinsel*, Michael Imhof, Petersberg, 2017; Magdalena Valor and Isabel Montes, “La transformación de mezquitas en iglesias”, *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia Andaluza*, Facultad de Teología S. Isidoro de Sevilla, 11, 2018, 99-115. After the conversion of the Moriscos, the *habices* originally became the property of the Crown of Castile. Later, most of them, those of a religious nature, were transferred to the various parishes of the Archbishopric of Granada by the royal decree of 14 October 1501. In the Alpujarra, parishes did not receive their donations until 14 May 1502. In any event, the transfer of properties to the Church did not take effect until 1 January 1506. The monarchy retained most of the *habices* destined for charity. See Camilo Álvarez de Morales, “Romanced Documents, Bilingual Documents and Books of *habices*”, in Petra M. Sijpesteijn (ed.), *From al-Andalus to Khurasan: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World*, Brill, Leiden-Boston, 2006, 10; Ana María Carballeira Debasa and Camilo Álvarez de Morales, “Some Remarks on the Books of *habices* and Islamic Granada”, in Agostino Cilardo (ed.), *Islam and Globalisation. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives: Proceedings of the 25th Congress of L'Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, Peeters, Louvain-Paris-Walpole, 2013, 157.

the Nasrid era. Further, it fills a gap in the records in Arabic since the latter references are not only few, but they scarcely refer to rural areas. Still, we do not disdain information from Arabic sources; rather, we draw on it, in particular cases, to fill in the fragmentary picture presented by the book of *habices* of 1530 for particular aspects of our general theme.

While the documentation is highly relevant to our study, we must recognize certain limitations. The inventory of 1530 does not provide an exhaustive account of the urban and rural landscape of the settlements that comprised the Andarax district in Islamic times, but it does present information about different religious elements of the population centers. Likewise, there is some confusion of terms relating to concepts that share a semantic field and are used interchangeably (e.g., mosque/*rābiṭa* and *rābiṭa/zāwiya*). Further, the document reflects the evolution of religious spaces during this transitional period; for instance, we find that, in 1530, some of the mosques and most of the *rābiṭas* from the Nasrid period were in a (semi)-ruinous state, so plots of land where they had stood under the Muslims are now almost all described as empty lots. Fortunately, this circumstance does not affect the importance of this inventory for reconstructing the religious spaces of the area under study. However, in certain cases, our analysis of the data may be affected by the changing circumstances during the transitional period from Islam to Christianity; for example, when a former mosque is designated as a church, we cannot always tell if we are dealing with a major or a minor mosque.

There is no doubt that analyzing the documentation of *habices* allows us to visualize facts about the Islamic past and, thereby, to identify elements of religious urbanism. To this end, we will consider not only the geographic distribution of religious structures, but also the donations that these centers received in the form of *habices* from the Muslim faithful. All this helps us to understand the religious climate that prevailed during the historical period under study.

I. MOSQUES AND THEIR PIOUS ENDOWMENTS

The mosque was the principal community building in all the Alpujarran *alquerías* of the Andarax district in Nasrid times.⁸ The book of *habices* of 1530 shows that a *gima* (Ar. [*masjid*] *al-jamā'*) or principal mosque for Friday prayer was present in most *alquerías*, a clear sign that the political authorities sought to control areas that were far from urban centers. It is even possible that there was one in each locality, though that is difficult to determine, because, as stated above, the inventory sometimes calls a former mosque (major or minor) a "church".⁹ In general, minor mosques were located in larger *alquerías* (e.g., Alcolea, Laujar, Paterna) or in smaller ones that did not boast a major mosque (e.g., Benecid).

In large villages (e.g., Fondón), there might even be several mosques in different neighborhoods. There is one unusual case of two major mosques in the *alquería* of *Hiçan*, where there was one in the residential area and another within the fortress. Occasionally, a lot formerly occupied by a *gima* is in a *pago*¹⁰ whose name recalls that building (e.g., *pago* of "Açequia del Gima" in the *alquería* of Laujar); perhaps that plot of land bordered a group of dwellings or the dwellings had been shifted in Christian times.

