



SHI'ISM IN THE
MAGHRIB AND AL-ANDALUS,
VOLUME TWO

Traditions

John Andrew Morrow

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and al-Andalus,
Volume Two

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By

John Andrew Morrow

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To Ottmar Hegyi, Dennis Patrick Walker, and Laleh Bakhtiar

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More than anyone, my spouse deserves the prize of "the most patient wife on the planet." I started to work on this study ten years before we married and twenty years later, I was still working on it. "Enough is enough," she said, "the time has come to publish it." Not only will she be pleased to see this book in print, but she will also be relieved. A scholarly gestation should not last three decades. The birth of this work was overdue.

Although this study was long in the making and was reviewed by numerous scholars who made every reasonable effort to ensure that it was free of errors, human beings are fallible. Consequently, despite due diligence on the part of all parties, I accept complete responsibility for any shortcomings to be found in this work. Some scholars might complain that it contains no index; however, this is compensated by the detailed table of contents in which the subject matter of each sub-section is identifiable. Finally, I would like to thank everyone at Cambridge Scholars Publishing for supporting my scholarship and, most importantly, for considering contributions to the field far more critical than commercial potential and profit.

ENDORSEMENTS

“This is the first comprehensive work on the Shī‘ite presence and contribution in Andalusia. Prior to this book, studies on the subject were confined to the role and contribution of Sunnī Muslims, ignoring any mention of Shī‘ah Muslims. John Andrew Morrow has done some amazing ground-breaking research work demonstrating the social, religious, and political contribution of key Shī‘ah figures in Muslim Spain. His lucid and well-researched work makes an important contribution to our understanding of the interplay between religion and politics in this part of the Islāmic world. This book provides a wealth of information and will be an invaluable resource that students of Islām can draw upon.” **Dr. Liyakat Takim**, *Sharjah Chair in Global Islām, Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University*

“An outstanding work that demonstrates an exceptional knowledge of classical Arabic texts and sources... The work, in and of itself, is of unquestionable academic merit... It provides masterful coverage of an especially important field when it comes to understanding the history of North Africa and al-Andalus during its classic period... This excellent work of historical research... will certainly provoke a great deal of scholarly debate.” **Dr. José Francisco Cutillas Ferrer**, *University of Alicante, Professor of Arabic and Islāmic Studies*

“In this seminal work, John Andrew Morrow makes a compelling historical argument for the presence of Shī‘ite Muslims in Andalusia (Islāmic Spain) and, as such, provides an excellent corrective to the generally held belief that there were few, if any, Shī‘ites in the region. Drawing from a variety of sources, his scrupulous and painstaking research pieces the scattered accounts together to make a cogent, coherent case for their presence. Being the first major and thought-provoking study on this subject, and one that diverges from existing scholarship, Morrow’s work will undoubtedly attract attention and be the center of scholarly debate for years to come.” **Dr. Hamid Mavani**, *Associate Professor of Islāmic Studies, Bayan-Claremont*

“Academic studies on Islām and Muslims in Spain and North Africa have tended to focus on the art and architecture, philosophy and mysticism, and periods of cooperation and conflict between Muslims, Christians, and Jews. Among the unexamined axioms concerning Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula is the Sunnī identity of those who practiced Islām. John Andrew Morrow’s two volume study, *Shī’ism in the Maghrib and al-Andalus*, deconstructs this narrative by providing a treasure trove of historical and textual evidence and analysis. This landmark study is a necessary and timely corrective to those who would attempt to erase any trace of Shī’ī Islām from both the past and the present, whether through myopic scholarship or the destruction of sacred sites and communities. Dr. Morrow’s study may also serve to remind us that not only were there both Sunnīs and Shī’as in Muslim Spain and North Africa, but that both communities exist wherever Islām does.” **Zachary Markwith**, *PhD Candidate, Graduate Theological Union*

SOURCES

As is customary in the field of Islāmic studies, I generally do not provide page numbers for citations of prophetic sayings, and simply reference them by source, such as Kulaynī or Bukhārī. Since works of *aḥādīth* come in so many versions, page numbers are hardly useful. What is more, virtually all the primary Arabic sources of Islām have been digitalized. Consequently, it requires almost no effort to track down traditions through key word searches.

When English translations of traditions were available, these have been quoted. It is the primary source of the *ḥadīth* that is cited; not necessarily the secondary sources and translations in which it appears. When the translations were not idiomatic, they were improved, often on the basis of the original Arabic. Most of the canonical prophetic traditions cited in this work can easily be found in print and online in Arabic and English. While every reasonable effort has been made to document sources in the bibliography, the sources of some works, often obscure and difficult to access, and which are merely mentioned in passing, are not always included.

Since this work has been thirty years in the making, small segments of its findings have been shared in some articles, books, and presentations, including “Shī’ism in Morocco,” which was published in several places on the internet, including *Jafariya News* (2006) and the *Imam Reza Network*, and appeared in print in *Islāmic Insights: Writings and Reviews* (2012) (193-198). Other findings appeared online in “Shī’ism in North Africa and Islāmic Spain” which was published in *Shafaqna* (2016). This study also appeared online in Spanish in *Musulmanes por la Paz* (2019), *ABNA*, *Rahyafteha*, and *Prensa Islāmica* (2020).

Some research on the Berber wives and mothers of the Shī’ite Imāms was included in *Restoring the Balance: Using the Qur’ān and the Sunnah to Guide a Return to the Prophet’s Islām* (20-24). Many of the prophetic traditions that I cite are found in *Shī’ite Islām: Orthodoxy or Heterodoxy*, a work by Luis Alberto Vittor that I translated, edited, and annotated, and which is available in print and various digital editions in both English and Spanish. Since these are my works, and every reasonable effort has been made to identify them, any parallels and echoes fall into the category of fair use.

Whenever it is written that the Prophet, the Imāms, or the companions made certain statements, it merely indicates that the source says so. In other words, when one reads that “the Prophet said” it is always implied that “the Prophet reportedly said,” “the Prophet supposedly said,” or the “Prophet allegedly said.” Including such qualifiers, however, would be burdensome, annoying, and repetitive. I am not claiming that all these traditions are true. I am simply sharing sayings that some Moriscos held to be true. Finally, while this work is not indexed, it contains a meticulously detailed table of contents that should allow readers to locate subjects with relative ease.

INTRODUCTION

The first volume of *Shī'ism in the Maghrib and al-Andalus* provides a history of Shī'ite Islām in North Africa and Islāmic Spain. It documents the presence of the Shī'ite Imāms, their companions, and the followers of their companions in the Maghrib and al-Andalus. It examines the racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic origin of some of the wives of the Shī'ite Imāms. It chronicles the sharīfian settlers in the Maghrib and al-Andalus. It traces many of the Ṣūfī orders from the region to the Shī'ite Imāms. It explores the Shī'ite sects, dynasties, revolts, scholars, and centers in North Africa and Islāmic Spain and sheds light on the imposition of Mālikī Sunnī orthodoxy through an inquisition. It unravels the mystery of the Shī'ite Moriscos, uncovers vestiges of Shī'ism in the Maghrib, surveys the literary legacy of Shī'ism, and touches upon the historical presence of Shī'ites in the region.

If the first volume of *Shī'ism in the Maghrib and al-Andalus* focuses on history, this second volume concentrates on literature, focusing on Aljamiado-Morisco works of Shī'ite inclination or inspiration. Since these works are written in Spanish, using the Arabic alphabet, and occasionally in Spanish, using the Latin script, they have generally been inaccessible to scholars who speak Spanish but cannot read the Arabic alphabet of the Moriscos, as well as academics who are not proficient in the Spanish language, much less the Aljamiado script.

The works included in this anthology are made available in English translation for the first time. They provide readers with a taste of Aljamiado-Morisco literature and an insight into the beliefs and devotional practices of Iberian cryptic Muslims. These works capture the fear, suffering, and hope of the Moriscos: a persecuted European Muslim minority. They cried, as oppressed Shī'ites did throughout the ages: "O Hidden Imām! Rise up and come to our help!" However much they prayed, and however much they hoped, the Awaited One and the Mahdī of Morisco legend never responded to their calls as the last remaining cryptic Muslims of Spain were forcibly assimilated, expelled or physically exterminated so that Catholic Spain could supposedly be cleansed both ethnically and spiritually.

TRADITION 1

MY *AHL AL-BAYT* IS LIKE THE ARK OF NOAH

1.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 29 from the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC, formerly known as the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas in Madrid (116r). The manuscript includes the *ḥadīth* in both its original Arabic and *aljamiado* translation.

1.2 Tradition

[The Messenger of Allāh said]: “My *ahl al-bayt* is the like the Ark of Noah. Whoever embarked on it was saved. And whoever did not was drowned.”

1.3 Commentary

The “Tradition of the Ark” is one of the foundational traditions of Shī‘ite Islām and is found in various versions in both Sunnī and Shī‘ī books of prophetic traditions. The *aljamiado* tradition in question is identical to the main version found in both Sunnī and Shī‘ī books of *aḥādīth*. Abū Nu‘aym (d. 1038) records that the Messenger of Allāh said: “The example of my *ahl al-bayt* among you is like Noah’s Ark; whoever got aboard it was saved and whoever remained behind was drowned.” Shabrāwī Shāfi‘ī relates the tradition on the authority of Rafī‘, who had been the slave of Abū Dharr al-Ghiffārī, who said:

Once Abū Dharr climbed the threshold of the Ka‘bah, grasped the ring of its door and turning his back towards it, said: “O people, those who know me, know me, and those who do not, know me: I am Abū Dharr; I have heard the Messenger of Allāh say: “My *ahl al-bayt* is like Noah’s Ark, whoever boards it, is safe, and whoever remains behind is pushed into the fire.”

Muttaqī al-Hindī (d. 1567) records the *ḥadīth* in the following words, adding that it was quoted by Ṭabarānī (d. 918) on the authority of Abū Dharr (d. 652):

The likeness of my *ahl al-bayt* among you is like that of Noah's Ark, whoever gets on board is safe, and whoever remains behind is doomed; it is like the Gate of Remission for the children of Israel.

The "Tradition of the Ark" is related on the authority of Abū Dharr, the famous companion of the Prophet who was a Shī'ite of 'Alī, in *al-Mustadrak*, a compilation of prophetic traditions compiled by al-Ḥākim (d. 1012), a Sunnī scholar, who classified it as authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*). The work, which was compiled in the year 393 AH (1002-1003), contains more than nine thousand traditions which the author has deemed as authentic according to the standards of Bukhārī and Muslim.

According to Sunnī scholars, the collections of Bukhārī and Muslim are the most authentic of the six canonical books of prophetic traditions. The six authentic books or *al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah* of the Sunnīs include the following, listed in order of importance:

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, collected by al-Bukhārī (d. 870), includes 7,275 *ḥadīths*.
2. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, collected by Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 875), includes 9,200 traditions.
3. *Sunan al-Ṣuḡhrā*, collected by al-Nasā'ī (d. 915), includes 5,270 *ḥadīths*.
4. *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, collected by Abū Dawūd (d. 888), features 4,800 *ḥadīth*.
5. *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, collected by al-Tirmidhī (d. 892), contains approximately 4,000 traditions.
6. The sixth authentic book is subject to dispute and may include one of the following:
 - a) *al-Muwattā*, collected by Imām Mālik (d. 796), which includes 1,720 *ḥadīth*.
 - b) *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, collected by Ibn Mājah (d. 886), which comprises 4,321 *ḥadīth*.
 - c) *Sunan al-Dārimī*, collected by al-Dārimī, which contains 3,550 *ḥadīth*.

The six *ṣaḥīḥ* books form part of the nine major *ḥadīth* collections, which may include *Sunan al-Dārimī* (d. 869) or *al-Muwattā*, along with the *Musnad* of Aḥmad (d. 855) containing over thirty thousand traditions, including ten thousand repetitions.

The “Tradition of the Ark” is cited by Hākim, Aḥmad, Bazzār (d. 905), Suyūṭī’s, Muttaqī, Haythamīs (d. 1566), Rāzī, Ṭabarānī, Suyūṭī, Abū Nu‘aym, and Khaṭīb al-Baghḏādī’s (d. 1071), among many others. Imām Shāfi‘ī (d. 820), the founder of one of the four Sunnī schools of jurisprudence, considered it to be authentic. As he said:

When I saw different schools of thought directing people toward the seas of ignorance and deviation, I boarded the Ark of Salvation in the Name of Allāh. Verily, this Ark is crystallized in the *ahl al-bayt* of Mustafā, the Seal of the Prophets.

The Sunnī traditionists have cited the “Tradition of the Ark” on the authority of the following companions of the Prophet and their disciples: Sa‘īd b. Jubayr from ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās, Rafī‘ on the authority of Abū Dharr, as well as Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn Zubayr.

The first chain, namely, from Sa‘īd b. Jubayr via ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās, is considered reliable. Sa‘īd b. Jubayr (665-714), also known as Abū Muḥammad, was originally from Kūfah, and was considered one of the leading *tābi‘ūn*. According to Ṭūsī (d. 1067), he was one of the companions of Imām ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Abidīn, the fourth Shī‘ite Imām. Along with an army of one hundred thousand, he participated in the Battle of Jamājim in 699-701 against the army of al-Ḥallāj (d. 714), during the reign of the Umayyad caliph al-Walīd I (d. 744). Sa‘īd formed part of the Battalion of Qur’ān Reciters, which also included Kumayl b. Ziyād, the famous companion of Imām ‘Alī (d. 661).

Sa‘īd was highly regarded by both Sunnī and Shī‘ī scholars who considered him one of the leading jurists of the time. He earned great praise from Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī (d. 1449) and Dhahabī (d. 1348). According to al-Ṭabarī (d. 923), Sa‘īd was a reliable Imām and a proof for Muslims while Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 965) described him as a righteous, pious, and God-fearing jurist. Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī, Nasā’ī, Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad, and Mālik have all quoted traditions from Sa‘īd, one hundred and forty-seven of them in Bukhārī, and seventy-eight of them in Muslim.

As for ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās (d. c. 687), he is considered reliable by both Sunnīs and Shī‘ites. According to the Sunnīs, he was the most knowledgeable of the companions in terms of Qur’ānic commentary. According to the Shī‘īs, he was one of the better companions, although he did not reach the rank of companions like ‘Ammār b. Yāsir (d. 657). In fact, Ibn ‘Abbās was a supporter of ‘Alī and played a role during the Battle of Siffīn in which he fought against Mu‘āwiyah (d. 680).

The second chain, which consists of Rafī‘ b. Khadij via Abū Dharr, is also reliable. Rafī‘ (d. c. 693) has been cited by both Mālik and Abū Dawūd.

He was the author of a *Ṣaḥīfah*, one of the earliest compilations of prophetic traditions. He is accepted by both Sunnī and Shī'ite scholars. Rafī' related the tradition on the authority of Abū Dharr al-Ghiffārī, the famous companion of the Prophet. Sunnī authorities consider him to be truthful to a fault while Shī'ite authorities consider him one of the four best companions of the Prophet who remained steadfast at the side of Imām 'Alī.

The final chain, however, is questionable, as it is related on the authority of Ibn Zubayr (d. 692). The son of Asmā' (d. 692), the daughter of Abū Bakr (d. 634), Ibn Zubayr fought against 'Alī during the Battle of Baṣrah. After the murder of al-Ḥusayn (d. 680), he proclaimed himself to be the caliph and led a failed revolt against the Umayyads. Shī'ite authorities do not consider Ibn Zubayr to have been a sincere Muslim.

Sunnī traditionists are divided regarding the authenticity of the "Tradition of the Ark." Dhahabī declared it to be a forgery because the chain of narrators includes Mufaḍḍal b. Sāliḥ, whom Ibn Ḥajar considered to be "weak" and whom Bukhārī considered to be *munkar* or "denounced" in *ḥadīth*. Still, according to traditionists, there is a difference between a weak *ḥadīth* and a *ḥadīth* which is a forgery. Simply because a narrator is weak does not necessarily mean that the *ḥadīth* was fabricated and should be dismissed as spurious.

Hākīm states that the "Tradition of the Ark" is authentic according to the standards established by Muslim. Although Ibn Ḥajar held that Mufaḍḍal was weak, he never claimed that the "Tradition of the Ark" was weak or spurious. On the contrary, Ibn Ḥajar stated that although the various chains are not without flaws, the tradition has been transmitted through many chains of narration that reinforce one another.

The "Tradition of the Ark" is found in many Shī'ite books of prophetic traditions. It is found in Kulaynī's (d. 941) *al-Kāfī*, Majlisī's (d. 1699) *Biḥār al-anwār*, and Qundūzī's (d. 15 c.) *Yanābī' al-mawaddah*. The "Tradition of the Ark" is cited in many Shī'ite works on *'ilm al-rijāl* or the science of narrators, including Dūlābī's (d. 932) *al-Kunā wa al-asmā'*. The "Tradition of the Ark" is found in some historical books, including Khaṭīb's *Tārīkh Baghdād* and Saban's *Is'āf al-rāghibīn*.

The "Tradition of the Ark" is also found in the same form in Shī'ite books of *aḥādīth*. The version cited in the bilingual Arabic-Aljamiado manuscript is related in Shī'ite sources on the authority of the *tābī'ī* Ḥanash al-Kinānī who relates it on the authority of the *ṣaḥabī* Abū Dharr, one of the closest companions of the Prophet, and one of the staunchest supporters of Imām 'Alī. It is possible that the "Tradition of the Ark" reached al-Andalus by means of Ḥanash al-Kinānī who was one of the *tābī'ūn* who contributed to the conquest of al-Andalus and the subsequent *da'wah* or missionary

efforts in the Iberian Peninsula.

Variants of the “Tradition of the Ark” are also found in Shī‘ite books of *aḥādīth*. In one version, the Messenger of Allāh says: “My *ahl al-bayt* is like the Ark of Noah. Whoever embarked was saved and whoever failed to embark was thrown into the fire.” The Prophet also said:

We serve as the Ark of Salvation. Whoever holds fast to this ark will attain salvation and whoever deviates from it will be cast into perdition. Whoever seeks anything from Allāh should resort to the *ahl al-bayt*.

This tradition is cited by Hamu‘ī (d. 1252), Khawārazmī, and ‘Amīnī’s (d. 1970). In another tradition, Imām ‘Alī said:

O Kumay! Once after saying the evening prayer on mid-Ramaḍān, the Holy Prophet told me while standing on his feet upon the *minbar* (pulpit) with the *muḥājirīn* (emigrants) and the Anṣārs (the helpers) gathered around: “‘Alī and my two grandsons from him who are immaculate are me [my light] and I am of them; they are pure, only second to their mother; they are as an Ark, whoever gets on board will be rescued and the one who misses it will fall down, the salvaged will abide in paradise and the one left behind will fall into the fire.”

Amply cited in Sunnī, Shī‘ite and Ṣūfī sources, the “Tradition of the Ark” serves as one of the doctrinal pillars of Shī‘ism. Although the account is minimized or ignored in Sunnism, it is emphasized in Shī‘ism as it supports claims that the Prophet was supposed to be succeeded by the People of the House, namely, Imām ‘Alī and his descendants.

TRADITION 2

THE EXCELLENCE OF ‘ALĪ B. ABĪ ṬĀLIB, FĀṬIMAH AL-ZAHRĀ’, AND THE TWELVE IMĀMS FROM THE HOUSEHOLD OF THE PROPHET

2.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which forms part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 20 v – f 21 r / 64).

2.2 Tradition

The excellence of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], is so great that no single person can comprehend it. He was the final and last caliph, *raḍī Allāh ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him]. We shall now list the blessed branches that proceeded from ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib which were: al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Abidīn, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, Mūsā al-Kāzīm, ‘Alī al-Riḍā, Muḥammad al-Taqī, ‘Alī al-Naqī, Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, and Muḥammad al-Mahdī, the well-known and Awaited One, who is the last of the Imāms. This is the lineage and household of Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā (Ṣ) from the loins of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’, the daughter of the Messenger of Allāh (Ṣ).

2.3 Commentary

The *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] was translated from Arabic into Spanish, using the Latin script, in 1639, by Ibrāhīm Taybilī, a Morisco living in Tunis. Since the work was destined to be read by

Moriscos, it suggests that there were Twelver Shī‘ites in both Spain and North Africa. The book, which deals with the lives of the Twelve Shī‘ite Imāms, identifies all the Imāms of the Shī‘ah Imāmiyyah Ithnā ‘Ashariyyah, although there are some cases of confusion.

The translator of the book, like many Moriscos, confuses al-Ḥasan with al-Ḥusayn and vice versa. Imām Muḥammad al-Taḳī is called Imām Muḥammad al-Saniḥ (which might be al-Thānī or the Second); Imām ‘Alī al-Naḳī is called Imām Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, and Imām Ḥasan al-‘Askarī is called Imām Ḥasan al-Khālīṣ. Despite the presence of titles that are not so prevalent in other Shī‘ite sources, the *Crónica y relación* is rooted in the Twelver Shī‘ite tradition. It may have been authored by a mainstream Twelver Shī‘ite or by a Zaydī who accepted the twelve Imāms; however, it could equally have been composed by an Alevī or Bektāshī Shī‘ite, a fact that might explain some of its Ṣūfī elements.

TRADITION 3

THE ḤADĪTH OF THE ARAB, THE LIZARD, AND THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD

3.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 13 from the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (fols. 134r-138r), as well as Manuscript 53 (fol. 195). It is also found in Manuscript T-12 (fols 26-29) from the Real Academia de la Historia. Transcriptions of the *ḥadīth* can be found in the *Códice aljamiado de varias materias* [*Aljamiado Codex on Various Subjects*] (300-310) and in Consuelo López Morillas' *Textos aljamiados sobre la vida de Mahoma: el profeta de los moriscos* [*Aljamiado Texts on the Life of Muḥammad: The Prophet of the Moriscos*] (1994: 98-101).

3.2 Tradition

Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm. [In the Name of Allāh, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful].