In general, a mosque could be centrally located in the inhabited area or be at its upper edge, even next to a ravine. It was also usually near an irrigation ditch, pool, cistern and/or spring so that the faithful

⁸ Susana Calvo, "Las mezquitas de pequeñas ciudades y núcleos rurales de al-Andalus", *Ilu. Revista de Ciencias de las Religiones Anejos*, UCM, 10, 2004, 39-63; Susana Calvo, *Las mezquitas de al-Andalus*, Fundación Ibn Tufayl, Almería, 2014; María Teresa Martínez Pérez, "Las mezquitas de Granada en los libros de habices", *Andalucía Islámica (textos y estudios)*, EUG, 4-5, 1983-1986, 203-235; Juan Martínez Ruiz, "Edificios religiosos musulmanes de la Granada morisca (Lingüística e Historia)", in Abdeljelil Temimi (ed.), *Actas del III Simposio Internacional de Estudios Moriscos. Las prácticas musulmanas de los moriscos andaluces (1492-1609)*, CEROMDI, Zaghuan, 1989, 121-137; Carmen Trillo, "Mezquitas en al-Andalus: un espacio entre las comunidades y el poder", *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval*, USAL, 29, 2012, 73-98.

⁹ We know that those churches were former mosques because they had received donations of *habices* in Islamic times.

¹⁰ An agricultural area that comprises several farms which are usually irrigated.

could perform their ablutions before prayer. Often, the cemetery or other religious elements were installed nearby.

The inventory of 1530 makes clear that, in the Andarax district during the Nasrid era, many *habices* were endowed to mosques. This fact accords with the predominance of this type of *habices* in earlier periods of Andalusí history. Written Arabic sources confirm this fact, although their references are less explicit and not quantitative. Works of jurisprudence contain an abundance of legal opinions related to assets designated for mosques in al-Andalus.¹¹ In general terms, then, it is unquestionable that mosques were the chief beneficiaries and owners of *habices* in al-Andalus. We can deduce from all this that Nasrid mosques possessed considerable property.

Castilian documentation reveals that, in the Andarax district, income from *habices* destined for mosques served to defray their operating costs: in particular, salaries for employees, repairs and worship services, especially, oil for the mosque lamps and mats for the floors. But it was the *alfaquí* (Ar. *al-faqīh*) who benefited the most. Under the Nasrids, these men acted as heads of sites of Muslim worship, administering the buildings' *habices* and reserving part of them for their own expenses, just as the book of 1530 describes.¹²

As to the types of pious donations made to former mosques in the district of Andarax, information preserved in this inventory points above all to parcels of land and structures, principally, rural, but some urban. There were also different types of trees and plants dispersed around cultivated areas. Where fields were irrigated, *habices* could also consist of allotted times of irrigation. A few parcels were in dry-farmed areas or, alternatively, a *habiz* could be made up of portions of the crop.

¹¹ See Carballeira Debasa, *Legados píos y fundaciones familiares*, 68-113; García Sanjuán, *Hasta que Dios herede la Tierra*, 215-254; García Sanjuán, *Till God Inherits the Earth*, 243-292.

¹² *Libro de habices de 1530*, fol. 315v. Economic support of mosques and the salaries of their personnel came not only from *habices*, but also from the public treasury (*bayt al-māl*) or from funds collected from residents of the place where the mosque was located. See María Isabel Calero, "Afectación de las rentas de los habices de las mezquitas en fetuas nazaríes del siglo XV. El caso del poeta-alfaquí al-Bastī", in Celia del Moral (ed.), *En el epílogo del Islam andalusí: la Granada del siglo XV*, EUG, Granada, 2002, 157-183; Carballeira Debasa, *Legados píos y fundaciones familiares*, 77-84; Carmen Trillo, "Agentes del Estado y mezquitas en el Reino Nazarí", *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos*, US, 34, 2007, 288-290.

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Aside from houses, structures included ovens, wheat and olive-oil mills, shops and silk-weaving sheds. In rare cases, we also find canebrakes, threshing floors, ravines, riverbeds, water tanks, springs, paths, beehives and caves used as animal shelters. Clearly, Muslims donated many valuable pieces of property to their mosques.

II. *RĀBIṬAS*, *ZĀWIYAS* AND THEIR PIOUS ENDOWMENTS

Both inside and outside the *alquerías* of the Andarax district in the Alpujarra, we find references to other structures closely related to Islamic religious practices: these were the *rābiṭas* and *zāwiyas*.¹³ On one hand, *rābiṭa* is a concept linked to that of *ribāṭ*. In al-Andalus, the latter was a sort of fortified monastery, usually, in a frontier or coastal area whose residents combined ascetic living with political/military activity in defense of Islam; the function of a *rābiṭa* was essentially a

¹³ On the *rābiṭas* and *zāwiyas* of Nasrid Granada, see Juan Cañavate, “Algunos morabitos, zawiya y rábitas en el Reino de Granada”, *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino*, CEHGR, 28, 2016, 179-217; Manuel Espinar, “Las rábitas de las tierras granadinas en las fuentes documentales. Arqueología y toponimia”, in Francisco Franco and Mikel de Epalza (ed. y dir.), *La rábita en el islam. Estudios Interdisciplinarios. Congressos internacionals de Sant Carles de la Ràpita (1989, 1997)*, Ajuntament de Sant Carles de la Ràpita–Universitat d’Alacant, Sant Carles de la Ràpita, 2004, 211-230; Manuel Espinar and Juan Abellán, “Las rábitas en Andalucía. Fuentes y metodología”, in Francisco Franco and Mikel de Epalza (ed. y dir.), *La rábita en el islam. Estudios Interdisciplinarios. Congressos internacionals de Sant Carles de la Ràpita (1989, 1997)*, Ajuntament de Sant Carles de la Ràpita–Universitat d’Alacant, Sant Carles de la Ràpita, 2004, 183-206; Lorenzo L. Padilla, “Los centros religiosos musulmanes después de la reconquista de Granada en 1942: Mezquitas, Rábitas y Zawiya en La Alpujarra y Valle de Lecrín”, in Francisco Toro and Francisco Vidal (coords.), *Al-Andalus y el mundo cristiano. Relaciones sociales y culturales, intercambios económicos y aspectos jurídico-institucionales*, Ayuntamiento-Universidad de Jaén, Alcalá la Real, 2018, 193-212; Juana M. Rodríguez and Lorenzo Cara, “El fenómeno místico religioso rural en los últimos siglos del Islam andalusí: introducción al estudio arqueológico de las rábitas alpujarreñas”, in *Almería entre culturas. Siglo XIII al XVI*, I, Instituto de Estudios Almerienses, Almería, 1990, 225-254; Carmen Trillo, “Religiosidad popular en el reino de Granada, España (ss. XIII–XV): Sufismo y rábitas en la Alpujarra”, *Studia Orientalia Electronica*, FIME, 4, 2016, 71-88; Carmen Villanueva, “Rábitas granadinas”, *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, EUG, 3, 1954, 79-86.

religious one. A *zāwiya*, on the other hand, was a meeting place for poor Sufis (*fuqarāʾ*, in Nasrid terminology), mystics who practiced voluntary poverty as a way of life.

As L. Torres Balbás pointed out, however, in al-Andalus, the two concepts of *rābiṭa* and *ribāṭ* were often used interchangeably¹⁴ and both terms came to be confused with *zāwiya* in reference to the same establishment. L. Seco de Lucena perceived a shift in designation such that, toward the end of the fifteenth century, Arabic sources usually called *zāwiyas* by the name of *rābiṭas*.¹⁵ Perhaps because of this confusion of terms, in Castilian documentation of *habices*, we find many references to *rābiṭas* and very few to *zāwiyas*, just as in the inventory of 1530 in which the only traces of “*zāwiya*” occur in local toponyms.

II.1 – *Rābiṭas*

In the book of *habices* of 1530, *rābiṭas* are mentioned more often than mosques. We can conclude that, in the Andarax district in Islamic times, this type of building proliferated, as we have mentioned above. Their presence is documented in every settlement of the administrative district and the whole area under its jurisdiction. Aside from direct mentions, there are also allusions in the toponymy of different agricultural areas (e.g., *pago* of “*Rábita*”, *pago* of “*Rubite*”).