This is the *ḥadīth* of the Lizard, the Arab, and the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

It was related by Ibn ‘Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, that an Arab from the tribe of Banī Sulaymān was traveling when he came across a lizard... which was fleeing in front of him. He chased after it, caught it, and placed it in his sleeve. He went with it to see the Messenger of Allāh, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. He stood in front of the door of the mosque and said: “O Muḥammad!”

It was the custom of the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, that when someone said “O Muḥammad!” he would answer “O Muḥammad!” and when they said “O Abū al-Qāsim!” he would say “O Abū al-Qāsim!” and when they said “O Messenger of Allāh!” he would say: “How may I help you?” and his face would be filled

with the light of joy, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

When the Arab called him by those names, and he did not respond, he said: “You are a sorcerer and a great liar. You claim and profess to be the Messenger of Allāh and that you are truthful. By al-Lat and al-‘Uzzā! If it were not for the fact that my companions would call out hurriedly, I would give you such a blow from my sword that it would blacken the first of the last.”

‘Umar got up angrily and wanted to fight with him. The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, told him: “O ‘Umar! Do not be hasty. Sit down.” ‘Umar did as the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, requested.

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “By Him who sent me with the truth as a giver of glad tidings and as a warner! Whoever harms me or belies me will be an inhabitant of hell.” He then told him: “O brother of the Banī Sulaymān! What prevents you from honoring me in my home? Become a Muslim and you will be saved from the fire of hell. O Arab! Believe in Allāh, and believe in His oneness, and you will have what is in store for us.”

The Arab said: “By al-Lat and al-‘Uzzā! I will not believe in you until this lizard believes in you.”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, turned timid and humble. Then, the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, called out: “O lizard!”

The lizard said: “At your service, O best in birth!”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, asked: “Whom do you serve?”

The lizard said: “The One who is in the Heavens upon His throne, the One who rules upon the earth, the One whose judgment is found in the sea and on the earth, the One whose mercy is found in heaven, the One whose wrath is found in hell, the One whose knowledge is found among the living and the dead, and the One whose action is found in the alteration of night and day.”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, asked him: “O lizard! Who am I?”

The lizard said: “You are Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon you, the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds, and the Seal of the Prophets, the highest in rank among them, the most exalted in status, blessed be the one who testifies to your truth, and wretched be the one who denies you.”

‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās said that Allāh sealed the tongue of the lizard and that he never spoke again.

‘A’ishah, may Allāh be pleased with her, said: “Now that the lizard spoke, his words were very pleasing to me. I asked the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, and he gave him to me. I used to give him to eat of what I ate, and I used to give him to drink of what I would drink. I never heard him speak after he spoke with the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.”

The Arab moved his face happily while laughing. The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, asked him: “O Arab! Are you mocking Allāh and His messenger?”

The Arab said: “No. By Allāh! I am not mocking Allāh nor am I mocking you. Nonetheless, before I came here, there was nobody I loathed more in the world than you. And now, after I leave your presence, I want you to know, O Prophet of Allāh, that you are now the person whom I love the most in the world, and that there is nobody lower than me in all creation.”

The Arab turned his face towards the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, and said: “O Prophet of Allāh! I bear witness that there is no Lord but Allāh, the One and Only, who has no partner, and I bear witness that you, Muḥammad, are the Messenger of Allāh, professing *Lā ilāha illā Allāh, Muḥammadun Rasūl Allāh* [There is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh].”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “O Arab! You can boast all you wish to us about your camel. However, please allow me to describe the one that Allāh will give you in exchange for her, O ‘Abd al-Raḥmān!”

The Arab said: “Then describe her for me.”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “O ‘Abd al-Raḥmān! She will be a camel of gold. Her legs and her stomach will be covered in precious stones, her elbows will be covered with amber, her sides will be covered with the mercy of Allāh, and her inside will be filled with the forgiveness of Allāh for those who ride upon her.”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and mercy of Allāh be upon him, turned and asked: “Who will give a head covering to this Arab so that I can guarantee him paradise? Who can tell me what is the lasting head covering?”

The Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, got up, and said: “O Messenger of Allāh! What is the lasting head covering?”

Muḥammad, may the peace and mercy of Allāh be upon him, said: “It is the description of Allāh.”

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib removed his head covering and placed it on the head of the Arab. The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and mercy of Allāh be

upon him, then said: “Who amongst you will give this Arab the provision and trust in Allāh that he needs against fear?”

Salmān al-Fārisī got up and said: “O Messenger of Allāh! I swear in the names of my father and my mother! Tell me. What is the provision against fear?”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and mercy of Allāh be upon him, said: “O Muḥammad! When the end of your days comes, remember the testimony [of faith] *Lā ilāha illā Allāh / Muḥammadun Rasūl Allāh* [There is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.] By saying these words, you will find me. If you do not say these words, you will never find me, and I will never find you.”

3.3 Commentary

The origin of this tradition has yet to be determined. It shares some similarities with the works of Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Bakrī, a Shī‘ite scholar from Baṣrah, Iraq, who is said to have authored the *Kitāb al-anwār* [*Book of Lights*], a work which was popular among the Moriscos, along with a lengthy list of other works.

As Consuelo López Morillas points out, Knapper (1985: I 22-33) cites some similar legends from Swahili traditions in which a camel or a gazelle speaks to the Prophet, asking him for help, after which their owners convert to Islām (98). Considering that the Swahili people learned Islām at the hands of Yemenite sailors, merchants, and settlers, many of whom were Zaydī Shī‘ites, it makes sense that Shī‘ite traditions reached the coastal inhabitants of East Africa. Although the tradition does not convey clear Shī‘ite doctrines, it does give a prominent place to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and Salmān al-Fārisī, two of the most important companions of the Prophet in the eyes of Shī‘ites.

TRADITION 4

THE HUNGER OF FĀṬIMAH AND THE *HADĪTH* OF THE CLOAK

4.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 13 from the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f 139v-144r). A transcription of the *ḥadīth* can be found in *Textos aljamiados sobre la vida de Mahoma: el profeta de los moriscos* [*Aljamiado Texts on the Life of Muḥammad: The Prophet of the Moriscos*] by Consuelo López Morillas (1994: 101-104).

4.2 Tradition

Ibn ‘Abbās said that Salmān went out to look for provisions. He walked until he passed by seven houses and did not find a thing in any of them.

When he saw the last house, he said: “By Allāh! What house is better in the world than the house of Fāṭimah, may Allāh be pleased with her?”

He approached the house and knocked on the door. She asked: “Who is at the door? May Allāh have mercy upon you!”

He answered: “It is Salmān.”

She said: “O Salmān! What do you wish?”

He entered and explained to her what had happened.

She said: “O Salmān! By Him who sent Muḥammad with the truth! We have not eaten a thing in three days. Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are sleeping out of hunger. Nonetheless, we refuse to accept any charity that is offered to us. O Salmān! Take this cloak and go and see Sīmūn, the Jew. Tell him to give you a portion of dates and barley in exchange for it. I will return its value to him Allāh-willing.”

Salmān took the cloak, went to the Jewish man, and said: “O Sīmūn! Take this cloak which belongs to Fāṭimah and lend her a portion of dates and barley. Allāh-willing, she will return its value to you when Allāh gives

her the means of sustenance through His grace.”

The Jewish man took the cloak, folded it around his arm, and asked: “O Salmān! What is the story of this cloak?”

Salmān related the event to him, and when he heard it, his eyes filled with tears, and he said: “O Salmān! By Allāh! This is the story that Mūsā, the son of ‘Imrān, taught us in the Torah. I bear witness that there is no Lord but Allāh and that Muḥammad is His servant and His messenger.”

The Jewish man, may Allāh have mercy upon him, became a Muslim. He gave Salmān a portion of dates and another of barley which Salmān brought to Fāṭimah who ground it with her hands and made bread out of it. She then gave the bread to Salmān and said: “O Salmān! Take this with you and go and see the Prophet, may the peace and mercy of Allāh be upon him.”

Salmān said: “O Fāṭimah! Take this piece so that al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn can have something to eat.”

She said: “O Salmān! This is something that is offered in the path of Allāh and I will have no part in it.”

Salmān took it with him and went to see the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. When the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, saw him, he asked him: “O Salmān! Where did you find this food?”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, had not eaten in three days. And Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, had informed Salmān al-Fārisī about what had happened to him through the judgment of Allāh.

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, got up, and went to the house of Fāṭimah. When he knocked upon the door, she was the only one who answered it. When she opened the door, Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, saw his daughter Fāṭimah. She had a thin face and could barely lift her feet due to hunger. The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, asked: “Why is your face so thin?”

She answered: “O Father! We have not had anything to eat for three days. Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are suffering from hunger and are sleeping.”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, woke them up, and sat one of them on his right thigh and the other on his left thigh. Fāṭimah sat down in front of him. The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, then kissed them all.

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, entered, and kissed the Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him. The Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him, raised his eyes to the heavens and said: “O God, Lord, and Master! These are my *ahl al-bayt*. Lord, purify them from any

uncleanliness and purify them with a complete purification” [Qur’ān 33:33].

Fāṭimah got up and went to the place where she did her ritual prayers, stood on her feet, and raised her hands to the heavens and said:

O God, Lord, and Master! This is Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, your Prophet, and this is the brother of your Prophet, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and these are his grandsons, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn. O Lord! Send them a table from the heavens like the one you sent to the children of Israel. They ate from it and disbelieved in you; however, we believe in you.

Ibn ‘Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “By Allāh! Her prayer was not even completed when I saw the most delicious piece of meat I have ever seen appear and which smelled better than musk.”

Fāṭimah took it and the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, came to her. When ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib saw it, he asked: “O Fāṭimah! Where did you get this from?”

The Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him, said: “Eat, O Abū al-Ḥasan! And do not ask from where it comes.”

‘Alī knew very well that there was nothing (to eat) in his house. The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said:

Praise be to Allāh who has not given me death until he gave me in charity a daughter like Mary, the daughter of ‘Imrān, who, every time he entered upon her, Zakariyyā would find her with sustenance, and she would tell him: “Where did you get this (food) from, O Mary?” And she would tell him: ‘From the sustenance of Allāh whom I love beyond measure.’”

Let this *ḥadīth* come to a close with praise and glory to Allāh, *wa alḥamdulillāh rabb al-‘alamīn* [praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds].

4.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition is known as *Ḥadīth al-kisā’* or *The Event of the Cloak*. It is a *ḥadīth* that is central to Shī’ism. Although Sunnī traditionists have recorded the event, they only provided short narrations such as the following tradition:

‘A’ishah reported that the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings be upon him, went out one morning wearing a striped cloak of black camel hair and that Ḥasan b. ‘Alī arrived. He [the Prophet] wrapped him under it. Then came Ḥusayn, and he [the Prophet] wrapped him under it along

with the other one [Ḥasan]. Then came Fāṭimah and he [the Prophet] took her under it. Then came ‘Alī and he [the Prophet] also took him under it and then said: “Allāh only desires to take away any uncleanness from you, O people of the household, and purify you (with a thorough purification).” (Muslim)

Although both Sunnī and Shī‘ite versions agree in essence, the Shī‘ite versions of the event are more detailed, the result of four possible scenarios: 1) The Shī‘ite versions are the result of snowballing; 2) The Sunnī versions were related by outsiders who were aware of the event but not of its details; 3) The Sunnī versions were related by opponents of the *ahl al-bayt* who wished to minimize the magnitude of the event; 4) The Shī‘ite versions were related by insiders who described the event in intimate detail. The traditional Twelver Shī‘ite version of the Ḥadīth of the Cloak is as follows:

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’, the daughter of the Prophet, peace be on them, related:

My father, the Prophet of Allāh, came to my house one day and said to me: “Peace be on you, Fāṭimah.” I replied: “And upon you be peace.” Then he said: “I feel weakness in my body.” I said: “May Allāh protect you from weakness, father.” He said: “Fāṭimah, please bring a Yemeni cloak and cover me with it.” So, I brought the Yemeni cloak and covered him with it. Then, I looked at him and saw that his face was shining like a full moon with its glory and splendor.

After a while, my son Ḥasan came in and said: “Peace be on you, mother.” I replied: “And upon you be peace, O light of my eyes, and the delight of my heart.” He then said: “Mother! I smell a fragrance so sweet and so pure as that of my grandfather, the Prophet of Allāh.” I replied: “Yes. Your grandfather is laying underneath the cloak.” Ḥasan went near the cloak and said: “Peace be on you, my grandfather, the Prophet of Allāh. May I enter the cloak with you?” He replied: “And upon you be peace, my son, and the master of my fountain (*kawthar*). You are given permission to enter.” So, Ḥasan entered the cloak with him.

After a while, my son Ḥusayn came in and said: “Peace be on you, mother.” I replied: “And upon you be peace, O light of my eyes, and the delight of my heart.” He then said: “Mother! I smell a sweet fragrance like that of my grandfather, the Prophet of Allāh.” I replied: “Yes. Your grandfather and your brother are lying underneath the cloak.” Ḥusayn stepped towards the cloak and said: “Peace be on you, my grandfather, the Chosen of Allāh. May I enter the cloak with you?” He replied: “And upon you be peace, my son, and interceder of my followers. You are given permission to enter.” So, Ḥusayn entered the cloak with them.

After a while, Abū al-Ḥasan, ‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib came in and said: “Peace be on you, O daughter of the Prophet of Allāh.” I replied: “And

upon you be peace, O father of Ḥasan, and the Commander of the faithful.” He then said: “Fāṭimah! I smell a sweet fragrance like that of my brother [my cousin], the Prophet of Allāh.” I replied: “Yes. He is underneath the cloak with your two sons.”

So, ‘Alī went near the cloak and said: “Peace be on you, Prophet of Allāh. May I enter the cloak with you?” He replied: “And upon you be peace, my brother, my legatee, my successor, and my standard bearer. You are given permission to enter.” So, ‘Alī entered the cloak with them.

Then I stepped forward and said: “Peace be on you, my father, O Prophet of Allāh. May I enter the cloak with you?” He replied: “And upon you be peace, my daughter, O part of myself. You are given permission to enter.” So, I entered the cloak with them.

Getting together underneath the cloak, my father, the Prophet of Allāh, held the two ends of the cloak and raised his right hand towards the heavens and prayed:

“O Allāh, these are the People of my Household (*ahl al-bayt*). They are my confidants and my supporters. Their flesh is my flesh, and their blood is my blood. Whoever hurts them, hurts me too. Whoever displeases them, displeases me too. I am at war with those who are at war with them. I am at peace with those who are at peace with them. I am the enemy of their enemies and I am the friend of their friends. They are from me and I am from them. O Allāh! Bestow your blessings, benevolence, forgiveness, and your pleasure upon me and upon them. And remove impurity from them and keep them thoroughly pure.”

Then the Lord, Almighty Allāh said: “O My angels! O residents of My heavens! Verily, I have not created the erected sky, the stretched earth, the illuminated moon, the bright sun, the rotating planets, the flowing seas, and the sailing ships, but for the love of these five lying underneath the cloak.”

Gabriel, the trusted angel, asked: “Who are under the cloak?” The Almighty answered: “They are the household of the Prophet and the assets of Prophethood. They are: Fāṭimah, her father, her husband, and her two sons.” Gabriel said: “O Lord, may I fly to earth to be the sixth of them?” Allāh replied: “Yes. You are given permission to do so.”

Gabriel, the trusted, landed near them and said: “Peace be on you, O Prophet of Allāh. The Most High conveys His peace on you and His greetings and says: ‘By My honor and glory, O My angels! O Residents of My heavens, verily, I have not created the erected Sky, the stretched earth, the illuminated moon, the bright sun, the rotating planets, the flowing seas and the sailing ships, but for your sake and love.’ God has given me permission to enter the cloak with you. May I join you, O Prophet of Allāh?” The Prophet replied: “And peace be on you, O trusted bearer of Allāh’s Revelations! You are granted permission to enter.” So, Gabriel entered the cloak with us and said to my father: “Allāh sends His revelations to you: ‘Verily Allāh’s desire is to remove blemish from you, O People of the Household (*ahl al-bayt*) and purify you with a perfect

purification.”

Then ‘Alī said to my father: “O Prophet of Allāh, tell me: What significance has Allāh reserved from His grace for this gathering of ours under this cloak?” The Prophet replied: “I swear by Him who rightfully appointed me a Prophet and selected me with prophethood as a savior: this episode of ours will not be recounted in any gathering from the gatherings of the people of the earth where a group of our Shī‘ah and lovers are present except that there will descend upon them mercy! And angels will encircle them asking Allāh the remission of their sins until the assembly disperses!” So ‘Alī said: “In that case, we have attained success, and our Shī‘ahs have attained success, by the Lord of the Ka‘bah!”

Then the Prophet replied a second time: “O ‘Alī! I swear by Him who rightfully appointed me a Prophet and selected me with prophethood as a savior that this episode of ours will not be recounted in any gathering from the gatherings of the people of the earth where a group of our Shī‘ah and lovers are present and there be a person present full of grief except that Allāh will remove his grief! And no person in distress except that will dispel his distress! And no seeker of any wish except that Allāh grants his wish!

So ‘Alī stated: “In that case, by Allāh! We have attained success and felicity, and our followers also have attained success and felicity, in this world and the hereafter, by the Lord of the Ka‘bah!” (duas.org n. page)

The *aljamiado* version of *The Event of the Cloak* is important in many regards. Since most Moriscos were illiterate, *aljamiado* manuscripts were meant to be read in small family groups or congregations. According to López-Morillas, “The vast majority, and almost all of the women, were illiterate in both Spanish and Arabic” (1995: 193). Lugo Acevedo is even more precise, affirming that “existía un 72% de analfabetismo entre los moriscos y un 100% entre las mujeres” (1995: 169) [there was a 72% rate of illiteracy among Morisco men and a 100% rate of literacy among women]. However, one wonders how she can come up with such precise statistics.

While Sunnīs may sit down, recite the Qur’ān, read some *aḥādīth*, and perform some prayers, it is not customary for Sunnī Muslims to read *The Event of the Cloak* in congregation, if they ever read it at all. Devout Shī‘ite Muslims, however, recite the *Event of the Cloak* in congregation weekly, typically on Thursday nights. The popularity of *Hadīth al-kisā’* among Shī‘ites is equivalent to that of *Du‘ā’ Kumayl*, which is also recited on Thursday nights. Thursday is also the Ṣūfī “sabbath.”

The *aljamiado* version of *The Event of the Cloak* represents a unique rendition of the event. The version of the *ḥadīth* which circulated among the Moriscos differs from the standard Sunnī version in length. Although it compares to the standard Shī‘ite version in size, it differs in details. The

standard Shī'ite version does not mention what occurred before the Event of the Cloak or what happened after. The *ḥadīth* about Fāṭimah's hunger does exist in Sunnī and Shī'ite sources; however, it is not connected to the Event of the Cloak. The descent of the outspread table from heaven, which is mentioned in the *aljamiado* version, does not exist in any of the canonical Sunnī or Shī'ite sources that I have consulted. Although Qur'ānic in origin, it may have been inserted into the tradition to exalt Fāṭimah to the level of the Virgin Mary, and even over and beyond this, something plausible considering the hostile Christian context in which the Moriscos were living.

If the standard Sunnī version of *The Event of the Cloak* is taken as the original version, the extended version found among the Twelver Shī'ites may represent honest or dishonest attempts to read things into the original event. If this is the case, then the version found among the Ḥusaynī Shī'ites of the Middle East may have developed in one direction, while the version found among the Ḥasanī Shī'ites of the Maghrib and al-Andalus may have developed in a different direction. Though the details are different, the core of the tradition is the same: the five members of the prophetic household: Muḥammad, Fāṭimah, 'Alī, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn, were purified by Almighty God, supporting the Twelver Shī'ite belief that they were infallible or immaculate, namely, protected from sin due to their faith and piety, invested with the knowledge of the Prophet, and divinely appointed as the leaders of the Islāmic ummah.

The *aljamiado* version of *The Event of the Cloak* may represent a composite tradition, in which three different *aḥādīth* -- the hunger of Fāṭimah, the Event of the Cloak, and the outspread table -- were combined and presented as a single sequence.

For some pious readers, the Morisco version of *The Event of the Cloak* may represent the true and accurate version of the events. It is possible that the earliest version of the *ḥadīth* included the events which preceded and succeeded the actual event of the cloak and that rather than being passed down as a single sequence, the various segments were narrated as individual *aḥādīth*, the part of the outstretched table having been lost over the course of time in the Middle East. It is possible that *aljamiado* version of *The Event of the Cloak* was brought to North Africa and the Maghrib by Ḥasanī Shī'ites. As libraries were burned, and Shī'ite books were destroyed in the Middle East and North Africa, this version of the *Ḥadīth al-kisā'* may have survived solely among the Ḥasanī Shī'ites of al-Andalus.

The "Tradition of Fāṭimah's Hunger" is found in a detailed account in Majlisī, who writes:

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī said: One morning 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib woke up very hungry and said: "Fāṭimah! Do you have anything to feed us?" She

answered: “No. By Him who honored my father with prophethood, and honored you with successorship, we have nothing edible this morning, and we have not had any food for two days save that which I have preferred to give you and our two children, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.”

‘Alī said: “Fāṭimah! Why didn’t you tell me, so I could bring some food for you?” Fāṭimah answered: “Abū al-Ḥasan! I surely become ashamed before my God to ask you to do something you cannot do.” After this, ‘Alī b. Abū Ṭālib left Fāṭimah, with full trust that Allāh would help him. He borrowed a dinar, and while he was holding the dinar and trying to buy some food for his family, he came upon Miqdād b. al-Aswad. The sun had burnt al-Miqdād’s face and feet on that sweltering day. When ‘Alī, peace be upon him, saw him, he exclaimed surprisingly: “Miqdād! What brings you out of your home at this hour?”

Miqdād answered: “Abū al-Ḥassan! Ask me not about what I have left behind in the house.” ‘Alī said: “My brother! I cannot leave you without knowing your problem.” Miqdād then said: “Abū al-Ḥassan! For Allāh’s sake and your sake leave me alone, and do not ask about my condition.” Imām ‘Alī said: “My brother! You should not hide your condition from me.”