In villages, the number of *rābiṭas* is even larger. Sometimes, there is more than one *rābiṭa* per *alquería* or even per neighborhood, indicating the importance of this type of structure in the Alpujarra. In Paterna, for example, there were nine *rābiṭas* distributed among its four neighborhoods, with six in the hamlet of Alcudia alone. Next, comes the *alquería* of *Hiṣan*, with seven recorded *rābiṭas*. Data from the inventory indicate that urban *rābiṭas* were mainly centers of worship where local Muslims performed their daily prayers, except on Fridays, when the noon prayer was held in the chief mosque. The manuscript reveals how *rābiṭas* would have functioned under the Nasrids: “[...]”

¹⁴ Leopoldo Torres Balbás, “*Rábitas hispanomusulmanas*”, *Al-Andalus*, CSIC, 13, 1948, 476, 479.

¹⁵ Luis Seco de Lucena, “De toponimia granadina”, *Al-Andalus*, CSIC, 16, 1951, 74-75.

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the people who went to pray at the said *rābiṭa* [...] [in the Ay Borux Mud neighborhood of Paterna]”.¹⁶

Some *rābiṭas* consisted of more than one room, suggesting that they were of a certain size: “[...] a *rābiṭa* from the time of the Moors, in the said village of Yniça, called ‘dar alçofa’ at that time, which has three small chambers and is thirty-five feet long and fifteen wide [...]”.¹⁷ The identification of the *rābiṭa* with *dar alçofa*,¹⁸ which is defined elsewhere in the same document as “a house where people gathered together to sing”,¹⁹ leaves no doubt that these were spaces such as Sufi monasteries, associated with mystical practices, in clear reference to the rituals followed by members of Sufi brotherhoods (*ṭarīqas*), such as chants repeated until a state of ecstasy was reached.

The inventory also attests to the normal presence of *rābiṭas* around the settled areas of the Andarax district. In particular, it should be noted a concentration in the jurisdiction of Laujar where seven buildings that go back to the Nasrid period are documented; of these, two were somewhat farther from the population center: one, half a mile distant and the other, a quarter of a league.²⁰ It appears that, in the late Nasrid period, these periurban *rābiṭas* were becoming more important, most of them probably adapted as places of spiritual withdrawal for ascetic practices, rather than as oratories, on account of their more remote location.

We learn from the book of 1530 that *rābiṭas* in the Andarax district owned *habices*. Unfortunately, we do not know in every case

¹⁶ “[...] la gente que yva a la çala [Ar. *ṣalāt*] a la dicha *rābiṭa* [...]” (*Libro de habices de 1530*, fol. 289v).

¹⁷ “[...] vna rábita de tienpo de moros, en el dicho lugar de Yniça, que se dezia en tienpo de moros ‘dar alçofa,’ que tiene tres palaçios pequeños, que tiene treynta e çinco pies en largo e quinze en ancho [...]” (*Libro de habices de 1530*, fol. 224r).

¹⁸ C. Trillo and P. Hernández derive this term from Ar. *ṣuffa* (bench in front of a mosque): “Topónimos de la Alpujarra según un manuscrito de rentas de habices”, *Miscelánea de Estudios Arabes y Hebraicos*, EUG, 37, 1989, 300. From the same Arabic root, J. Martínez Ruiz assigns it the meaning “poor homeless people”: “El árabe ard ‘tierra’ y el árabe qaṭra ‘haza’ en la toponimia menor granadina (siglo XVI)”, *Estudios de Historia y Arqueología Medievales*, UCA, 5-6, 1985-1986, 369.

¹⁹ “casa donde la gente se juntaba para cantar” (*Libro de habices de 1530*, fol. 271v).

²⁰ *Libro de habices de 1530*, fol. 315r.

the property possessed by each *rābiṭa*, because all the possessions of the mosques and *rābiṭas* of a given settlement were often lumped together when, after the Christian conquest, they were reassigned to local churches. Although we have no absolute data, we can deduce that, after mosques, *rābiṭas* received the next largest proportion of endowments. Though the document lacks quantitative data, we can assess the nature of the donations: principally, mulberry trees, but also irrigated parcels, vineyards, dry-farmed fields and so on. The inventory does not usually specify the purposes to which income derived from the *habices* of *rābiṭas* were put, except in the case of their administrators or *alfaquies* who also oversaw the goods assigned to mosques, as stated above; sometimes, it is clear that those men were paid out of *habices* that did not belong to mosques, but to *rābiṭas*.