Miqdād replied: “Abū al-Ḥasan! Now that you insist, by Him who honored Muḥammad with prophethood and honored you with successorship, nothing forced me out of my house save poverty. I left my children starving. When I heard their cries, there remained no place for me on earth. I have come out of my house in depression. This is my story.”

Imām ‘Alī cried when he heard the story. He cried until his beard was wet from tears and said: “By Allāh! That which forced you out of your house is also what forced me out of my house. I borrowed a dinar, but I prefer you to have it.”

When Imām ‘Alī had given the dinar to Miqdād, he went to the mosque and performed his *zuhr* (noon), *‘aṣr* (afternoon) and *maghrib* (evening) prayers. When the Messenger of Allāh had completed his prayers, he signaled ‘Alī, who was in the first line, to follow him. ‘Alī obediently followed him out of the mosque and after the Prophet greeted him said: “Abū al-Ḥassan! Do you have some food for dinner so that I can accompany you?”

Imām ‘Alī was too shy to answer the Messenger but the Prophet of Allāh had detailed knowledge about the dinar and what had happened to it for Allāh, the Exalted, had revealed to His prophet to have dinner at ‘Alī’s house that night. When ‘Alī did not answer, the Prophet said: “Abū al-Ḥassan! Why do you not say no, so that I may leave you, or yes, so that I may accompany you?” Imām ‘Alī said: “Accompany me!”

The Prophet then took ‘Alī’s hand and proceeded toward Fāṭimah’s house. When they arrived, Fāṭimah was just finishing her prayers and there was a pan of oil on the fire behind her. When she heard the Prophet coming, who was the dearest person to her, she greeted him, and he wiped his hand on her head and said: “How is your evening, my daughter?” She

answered: "Fine." He then said: "Give us some dinner, may Allāh bless you, and surely He has."

Fāṭimah placed the pan in front of the Prophet and 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib. At that moment, the Messenger of Allāh put his hand on 'Alī's shoulder and said: "'Alī, this is a substitute for your dinar. This is a reward from Allāh for the dinar. Surely Allāh grants whatever He wills without limit."

The Prophet cried and said: "Praise be to Allāh, who insisted on rewarding you in this world, as well, and made you, 'Alī, like Zakariyyā, and Fāṭimah like Maryam bint 'Imrān, for whenever Zakariyyā entered the Mihrāb, he found Maryam with her subsistence." (Ordonī n. page)

According to many Shī'ite Muslims, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' was the greatest woman who ever lived, with a spiritual status higher than that of the Virgin Mary. As such, Shī'ite Muslims call her Maryam al-Kubrā or "the Greater Mary." If the Twelver Shī'ite tradition praises the status of Fāṭimah al-Zahrā', the Aljamiado-Morisco version of the *ḥadīth* exalts her to an even higher degree, claiming that food miraculously descended from heaven as it did for the mother of Jesus. For some, this would suggest that the tradition snowballed through extremist Shī'ite and Christian influence.

TRADITION 5

THE EXALTED STATION OF THE FIVE FOUNDATIONAL MEMBERS OF *AHL AL-BAYT*

5.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which forms part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 23 r / 66-66).

5.2 Tradition

Muḥammad Muṣṭafā said: “This is an angel who never descended from heaven until this evening. He told me that he was sent on behalf of my Lord to send me his salutations and to give me the glad tidings that Fāṭimah is the mistress of the best women in the universe and that al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the Lords of the Youth of Glory.”

5.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition appears to be a translation of the following *ḥadīth* found in Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 1176):

The Messenger of Allāh said: “An angel came to me and sent me greetings of peace. He came down from the heavens and he had never come down before -- and he gave me the glad tidings that al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn would be the leaders of the youth of paradise, and that Fāṭimah would be the leader of the women of paradise.”

Although Ibn ‘Asākir was a Sunnī of the Shāfi‘ī rite, the tradition in question is supportive of Shī‘ite beliefs in the excellence of the *ahl al-bayt* and their spiritual superiority over the ordinary rank and file. If al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn,

and Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’ were promised paradise, argue the followers of the Prophet’s family, then they were surely rightly-guided. As such, Shī‘ites hold that those who fought them, opposed them, and oppressed them, belong to the party that went astray.

TRADITION 6

ADAM INVOKES THE INTERCESSION OF *AHL AL-BAYT*

6.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Libro de los amuletos* [*The Book of Amulets*], which also includes the *Libro de dichos maravillosos* [*The Book of Marvelous Sayings*] and the *Libro de suertes* [*The Book of Chance*]. Most of the manuscript was written by two hands which alternate at short intervals, one of which appears to be that of Muḥammad Escribano, a Morisco from Almonacid de la Sierra in Zaragoza, Spain, to whom we owe the copy of Manuscript CSIC number J/ 6 made in 1601.

6.2 Tradition

It is reported that Adam ‘*alayhi al-salām* [peace be upon him] said the following when he asked Allāh to forgive him his sin. Allāh, *subḥānahu wa ta‘ālā* [glorified and exalted be He], said: “Say: read the words that I told you when you were in *jinnah* [paradise], as found in the verse: [2:37].” Adam then said: “Lord! Forgive me through the authority of Fāṭimah, ‘Alī, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.” And Allāh forgave him.” Hence, anyone who asks for forgiveness by means of these words -- namely through the intercession of Fāṭimah, ‘Alī, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn, as well as the Prophet Muḥammad -- Allāh will forgive him his sins regardless of how big they are. This is the meaning of the *ayah* according to its commentary. *Alḥamdulillāh rabb al-‘alamīn. Tammāt.* [Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds. The end] (197).

6.3 Commentary

In his commentary on Qur’ān 2:37, Suyūfī explains that after Adam committed his sin, he asked Allāh to forgive him for the sake of the Prophet

Muḥammad and his progeny in the following words: *Allāhumma bi ḥaqqi Muḥammad wa āli Muḥammad* [O Allāh! By the truth of Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad]. Suyūfī also reports that Ibn ‘Abbās, the famous traditionist and authority on the Qur’ān, asked the Prophet about the supplication which God revealed to Adam. The Prophet answered: “He prayed saying, ‘O Allāh, for the sake of Muḥammad, ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn, do turn toward me,’ and He turned toward him.”

In Sulamī’s (d. 1021) famous compilation of the Qur’ān titled *Haqā’iq al-tafsīr*, we find an exegesis of Sūrah 2:37 which is fascinating for a Sunnī source (Vittor n. page). When interpreting the verse, “and Allāh taught Adam the names,” Sulamī cites a tradition from Imām Ja’far al-Ṣādiq that states:

Allāh existed before His creation existed. He created five creatures from the light of His glory and gave each one a name from among His names: being the Praised One [*maḥmūd*], He called His prophet, *Muḥammad*; being the Most High [*‘alī*], He called the Leader of the Believers, ‘*Alī*’; being the Creator [*fāṭir*] of the heavens and the earth, he forged the name *Fāṭimah*; and since he has the most beautiful [*ḥusnā*] names, He forged two names for *Ḥasan* and *Ḥusayn*. He then placed them to the right of His throne... (Vittor n. page)

Although the belief that Adam asked Allāh’s forgiveness for the sake of Muḥammad, Fāṭimah, ‘Alī, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn is found in some Sunnī and Ṣūfī sources, it finds a body of supporting evidence in Shī’ite sources. Even though the *aljamiado* tradition in question may have been drawn from the Qur’ānic commentaries of Suyūfī or Sulamī, it may also be derived from Shī’ite sources. In fact, the same prayer is found in Majlisī’s *Biḥār al-anwār*, which reports that Allāh ordered Adam and Eve to seek intercession of the five persons in the following fashion: “O Allāh! We beg you to absolve us through Muḥammad, ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.”

Although Salafīs view invoking the Prophet or friends of God as a forbidden religious innovation and a form of *shirk*, it is viewed as a legitimate religious practice by Sunnīs, Ṣūfīs and Shī’ites. While the Ṣūfīs tend to invoke the Prophet and their shaykhs, the Shī’ites generally limit their intercession to the *ahl al-bayt*, the Prophet, Fāṭimah, and the twelve Imāms. The *aljamiado* supplication to the purified five is similar to the supplications found in Twelver Shī’ite books of traditions, the only difference being that they are more detailed. Imām Ja’far al-Ṣādiq, for example, recommended the following prayer to relieve the severe throbbing of blood vessels in the joints:

O Allāh! I ask you by your names and your blessings, and the call of your noble, blessed Prophet, who has influence with You, and by his right and the right of his daughter Fāṭimah, the blessed, and by the right of his trustee, *amīr al-mu'minīn*, and the right of the Chiefs of the People of paradise [al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn], to remove from me the evil of what I suffer; by their right, by their right, by their right. By your right, O Lord of the Worlds! (Newman 85)

He also encouraged the following prayer for protection from the evil eye and ailments of the stomach:

I take refuge in Your sublimity, Your power, Your magnificence, and Your sovereignty, from what I suffer. O my succor! O Allāh! O my succor! O Messenger of Allāh! O my succor! O *amīr al-mu'minīn*! O my succor! O Fāṭimah, daughter of the Messenger of Allāh! Help me! (Newman 91)

The Aljamiado-Morisco prayer in question appears to be rooted in the Shī'ite tradition of Islām. It is consistent with Shī'ite traditions, Qur'ānic commentary, and devotional practices. The fact that some of the Moriscos were teaching their children to seek the intercession of the Prophet Muḥammad, Fāṭimah, 'Alī, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn, indicates a commitment to the *ahl al-bayt* and suggests a connection with Shī'ism, either directly, through formal affiliation with that branch of Islām or indirectly by means Shī'ite-infused Ṣūfism.

TRADITION 7

THE SUPPLICATION OF FĀṬĪMAH

7.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 774 from the Bibliothèque Nacional de Paris (f. 37 r). The manuscript has been edited by Mercedes Sánchez Álvarez as *El manuscrito misceláneo 774 de la Biblioteca Nacional de París* [*Miscellaneous Manuscript 774 from the National Library of Paris*] (153).

7.2 Tradition

Bismillāhi al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm [In the Name of Allāh, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful]. This is the supplication of Fāṭimah, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anha* [may Allāh be pleased with her]. It says: *Allāhumma* [O Allāh], Lord of the Seven Heavens, Lord of the Glorious Throne, Lord of all Things, the One who causes the Torah, the Gospel, and the Glorious Qur’ān to descend. You are the First of the First and you are the Last of the Last, and none is adored but your honored Face. *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāhi al-‘Aliyyu al-‘aẓīm* [There is no might nor power but Allāh the Great and Mighty] (153).

7.3 Commentary

The *aljamiado* “Supplication of Fāṭimah” is a well-known Shī‘ite prayer which is regularly recited by many pious Shī‘ite Muslims. The *aljamiado* version represents a shortened or partial version of the supplication. The beginning of the *aljamiado* version is the same as the original Arabic version found in Shī‘ite books of supplications, although some of the body is missing, and the conclusion is different. The “Supplication of Fāṭimah” is found in *Muhaj al-da‘awāt wa manhaj al-‘ibādāt* by Ibn Ṭawūs and was taught to Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’ by her father, the Prophet Muḥammad. It reads:

O Allāh! Our Lord and the Lord of Everything!
 (He) Who revealed the Tawrāt, the Injīl and the Furqān;
 (He) Who causes the seed-grain and the date-stone to split and sprout;
 I seek refuge in You from every beast that You shall seize by its forelock
 Surely You are the First, where nothing has succeeded (You);
 And the last, where nothing shall come after (You);
 You are the Evident, there is nothing more Manifest than You;
 And the Eminent, there is nothing more Eminent than You;
 Send your grace upon Muḥammad and his *ahl al-bayt*.
 May Peace be upon them;
 And settle my debts for me;
 Make me free from poverty,
 And decree easy for me all my affairs.
 O You! Most Merciful of all! (Ordonī 188-89)

The fact that parts of the prayer are missing should come as no surprise. Many of the *aḥādīth* and prayers found in *aljamiado* manuscripts are missing parts or have been shortened or synthesized for the sake of simplification. The Moriscos were also the first Muslims to produce condensed Qur'āns, namely, Arabic and Spanish editions which featured the most popular verses recited in prayers. Other Morisco traditions and supplications show signs of confusion and corruption. They appear to have been working with ancient manuscripts which were damaged and in poor condition. As their knowledge of Arabic declined, they may have suppressed sections of supplications that they simply could not comprehend and thus could not translate. Although some of the Morisco copyists maintained a high level of proficiency in classical Arabic, others seem to have preserved little to no knowledge of the Arabic language, besides the ability to read it. Hence, it is not uncommon to find mistakes, both minor and major, in the Arabic citations found in *aljamiado* manuscripts. As for the "Supplication of Fāṭimah" recited by certain Moriscos, it seems consistent with Shī'ite devotional practices.

TRADITION 8

THE SUPPLICATION OF LIGHT

8.1 Source

The “Supplication of Light” is found in *Manuscrito Número XIII de la Antigua Junta para Ampliación de Estudios*. It has been transliterated into Latin characters by Tarek Khedr in his *Código aljamiado de varias materias [Aljamiado Codex on Various Subjects]* (397).

8.2 Tradition

Whoever reads this supplication with devotion and attention there is no doubt that Allāh will hear it and respond to it:

O Light of Light! O Light of the Lights of the Universe ...

The All-Powerful King and the Solemn Judge.

To You belongs all praise and eternity.

There is no god but You.

I invoke You by the most beautiful names of Allāh with all of them that You protect us from the heavy cloud, this misfortune, and the other misfortunes that fall from the sky.

O Most Merciful of the Merciful.

Help us and protect us from this cold and these heavy clouds, us, and all the Muslims, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allāh! Bless our master Muḥammad, the noble, and his family, with complete salvation.

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

In the Name of Allāh, the Light.

In the Name of Allāh, the Light of Lights.

In the Name of Allāh who is above light.

In the Name of Allāh who directs and controls all affairs.

In the name of Allāh who created light from light.

All praise is due to Allāh who created light from light.

And who sent down light on Ṭūr, mentioned in the broad leaves of the guarded table, and on him.

All praise is due to Allāh, who is spoken of with respect and who is famous for His honor.

And who deserves thanks both in happiness and in sorrow.

And may Allāh bless our master Muḥammad and his family, the good, the pure.

8.3 Commentary

The *aljamiado* “Supplication of Light” cited above is a popular Shīʿite prayer which is found in the *Muhaj al-daʿawāt wa manhaj al-ʿibādāt* of Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 723). The mother of the Imāms, Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ, taught the supplication to Salmān al-Fārisī, instructing him: “If you wish to avoid fever so long as you live, then recite this supplication which my father Muḥammad taught me and which I recite every morning and evening.” She then recited the following prayer which is found in Shīʿite sources:

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful
 In the Name of Allāh the Light;
 In the Name of Allāh the Light of Light;
 In the Name of Allāh, Light upon Light;
 In the Name of Allāh, the Planner of Affairs;
 In the Name of Allāh who created light from light;
 and revealed light upon the Ṭūr;
 By a decree inscribed;
 In a scroll unfolded,
 According to a decree fore-ordained;
 Unto a Learned Prophet;
 Praise be to Allāh who is known with might;
 Whose glory is established;
 Who is praised during times of prosperity and affliction;
 And may Allāh’s grace be upon our Master Muḥammad;
 And his purified progeny. (Ordonī n. page)

Salmān al-Fārisī is reported to have stated: “By Allāh! I have taught this supplication to more than a thousand people in Mecca and Medina who were suffering from fever, and they were all cured by the will of Allāh.” The presence of the “Supplication of Light,” a popular Shīʿite prayer, in *Aljamiado* manuscripts lends further credence to the claim that some Moriscos belonged to the Shīʿite branch of Islām or were influenced by it and relied upon its sources.

TRADITION 9

THE TEARS OF FĀṬIMAH AND THE PRAYER OF FAREWELL

9.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f 159v-160v / 506-08). The *Códice aljamiado de varias materias* [*The Aljamiado Codex on Various Subjects*] includes a lengthy *ḥadīth* regarding the tears of Fāṭimah and the Prayer of Farewell (239-242).

9.2 Tradition

It was related: Our Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, went to see his daughter Fāṭimah, may Allāh be pleased with her, and found her crying while ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, was consoling her.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, asked: “O Fāṭimah! What makes you cry?”

‘Alī replied: “It is nothing, O Messenger of Allāh.”

The Prophet, may the peace and blessings be upon him, said: “O ‘Alī! Nobody cries and is sad without a cause.” The Prophet, peace be upon him, then said: “There shall never be anyone in this world like Fāṭimah.”

Fāṭimah said: “How can I not cry when I ruined the final night of Ramaḍān?” What she meant was that she had her period.

She then said: “O Messenger of Allāh! If I said *Lā ilāha illā Allāhu Akbar wa subḥān Allāh*, its translation [*sharḥ*] ‘there is no lord but Allāh, Allāh is the greatest, and glory be to Allāh,’ would there be as many blessings as the prayer of farewell?”

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “O my daughter! If you said *Lā ilāha illā Allāh wa Allāhu Akbar wa subḥān Allāh* then this is what Allāh wills. However, it will not amount

to the blessings of those units of prayer.

She asked: “O Messenger of Allāh! And if I gave charity [*ṣadaqah*], would there be as many blessings?”

The Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “O my daughter! Even if you gave Mount Uḥud in gold as charity, you will never receive the same blessings as if you have completed that ritual prayer.”

‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, then asked: “O Messenger of Allāh! How does one perform the Farewell Prayer?”

The Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “O ‘Alī! At the end of Ramaḍān clean your clothing, apply the best perfume, and head to the place of prayer and say *subhān Allāh* [Glory be to Allāh] ten times and send your blessings to Jibrīl [Gabriel], Mikā’īl, and all the Angels, and to Adam, peace be upon him, and all the prophets, and especially the messengers, ten times in the following fashion:

Allāhuma ṣalli ‘alā Jibrīl wa Mikā’īl wa Isrāfīl ten times. Then, you should say *Allāhuma ṣalli ‘alā Adam wa jāmi’ah al-nabiyīn wa al-mursalīn* which means “Lord Allāh, bless Adam and all the prophets and especially the messengers.” You will say this prayer ten times in a row. After that, you will say *a ‘ūdḥū billāhi min al-Shayṭān al-rajīm* which means “I take refuge in Allāh from Satan, the cursed and the stoned one.”

“After that you will complete your ritual prayer, if you wish, during the early evening or at its end. And you should know that it better to do so at its end. And you will say: *Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is the greatest], and read *Alḥamdulillāhi* [Praise be to Allāh] once and *‘idā jā’a* (Sūrah 110) seven times in a row and *Qul huwa* (Sūrah 112) and the two *Qul a ‘ūdhu* (Sūrah 113-114), each one seven times in each unit of prayer. And you will say *al-taḥiyyātu* and send your salaams. After you send your salaams, you will prostrate, and while in prostration you will say:

Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm which means “In the Name of Allāh... I humble myself before Allāh who created me and molded me and who gave me sight, blessed be Allāh, the Best of Makers. Lord Allāh, accept my fast and have pity upon my weakness and forgive me my sins. It is you whom I trust and to you I humble myself.

Lord Allāh, fasting is for you, in you I believe, and with your charity. Lord Allāh, the month of Ramaḍān has ended and it was our guardian. As you say in the Qur’ān, it was our pious servant. How many people who stand in prayer stood in congregational prayers! Be pleased with me, my Lord, and count it as compensation and expiation of my sins, and make my actions pleasing to you, O Most Pious of the Pious who has power over all things.

Lord Allāh, bless Muḥammad, the chosen prophet and his household, that is: upon his ummah, his companions, and grant them salvation. *Wa alḥamdulillāhi, rabb al-'alamīn* which means “Glory be to Allāh, the Lord of all things.”

9.3 Commentary

I have been unable to locate this tradition in the canonical books of the Sunnīs and the Shī'ites that I searched. The tradition appears to contain both Sunnī and Shī'ite elements. Shī'ite traditions, for example, stress the fact that Fāṭimah was one of the most sensitive souls to have ever lived in the world, a person who would constantly weep out of love and fear for God. As Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq said:

There are five weepers in the world: firstly, Adam, who cried so much after his expulsion from paradise that two rivers [of tears] were flowing on his face. Secondly, Yā'qūb, who wept so much on account of his separation from Yūsuf that he became blind. Thirdly, Yūsuf, who deplored in prison his separation from Yā'qūb to such a degree that all the captives were distressed. Fourthly, Fāṭimah who wept so much after the death of the Holy Nabī [Prophet] that the inhabitants of Medina sent her the following message: “O darling of the Lord of the Worlds, you have indeed distressed us by your fervent lamentations.” (Naqshbandī n. page; Mīr Khvānd 787)

The mention of Fāṭimah's menstruation coincides more with Sunnī, and perhaps Ḥasanid Shī'ism, than with Ḥusaynid Shī'ism. According to the Twelver Shī'ites from the line of al-Ḥusayn, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' did not menstruate and did not suffer from post-partum bleeding. It was related by Imām 'Alī that: “Verily, the Prophet as asked what *al-Batūl* meant, and he replied: ‘It is a woman who never sees redness; namely, she never menstruates because menstruation is hateful in the daughters of the prophets.’” According to Asmā' bin Umays,

When Fāṭimah gave birth to al-Ḥasan, she did not bleed. She also does not have menstruation bleeds. When I informed the Prophet of Allāh of this, he said: “Don't you know that my daughter is chaste. She does not discharge blood as a result of childbirth or menstruation.” (cf. Sibtayn n. page)

According to Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir: “When Fāṭimah was born, Allāh, exalted is His name, revealed to an angel to speak the name Fāṭimah with Muḥammad's tongue. Allāh then said: ‘I have bestowed knowledge upon

you and safeguarded you from menstruation.” The Imām then added that “Allāh, blessed and exalted is His name, bestowed knowledge on her and safeguarded her from menstruation with the covenant.”