In contrast, written Arabic sources make very little reference to pious donations assigned to *rābiṭas*. In works of jurisprudence, most consultations in the Nasrid period have to do with problems in the management of income from *habices*.²¹ I have found no direct references in earlier eras of Andalus history to *habices* given in benefit of *rābiṭas*. There are allusions in legal documents to castles or fortresses (Ar. *ḥiṣn*) on the Christian-Muslim frontier that received pious legacies to cover their expenses. It is possible that some of these fortified structures drew devout Muslims from other parts of al-Andalus who could then form a *ribāṭ*.²²

II.2 –Zāwiyas

²¹ García Sanjuán, *Hasta que Dios herede la Tierra*, 204-206; García Sanjuán, *Till God Inherits the Earth*, 230-232; García Sanjuán, “*Rābiṭas* y *ribāṭs* en el *Mi ‘yār* de al-Wanṣarīṣī (m. 914/1508)”, in Francisco Franco and Mikel de Epalza (ed. y dir.), *La rābīta en el islam. Estudios Interdisciplinarios. Congressos internacionals de Sant Carles de la Ràpita (1989, 1997)*, Ajuntament de Sant Carles de la Ràpita–Universitat d’Alacant, Sant Carles de la Ràpita–Alicante, 2004, 83-85.

²² Carballeira Debasa, *Legados píos y fundaciones familiares*, 140-148. See also Alejandro García Sanjuán, “Frontera, *Yihād* y legados piadosos en Al-Andalus (siglos X-XV)”, in Francisco Toro Ceballos and José Rodríguez Molina (coords.), *III Estudios de Frontera. Convivencia, defensa y comunicación en la frontera (Alcalá la Real, 18-20 de noviembre de 1999)*, Diputación Provincial, Jaén, 2000, 317-330.

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One kind of Sufi monastery was the *zāwiya* which might be built around the tomb of a locally venerated saint and have several outbuildings meant to house students and visitors. In al-Andalus, it was an institution found especially in the Nasrid period.²³ The book of 1530 contains no direct reference to this type of building, though we can infer from the microtoponymy of the region that it existed in Islamic times. We find mention of the *pago* of “Azegüia” in the *alquería* of Escarientes and to those of “Zeguiat Beni Hamet” and “ZeguiatReha/AzeguiatArreha” in that of Darrícal, all in the neighboring district of Ugíjar. Some also consider that the toponym “Zubia” derives from Ar. *zāwiya*, while others trace it back to Ar. *zubyā* (trench, elevated place above the waterline).²⁴

This type of documentary source also has little to say about *habices* assigned to *zāwiyas*. But in the Arabic sources of jurisprudence, there are numerous consultations about whether it is licit to finance *zāwiyas* and Sufi brotherhoods through *habices*. We have observed that both *rābiṭas* and *zāwiyas* were connected to the activities of *fuqarāʾ*. While those activities had been present in al-Andalus from the twelfth century, it is in the Nasrid period that *alfaquíes*—jurisconsults who represented orthodox or official Islam—showed broad opposition to donations in favor of mystics whose practices they saw as heretical innovations (Ar. *bidʿa*). Donations made to them, therefore, would be judged as reprehensible.²⁵ The political authorities

²³ Viguera, “La religión y el derecho”, 165.