Sunnī sources have also related traditions regarding the fact that Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’ was miraculously guarded from menstruation and post-partum bleeding. Anas b. Mālīk relates that he heard Umm Salīm, the wife of Abū Ṭalḥah al-Anṣārī, say: “Fāṭimah never experienced the blood of menstruation or parturition for she was created from the waters of paradise.” Although the belief that Fāṭimah did not menstruate is widely accepted among Shī’ites, it is generally rejected by Sunnīs as a pious legend if not an outright lie. Many modern Muslim scholars of all sects view these anti-menstruation traditions as misogynistic. As for the tradition in question, the emphasis on the piety of Fāṭimah and the invocations upon the household of the Prophet are in line with Shī’ite norms.

TRADITION 10

THE AMULET OF FĀṬIMAH AL-ZAHRĀ'

10.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Libro de los amuletos* [*The Book of Amulets*].

10.2 Tradition

A good and blessed talisman for every occasion: In the Name of Allāh, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. May Allāh bless our Master, Muḥammad, the noble one, and his family, and save them all. KHYS [Sūrah 19] HM SQ [Sūrah 42] [Sūrah 20:111] [20:46] [5:23] Lord! God of Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes! Lord of the Worlds! O My Refuge! TH [Sūrah 20] YS [Sūrah 36] Bless Muḥammad, the Truthful. Guard me and guard the one who wears this writing, by the right of Maryam or Fāṭimah the daughter of Khadījah, from the evil of the cursed devil and from the force of the oppressor for verily you have power over all things! (118).

10.3 Commentary

Amulets and talismans are widely used in the Muslim world. The aforementioned amulet could conceivably be of Šūfī or Shī'ite origin. While traditional Sunnīs do seek the intercession of the Prophet, they do not call upon Fāṭimah to the same extent that Shī'ites do. Consequently, it could be argued that the amulet in question is of Shī'ite origin or inspiration.

TRADITION 11

THE ḤADĪTH OF BILĀL AND FĀṬIMAH

11.1 Source

The “Ḥadīth of Bilāl and Fāṭimah” is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. XXX-f 151v / 489-490).

11.2 Tradition

The muezzin of the Prophet (ṢA) was known as Bilāl, and he was black. When the Prophet Muḥammad died, he was so affected by his death that his eyes became swollen from crying so much. He went to Medina and he went to Fāṭimah’s house.

He carried a leather bag on his side and a staff in his hand. When Fāṭimah saw him, she asked: “O Bilāl! Where are you going?”

Bilāl said: “I am fleeing this land. Since I can no longer see the Prophet Muḥammad every morning and afternoon, I cannot find solace. O Fāṭimah! Give me something so that I can make my journey.”

She said: “Take my clothing! It is the only thing that I own.” So Bilāl took Fāṭimah’s clothing, sold it, and left, and arrived in a new land.

When the time for the ritual prayer came, Bilāl made the call to prayer. When the people heard him, men, women, and children gathered around him to hear his beautiful voice.

They begged him: “O black man! Would you like to remain among us and teach us and our children and guide them on the path of the religion of Islām?” He remained among them and educated their children.

He taught them how to read the Qur’ān and taught them how to serve Allāh, *ta’ālā* [the Most High]. It was there that he returned to his Lord. May we all return to our Lord in a similar state. Amen.

11.3 Commentary

Although the Prophet's muezzin, Bilāl b. al-Rabah al-Habashī (c. 578-82 to c. 638-42), is respected by all Muslims, Sunnī Muslims do not generally consider him among the closest companions of the Prophet. The Shī'ites, however, hold Bilāl in high esteem as he was a faithful Shī'ite of *ahl al-bayt*, and one of the earliest and most loyal supporters of Imām 'Alī, including him among the ranks of the greatest companions: Salmān al-Fārisī, Abū Dharr al-Ghiffārī, 'Ammār b. Yāsir, and Uways al-Qarnī.

Bilāl received great praise from the Prophet and his family. The Prophet told him that "I heard your footsteps in paradise" (Bukhārī and Muslim). Imām 'Alī is quoted as saying:

The vanguards of Islām are five. I am the vanguard of the Arabs. Salmān is the herald of the Iranians. Şuhayb is the first believer from Rome. Bilāl is the vanguard of Abyssinia, and Zabbāb is the herald of Niyt. (Majlisī)

Both Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Imām Ja'far al-Şādiq are cited as saying: "May Allāh bless Bilāl! He loved us, the family of Muḥammad, and was one of the most pious servants of God. He pledged not to announce the call to prayer after the demise of the Holy Prophet" (Balādhurī).

Although he was born in Mecca, and was the son of an Arab slave, Bilāl was reportedly of noble Ethiopian ancestry from his mother's side. It is alleged that he spoke Arabic with a slight accent. To be precise, it is claimed that he could not pronounce the letter *shīn*, pronouncing it instead as a *sīn*. Apparently, this was because the two sounds had merged into "s" in the classical Ge'ez language. It is reported that some companions of the Prophet criticized his pronunciation. In order to console Bilāl, the Prophet stated that "The *sīn* of Bilāl is *shīn* in the ears of Allāh."

A similar event took place during the rule of 'Alī. According to a Shī'ite tradition, a man came to Imām 'Alī and said: "O *amīr al-mu'minīn*, someone is making fun of Bilāl because he cannot pronounce [words] properly." The Imām replied:

O servant of Allāh! The proper articulation of supplications is meant to purify our deeds. Therefore, the beautiful words of one whose deeds are evil will not avail him. Hence, Bilāl's wrong articulation will not affect his praiseworthy deeds. (duas.org n. page)

For Sunnī scholars, the words of the Prophet had no inner meaning. The Prophet was merely trying to make Bilāl feel better, reassuring him that although he could not pronounce the letter *shīn*, it was his intention that

counted. The Shī'ites, however, stress the symbolism of the Arabic letters. They argue that *shīn* stands for Shī'ī while *sīn* stands for Sunnī. This was known by Shaltūt, the Sunnī head of al-Azhar, who signed his correspondence with Sharaf al-Dīn with a *sīn*, while Sharaf al-Dīn, the leading Shī'ite scholar from Lebanon, signed his correspondence with Shaltūt with a *shīn*. So, for Shī'ite scholars, the words he pronounced to Bilāl meant: "Although you cannot pronounce the letter *shīn*, Allāh bears witness that you are a Shī'ite."

Like many of Shī'ites of 'Alī from the companions of the Prophet, Bilāl never swore allegiance to Abū Bakr. Disillusioned at what he perceived to be the usurpation of power from 'Alī, Bilāl refused to give the call to prayer after the death of the Prophet. According to Sunnī sources, Bilāl called the faithful to prayer only twice more in his life: the first time in Syria, and the second time in Medina, when he was specifically asked to do so by Imām al-Ḥasan and Imām al-Ḥusayn, the grandsons of the Prophet Muḥammad.

According to Shī'ite sources, Bilāl was in the Prophet's mosque when he learned that a group of people had appointed Abū Bakr as the caliph. When Abū Bakr entered the mosque to lead the prayers, all the companions were waiting for Bilāl to make the call to prayer as he had done during the lifetime of the Prophet. Assuming he was distracted or bewildered, they reminded him of his duty. He responded that he would no longer make the call to prayer, and that they should someone to replace him as muezzin. When Abū Bakr repeated his request, Bilāl shook his head in refusal and said: "If by freeing me from the hands of the Umayyads you took me as slave, I am at your service. However, if you freed me out of love of Allāh, let me be, and let me do as I please."

When Abū Bakr acknowledged that he had freed him for the sake of Allāh, Bilāl made his position clear: "After the passing of the Prophet, I will no longer make the call to prayer." In so doing, Bilāl reaffirmed his loyalty to *aḥl al-bayt*. Although she was pleased by Bilāl's devotion, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' yearned to hear the voice of the Prophet's muezzin. Hence, she asked Bilāl: "It would please me greatly to hear my father's muezzin" (Majlisī). Bilāl conceded her request and his voice echoed once more throughout Medina. When he reached the phrase "I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh," Fāṭimah broke down in tears and, according to some sources, even fainted, forcing Bilāl to cut short his call to prayer. Bilāl rushed to her side and, when she recovered, Fāṭimah asked him to complete the call to prayer. Aware of the extent of her love for her father, Bilāl asked: "Daughter of the Prophet. Please excuse me from this request. I fear for your life" (Ṭūsī), after which she acquiesced to his request.

Rather than oppose Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān militarily, Bilāl maintained a silent strike against those he blamed for usurping spiritual and temporal authority from *ahl al-bayt*. Despite requests by Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and other companions of the Prophet, Bilāl refused to call the *adhān*. Due to his devotion to *ahl al-bayt*, Bilāl defended Imām 'Alī and Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' in public. His action earned him the criticism and reproach from the supporters of Abū Bakr who asked him how he could be so disloyal towards the man who had freed him from slavery. Bilāl responded that:

'Alī has more rights upon me than Abū Bakr. Although Abū Bakr saved me from the slavery and torture, through patience and submission, I could have found the straight path to heaven. However, Imām 'Alī spared me from everlasting torment, and the eternal fire of hell. It is only through loving and supporting the *wilāyah* [guardianship of the Prophet's family], and recognizing 'Alī's superiority over others, that I am worthy of heaven and its eternal rewards.

Due to his defiance of Abū Bakr, and finding the political environment of Medina insupportable, the historical sources state that Bilāl sought exile in Syria. Before leaving Medina, he visited Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' and Imām 'Alī at their home, and recited the following poem to them:

I was saved by Allāh, and not by Abū Bakr.
 Were it not for Allāh.
 I would have been savagely slaughtered by hyenas.
 It is Allāh who has honored me.
 And all goodness is from Him.
 You may find me heretical,
 But I am not a heretic like them.

After bidding farewell to Fāṭimah, Bilāl settled in Syria. According to Suyūṭī's *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*, he died in Damascus around the year 640. He rests in *Bāb al-ṣaghīr*, a street in Damascus, Syria, with cemeteries on either side of the road, where thousands of visitors pay their respect to him every year.

The *aljamiado* version of the farewell between Bilāl and Fāṭimah is more reminiscent of the Shī'ite version of Bilāl's life than the Sunnī one. In fact, the Sunnī version makes no mention of Bilāl's visit to Fāṭimah and 'Alī before his departure. Like the Shī'ite version, the *aljamiado ḥadīth* stresses the close ties between Bilāl and Fāṭimah, something which is not found in Sunnī traditions. The Sunnī version also fails to mention the reason why Bilāl was compelled to leave Medina. According to the *aljamiado* version, Bilāl left because he missed the Prophet so severely and the surroundings

reminded him too much of him. This seems odd since, if he missed the Prophet, he could have found solace among his daughter Fāṭimah, his son-in-law and cousin, ‘Alī, and his grand-children, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, the first of whom would grow up to look just like the Prophet. If Bilāl could find no peace in Medīna, it was perhaps because his opposition towards Abū Bakr has made life intolerable for him.

The “Ḥadīth of Bilāl and Fāṭimah” seems to be a combination of both the Sunnī and Shī‘ite versions of the event. As mentioned earlier, the Ḥasanid Shī‘ites from the western part of the Islāmīc world accepted the rightly-guided caliphs. As such, they overlooked or downplayed any of their shortcomings out of respect, something which stands in contrast to the Ḥusaynī Shī‘ites from the eastern part of the Islāmīc world who devoted volumes to the real and fictitious faults of companions like Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān, slighting them, slandering them, and even cursing them as hypocrites, infidels, heretics, and unbelievers.

Although some of the Ḥasanid Shī‘ites were extremists in exalting ‘Alī to fantastic proportions, they were moderate when it came to the *fitnah* over the Prophet’s succession. If some of the followers of the *ahl al-sunnah* had cursed the Imāms and their companions, and some of the followers of the *ahl al-bayt* had cursed the caliphs and their companions, some of the Ḥasanid Shī‘ites seem to have embraced Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān, as well as the twelve Imāms. Unlike the Shī‘ah Ithnā ‘Asharī, who reject Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān, and unlike the Sunnīs, who rejected the right to rule of the Imāms, opting to submit to the Umayyads, the ‘Abbāsids, and other dynasties down to the Ottomans, some of the Ḥasanid Shī‘ites seem to have cut the line of caliphs after ‘Alī, transferring their loyalty to the eleven Imāms who followed after him.

TRADITION 12

THE PROPHET'S PRAYER FOR 'ALĪ

12.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f 208 r / 616).

12.2 Tradition

The Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said to 'Alī: "O 'Alī! When you face something you fear in this world and you are afraid, say: 'My Lord, Allāh, I turn to you from his evil, and I seek protection from you from his evil.' By doing so, Allāh will save you from its harm and evil, and you will overcome it with the help of Allāh. And when you see that it is so, then say: 'O Lord! You have created nothing in vain. May you be blessed! Free me from the punishment of the fire.' Allāh will forgive you all your sins and the fire of hell will not touch you."

12.3 Commentary

The following prayer is found in both Sunnī and Shī'ite sources and is listed in many prayer manuals.

TRADITION 13

THE PROPHET'S SUPPLICATION FOR 'ALĪ AND HIS SHĪ'ITES

13.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 13 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 250 r – f 257 v / 701-710).

13.2 Tradition

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “And this is the special supplication [*du'ā'*] for you and your ummah, O Muḥammad! This supplication is a gift from Allāh, blessed be He, for you and your ummah.”

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “O my friend! O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! What is the blessing of this supplication?”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “O Muḥammad! None but Allāh, blessed be He, knows. However, whoever reads this *du'ā'*, wears it as a talisman for protection, or reads before leaving home, Allāh is obliged to grant him the same blessings as if he read the *Tawrah* [Torah], the *Injīl* [Gospel], the *Zabūr* [Psalms], the Qur'ān, and the Scrolls of Ibrāhīm.”

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “O my brother! O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! If someone reads this supplication, Allāh will give him all these blessings?”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “Yes, O Muḥammad! For every letter he reads, He will give him two women from the houris of paradise. And when he finishes reading it, Allāh will build him a house in heaven. And whoever reads this supplication, Allāh will give him the count of its letters, and the letters of the *Tawrah* [Torah], the *Injīl* [Gospel], the *Zabūr* [Psalms], the Qur'ān, and the Scroll of Ibrāhīm.”

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “O my brother! O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! Allāh will give all these blessings to the one who recites this supplication?”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “Yes, O Muḥammad, because He sent you with the truth to give glad tidings of heaven, and to warn of the threat of hell. Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, will give him blessings similar to those who he gave Ibrāhīm, the friend [of Allāh], and Moses, the one who spoke with Allāh, and ‘Isā [Jesus], the Faithful Spirit of Allāh, may the blessings of Allāh be upon them all.”

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “O my friend! O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! Allāh will give all these blessings to the one who recites this supplication?”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “Yes, O Muḥammad, because He sent you with the truth to give glad tidings of heaven, and to warn of the threat of hell. Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, created the rising sun, a white earth, which contains those who were created by Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, who adore Him and who do not disobey him even with their eyelashes, and whose skin is flushed from crying. Allāh sent you to them to say: ‘Why do you cry when you have never disobeyed even by the flutter of your eyelashes?’ They responded: ‘We fear that you will become angry with us and that you will cast us into the fire [of hell].’”

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, said that the Archangel Gabriel said: “O Messenger of Allāh! Are these people the sons of Adam or the sons of Satan?”

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “By Him in whose hand is my soul. They know that Allāh created both Adam and Satan. They neither eat nor drink. And they know that Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, will give the one who recites this prayer the allocated rewards.”

The Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “O my friend! O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! Allāh will give all these blessings to the one who recites this supplication?”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “O Muḥammad! By Him who sent you with the truth to give glad tidings of paradise, and to warn of the punishment of hell, Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, made seventy one houses in heaven called *al-bayt al-ma‘mūr*, in which one thousand angels enter and leave every day, and who will not return until the Day of Judgment, which means that whoever passes through one of these houses once will not pass through it again until the Day of Judgment. And Allāh, blessed be He, will give the one who recites this supplication the blessing of all those angels.

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “O my brother! O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! Allāh will give all the blessings to the one who recites this supplication?”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “O Muḥammad! By Him who sent you with the truth as both a prophet and a messenger! Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, will give the one who recites this supplication the blessing of all the Muslim men and Muslim women and all the believing male jinn

and believing female jinn, and will forgive them from the day that Allāh created them until the day that Isrāfīl [Uriel] will blow into the bugle. And by Him who sent you with the truth as both a prophet and a messenger! Whichever house in which this supplication is found no thief will enter therein and nor shall anything in it be burned in a fire.”

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “O my brother! O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! Allāh will give all these blessings to the one who recites this supplication?”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “Yes, O Muḥammad! By Him who sent you with the truth! Whoever reads this supplication will die [with all his sins] forgiven. O Muḥammad! Allāh will give him nine hundred pardons. O Muḥammad! And whoever writes this supplication in a clean drinking vessel with saffron and whoever drinks it with clean rainwater or washes with it, Allāh will save him from all sickness found in his body and heal him from all types of fever. O Muḥammad! Whoever reads this *du‘ā*’ on the night of *jumu‘ah* [i.e. Thursday night] Allāh, blessed be He, will accept his *witr* prayer and will grant him what he wishes in this world and the next.”

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “Increase [my knowledge], O Jibrīl [Gabriel]!”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “O Muḥammad! By Him who sent you with the truth! On whichever day that this *du‘ā*’ is read or written, Allāh will remove from its reader the evil of Satan’s handiwork and will accept his purified deeds.”

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “O my brother! O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! Will all these blessings be upon the person who recites this supplication?”

The Archangel Gabriel said: “O Muḥammad! Allāh, *‘azza wa jalla* [Mighty and Majestic], the honored and noble, said:

By My honor and My nobility and My honesty and My honor, and My might, and My place with authority, he who honors Me truly and stands close to this supplication will be shown things that the eyes cannot see, will be made to hear things that the ears cannot hear, nor thought of heart that a person could not pass, so great is the blessing of this supplication. And I am Allāh whose Treasure does not diminish, nor is anything in My kingdom exhausted. And if I desire heaven for a servant among my servants, I would be diminished in nothing.”

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “O Muḥammad! If, by chance, a servant from among the servants of Allāh reads this supplication with sincerity and with a pure soul over the heads of those from the House of Fortune and the House of the World, one thousand lepers, and demonized people would be saved from their sickness and it would remove those diseases from their bodies.”

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “O Muḥammad! Blessed be he who will read this *du‘ā*, who believes in you, and in the truth of this supplication, and its blessing. And woe to the one who will deny it and does not want it for he will be free of you and Allāh.”

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “O Muḥammad! He who writes this supplication in marble stone with camphor and musk and rose water and who will clean it, and who will sprinkle that water over the grave of a dead person, Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, will send upon his grave one hundred thousand lights and will free him from the fear of Munkar and Nakīr. And Allāh will send to him seventy thousand angels, each with a sign of light, who will spread them upon him, and they will give him the glad tidings of heaven. And they will tell him that Allāh has sent us to speak with you, and to console you in your grave from now until the Day of Judgment. And Allāh allows him to see from his grave everything to the extent that his sight can perceive. And Allāh opens a door of heaven, adorns it, and beautifies it like a bride, for the one who remembers this supplication. And Allāh, exalted be He, says: “I would be ashamed to cast a servant who recites this supplication into the fire.”

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “O Muḥammad! I heard the Most Honorable and Blessed say: ‘This supplication was written on the foot of the Throne five thousand years before the creation of Adam.’

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “And whichever servant prays with this supplication with a pure intention, and with firm faith devoid of doubt at the beginning of Ramaḍān and at its end, on every Friday or Friday night, Allāh will give him the right of The Night of Power.

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “And Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, creates seventy thousand angels at dawn and seventy thousand angels at dusk. He gave every angel one thousand heads, twenty thousand necks, twenty thousand mouths, and twenty thousand tongues, that remember Allāh in *tasbīḥ* with those tongues in different languages. And they give the blessings of their rosaries to the ones who invoke Allāh with this supplication.”

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “O Muḥammad! This prayer to Allāh is a noble guarantee. Whoever reads this supplication, nothing will remain between him and Allāh nor will anything he requests be denied by Allāh, glorified and exalted be He.”

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “O Muḥammad! There is not a servant who invokes Allāh using this supplication but that Allāh send seventy thousand angels to him when his soul is removed from his body, and seventy thousand servants or young girls who remember Allāh in *tasbīḥ* [rosary], blessed be He, and say *Lā ilāha illā Allāh* [There is no god but Allāh], and

send the blessings of the rosaries and their saying of *Lā ilāha illā Allāh* [There is no god but Allāh], to the one who recited this supplication.

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “Whoever uses this supplication in prayer, seventy thousand angels will be sent to him. And with every angel a hallway of white pearl composed of four colors as well as a drink of wine, a drink of milk, and a drink of honey. On the head of each angel there is a purple platform and on top it is an object on which is written the words *Lā ilāha illā Allāh waḥdahu lā sharīka lahu wa anna Muḥammad ‘abduhu wa rasūluhu* which means “There is no lord but Allāh, the One, who has no partner, and that Muḥammad is His servant and His messenger.”

[The Archangel Gabriel said:] “This is a gift from the Creator to the one who reads this supplication. The one who reads this supplication will be in purple clothing on the Day of Judgment. And all creation will ask: ‘Who is that prophet?’ because of the fact that young boys and girls surround him, and he rides on a horse, and the angels walk in front of him and behind him guiding him to the mercy of the Throne. And a Caller calls on behalf of Allāh, *‘azza wa jalla* [Mighty and Majestic]: “O My servant! Enter My heaven without reckoning!”

Al-Ḥasan, the son of [‘Alī b.] Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “In the will that my father, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, made to me, he instructed me to place this supplication on his grave upon his death.”

Al-Ḥasan said: “And I did as my father had instructed me and he made me a long will and about this supplication, the following news, and it is a treasure from among the treasures of Allāh, *‘azza wa jalla* [Mighty and Majestic]. This supplication was chosen with a thousand names that Allāh placed as protection and security for whoever recites it from the evils of this world and its trials instead of the glory and pleasures of the next world. And send the blessings of Allāh upon our master Muḥammad, his family, his companions, and his companions and save them.

The Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “O ‘Alī! Teach this supplication to your Shī‘ites [*konpana*] and your brothers. Teach them about it and teach them how to invoke Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, with it. And be careful not to show it to any unbeliever, apostate or hard of heart because the hard of heart is far from Allāh, *‘azza wa jalla* [Mighty and Majestic], and from the people. Once a person knows this supplication, whatever he asks of Allāh will be granted to him by Allāh, and Allāh will protect him from what he fears and will protect him.

The Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said: “These are among the blessings of this supplication. Go, and invoke the blessings of Allāh upon us and make it beneficial for you, include us among

it, and answer our invocations, since He is the Refuge, the Resolver, and the Appealer of every complainer. Praise be to Allāh, and glory to be Last. He is the One who takes account, and the best advocate. There is no might nor power but Allāh, the Exalted, the Great. And this is the blessed supplication. May Allāh make us benefit from it as well as the one who recites it and the one who listens to it. Amen.”

13.3 Commentary

I have not been able to locate this tradition in the canonical Sunnī or Shī'ite books of prophetic traditions that I surveyed. The tradition in question appears to have been related through the Ḥasanid line of Shī'ism. Although some will argue that the word *konpana* means “companions,” the Arabic term *ṣahābah* is used for the companions of the Prophet. The companions of ‘Alī, however, were known as *shī'ah* of ‘Alī, in the same fashion that the companions of Mu‘āwiyah were known as *shī'ah* of Mu‘āwiyah. I am therefore inclined to believe that the original Arabic spoke of the Shī'ites of ‘Alī as opposed to the companions of ‘Alī. After all, if one accepts the traditions as authentic, and not later fabrications, the Prophet himself spoke of the Shī'ites or partisans of ‘Alī during his lifetime.

TRADITION 14

A SHĪ‘ITE PRAYER TAUGHT BY THE PROPHET TO IMĀM ‘ALĪ

14.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 226 v – f 228 r / 655-658). It is also found on page 474 with many distorted words.

14.2 Tradition

It was related by ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, that he said: The Messenger of Allāh, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, said:

Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, has ordered me to teach you this *du‘ā*. It is a name among the names of Allāh, glorified and exalted be He. When anything is asked with it, it is granted. When one prays with it, one’s prayers are answered. He instructs me to teach it only to the believers from your ummah, and to prevent the disobedient ones, who have not been forgiven, from invoking [Allāh] with it because I have sent you with the truth, to give glad tidings of paradise, and to warn of the fire [of hell].

No member of your ummah will use this prayer without results being granted by Allāh. Let him express his needs and he will see signs of Allāh’s answer, glorified and exalted be He, what He gives to the prophets, those who die as martyrs, and the righteous, namely, that Allāh will build him a castle in paradise and he will see Allāh every day for one hundred and seventy glances.

When he will have completed his supplication, an angel from among the angels will call out: “O Man! Persevere in the performance of good deeds going forward for Allāh has forgiven your sins, changed your sins into blessings, and has granted you satisfaction. It is medicine that prevents seventy-two diseases and it is medicine that alleviates all pain and illness.

You shall write it with musk and saffron. You will give it to drink to the sick and they will be healed by power of Allāh, glorified and exalted be He. Whoever writes it down and places it in his tent, Allāh will increase his sustenance, and will prevent any devil from approaching. If he is at war and takes it with him and prays with it, he will be protected from fear. He who places it on a child, who has not reached the age of maturity, he will be protected from fear, pain, and every disease but death. Whoever prays with it for any part of this world or the next, it will be judged to his advantage, and he will be counted among the safe ones in the next world. And he who carries it, but who cannot read it, may he place it where he performs his ritual prayers on a small piece of paper.

After completing two units of prayer, he should say: *Alḥamdulillāh* [Praise be to Allāh, namely, the first chapter of the Qur'ān] and *Qul huwa Allāhu aḥad* [Say He is God, One God, namely, chapter 112 of the Qur'ān] ten times. Then, he should say: “*Allāhumma* [O Allāh]. Lord, judge my actions and my needs according to the authority of this supplication,” since He will not ask about his actions until Allāh judges his condition and his needs, with the order of Allāh *'azza wa jalla* [Mighty and Majestic]. And it is the following blessed supplication which is pure and purifies.

14.3 Commentary

The Arabic prayer found at the end of this Aljamiado-Morisco tradition contains segments like *Yā ghāfirā dhanbi Dāwūda* [O Forgiver of the sin of David], among various others, that are found in identical form in *Du'ā' mashlūl*, the *Prayer of the Paralytic*, a famous supplication authored by Imām 'Alī which is regularly recited by Shī'ites. It is found in *Muhaj al-da'awāt wa manhaj al-'ibādāt* by Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 1265) and Kaf'amī's (d. 1499) *al-Balad al-amīn*. Other segments of the prayer are similar to *Du'ā' Jawshan al-kabīr*, a long prayer that is popular among Shī'ites. And yet others are similar to segments found in the prayers of Zayn al-'Abidīn. The prayer ends with blessings upon the Prophet and his family.

It is interesting that the Prophet instructs 'Alī to teach this prayer “only to the believers among your ummah, and to prevent the disobedient ones” from learning and reciting it. The Prophet speaks of 'Alī's ummah, namely, the people over whom he will rule, and distinguishes between his believing subjects, namely, his faithful partisans, and the disobedient ones, that is, his opponents. Since it treats the followers of 'Alī as legitimate and his antagonists as illegitimate, it seems that this tradition was transmitted by the 'Alawī line of Islām as opposed to the Sufyānī line. The tradition appears to be of Shī'ite or Shī'itized Ṣūfī provenance.

TRADITION 15

YOU ARE MY COMPANION AND MY BROTHER

15.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 18 r / 62).

15.2 Tradition

The Prophet Muḥammad said to ‘Alī: “You are my companion and my brother in this life and in the hereafter.”

15.3 Commentary

In his *Isti‘āb*, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr mentions that the Prophet Muḥammad selected ‘Alī as his brother, saying: “You are my brother in this world and in the hereafter.” This tradition is also found in Ḥākim and Tirmidhī. In another tradition, the Prophet said to ‘Alī: “You will be my brother and companion in paradise” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī; al-Fīrūzābādī). Imām ‘Alī cited the Prophet’s tradition in the following sermon he gave from the pulpit in Kūfah in which he said:

O people! The Messenger of Allāh granted me ten attributes that are dearer to me than anything upon which the sun shines: He has said to me: “O ‘Alī! You are my brother in this life and the life hereafter, and you are the closest to me among all creation on the Day of Resurrection. Your residence in paradise faces mine. You are my heir, the executor of my will after me, when dealing with both my foes and family. You protect my family on my own behalf during my absence. You are my nation’s Imām. You execute justice among my followers. You are my friend and my friend is the friend of Allāh. Your enemy is my enemy and my enemy is surely the enemy of Allāh.” (Sharaf al-Dīn n. page)

The *aljamiado* tradition seems to contain elements from both the Sunnī and the Shī'ite traditions. If the Prophet Muḥammad stated that 'Alī would be his brother in paradise, Shī'ites take this as proof that he would be rightly guided both spiritually and politically. For them, it also implies that those who opposed him and fought him were misguided. Consequently, traditions like this one are used by Shī'ites to support their claims regarding the Prophet's succession.

TRADITION 16

THE LOVE OF ‘ALĪ IS BELIEF AND THE HATRED OF ‘ALĪ IS DISBELIEF

16.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 19 r / 63).

16.2 Tradition

Imām ‘Alī said: “By Him who created and sustains all things, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) told me: ‘O ‘Alī! Only a good and just believer will love you, and only a hypocrite and an unbeliever will hate you.’”

16.3 Commentary

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “He who loves ‘Alī loves me and he who hates ‘Alī hates me” (Ḥākim and Dhahabī). The Prophet said to ‘Alī: “O ‘Alī! Friendship with you is faith and opposition to you in hypocrisy” (Shīrāzī). He also said: “No one loves ‘Alī but a believer and no one is hostile towards him except an infidel” (Shīrāzī). On another occasion, he said: “O ‘Alī! Only a believer will love you and only a hypocrite will hate you” (Ṭūsī and Majlisī). Imām ‘Alī said: “By Him who produces a plant from a seed and blows soft and fresh breezes, the Holy Prophet assured me that only the faithful would love me and none but the hypocrites would hate me” (Muslim and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr).

Although the Aljamiado-Morisco tradition in question is supported by both Sunnī and Shī‘ite traditions, the content and wording more closely approximate the version transmitted in the Twelver Shī‘ite works of Ṭūsī and Majlisī. If the *Crónica y Relación* [*The Chronicle and Account*] were a Sunnī work on the twelve Imāms, one would expect it to draw primarily, if

not exclusively, from *ahl al-sunnah* sources. The fact that it relies on Twelver Shī'ite traditions suggests that its author was a Twelver himself or belonged to a faith community that was intricately connected to Twelver Shī'ism, namely, the Alevīs, the Bektāshīs or other similar groups.

TRADITION 17

THE ḤADĪTH OF THE TEARS OF ‘ALĪ

17.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 203 v / 605).

17.2 Tradition

It is related that ‘Alī, the Commander of the Faithful, cried one day. He was asked: “What makes you cry?” He responded: “I am crying because no guest has visited me in the past seven days, and I fear that Allāh is displeased with me.”

17.3 Commentary

The aforementioned *ḥadīth* was cited by Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī al-Makkī (1503-1566), a Sunnī Muslim scholar of the Shāfi‘ī school, famous for authoring *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqah*, an anti-Shī‘ite polemic. In this case, the tradition is taken from Ibn Ḥajar’s *Asnā al-maṭālib*. The tradition is commonly quoted in Twelver Shī‘ite works on the subject of *akhlāq al-ā‘immah* or the ethics of the Imāms, particularly under the topic of hospitality. As Imām ‘Alī stated, “Three things are dear to me: hospitality, *jihād* with the sword and fasting on a hot day” (‘Amilī).

TRADITION 18

I AM THE CITY OF KNOWLEDGE AND ‘ALĪ IS ITS GATE

18.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC Junta 3 (f. 204 v / 607).

18.2 Tradition

The Messenger of Allāh said: “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate. Whoever wishes for knowledge must come to it.”

18.3 Commentary

The “Tradition of the Gate” is cited by Ḥākim, Ibn Kathīr, Ṭabarānī, Bazzār, Ibn Jarīr, ‘Uqaylī, Samhūdī, Suyūfī, Jurjānī, Dihlawī, Shabramalāsī, Kawranī al-Shāfi‘ī, Zurqānī, Ujaylī, Ibn Taymiyyah, Shamī, Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn Hajar al-Haythamī Ṣabbān, Yāmanī, Qārī, Ṭalḥah al-Shafī‘ī, Ibn Rūzbahān, and Maybudī among many others.

Although classical sources stipulate that the tradition “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate” was originally included in Tirmidhī, it seems to have been suppressed as it no longer appears in the later versions of his *ṣaḥīḥ*. The only version which remains in Tirmidhī is that which says, “I am the house of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate.” Rather than a variant, the “house of knowledge” and the “city of knowledge” appear to have been two distinct traditions.

In Sunnī books of tradition, the “Tradition of the Gate” is related on the authority of several prominent companions of the Prophet. Ḥākim relates the tradition on the final authority of Ibn ‘Abbās. Bazzār and Ṭabarānī relate it on the final authority of Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī. Ṭabarānī, Ḥākim,

and Ibn ‘Adī also relate it on the final authority of Ibn ‘Umar. Both Ḥākim and Tirmidhī relate it on the authority of ‘Alī. According to Sunnī traditionists, all these narrators are trustworthy.

According to Ibn Taymiyyah, the “Tradition of the Gate” is not reliable. Tirmidhī, however, considered it to be *ḥasan* or good. Ibn Rūzbahān and Ḥākim consider it to be *ṣaḥīḥ*. The highest-ranking is found in Lakhnawī’s *Nafahāt al-aẓhar* in which he describes the “Ḥadīth of the Gate” as *mutawātir* or continuously related by numerous authoritative narrators.

The Aljamiado-Morisco version of the tradition does not appear to exist in the canonical Sunnī sources. However, it does resemble the famous *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet Muḥammad declares that: “I am the City of Knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate” which is cited in several Shī‘ite sources including Kulaynī (864-941) and Mufīd.

While Shī‘ite traditionists would accept Ibn ‘Abbās as reliable, they would give the highest-ranking of truthfulness to Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī. The same cannot be said for ‘Abd Allāh (c. 614-693), the son of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (581-83), the second caliph, whom Twelver Shī‘ites consider unjust and insincere. In their view, ‘Umar betrayed the Prophet Muḥammad, usurped the caliphate from ‘Alī, and contributed to the death of Fāṭimah. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar supported Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān, but refused to pay allegiance to ‘Alī when he was designated the caliph. Once ‘Alī was murdered, and Mu‘āwīyah gained control over the Muslim ummah, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar immediately pledged allegiance to him.

Despite the fact that Yazīd’s forces slaughtered Ḥusayn, his family, and his companions, at Karbalā’, and mistreated his womenfolk when they were in captivity; and despite the fact that Yazīd sacked Medina, allowed his soldiers to murder nearly one thousand companions of the Prophet and ten thousand civilians, sexually assault thousands of women, and set fire to the Ka‘bah, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar remained his staunch supporter, denouncing as traitors anyone who rose against him.

The Tradition of the Gate may exist in Sunnī sources; however, many Sunnī scholars minimize its significance or treat it as spurious. The Salafīs consider it a forgery. The only Muslims who emphasize this tradition, and treat it as central, are the Shī‘ites and Ṣūfīs, both of whom stress the status of Imām ‘Alī whom they view as the spiritual successor of the Prophet Muḥammad.

TRADITION 19

IMĀM ‘ALĪ IS THE KEY TO KNOWLEDGE

19.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 197 / 590).

19.2 Tradition

The Prophet Muḥammad asked ‘Alī something and ‘Alī answered. The Prophet Muḥammad then told him: “O ‘Alī! If knowledge were in a room, you would hold the key.”

19.3 Commentary

This tradition does not appear to exist in the canonical sources of the Sunnīs or the Shī‘ites. At least, I did not find it in the works that I surveyed. It does, however, resemble the famous *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet Muḥammad declares that: “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate” (Tirmidhī, Suyūṭī, Ḥākim) and reinforces the Shī‘ite belief that ‘Alī was the most knowledgeable of the companions of the Prophet and the most suited to be his immediate spiritual and political successor. Some critics goes as far as claiming that the Shī‘ites constructed an entire religion on the basis of this supposedly forged tradition. It even became foundational to the Ghulāt, the Bābīs, and the Bahā’ī.

TRADITION 20

THE ḤADĪTH OF ‘ALĪ’S JEALOUSY OF FĀṬIMAH

20.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (154 v - 155 r / 496-97)

20.2 Tradition

Fāṭimah went to do the laundry at a source of water. Gabriel descended to where Fāṭimah was working, dressed in white, and was guarding her. ‘Alī saw him and became jealous. Although he did not say anything to her about it, he continued to live with his jealousy. And the Prophet Muḥammad knew about it.

It happened that one day a man committed adultery with a strange woman. And while they were in the house, the time for the ritual prayer arrived. The woman asked for a vessel to perform her ablutions. The man took the vessel and when his hand touched her hand, they could not separate them from one another. The husband of the woman found them like this. When he saw them, he went to denounce them to the Prophet Muḥammad who said: “‘Alī will go and stone them.” So ‘Alī went, but he did not have the heart to stone them. So, he returned to see the Prophet who told him: “Only one who has not offended Allāh will be able to stone them.”

And the people said: “Fāṭimah should go.” So Fāṭimah, the wife of ‘Alī, went. She gathered some rocks and stoned them both according to the will of Allāh. It was then that ‘Alī realized that he had wronged his wife Fāṭimah. The Prophet Muḥammad then told him:

O ‘Alī! You were jealous of my daughter Fāṭimah because you saw her in the presence of that man who was guarding her that day when she was

doing her laundry. O 'Alī! That man was Jibrīl [Gabriel] who was guarding her according to the orders of Allāh so that the judgment against this man and this woman [who committed adultery] could be fulfilled, and so that you could be pleased with your wife.

20.3 Commentary

I have been unable to locate this tradition in any of the canonical sources of prophetic traditions that I surveyed. Although the original *aljamiado* says that 'Alī had "pegado" or "sinned" against Fāṭimah, I have translated it as "wronged" as the Arabic *dhanb* also conveys this meaning. In slightly archaic English, "sinned" could be synonymous with "wronged," as in the phrase "more sinned against than sinning", which carries no connotation of the divinity or infallibility of the one sinned against. The same could be true of the Spanish "pegado."

If the author literally meant sinned, then this tradition could not be of Twelver or Sevener Shī'ite origin as the Shī'ah Ithnā 'Asharī and the Shī'ah Ismā'īlī believe that the *ahl al-bayt* are *ma'sumīn*, immaculate, infallible, inerrant, and divinely protected from sin and wrong-doing. In that case, the tradition may be of Shī'ite Zaydī origin as the Zaydīs do not accept the doctrine of infallibility.

According to Twelver Shī'ite sources, Fāṭimah was the product of paradise. As the Messenger of Allāh explained:

When I ascended to heaven, Jibrīl [Gabriel] took me by the hand, and brought me to paradise. He gave me some dates from paradise, and I ate them, producing semen in my loins. When I came down on the earth and had contact with Khadījah, she became pregnant with Fāṭimah. Thus, Fāṭimah is a human nymph [*hawrā' insiyyah*]. Whenever I long for the perfume of paradise, I smell the scent of my daughter Fāṭimah.

This tradition is cited in Ṣadūq's *Amālī*. Variants of this tradition are found in a dozen different Sunnī sources. In a tradition related by Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir, it was an apple, and not a date, that Gabriel gave the Prophet in heaven. According to another Shī'ite source, when Fāṭimah was married to 'Alī, the Messenger of Allāh stood before her, the angel Gabriel stood to her right, and the angel Michael stood to her left. Seventy thousand angels stood behind her, praising and glorifying Allāh. According to one account, Imām 'Alī spoke proudly of this auspicious occasion.

The tradition in question cannot possibly be authentic. In an attempt to exalt the spiritual status of Fāṭimah, something that was only in the ideological interest of Shī'ites, the author of this *ḥadīth* denigrated the

dignity of Imām ‘Alī. Although there are reports that Imām ‘Alī ordered people to be stoned for certain major sins, there is no evidence that Fāṭimah stoned anyone to death. What is more, the traditions regarding stoning are late and subject to dispute. Many religious authorities believe that stoning is inhumane and contrary to the spirit of Islām and the Qur’ān. Some scholars suggest that the punishment of stoning entered Islām via Jewish traditions.

TRADITION 21

THE BOOK OF BATTLES

21.1 Source

The following traditions are found in Manuscript 5337 from the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid which dates from the sixteenth- century (f 26 v / 138). The tradition can also be found in *El libro de las batallas* [*The Book of Battles*] which was transliterated by Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes (1924-2003) (1975: 138).

21.2 Tradition

Imām ‘Alī said: “I am from Mudarraḥ. I have the longest elbows and the strongest arms of Banū Hāshim... I am the one who brings affliction and anguish, the one who cuts down squadrons, the one who defeats brave warriors, the one who knocks knights to the ground, the lion of the Banū Ghalib, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. Praise belongs to me along with Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’ and her sons, and then to the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.”

21.3 Tradition

Imām ‘Alī said: “I am ‘Alī, the knight of knights, and great are the deeds of Allāh. And this is Muḥammad who comes with the declaration. Today is the day of blows and injuries.”

21.4 Tradition

Imām ‘Alī said: “I am the brave warrior and the hero (*baṭūl*) of ‘Adhnān” (1975: 139)

21.5 Tradition

The Prophet, *‘alayhi al-salām*, said: “Yā ‘Alī!” Imām ‘Alī responded: “At your service! O Messenger of Allāh!” The Prophet said: “You are the grace of Allāh against the enemies” (1975: 137-88).

21.6 Tradition

Imām ‘Alī said: “I am the hero (*batūl*), the one who spills the blood of the unbelievers... I am the hero (*batūl*) of al-Mazīd in defense and victory of Muḥammad... I am ‘Alī, and uncle is al-‘Abbās. I shall kill all of you who are hard of heart towards the Prophet... I am the one who makes women dress in black (in mourning) for I kill the bravest warriors that I find, round up my prey in nets, and at times I cut off heads...” (1975: 115-16)

21.7 Tradition

Imām ‘Alī said: “I am the knight of the Muslims.”

21.8 Tradition

When the Prophet (ﷺ) saw ‘Alī, he said: “*Allāhu Akbar!* I can now see ‘Alī in battle.” The Prophet hugged him, kissed him between the eyes, and told him: “Finally, you have come, O Abū al-Ḥasan! You remove the anguish from my heart.”

21.9 Tradition

Imām ‘Alī said: “I am ‘Alī, the exalted knight in every battle, the one who cuts down, and the public victor through the power of my Lord, Allāh” (1975: 256).

21.10 Tradition

The Angel Gabriel said to the Prophet Muḥammad: “O Muḥammad! The angels in heaven marvel at ‘Alī” (1975: 207).

21.11 Commentary

The aforementioned *aḥādīth* are cited in *El libro de las batallas* [*The Book of Battles*], an *aljamiado* account of the early battles of Islām in which Imām ‘Alī is the protagonist. Although the *aljamiado* version of the work dates to the sixteenth century, it appears to have been translated from an ancient Arabic original brought to al-Andalus by Arabs, possibly from Yemen. As Galmés de Fuentes (1924-2003) perceived, “Todas las narraciones... están dentro de la tradición alida, arduamente defendida por el partido šī’ī, para quien ‘Alī es el máximo héroe del Islām” (1975: 16) [All of the narrations... are within the ‘Alid tradition, which was arduously defended by the Shī’ite party, for whom ‘Alī is the greatest hero of Islām].