²⁴ María Isabel Calero and Virgilio Martínez Enamorado, “Rábitas y zúbias malagueñas”, in Francisco Franco and Mikel de Epalza (ed. and dir.), *La rábida en el islam. Estudios Interdisciplinarios. Congressos internacionals de Sant Carles de la Ràpita* (1989, 1997), Ajuntament de Sant Carles de la Ràpita–Universitat d’Alacant, Sant Carles de la Ràpita–Alicante, 2004, 237-254; Carballeira Debasa, *Libro de los habices de la Alpujarra*, 30; Juan Antonio Chavarría, “Huellas sufíes en al-Andalus: la toponimia. *Murābiṭ, Rubayṭa/Rubayṭ(a)* y *Zāwiya*”, *Estudios sobre patrimonio, cultura y ciencias medievales*, EUG, 19, 2017, 243-245; David Ortega, “Entre *masāyid* y *rawābiṭ*: la religiosidad musulmana en la Axarquía de Málaga en la Edad Media (ss. XI-XV)”, *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes*, UCM, 34, 2023, 147; Francisco Vidal Castro, “Los arabismos del castellano y el agua: aproximación a los principales vocablos”, *Revista de Derecho de Aguas*, Universidad de Chile, 9, 1998, 271-272.

²⁵ García Sanjuán, *Hasta que Dios herede la Tierra*, 206-211; García Sanjuán, *Till God Inherits the Earth*, 232-238. See also María Arcas Campoy, “El criterio de los juristas malikíes sobre ciertas prácticas rituales en el *ribāṭ*. Al-Andalus

tolerated the unstoppable mystical current, though they were always on guard against its more dangerous manifestations.²⁶ There is no question that Sufi practices were a widespread form of popular religious expression.

III. OTHER RELIGIOUS SPACES

The book of *habices* of 1530 makes clear that, in the vicinity of Islamic devotional centers, there were spaces for other ways of religious expression in the form of *moçalas* (Ar. *muṣallā*)²⁷ and *macáberes* (Ar. *maqbara*, pl. *maqābir*).²⁸ As a result, in Nasrid times, we can assume a tendency to concentrate properties of a religious nature into a single sacred space.

A *muṣallā* (also called *sharī'a*) was an open-air esplanade where the Muslim faithful gathered for prayer on important occasions, sometimes, when praying for rain. In this inventory, I have found only one reference to a *moçala* in the village of Paterna.²⁹ But there are more traces of this sacred space in toponymy, such as the microtoponym “Almoçalal”, presumably, from Ar. *muṣallā*, in the *alquería* of Alcolea. In the neighboring district of Ugíjar, there is mention of the *pagos* of “Xarea” and “Xareha” whose name could derive from *sharī'a* in reference to an open-air oratory, though another suggested etymon is Ar. *sha'riyya*, a place abounding in rockroses.³⁰ This documentary source lists no *habices* destined for this type of oratory.

According to the book of *habices* of 1530, Islamic cemeteries were sacred spaces that might be located either inside or outside a

y Norte de África”, *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos. Sección Árabe-Islam*, EUG, 55, 2006, 37-48; Maribel Fierro, “Opposition to Sufism in Al-Andalus”, in Frederick de Jong and Bernd Radtke (eds.), *Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, Brill, Leiden, 1999, 174-206.

²⁶ Viguera, “La religión y el derecho”, 171-173.

²⁷ Leopoldo Torres Balbás, “«Muṣallā» y «šarī'a» en las ciudades hispanomusulmanas”, *Al-Andalus*, CSIC, 13, 1948, 167-180.

²⁸ Leopoldo Torres Balbás, “Cementerios hispanomusulmanes”, *Al-Andalus*, CSIC, 1957, 22, 144-207.

²⁹ *Libro de habices de 1530*, fol. 289r.

³⁰ Ortega, “Entre *masāyid* y *rawābiṭ*”, 129-130, 133.

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populated area. We know that, in the Nasrid period, pious donations were also made to *macáberes*. In fact, in the inventory, there is one brief reference to Islamic *habices* destined for tombs of Muslims in the village of Fondón.³¹ Though there are few documented *habices* of this type, we can also draw on Arabic legal sources, which attest to the existence of such endowments going back to the Umayyad period.³² Because of a dearth of data in this documentary source, I will not further explore the question of cemeteries.

Conclusion

Castilian documentation of *habices* is of great interest for revealing several aspects of Islam in the Nasrid kingdom of Granada, especially, in rural areas. A variety of documented religious spaces attests to the practice of the Muslim faith. In particular, the inventory of 1530 gives evidence of many spaces connected to the official religion that were established in the Islamic period as well as of popular religiosity and religious practices of the district of Andarax in the Alpujarra. This area contained a variety of human settlements in which residents could attend religious services in the local mosque or even pursue Sufi mysticism. Once gathered and analyzed, the data show that Islamization was strengthened in rural areas during the Nasrid period; even mysticism became well established among the rural population.