Although the work reads like a novel, “el núcleo fundamental de nuestras narraciones... se refiere a hechos históricamente documentados” (1975: 30) [the nucleus of our narrations... refers to historically documented facts]. As Galmés de Fuentes (1924-2003) explains, the work is faithful to history (1975: 83). The facts presented are historically accurate, the geographic references are extraordinarily accurate, and the characters in the work, both minor and major, can all be identified (1975: 83).

In one segment of *The Book of Battles*, Imām ‘Alī makes a peculiar statement, namely, “Praise belongs to me along with Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’ and her sons, and then to the Messenger of Allāh.” The custom of praising oneself before battle was pre-Islāmic in nature. According to traditions, Imām ‘Alī called upon his combatants to replace it with praise for God. It is questionable whether such vanity could be attributed to Imām ‘Alī. What is more, he praises himself, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’, and her sons, instead of “my sons” or “our sons,” and lastly, the Messenger of God. Was this author attempting to elevate ‘Alī above the Prophet Muḥammad? If so, it might hint at so-called Ghulāt influences.

TRADITION 22

THE ḤADĪTH OF THE HORSE OF ‘ALĪ AND HIS SWORD

22.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 154 r -155 r / 495-496).

22.2 Tradition

One day, the Prophet was with his companions and ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him. ‘Alī was a thin young man with a yellowish complexion and with little physical strength. A horse descended from heaven along with a sword. The horse was fully saddled and harnessed and the sword was in the sheath of the saddle. When they saw it, the companions asked: “O Messenger of Allāh! Which one of us should get that horse?” He replied: “Let the bravest warrior get it!” Immediately, one of the bravest of the warriors went out after the horse. Once the horse saw him, it fled, and he was unable to get it. He returned and another one set off but was unable to catch it. One by one, they all went, and none of them were able to catch it.

‘Alī never went after the horse because he was too feeble. When Muḥammad noticed that, he said: “Go after the horse, ‘Alī!” And it was a beautiful yellow horse. And they asked: “O Muḥammad! How can ‘Alī catch the horse when none of us was able to catch it?” And he said: “Go and try your luck.” And ‘Alī set off to catch the horse. And when ‘Alī approached the horse, the horse stopped, and started to rub his head against ‘Alī. So ‘Alī took it, rode it, and took the sword in his hand. The horse was happy and excited with ‘Alī. It was thus that the companions and the Prophet Muḥammad all discovered the decree of ‘Alī. And this was the beginning of the bravery of ‘Alī. And all praise belongs to Allāh.

22.3 Commentary

I was unable to locate any such tradition in the canonical *ḥadīth* literature that I surveyed. Consequently, this *ḥadīth* might be unique to the Moriscos of al-Andalus. It is reminiscent of the common fairy tale motif of the youngest and least favored of three brothers who completes the magical task after his brothers fail, and the unexpected success of Arthur in drawing the sword from the stone.

According to most accounts, the Prophet Muḥammad presented the sword of *Dhū al-ḥiqār* to ‘Alī at the Battle of Uḥud. During the battle, ‘Alī struck one of his adversaries, breaking both his helmet and shield. Upon seeing this, the Prophet proclaimed: “There is no sword like *Dhū al-ḥiqār* and no hero [*fatā*] like ‘Alī.”

According to some sources, these words were heard at the battlefield in Badr after ‘Alī reportedly killed half of the unbelievers and then helped the Muslims kill the others. According to other versions, it was the Archangel Gabriel who came down from heaven and proclaimed these words. According to most accounts, ‘Alī used the sword at the Battle of the Trench where he sliced ‘Amr b. ‘Abd al-Wud, the hero of Quraysh, in half with one powerful blow even though he was fully armored. According to one interpretation, *Dhū al-ḥiqār* means “spine splitter,” which would seem fitting in this context. The sword was reportedly passed from ‘Alī, to al-Ḥasan, and from al-Ḥasan to al-Ḥusayn, who used it in the Battle of Karbalā’. Since then, the sword has been the symbol of honor and martyrdom.

The description of the sword differs from source to source. Some speak of parallel blades, others portray a more traditionally shaped scimitar, and yet others depict a split, V-shaped blade. Although Shī’ite traditions insist that the sword of the Prophet was passed from Imām to Imām, from ‘Alī to al-Mahdī, the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul displays a sword it claims to be *Dhū al-ḥiqār*. The sword of ‘Alī is one of the oldest and best-known symbols of Islām. Although it has symbolic value to some Sunnīs, it is particularly important to the Shī’ites, the Alevī, and the Šūfis. For the Shī’ah, *Dhū al-ḥiqār* represents the link between the Prophet and ‘Alī, it represents ‘Alī’s right to succession, and the right of succession of the Imāms. The passing of the Prophet’s sword from one Imām to the next Imām was a symbolic passing of the mantle, a type of appointment to the Imāmate. For the Šūfis, *Dhū al-ḥiqār* represents mystical power and the passing of esoteric knowledge from the Prophet to Imām ‘Alī. What is more, the two points of *Dhū al-ḥiqār* symbolize the lesser and the greater jihads. And since the spine is the major conduit of the body’s vital energy, both gross and subtle, for it to be split could also indicate a channeling of that energy in two different

directions, one outward and the other inward.

While most Sunnī and Shī‘ite sources say that the Prophet Muḥammad gave the sword of *Dhū al-fiqār* to ‘Alī, the Aljamiado-Morisco tradition in question claimed that both ‘Alī’s horse, and his sword, *Dhū al-fiqār*, descended from heaven specifically for him, by divine decree. Some sources state that the words “There is no hero like ‘Alī and there is no sword like *Dhū al-fiqār*” were simply heard on the battlefield. Other sources say that they were said by the Prophet. And yet others indicate that they were said by the Angel Gabriel. The Aljamiado-Morisco version of the story, which is perhaps one of the latest, may have been the result of one thousand years of snowballing.

While the tradition may have been developed by Sunnīs or Ṣūfīs, it is more likely that it is of Shī‘ite origin. As opponents of the ‘Alid claims to the caliphate and the Imāmate, the Sunnīs were more interested in downplaying the status of ‘Alī. It was the Shī‘ites, as opposed to the Sunnīs, who benefited from exalting the status of ‘Alī. Consequently, it comes as no surprise to find the following tradition in Shī‘ite sources: “I (Aḥmad b. Abī ‘Abd Allāh) asked him (Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā) about *Dhū al-fiqār*, the sword of the Messenger of Allāh: “Where does it come from?” He (Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā) said: “Jibrīl [Gabriel] brought it down from heaven. It is ornamented with silver and I have it with me” (Kulaynī). With this information in mind, it would be difficult to argue in favor of a Sunnī origin for the Morisco *ḥadīth* of ‘Alī and his sword.

TRADITION 23

THE ḤADĪTH OF THE GOLDEN CASTLE AND THE STORY OF THE SNAKE AND ‘ALĪ B. ABĪ ṬĀLIB

23.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the second volume of Manuscript 3226 from the Biblioteca del Palacio Real de Madrid (f 1r – f 39 r) which was transliterated by Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes (1924-2003) and included in his edition of *El libro de las batallas* [*The Book of Battles*] (1975: 326-344).

23.2 Tradition

Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm [In the Name of Allāh, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful]. The *ḥadīth* of the golden castle and the story of the snake and ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [May Allāh be pleased with him].

He said: It was related by Ishāq b. ‘Abd Allāh on the authority of Ishāq b. Mālik b. Qaysar Jabīr, on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, on the authority of Anas b. Mālik, on the authority of Mu‘ādh b. Ha..., on the authority of Wahb b. Munabbih, *raḥīmahu Allāh* [may Allāh have mercy upon him], on the authority of the Prophet Muḥammad *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], that he said:

The Messenger of Allāh completed the *‘asr* [afternoon] prayer with us. We saw him look at the heavens and we saw that his forehead was forming pearls of sweat. We then knew that Jibrīl [Gabriel], *‘alayhi salām* [peace be upon him], had descended upon him [with a revelation].

We said: “O our beloved! O Messenger of Allāh! Share with us your brother Jibrīl [Gabriel] has taught you!”

He turned his radiant face towards us, and started to relate to us that an Arab would come to ask us for help:

-- Receive him and introduce yourselves to him and prepare the answer, because this Arab will arrive today.

Wa Allāh! [By Allāh] The Prophet had not completed his words or finished what he wanted to share with us when an Arab appeared on the back of a female camel which was spewing froth from her mouth like chards of cotton. The Arab rider stopped at the door of the mosque and called out:

-- Things are good for you and even the birds sing for you. How else could it be, considering that the chosen Prophet Muḥammad is among you?

The Imām, the truthful, the noble Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq said:

-- O brother of the Arabs! Do you not see that man with a radiant face who is seated next to the *mihṛāb*? That is Muḥammad, the chosen one. Allāh blesses him day and night.

The Arab dismounted his female camel, and said to him:

-- Peace be upon you, O Muḥammad, in particular, and upon your companions as a whole!

-- O companion of Peace! Who are you?

He told him:

-- I am an Arab from the honorable Banū Qays. We have believed in you even without seeing you. We have confirmed what you have said. And you have sent to us a delegation from your people. They have read us the Qur’ān and have taught us the meaning of the profession [of faith]. They have helped us distinguish between darkness and light. They have taught us the path of truth. And we have recognized that you are Muḥammad, the chosen prophet. Know, O Messenger of Allāh, that in our territory there is a castle known as “the golden castle” which is inhabited by a huge snake that has devoured our livestock, our cattle, and our camels. It lies in wait along paths, devours the caravans and the travelers, and attacks servants. Despite all our strength and efforts, we have not succeeded in killing it. By chance, out of your great honor and goodness, please send us someone to defend us from its harm since we are with Allāh and with you, O Messenger of Allāh!

Upon hearing these words, the Messenger of Allāh, *ṣalla Allāhu alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], told him: *wa lā quwwata illā billāhi al-‘Alīyyu al-‘Aẓīm* [there is no might nor power except Allāh, the Great, and Mighty].

[The narrator] said that the Prophet Muḥammad called al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad al-Kindī and Abū Hudayfah al-Anṣārī and they did not stop standing up until one thousand knights stood before the Messenger of Allāh. He called al-Faḍl, the son of al-‘Abbās, and ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with them], and he dressed in his armor, and he mounted his horse. Al-Abbās did the same thing, and they arrived before

the Messenger of Allāh. The Prophet, *'alayhi al-salām* [peace be upon him], approached 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, who was the leader of this army. He stood in front of the people and said:

-- We respond to the call. Whoever responds to the call of the pious will be blessed. There is no fear and humiliation from Allāh nor should there be any fear for the encounter that is about to take place as it is a proven enchantment. There is no religion but the religion of Muḥammad. Woe to him who prefers another religion and who denies the religion of Islām.

The narrator said:

'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, turned, and proceeded with the banner in his right hand. He journeyed and guided the people until that came across a clan of the Banū Qays. They came out to greet them with the greatest reverence and honor, and they placed great gifts on the ground in front of them. They had prepared for them delicious goods and slaughtered many cows and livestock for 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and his followers which 'Alī and his followers ate.

When they had finished eating, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib said:

-- How far is the golden castle from here? And who will take me there?

A very elderly man stood up and told them:

-- Men. I will guide you to its location. I know the path from here to the golden castle very well.

'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, told him:

-- O honorable elder! Tell me about that castle.

-- At your service, O 'Alī! It is an extraordinarily strong castle: its doors are made of iron and its floor is made of purple amber. It was built by Shadād b. 'Ad, the son of Thamūd, the son of king 'Aqīn, in the time of the gentiles. He built it and raised its dam and its towers exceedingly high. He covered it and opened in this castle many doors between two places. He raised its walls high and he decorated it with what seems like glass stone. Its doors were made of ivory. He covered its walls with gold, its corners with silver, its pillars with plaster, and its canons with pipes of lead. The barbican or fortified outpost of this castle is made of alabaster, some of which is white, and some of which is of different colors. They built extremely high walls that shine. It is surrounded by delightful rivers, orchards, groves, fountains, and watermills. The castle was constructed at the intersection of many roads and paths, some of which go to Yemen, some of which go to Syria. In the past, it was inhabited by kings and brave warriors. Its fame reached both the east and the west until that snake arrived that has laid waste to our croplands, olive groves, livestock, and beasts of burden. It lays in wait along the paths and impoverishes the cities and places that surround the castle.

The narrator said:

-- When 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, heard this, he said:

-- Where is Khālīd b. al-Walīd al-Makhzūmī?

He answered his call. He called upon Miqdād b. al-Aswad al-Kindī, and 'Umar b. Yāsir al-Qurayshī, and Amr the son of Umayyah al-Damrī, and told them:

-- Ride your horses to this castle and bring me news about it.

The riders rode off, traveling through very rough terrain and uninhabited deserts, traveling along hard, dark, earth, with nobody with whom to speak, nor any spies along the road to consult, only the worst of the sons of Iblīs, the damned.

They walked until the golden castle appeared. They saw that the doors of the castle had turned to ash. Any time someone attempted to approach the castle, they would see a tall cloud of smoke inside of the castle. Khālīd and his companions stood around it.

'Ammār said:

-- While we were looking at the castle's door, we saw what looked like a black hill leaving the castle, as if it were a gloomy night, and the smoke which approached as if were a hill. While we were watching, we saw the shape of a huge snake, which poked its head out of castle's door. Its mouth was so big that when it opened it, it looked like a cave. Pillars of smoke were coming out of its mouth, burning any greenery that surrounded it. We heard a sound like thunder coming from it. And we saw a giant snake slithering towards us on its stomach and on its side. We were terrified, fearful, and bewildered. Hence, we turned back, fleeing to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu 'anhu*.

When 'Alī saw us, he stood up and said: "Why has the color of your faces turned yellow?"

Khālīd b. al-Walīd then described to him the snake, the fire, and the smoke.

'Alī said: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāhi al-'Alīyyu al-'Aẓīm* [there is no might nor power but Allāh, the Great and Mighty].

He rode off on his horse and ordered that his people ride with him as well. They set off, tearing up the soil from far and wide, until they reached the golden castle. It was a great castle which illuminated the surroundings. He ordered the Muslims to sit down and they sat down. Moreover, they placed a carpet and a chair for 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. The people gathered around him, to the right and to the left.

A moment has barely passed when 'Umar the son of Yāsir al-Qurayshī said:

-- While we were sitting, a tall fire came out of the castle's door towards us. We saw that its flames were as high as hills, rising into the sky. The earth turned into an ember, and the fire and smoke reached us. When it surrounded us, there was not even one of us that did not get anguished. The sweat was flowing [from our bodies], our anguish increased, and the feat before us seemed overwhelming. The horses fled, breaking their reigns, and the swordsmen fled: one thousand in total. Not a single horse remained but the horse of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) which stood in front of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

[The narrator] said that when 'Alī saw this, he shouted out at the top of his voice:

-- O horses! O those who hide from authority! Respond! Respond! Obey the cousin of the Messenger of Allāh! And return to your companions.

[The narrator] said:

-- When the horses heard the voice of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu 'anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], they turned around and stood in front of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. 'Alī approached them and rubbed their faces with his sleeve, thereby removing any fear, terror, or panic that they felt.

'Alī, *raḍī Allāhu 'anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], then told us:

-- Ride your horses.

And we rode.

The narrator of the *ḥadīth* then said:

-- We were terrified and fearful at the sight of such a feat.

'Alī, *raḍī Allāhu 'anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], then said:

-- Do not be afraid of this feat. And do not have afraid of what you have seen. By Allāh! There is no doubt that what you will see on this day will terrify the elderly, astound the young, and will make the angels in heaven marvel.

-- Khālīd b. al-Walīd said: While 'Alī was thinking, and we were thinking as well, a dark black smoke came out of the door of the castle towards us and which spread from east to west, and from right to left, so much so that we could not distinguish between one another due to the thickness of the smoke. We shrank in fear. We heard cries and tremendous words that shook the earth from wide and far. We were filled with great fear and terror. We were all convinced that we would perish. 'Alī, *raḍī Allāhu 'anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], was reassuring us with his words. He showed no fear or terror like we did. Not a moment had passed that we learned about ourselves. We looked to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāh 'anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], who was increasing in his determination. We were looking for a sign for when he became determined, the color of his face would change.

Al-Walīd said: I was bold and told him:

-- Let it take you over, O beloved! O Abū al-Ḥasan! Let your determination take control over you.

And patience returned to him.

He later said: he turned to al-Zubayr, the son of al-‘Awwām, and told him:

-- O ‘Abd Allāh! This is neither the time nor place to mount your horse.

Dismount your horse.

Al-Zubayr then dismounted from his horse and told him:

-- O Abū al-Ḥasan! Command me and I will obey.

‘Alī, *raḍī Allāh ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], told him:

-- O Abā ‘Abd Allāh! Will you help me confront death today?

He told him:

-- Yes, O cousin of the Messenger of Allāh!

‘Alī, *raḍī Allāh ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], told him:

-- Prepare yourself for death.

Al-Zubayr covered himself with his armor which was covered with silver decorations. He drew his sword, took a colored headdress, and wrapped it around his head. Zubayr was a well-built man. He went and stood at the side of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāh ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him].

‘Alī then turned to Qays, the son of Sa‘d, and told him.

-- O ‘Abd Allāh! Will you help me confront death today?

He told him:

-- Yes, O cousin of the Messenger of Allāh (Ṣ)!

He told him:

-- Prepare yourself for death.

He then dismounted his horse, dressed himself with a headdress, a headdress of chain mail, decorated with gold. He put on a yellow headdress and drew his sword. He took it out of its scabbard and took an armor helmet... He then stood at the right of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāh ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him].

He then turned to al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad al-Kindī, and ‘Umar b. Yāsir al-Qurayshī, and told them something similar to what he said to the others.

They gathered together and lined up in front of ‘Alī, *raḍī Allāh ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him].

‘Alī then told them:

-- Dismount your horse and turn them back.

And they did so.

He then told them:

-- If that snake overcomes me, and you see that we are powerless against it, then each of you should flee to your battle shelter, enter inside it, and cover yourselves with your shields. When the serpent returns towards the castle, you must ride to the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him] and inform him of our plight.

‘Alī, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], then dressed himself with his war apparel, and covered his head with the headdress of the Prophet Muḥammad. He drew the sword known as *Dhū al-ḥiqār* and took the shield of war of his uncle Hamzah b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib. He went to the door of the castle, made a loud cry, and knocked.

The narrator of the *ḥadīth* said:

-- We felt his voice from the fortress. It was as if the heavens had opened or the earth was split and the mountains were changing places.

‘Ammār said:

-- At that moment, we saw large sparks of fire come out of the door of the castle towards him and we were filled with fear.

[The narrator] said:

‘Alī, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], returned to us, and said:

-- This is not a snake from this world. Instead, it is an evil jinn. Moreover, there is no doubt that it is the leader of its people, and that he has many tribes under his rule.

[When we heard this], we were filled with fear and terror. ‘Alī, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], was not the least bit afraid. In fact, he returned towards the door of the castle while reciting the Qur’ān. [While he did so], small rocks were trembling all around him like hail when it falls from the sky. ‘Alī, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], was terribly upset with himself. *Wa Allāh!* [By Allāh!] Neither we nor ‘Alī, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], could reach the door of the castle due to the powerful flames and the great smoke [which emanated from therein].

When ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib saw this, he turned to us with his beautiful face, and said:

-- Stay firm and remain in this spot. By Him who brings light to both east and west! None but I shall defeat [the jinn]. If I survive, it will only be through the help of Allāh, *ta ‘ālā* [the Most High]. If it is another [who defeats the jinn], then it will be the will of Allāh, there is no lord but Him, the Living, the Self-Subsistent. And if my time has come, send my salaams to the Messenger of Allāh, to al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, and to the wives of the Prophet (Ṣ).

When the Muslims heard ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, say these words, they broke out in tears.

Al-Zubayr, the son of al-‘Awwām, responded to him saying:

-- O cousin of the Messenger of Allāh! How could we return to the Messenger of Allāh, *ta ‘ālā* [the Most High], in such a state? Shall we not join you and die defending you?

-- O Zubayr! Stand firm and remain steady in your place until you see what happens. The end has been written by the Pen of Allāh. Everything that happened, and every that will happen, is according to the will of Allāh. There is no might nor power but with Allāh, the Great and Mighty.

‘Alī bid farewell to his companions and approached the door of the castle. He let out a cry that we heard from the castle. It was as if the heavens had opened, as if the earth were ripped open, and as if the hills were moving places. And we heard a cry coming from the middle of the castle and our faces became blackened with smoke. ‘Alī, may Allāh have mercy on him, opened the door of the castle, and disappeared for an hour. We heard a cry like thunder coming from the middle of the castle. The people feared that they would be lost, and we said:

-- Your promise. O He who respects His promise. Lord! O Allāh! O Allāh! O Allāh! By the power of [sūrah twenty of the Qur’ān], and Yāsīn [Sūrah 36] of the Honorable Qur’ān, do not make our hearts anxious for ‘Alī. O Lord of the Worlds! By the virtue of Yāsīn [Sūrah 36] and *Qul huwa Allāhu aḥad* [Say: He is God, One God], in your power, not in the sadness of the hearts of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, for you have promised your Prophet (ﷺ) that you will help him, and when you promise, you do not break your promise.

Khālīd b. al-Walīd said:

-- By Allāh! I saw al-Zubayr scratching the earth with his hands while saying:

-- You have lost ‘Alī, O brothers! He used to comfort us with his voice.

The cries and the smoke continued, and the smoke was spewing out rising. The smoke covered the face of the earth, and we did not hear ‘Alī’s voice.

Al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwām said:

-- Come with us to the castle and we will see what Allāh has done through ‘Alī, may Allāh have mercy on him! And we when reach it, by power of Allāh and his Prophet (ﷺ), we will know with certainty.

The narrator said:

When we got close to the castle, fire came out of the castle, which reached everyone, and which lit up everything before us, next to us, and below us. A great dragon came out of the castle towards us, which destroyed

the trees it came across and burned the ground with its breath. It could be heard from far away like a terrible thunder. Eight flames of fire were coming out of it. We rushed to our war shelters, and each one of us entered his shelter and turned their shield towards it.

The dragon came upon us, surrounding us, in less than a moment. It went after the horses. It blew one breath and with it consumed all the horses apart from the horse of Muḥammad (Ṣ).

Al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwām said:

-- When it went away, we came out of our shelters, and we looked for the horses, and we found that they were nothing but ash blowing in the wind. By the Lord of the *Qiblah*, we were saddened, saddened at the death of ‘Alī.

While we were crying, and wanted to flee, we saw an older man approach us. He was tall and had a beautiful face. He came with strong judgments and words of warning.

When he approached us, he told us:

-- O companions of Muḥammad, *‘alayhi salām* [peace be upon him]! You will only join ‘Alī, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], in death.

They told him:

-- O older man! What has happened?

He said:

-- One of the wretched jinn has been joined by fifty thousand of his companions and cursed devils to fight him. He is fighting with them as we speak, and he is asking you to save him.

We were stunned. We were uncertain as to what we should do. We wanted to break down the wall.

It came out towards us and cried. So we ran back to our shelters. We all entered our shelters placing our shields on top.

The narrator said:

Let us turn to Fāṭimah, the wife of ‘Alī, daughter of the Prophet Muḥammad (Ṣ). She was in the house of Maslamatah. While she was sleeping, Allāh made her see her husband, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, in her dreams, along with the castle, its miracles, the jinn, the devils, and the various types of demons. She saw what was happening and woke up frightened.

Umm Salamah asked her:

-- O Fāṭimah! What is wrong?

She stood up screaming:

-- My beloved! O al-Ḥasan! My soul for your soul and my life for your life.

When her servant, Fiḍḍah, came to her, she told her:

-- O Fiḍḍah. Go to the mosque. Call my father, the Messenger of Allāh (Ṣ), and ask him to come if he wants to find his daughter still alive as she is in the throes of death, ready to leave this life for the next one.

She went to the mosque, as did Sa‘ūd, to tell the Prophet (Ṣ) to come see his daughter Fāṭimah, the Radiant One, alive, before she left this life for the next one as she was on the verge of death.

Sa‘ūd entered the presence of the Prophet and gave him the news. He stood up, took off running with his shoes in his hands, while asking:

-- What has happened to my daughter Fāṭimah, the Radiant One? What news has reached her that has frightened her so much but which my friend Jibrīl [Gabriel] has not shared with me? What has happened to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh have mercy upon him and forgive him, which my friend Jibrīl [Gabriel] has not shared with me?

He reached the house of Fāṭimah, his daughter, who was on the porch of her house, with tears running down her cheeks like rain. Her sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, were passing in front of her. She was crying as she said:

-- O my Lord and Protector! Help and defend ‘Alī!

When the Prophet reached her, he cried out and said:

-- O apple of my eyes! Why are you crying? May Allāh keep your eyes from crying!

-- O father! How shall I not cry when ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is in a state of loss.

The Prophet asked:

-- And how is that?

She said:

-- O father! I was resting with my head on the skirt of Umm Salamah. I fell asleep and, in my dreams, I saw ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], surrounded by demons (*ifrites*), jinn, and devils. He was in a fierce battle with them. The fighting was so intense that the iron was melting from the blade of his sword. ‘Alī is very astonished and perplexed. He does not know what to do. He is doing *jihād* against the jinn and he is crying out:

-- O Fāṭimah! Tell your father to send me help for I am in the midst of the fiercest *jihād*. By Allāh and for the love of Allāh!

[Fāṭimah implored]: I am asking you to save ‘Alī, and to have pity upon his sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. And they cry, and they say: “O grandfather! We ask you, by Allāh, the Great, that you take us to our father, for the love of Allāh.”

The Prophet (Ṣ) hugged them and kissed them between their eyes. He said:

-- O Fāṭimah! If what you say is true, nothing is hidden from my Lord in both the heavens and the earth. I am waiting for my friend Jibrīl [Gabriel], *'alayhi al-salām* [peace be upon him], to descend upon him.

Jibrīl [Gabriel], peace be upon him, descended upon him, and told him:

-- Salaam be upon you, O Muḥammad, and His *rahmah* [mercy] and His *barakah* [blessings]! O Muḥammad! The Most-High sends you his salutations. He distinguishes you with reverence and honor. He asks you to send his salutations to Fāṭimah. Tell her not to be sad, afraid or fearful for her husband 'Alī as I will bring him to her safe and sound. O Muḥammad! I have sent him some of my closest angels. If I were to ask one of those angels who are with him to tear up the heavens and the earth, they will tear them all up with trees, rivers, and all. Do not worry. Do not be sad. Do not cry for the Most Powerful One is with him, which none can overcome, and the One who created him, who is powerful over all things.

[The narrator] said: When the Prophet (ﷺ) explained to her what Jibrīl [Gabriel], *'alayhi salām* [peace be upon him], told him, she became happy and regained her strength.

The Prophet (ﷺ) then completed two units of prayer, and said:

-- O Allāh! O my Lord! By the right of your friend Ibrāhīm [Abraham]! By the right of Mūsā [Moses], with whom you spoke, reveal yourself to me and my beloved 'Alī, may Allāh have mercy upon him.

It was then heard they shouted to him:

-- Look, O Muḥammad! None compares to you among the prophets, and there is none with a higher station than yours. I have given you what you have requested. Order the earth as you wish since Allāh has ordered it to obey you one thousand years before Allāh created Adam, *'alayhi salām* [peace be upon him]. When night arrives, and the eight shall sleep, and nothing remains in two houses but the Self Sustaining, do as you wish, O Muḥammad!

Then, as it was night, and the people were sleeping, Fāṭimah took the hands of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn and went to the hills of 'Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī since there were no higher hills in the city. And she cried out to the earth so that it would fold and engulf the castle, its doors, its rooms, and its dragon.

The earth was folded until the castle in the hills was only forty elbows away. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saw the castle, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh have mercy upon him, the jinn, the *'afārūt* [demons], the Satans, who had 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib circled while he battled them with his right and left hands.

The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, cried out:

-- Stop killing the jinns and the devils and turn to kill the unknown, cursed dragon, who is the king of his companions. Perchance, you will defeat him.

‘Alī, may Allāh have mercy upon him, heard the voice of the Prophet (ﷺ) and turned to kill the dragon. He cried out, turned towards it with the sword of the Prophet, *‘alayhi salām* [peace be upon him], while Jibrīl [Gabriel], *‘alayhi salām* [peace be upon him], helped him to kill him. And he wounded it so severely that he cut it in half. One half of it was flung to the east and the other was flung to the west. When the jinn saw that their king was dead, they turned towards ‘Alī and charged while ‘Alī cried out:

-- By Allāh! I will not be done with you until you are all dead for Allāh is with me and He will help me overcome you!

And ‘Alī set off [to fight them]. He approached them, attacking them from the middle and leaving their rear-guard. He did to them what the strong wind does when the sea is rough and what fire does to wood. The angels helped him in his fight. He did not stop attacking them until he made them all perish, and blood flowed from their hands as blood flows in fast-flowing currents.

The troops then cried out.

-- Give us safety, O ‘Alī!

He raised his sword towards them, and they became Muslims at the hands of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered that the earth return the castle to its place, and it returned, within the blink of an eye, the distance of eight days of travel.

‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, left the castle, and he did not find any of his companions. He went to the shelters and found them. Since they recognized the voice of ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, they came out to hug him and they kissed him between the eyes and said:

-- Praise be to Allāh who blessed us with ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

He returned with them to the castle. When they entered the castle, they saw that blood was flowing like a deluge in the middle of it.

A caller cried out:

-- I give you glad tidings, O ‘Alī! Seventeen thousand jinns, and cursed demons died at your hand, and Allāh helped you against them.

The narrator of the *ḥadīth* said that ‘Alī, may Allāh have mercy upon him, spent the night in that castle. He woke up at dawn, performed his ablutions with the water from the castle, and prayed two units of the ritual morning prayer [*fajr*]. He emptied the castle of the [dead] jinn and demons. He then called for the Banū Qays. They came to him. And he told them:

-- ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib orders that you inhabit and populate this castle, that you occupy its lands, orchards, and trees.

They did as they were ordered by 'Alī and he returned to the city of the Prophet full of happiness. The tribes were overjoyed and marveled at his courage. He returned to the city safe and sound. The Prophet Muḥammad (Ṣ) came out to greet him. He hugged him. He held him against his chest. He kissed him between his eyes. His sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, did the same as their grandfather Muḥammad (Ṣ). He turned to the mosque and the people were coming. They were greeting him and praising him with reverence and honor.

The people of the *ḥadīth* wrote down what he did and what he had seen of the tribulations, miracles, and great fortunes. The people were astonished at his courage, and the sharpness of his senses, may Allāh be pleased with him.

The people wrote down everything they heard and witnessed and started to relate this *ḥadīth* with all its information, covering his courage and the sharpness of his senses, until the Day of Judgment. May Allāh have mercy upon him!

This is the end of the *ḥadīth* of the golden castle, the dragon, and the knight 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. *Wa alḥamdulillāhi* [And praise be to Allāh].

23.3 Commentary

The legend of 'Alī, the Snake and the Golden Castle is an allegory of the battle between the *Rūḥ* or Spirit of Allāh (often personified as Jibrīl) and the *naḥs al-ammārah bi al-sū'*, the "soul-commanding-to-evil", for possession of the City of *al-Qalb*, the Heart. This is a common Ṣūfī motif. That the castle is seen with eight flames issuing from it identifies it as the psychic or intermediary plane, the *barzakh* (isthmus) between the earth, whose symbol is the square, and the celestial plane, whose symbol is the circle. Within the human microcosm this *barzakh* is, precisely, the Heart. In Islāmic architecture and graphic design, the octagon -- as for example in the fountain or pool at the Alhambra -- is a symbol of this same *barzakh*, as are the eight corners of the Ka'bah.

After Muḥammad prays to Allāh for the deliverance of 'Alī, and Jibrīl descends upon them, after which he prays a second time that Allāh reveal Himself to both him and 'Alī, Jibrīl tells him: "When night arrives, and the eight shall sleep, and nothing remains in two houses but the Self Sustaining, do as you wish, O Muḥammad!" "Night" is a symbol of *fanā'*, self-annihilation. That "the eight shall sleep" indicates that, in the Night of Annihilation, the psychic activity of the Heart is stilled, consequently nothing but Allāh remains in "the two houses", in the *dunyā* and the *akhirah*, in this world and the next. And when the Prophet Muḥammad cries out to

‘Alī to stop killing the *Jinn* one-by-one but instead to concentrate all his energy on slaying the dragon, this is good spiritual direction. If we spend all our efforts trying to eradicate individual sins and passions, one by one, they will overwhelm us; there is no time in any human life to accomplish this feat. The real task is to slay the source of all of them, the *nafs al-ammārah bi al-sū’* -- Abū Madyan (d. 1198) called it “the forest of the jinn” -- whose essence is *self-will and self-identification*.

In some versions of the Eastern Orthodox Christian icon of St. George as a mounted knight slaying a dragon with his lance, an angel appears above the saint’s head, reminiscent of Jibrīl. The notion of conquering demons, subduing them, and converting them to the true religion is also found in Vajrayana (Tibetan) Buddhism. Interestingly, the notion of the *barzakh* as an intermediate state between one phase or plane and another also appears in the Vajrayana, where it is known as the *bardo*. One wonders if these words are etymologically related.

The origin of the “Ḥadīth of the Golden Castle and the Story of the Snake and ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib” is yet undetermined. It does recall the fantastic tone found in the works of Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Bakrī, a thirteenth-century Shī‘ite from Baṣrah, Iraq, and the miraculous and fabulous legends compiled by the seventeenth century Majlisī. While different, there is a tradition in Mufīd’s *Kitāb al-irshād* which describes one of Imām ‘Alī’s miraculous victories against the armies of the jinn. Accounts of Imām ‘Alī’s encounter with snakes are numerous.

Tradition has it that while Imām ‘Alī was preaching in Kūfah Great Mosque a serpent appeared and approached him. The terrified congregation tried to protect him, but he called to the serpent to come to him, whereupon he bent down and was seen to converse with it. After the serpent left, the people asked him what it had wanted of him. He replied that the serpent was the ruler of a congregation of Djinns and had come to consult him on a theological problem that was troubling them. On answering this question, the serpent had then asked for his blessing. As it had left the mosque through the gate opposite the *qiblah*, this gate has been henceforth known as Bābu al-Thu‘abān, or the “Gate of the Serpent.” Hann et al. 283)

As Ismail Ḥamīd notes,

the first accounts about ‘Alī and his children were recorded in Shī‘ī traditions. Dwight M. Donaldson points that that after the tragedy of Karbalā’ Muslim storytellers and poets who sympathized with the house of ‘Alī began to record the accounts of ‘Alī and his children, and these accounts of ‘Alī were developed into narratives and legendary tales... Examples of such narratives which were created about ‘Alī b. Abū Talib

are *Mawlid al-Imām 'Alī bin Abū Ṭālib* (*The Story of the Birth of Imām 'Alī*), *Sīrah al-Imām 'Alī bin Abū Ṭālib* (*The Biography of Imām 'Alī*), *Hadīth Nikaḥ 'Alī bin Abū Ṭālib*, *Min Fāṭimah* (*The Story of 'Alī's Marriage to Fāṭimah*), *Qissah Khātim Imām 'Alī* (*The Story of 'Alī's Ring*), *Qissah Ghazwah Qaṣr al-Dhahab wa al-Thu'abān wa al-Imām 'Alī* (*The Story of the Battle of the Golden Palace, the Snake and Imām 'Alī*). (110)

These popular, adventurous, and highly entertaining tales were used to introduce people to Islām and to educate new Muslims. As Ismail Ḥamīd notes, “The spread of Persian literature to the subcontinent of India brought about the diffusion of these legendary tales to the East and later reached the Malay Archipelago” (134). And just as these fantastic pedagogical stories flowed east, brought by sailors, merchants, storytellers, and missionaries, they also flowed west into North Africa and Spain. In fact, many of the legends found among the *Ḥikāyat* literature of the Malays and Indonesians are also found in Aljamiado literature of the Moriscos and they all appear to have a common source: early Shi'ism. As Hārūn Mat Piat confirms,

Works such as the *Ḥikāyat Fāṭimah*, *Ḥikāyat 'Alī Kahwin*, *Ḥikāyat Nabī Mengajar 'Alī*, *Ḥikāyat Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Umar* and *Ḥikāyat Abū Bakar*, all venerate the sanctity and self-sacrifice of 'Alī, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn [sic], and dismiss the Umayyads [sic] as hypocrites and the enemies of Islām. (341)

Another important Malay literary work is *Ḥikāyat Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah* (637-700) which centers around the third son of Imām 'Alī and the half-brother of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. The work relates Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah's epic role in the revolt against Yazīd (Fang 224-229). The fact that over thirty manuscripts of the text survive is a testament to its early popularity. In fact, it was read to inspire Malay warriors during the siege of Malacca in 1511. Most importantly, “it attests to a Shi'ite presence in the Malay world at the very beginning of Islāmization” (Bonney 172). Since the Malaysians and Indonesians share the same literary and religious substrata as the Moriscos, the evidence points to a primordial Shi'ite presence in al-Andalus.

As studies on Malaysian and Indonesian literature reveals, this early Shi'ite literature appears to have originated in Persia and Yemen. The Persian influence passed through the medium of India before reaching Malaysia and Indonesia while the Yemeni influence arrived by means of sailors, traders, and settlers, many of whom were 'Alawiyyūn or sayyids who descended from 'Alī (Binti Elias 25-62; Marchinkowski n. page). As Liaw Yock Fang acknowledges in *A History of Classical Malay Literature*,

The Shī'ites must have had a great deal of influence in Indonesia in the past. To this day, their influence can still be clearly seen. In Padang, Sumatra, for example, the death of Ḥusain is still commemorated in a play known as "tābūt." During the day of mourning, the martyrdom of Ḥusain and his funeral is re-enacted. The actors wail and make an extravagant display of their grief throughout their performance. (228)

While some early Malaysian and Indonesian literature was explicitly Shī'ite in content, it was eventually purged of its earliest "heterodox" tendencies (Marchinkowski n. page). As Edwin Wieringa concludes,

the prominent place of 'Alī and Fāṭimah in Malay *ḥikāyat* literature is to be explained by the early introduction of these stories as popular reading matter for neophytes when Indonesian Islām still had a Shī'ah tinge. In the course of time the popular stories, in which 'Alī and his family played a prevalent part, were gradually neutralized to such an extent that no Sunni believer could object to them." (107)

If one scratches the surface of Malaysian and Indonesian Islām, however, one finds "a profound 'heterodox' mystical tradition with, at times, strong Shī'ite under-currents dating back to the time of the arrival of Islām in the region, hidden under a veneer of Sunnī legalism" (Marchinkowski n. page). The same process, to varying degrees, may have taken place in Spain.

The depiction of Imām 'Alī found in the Aljamiado-Morisco Ḥadīth of the Golden Castle is saturated with Shī'ite sentiments. The Shī'ites, more than the Sunnīs, present Imām 'Alī as possessing miraculous abilities. The centrality of the Prophet, Fāṭimah, 'Alī, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn, also serves to exalt *ahl al-bayt*. As such, the "Tale of the Golden Palace and the Story of the Snake," "Imām 'Alī and the Forty Girls," the "Battle of al-Ashyab b. Hanqar," and the "Battle of the King al-Muhalhal b. al-Fayyadh," have been included in the *Encyclopedia of Imām 'Alī* as 'Alawite mythological epics (Touraihī 616-697).

Whether it is of Zaydī, Ismā'īlī or Imāmī origin, the *Ḥadīth of the Golden Castle*, which appears to be a legend inspired by the City of the Pillars mentioned in the Qur'ān (89:6-14), namely Iram, a sort of Atlantis of the Sands, appears to belong to the body of Aljamiado-Morisco Shī'ite literature.

TRADITION 24

THE ḤADĪTH OF ‘ALĪ AND THE FORTY DAMSELS

24.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript Gay T. 18 from the Academia de la Historia in Madrid (f. 114 r – f 120 r) which was transliterated by Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes (1924-2003) and included in his edition of *El libro de las batallas* [*The Book of Battles*] (1975: 344-55).

24.2 Tradition

Ibn ‘Abbās, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], said that when ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], got married to Fāṭimah, the Radiant, he had nothing in his house but seven units of dry measure of barley.

‘Alī said: O Fāṭimah! The seven measures will be for seven days. Ground one of them each day, and when they will be finished, Allāh will open the heavens and the earth for us.

When morning came, Fāṭimah went to the mill with the henna that remained on her hands. On the second day she wanted to grind some grain, forty damsels dressed in silk clothing, pearls, and rubies passed her by, accompanied by an older woman, may Allāh curse her.

When they passed Fāṭimah, the old woman told her: O Fāṭimah! Where is your beauty? Where is your image? Where is your self-worth? O Fāṭimah! You could have married a warrior from the Banī Quraysh. [Had you done so] you would be dressed in silk, pearls, and rubies, like these damsels. [However], you married ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and he has four faults: ‘Alī owns few horses, ‘Alī has a big belly, ‘Alī has thin legs, and ‘Alī is poor and owns little or nothing.

They set off and left her crying.

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib came upon her, found her crying, and asked her: O Fāṭimah! Why are you crying?

She said: O ‘Alī! The Banū Quraysh came to me and explained to me that you have four faults.

‘Alī asked her: And what are those four flaws?

She told him: O ‘Alī! They told me that you own few horses.

‘Alī said: They told you the truth, O Fāṭimah! By Allāh! I own few horses. I wear an armor helmet on my head that I never remove.

She said: ‘O ‘Alī! They told me that you have a big belly.

He said: O Fāṭimah! They have told you the truth for your father, the Prophet, told me that he was the city of knowledge, and that I was its gate, and that whoever wishes to enter the city must first pass through the gate.

She said: O ‘Alī! They told me that you have thin legs.

He said: They told you the truth, O Fāṭimah! When I ride my horse, my horse counts for seven, my shield counts for seven, my legs count for seven, and my lance counts for seven. They are all brave. I injure the unbelievers within the distance of twenty palms.

She said: O ‘Alī! They told me that you are poor and that you own little or nothing.

‘Alī told her: O Fāṭimah! Are you not ashamed to shame me for my poverty when your father, the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him] is more impoverished than I am?

When ‘Alī had finished saying these things, Fāṭimah became terribly upset and went to the house of her father, the Prophet Muḥammad.

[Meanwhile], ‘Alī had repented for what he had said, saying: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāhi al-‘Alīyyu al-‘Azīm* [there is no might nor power but Allāh, the Great and Mighty].

‘Alī said: How will I face the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, if he asks me about the rights of Fāṭimah?

He spent that day, the second day, and the third day without coming out of his house. On the fourth day, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], completed the *zuhr* prayer, after which he raised his hands to the heavens and said:

-- O Lord! O my Lord and Master! I ask you by the honor of this honorable prophet! Send to me an army of unbelievers to surround this city so that the heart of Fāṭimah and the heart of her father become happy. O He who says “Be!” and it is!

Ibn ‘Abbās said that once ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib completed his prayer, someone knocked on his door.

‘Alī asked: Who is knocking on my door?

It was said to him: Bilāl b. Ḥamāmah, the muezzin of the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings

of Allāh be upon him].

‘Alī asked him: And what is that you want, O Bilāl?

He said: O ‘Alī! The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], is calling for you.

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib said: The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], is only calling me to ask about Fāṭimah’s rights. Woe to me on this day! How shall I stand in front of the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], and his companions?

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], accompanied Bilāl b. Ḥamāmah until they arrived in front of the Prophet Muḥammad and his companions. ‘Alī found the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], in the company of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān, Mu‘ādh b. Jabal, Sa’d b. Abī Waqqās, Khālid b. al-Walīd, Abī ‘Ubaydatī b. al-Jarrāh, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhum ajma‘īna* [may Allāh be pleased with all of them].