In the Andarax district, we find different types of buildings connected to Islamic religious practices: major and minor mosques, *rābiṭas*, *zāwiyas* and *muṣallās*. Frequently, a single settlement included a mosque, a cemetery and sometimes a *rābiṭa*. At the date when the inventory was compiled, many former mosques and *rābiṭas* had fallen into ruin or been abandoned; even so, because their former sites were named, we can identify the plots on which those buildings had stood. Moreover, toponymy yields references to *gimas* (mosques), *rābiṭas* and *zāwiyas*. As we have noted, although the source belongs to the Christian era, we can use it with proper caution to reconstruct the state

³¹ *Libro de habices de 1530*, fol. 344v.

³² Carballeira Debasa, *Legados píos y fundaciones familiares*, 114-132.

of affairs at the end of the Nasrid emirate, using the documentation of *habices* to project back into the past.

This documentary source confirms how some terms were superimposed on others: at the end of the Nasrid era, names of certain buildings were applied to other types of edifices that housed similar institutions (mosque vs. *rābiṭa*; *rābiṭa* vs. *zāwiya*). With some margin of error, we can affirm that every *alquería* in the Andarax district contained at least one mosque. Likewise, the religious landscape was marked by a series of smaller establishments, *rābiṭas* and *zāwiyas*, that performed different roles. In Nasrid times, the many *rābiṭas* were places of prayer, comparable to small mosques, inside of villages, but they also appear as gathering places for Sufi worship, suffusing the *alquerías* and periurban areas with a mystical tradition. The overall picture is one of religious urbanism containing several elements, perhaps favored by a pattern of villages made up of neighborhoods with some distance between them.

Castilian documentation reveals that these religious structures were maintained through pious donations, accumulating over time an enormous patrimony of *habices*; there, we see the devotion of the individuals who donated and, therefore, an active exercise of the Muslim faith. Though legal documents in Arabic and lists of *habices* emerge from different times and cultures, they both show that religious institutions gained the greatest benefit from this system of pious donations. More precisely, they confirm the wealth of the mosques in the Andarax district. Of the two principal religious institutions, mosques and *rābiṭas*, the former received the larger share of donations. As for the latter, we cannot always tell just which *habices* were given to which *rābiṭa*. As properties were transferred to Church control, the original recipients of the legacies were often lost; only exceptionally, were they preserved. Nonetheless, pious donations to *rābiṭas*, when added to those destined for mosques, must have had considerable economic weight.

If we compare information from Castilian documents of *habices* and data from Arabic legal sources, we find a surprising disparity: in the past, there had been an abundance of *rābiṭas* and even an important number of *zāwiyas*, but jurists were opposed to the activities of the *fuqarā'*. Nonetheless, the number of periurban *rābiṭas* and the many *habices* they received suggest that *fuqarā'* in this area

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enjoyed a good deal of popular support. We can assume the existence of a current of popular religiosity that reached deep into the rural population, on the margins of orthodox Islam. It is clear that the official religion and this popular religious expression ran along parallel tracks. Perhaps the *alfaquíes*, who were guardians of orthodoxy, feared that this popular form of worship threatened—even economically—the official Islam that they represented since the donations that filled the coffers of *rābiṭas* and *zāwiyas* did not go to the mosques and, therefore, not to the *alfaquíes* themselves.

In sum, this documentation attests to the large resources from pious donations that centers of Islamic worship enjoyed—evidence of the power of religion in Nasrid Granada—. We should recall, too, that, in Islam, such donations allow a Muslim to fulfill one of the basic tenets of his faith, that of almsgiving. In this belief system, charity was a demonstration of a life of piety, a way of purging one's sins and attaining eternal life; *habices* were meant to give their donors the spiritual benefit of drawing closer to God and obtaining divine favor. From this point of view, the large number of endowments documented in the book of *habices* of 1530 illustrates the religious mentality of the Muslim community in this historical period.

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