The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], said:

-- O ‘Alī! You have neglected the Muslims. O ‘Alī! Climb up that minaret (*al-ṣawma‘ah*) and see what has come to the Muslims.

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib climbed and he saw an army of unbelievers composed of eighty thousand unbelieving knights who had the city under siege from all parts.

The situation made ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib incredibly happy.

-- Praise be to you, O my Lord! You have answered my prayer. You have brought joy to my heart. O Him who says to a thing “Be” and it is!

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib lowered himself from the minaret [*al-ṣawma‘ah*]. ‘Alī told the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him]: *Yā Rasūl Allāh* [O Messenger of Allāh]! What have you ordered regarding this army?

The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], said: O ‘Alī! We have ordered an event.

‘Alī asked: What event?

The Prophet Muḥammad said: ‘O ‘Alī! Today is Friday. We shall give the *khuṭbah* [sermon] to the Muslims. Tomorrow is Monday, the Easter of the Christians, may Allāh curse them. *Inshā’ Allāh*, we will go out [against them] on Monday with the *muhājirīn* and the *anṣār*. [Author’s note: Monday, of course, does not immediately follow Friday, and Easter is

always on a Sunday, not a Monday.]

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib said: *Yā Rasūl Allāh* [O Messenger of Allāh]! They have kept the city under siege for seven days while ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is in it. By the honor of my Lord and His nobility, none but I will go out against them. I am confident that Allāh will help me for He is powerful over all things.

The companions said: O ‘Alī! We fear for you since the army is great and contains many people.

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], said: *Yā Rasūl Allāh* [O Messenger of Allāh]! I ask you for a favor.

The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], asked:

-- What is it that you wish? O ‘Alī!

-- Yā Muḥammad! I implore you. Send [someone] to your daughter Fāṭimah to tell her to climb one of the city walls. And send the forty damsels and the old lady to see what the man with few horses will do.

The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], said: O Bilāl! Go to [see] Fāṭimah and tell her to climb one of the walls of the city. And [make] the forty damsels and the old lady come.

Bilāl did [as instructed], until he came to Fāṭimah, and he asked her to climb the city walls, and she did so. And the forty damsels dressed in silk also came, accompanied by the old lady, may Allāh curse her.

Fāṭimah, [however], was not dressed in anything like that. The most noble of the nobles [i.e. the Prophet] then sent Jibrīl [Gabriel], *‘alayhi al-salām* [peace be upon him], to Riḍwān, the gatekeeper of paradise, to give her a dress from the dresses of paradise, so that they may dress Fāṭimah like those damsels.

Jibrīl [Gabriel] did [as instructed] and came with a dress from the dresses of paradise and they dressed Fāṭimah. The damsels were astonished by the beauty of that dress.

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib went to his house to fetch his horse and found it very thin because it had not eaten a thing in four days.

‘Alī said: If I ask to borrow Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq’s horse, they will say that I am afraid; and if I ask to borrow ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb’s horse, they will say that I frightened. And if I ask to borrow ‘Uthmān’s horse, they will say that I do not dare to go out [to war].

‘Alī said: O my horse! If you wrong me, I will complain about you to Him who sees us, but whom we do not see.

After [he said] that, the horse rose up. He threw the saddle upon it, tightened the straps, drew his sword, and rode off on his horse which now

appeared like a ferocious lion.

He rode until he found the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], sent him his salaams, and said: Open the gates of the city.

Once the gates to the city were opened, he [the Prophet] kissed him between the eyes, held him against his chest, prayed for him, and said: Go, O 'Alī! May Allāh not make the Muslims sad because of you.

The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], and all his companions started to cry.

'Alī set off saying: I am from Allāh and from Allāh I am.

The narrator of the *ḥadīth* said:

'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib set off towards the unbelievers and directed his horse towards twenty knights in the front line, all of whom were brave warriors. He fought them and cut them down to ten. He then attacked the ten and cut them down to five.

'Alī then tightened the straps of his horse until the army was astonished at 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib's skills in cavalry.

The king of the army said: Who shall bring me the head of that knight?

The king had not finished asking his question when a warrior stood forth and said: I shall bring you his head.

He then set off after 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and the unbeliever asked him: Who are you? O knight?

'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib said: My name is the end of my lance. None shall know it but one who defeats me.

'Alī asked him: O knight! Why have you come with this army and what do you want from this city?

The knight told him: We have come to demolish the city and bring back the head of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and the head of the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa al-sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him].

'Alī told him: I give you glad tidings, O knight! If you can defeat the one who is speaking to you, I will bring you the head of 'Alī and the head of the Prophet.

He still had hope, and he struck him with his sword and gave 'Alī a severe wound. 'Alī received the blow, and the unbeliever told him: With this sword, I shall take the head of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and the head of the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him].

'Alī became furious and let out a cry that was so loud that everyone on the ground thought that the sky was falling. He jumped onto the knight's

horse and wounded it with his sword. He cut the knight and his horse in half. And Allāh rushed his soul off to [hell] fire.

The forces and their king were astonished at this turn of events. The king of the army said:

-- Whoever brings me the head of that warrior I will give him my daughter [in marriage] and half of my kingdom.

A soldier stood up, and he was one of the most determined warriors, and said:

-- Glad tidings, O king! I shall bring you his head.

He went after ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and gave him the most terrible of blows.

‘Alī said: *Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh al-‘Aliyyu al-‘aẓīm* [there is no might nor power but Allāh, the Great, and Powerful].

He let out a loud cry, wounded him with his sword, and split him like a man splits a reed (*al-qalam*).

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib cried out: I am ‘Alī. Whoever does not know my name, I know his name.

When ‘Alī said these words, the shame and dishonor fell upon them, and someone called out:

-- Send out one knight after another or join together.

‘Alī cried again: Come out, O enemies of Allāh! There is no name above my name.

Since nobody was coming out from the army to fight him, ‘Alī rode into the middle of the army and disappeared among them for so long that they did not have any news of him.

The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], started to cry for the loss of ‘Alī.

The Prophet asked his *ṣaḥābah* [companions]: Whoever brings me news of the sight of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, I guarantee, by the power invested in me by Allāh, that he will be placed in paradise.

Little time elapsed before ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib was seen coming out of a gully with all his clothing soaked in blood. The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], came to him, and ‘Alī told the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him]:

-- Glad tidings, O Messenger of Allāh! This is a great victory for the Muslims who have never won a battle like this one. Still, order the Muslims to divide the booty among themselves.

The Prophet Muḥammad sent [the Muslims] to the army, and they divided it in equal shares.

The narrator of the *ḥadīth* said: The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him],

ordered that the call to prayer be given for the *'asr* [afternoon] prayer. The call to prayer had not finished before they professed that Allāh was powerful over all things. The Muslims obtained a great booty, the like of which had never been won before.

'Alī was only concerned about Fāṭimah. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib went and climbed on the walls of the city where Fāṭimah, the damsels, and the old lady were. 'Alī came to Fāṭimah and he kissed her between the eyes.

'Alī said: O company of damsels! What do you think now about the one with few horses, the one with the potbelly, the one with skinny legs, and the poor man?

Fāṭimah stood in front of him, kissed him between the eyes, and said: Go, O 'Alī! May Allāh and the Muslims never forget you.

'Alī said: O company of damsels! If, by chance, you wish to say *Lā ilāha illā Allāh Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh* [there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh], I will guarantee that Allāh will place you in paradise.

They told him: O 'Alī! Go to your right side for there is no disbelief after belief. We profess these words, weighty words, which are light on the tongue, which please the pious, and which make the devils flee. We profess that *Lā ilāha illā Allāh Muḥammadan Rasūl Allāh* [there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh].

The forty damsels all became Muslims at the hand of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

The narrator said that 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib told the old lady: Will you profess *Lā ilāha illā Allāh, Muḥammadan Rasūl Allāh* [there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh]?

The old lady responded: By al-Lat and al-'Uzzā! Even if you were to burn my tongue with coals, and tighten my neck in a saw, I would never say these words.

'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib struck her with his sword and split her in half and Allāh hurried her soul off to [hell] fire.

The Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], turned towards 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *raḍī Allāhu 'anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], and the Prophet Muḥammad, *ṣalla Allāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], told him: Any Muslim who marries one of these damsels will be granted paradise.

Wa ṣalla Allāhu 'alā sayyidinā Muḥammadin al-karīm wa 'alā ālihi wa sallam [May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Lord Muḥammad, the Noble, and upon his Household].

24.3 Commentary

As noted in chapter twenty-three, the *ḥadīth* in question traces back to the early days of Islām. It belongs to a body of legendary tales ingeniously produced by pro-‘Alid storytellers -- literary opponents of the Umayyads -- to attract people to the Islām of the *ahl al-bayt* and to educate new converts to the faith. This ingenious strategy was met with success in Persia, India, Malaysia, and Indonesia, as well as North Africa and Spain. And while many of these populations eventually evolved into Sunnīs, the foundation upon which their Islām was based was a primitive form of Shī‘ism focused on the love of the Prophet, Fāṭimah, ‘Alī, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn and opposition to the Umayyads as hypocrites, usurpers, and enemies of Islām. Although they placed ‘Alī on a pedestal, these storytellers treated Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and Uthmān with relative respect. They are therefore more in line with moderate Zaydī thought as opposed to Jarūdiyyah, Imāmī or Ismā‘īlī ideology. In fact, we may be dealing with a Shī‘ite literature that even predates the splintering of the Shī‘ite community into various factions. And at this phase, the term Shī‘ite simply designates supporters of ‘Alī and partisans of the progeny of the Prophet, namely, early ‘Alid Islām.

In terms of its content, *Imām ‘Alī and the Forty Damsels* recalls early accounts of the Battle of the Trench contained in the various biographies of the Prophet, particularly those of Ibn Ishāq and Wāqidī, combining them with certain aspects found in canonical traditions. The root of this Aljamiado-Morisco tradition, namely, the mocking of Fāṭimah, was related in *Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā li shī‘at al-Murtaḍā* by al-Ṭabarī. The Morisco traditionist or storyteller was concerned more with religious meaning and literary effect than transmitting historical fact. The story, which speaks of walled cities and Christian knights, evokes medieval Spain more than seventh-century Arabia.

Although the Prophet is central in Islām, the protagonist of this tradition is none other than Imām ‘Alī, another indication of the author’s ‘Alid inclination. Unlike other scholars who have argued against a Shī‘ite presence among the Moriscos, Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes (1924-2003) never adhered to this dubious dogma. Speaking of the tradition in question, he observed that: “La tradición šī‘ī encarece, naturalmente, el esfuerzo de ‘Alī, que, salvando el foso, participa además en una serie de combates singulares contra los paladines de La Meca” [Shī‘ite tradition naturally extols the efforts of ‘Alī who, besides saving the trench, also participates in a series of exceptional battles against the defenders of Mecca” (1975: 22).

One of the interesting aspects of this tradition is the portrayal of Bilāl, the prayer caller of the Prophet. Bilāl, like Salmān, was a distinguished and

pious companion, who had the privilege of associating with the household of Fāṭimah. He would regularly run errands for the Prophet. On day, for example, the Prophet gave Bilāl some money, and said: “Bilāl! Take this money and buy some perfume and fragrance for my daughter Fāṭimah (for her dowry).” He would also send him to fetch articles from Fāṭimah’s house. Whenever he longed to see his grandchildren, he would ask: “Bilāl! Bring my children, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn to me.” Like these traditions, the legend of *Imām ‘Alī and the Forty Damsels* demonstrates the trust and confidence that the Prophet Muḥammad had in Bilāl. Respected by Sunnīs, Bilāl is revered by Shī’ites for standing steadfastly by Fāṭimah and ‘Alī after the passing of the Prophet. The status of Bilāl in this story more closely resembles the image found in Shī’ite sources.

From a doctrinal point of view, *Imām ‘Alī and the Forty Damsels* provides much food for thought. The tradition emphasizes the rights of Fāṭimah, rights that were so sacred that even Imām ‘Alī was concerned about violating them. After all, the Prophet himself had warned that “Fāṭimah is a part of me so whoever angers her angers me” (Bukhārī).

It is significant to note that ‘Alī presented himself to the Prophet while he was in the company of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān, Mu‘ādh b. Jabal, Sa‘d b. Abī Waqqās, Khālid b. al-Walīd, and Abī ‘Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāḥ, some of the most important companions in the sight of Sunnī Muslims. Although their mention is followed by “may Allāh be pleased with them,” their inaction is contrasted with the action of Imām ‘Alī. When the city of Medina was under siege, surrounded by enemy forces, it was Imām ‘Alī, as opposed to other companions, who was called upon to protect Islām and the imperiled community of believers. The purpose is patently clear: to showcase the superiority of Imām ‘Alī over the other companions of the Prophet. This emphasis on the superhuman and supernatural power of Imām ‘Alī who cuts not only warriors but entire horses in half is consistent with Shī’ite tradition.

Not only is ‘Alī depicted as the best of the Prophet’s companions, it is also suggested that he was the best of the early caliphs. This is conveyed by the fact that Imām ‘Alī refuses to borrow the horses of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān -- who are presented in the correct chronological order of succession. In short, Imām ‘Alī, as presented in this account, refuses to engage in any action that could hint that he acknowledged the men who would become the first three caliphs. In short, he refuses to be in their debt in any form or fashion. Rather than rely upon Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī prefers to call upon his emaciated horse which becomes as fierce as a lion upon his command. It is Shī’ites, and not Sunnīs, who believe that the twelve Imāms were granted the gift, not only of human tongues but

of animal communication. In Shī'ite traditions, animals recognize the rights of the Imāms and acknowledge their spiritual and temporal authority.

Imām 'Alī's refusal to reveal his name to his enemies is equally interesting. When he said that "My name is the end of my lance. None shall know it but one who defeats me," was he merely issuing a challenge or conveying an esoteric doctrine? "Whoever does not know my name, I know his name," claims 'Alī, suggesting that he possessed hidden knowledge. According to a nearly universal archaic principle, familiar in myth and folklore, to know the name of a man or a spirit is to have power over that one. His claim that "I am from Allāh and from Allāh I am," and "There is no name above my name," recalls Ṣūfī, Bektāshī, Ismā'īlī, and so-called Ghulāt beliefs. As their literature and art manifests, the Bektāshī believe that Allāh and 'Alī are indissociable with the latter being the reflection of the former. Although such beliefs are not explicitly expressed in *Imām 'Alī and the Forty Damsels*, the tradition stands on the fringes of *ghuluww* or so-called Shī'ite theological extremism, implicitly conveying concepts that were only shared openly with initiates.

Other intriguing elements include the image of 'Alī defeating what appears to be a wicked witch, an image more associated with Europe than the early lands of Islām. In Ṣūfī lore, the *naḡs* or the *dunyā* is sometimes represented by a hag. The depiction of 'Alī, in all his bravery and valor, combines aspects from Sunnī and Shī'ite traditions. However, the marked hostility towards Christians is uncharacteristic of the Prophet Muḡammad and reflects the animosity the Moriscos harbored towards their Christian oppressors and persecutors. When relating prophetic traditions, Muslims from all parts of the world brought local color to them and used them to foreshadow further social, political, religious, and ideological developments. The Moriscos were no different.

As is well-established, the *ḡadīth* literature contains echoes of debates that took place within the Muslim community decades and centuries after the death of the Prophet Muḡammad. The sources provided convenient solutions to certain problems. To be blunt, later Muslims altered and even invented traditions to serve as the basis of their arguments. In the case of the Moriscos, who faced a campaign of forced assimilation into Catholicism, the *ḡadīth* literature became a source of solace, filled with prophecies of their suffering and words of consolation and encouragement, along with promises of eternal rewards for believers and the reassurance that their enemies would be damned eternally. Concerned and committed Muslims knew that the world of the Moriscos was coming to an end.

As abominable as it may be -- in the minds of some -- to falsify the words of God and His prophet, some Morisco Muslim scholars viewed it as

a lesser evil that could serve as a coping mechanism for a community in peril. Whether it was legendary or historically accurate, it was treated as true by those who transmitted it, those who listened to it, and those who read it. It was a source of instruction and a source of inspiration. Whether it is fictional or factual, it represents a literary gem from the treasure trove of Aljamiado-Morisco Shi'ite literature. Ultimately, what mattered was the message.

TRADITION 25

THE TESTAMENT OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD TO ‘ALĪ (I)

25.1 Source

The following tradition is found in chapter 26 of the Manuscript Gay T-13 from the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid.

25.2 Text

The counsels of [the Prophet Muḥammad] to ‘Alī, peace be upon him, are the following:

O ‘Alī! Do not approach your wife on the first night of the month, the night in the middle of the month or the last night of the month, otherwise, the child will be demonized.

Do not approach your wife on the night of menstruation, or on Wednesday night, otherwise, the child will become a road builder.

Do not approach your wife on the last night of Ramaḍān, the night before the *‘īd*, otherwise, he will be disobedient towards both his father and his mother. Do not approach your wife on the night of *‘īd al-aḍḥā* [the Feast of the Sacrifice].

Do not approach your wife in the sun; otherwise, the child will be one-eyed.

Do not speak during the moment of penetration; otherwise, the child will be a stutterer.

Do not protect look at the private parts of your wife; otherwise, the child will be born blind.

Do not approach your wife under a fruit tree; otherwise, he will be one-eyed.

Do not approach your wife between the *adhān* [the first call to prayer] and the *iqāmah* [the second call to prayer]; otherwise, he will become an infamous murderer.

Do not approach your wife while you are unclean; otherwise, the child will be one-eyed.

Do not approach your wife in the middle of [the month of] Sha'bān; otherwise, he will practice a poor profession.

Do not approach your wife under the stars; otherwise, the child will become an apostate.

Do not approach your wife the evening before you set off on a trip; otherwise, the child will be disobedient towards Allāh.

O 'Alī! Approach your wife on a Monday night and the child will be a good reader.

Approach your wife on a Tuesday and the child will be honest and pious.

Approach your wife on a Thursday night and the child will be knowledgeable and obedient of the laws of Allāh so much so that the devils will flee from him.

Approach your wife on Friday night and the child will be a servant who is obedient to Allāh.

Approach your wife on Friday, before the Friday prayer, and he will be lucky and die a martyr.

O 'Alī! Hold fast to this final will and testament from me just like I hold fast to it from Jibrīl [Gabriel], and Jibrīl holds fast to it from the Lord of the Worlds.

O 'Alī! When you lose your strength, say: "Lord! I ask you by the right of Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad that you save me and have mercy upon me, O Most Merciful of the Merciful!"

And 'Alī said: "O Messenger of Allāh! Who are the Members of your Family?"

He said: "Every righteous person, O 'Alī!"

O 'Alī! Do not enter a village without saying: "Lord! Grant me any good therein and the best that there is therein. Protect me from the evil therein and the evil of those therein." You should say that the muezzin says during the call to prayer.

You shall eat with three fingers because Satan eats with two. He views major sins as nothing at all, acts sinfully, and he does not apologize.

Do not hit any person or anything mute on the face. Do not swear to Allāh and lie. Guard your tongue from hurting your neck. Do not reveal a secret to anyone but a friend.

O 'Alī! The angels ask for the pardon for those who have honey, olives, and pomegranate in their homes.

Angels do not enter houses in which there are figures or the makers of figures, the smell of wine, a dog or one who disobeys his father or his mother nor do they enter houses in which guests never enter.

O 'Alī! Kill the sorcerer and toss the fortune-teller [to his/her death] if he or she wants the hock of a steer [for osteomancy, i.e., bone reading, and divination]. Eat pomegranates because they contain a seed from paradise. Do not return the greeting immediately until seeing the one who salutes you. Do not leave meat for forty days. Do not eat fat because it fattens the heart and makes the body lazy.

And when you sneeze, say: *al-ḥamdu-li-llāhi rabb al-'alamīn* [praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds]. Do not give medicine to a sick person for more than three days. Eat beans because they give great wisdom and dry phlegm.

Read the Qur'ān with humility and piety for it will raise your rank on the Day of Judgment.

When you set off walking or you want to fight, read Sūrah al-Yāsīn ten times *innā anzalnāhu fī laylati al-qadri* [Indeed, We sent the Qur'ān down during the Night of Decree] (Sūrah 97).

When you are afraid of some evil doer, say: "O Lord of Jibrīl, Mikā'īl, Isrāfīl, 'Azrā'īl, Ibrāhīm, Ismā'īl, Ishāq, Yā'qūb, the Tawrah, the Injīl, the Zabūr and the Qur'ān!" [O Lord of Gabriel, Michael, Uriel, Azrael, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, and the Qur'ān!].

O 'Alī! There is not a person who does not have the seed of madness and the seed of leprosy.

Allāh removes madness with phlegm and blindness with rheum of any servant He wishes.

O 'Alī! The envious does not have rest. The liar is devoid of faith. The stingy person has no honor. The person with bad manners is devoid of repentance unless he abandons them. The stingy person is devoid of friends.

O 'Alī! The fasting person has two joys and one prayer. When you break your fast, say: "Lord, I have fasted for you. I break my fast with the sustenance you have provided me and upon you I rely. O Most Forgiving! Forgive my sins." And you should repeat these words three times."

O 'Alī! The honor of a believer towards Allāh includes a good wife, congregational prayer on Fridays, and neighbors who are pleased with him."

O 'Alī! When you wear new clothing, give your old clothing as charity. When a Muslim asks you for help, help him: "The worst of the people are those from whom the people are not safe from their evil."

O 'Alī! Honor the elderly and be kind towards children. And avoid sitting with those from whom you do not expect any good and you are

certain of their evil and you will be among the fortunate ones.”

O ‘Alī! Complete your prayers on time and in congregation since this is the best of virtue and the guide to servitude.”

O ‘Alī! He who eats after he is full kills his heart, destroys his flesh, and is in danger of leprosy.”

O ‘Alī! Whoever guides a blind person or gives him directions, Allāh will forgive one hundred of his sins. Hold him by his left hand with your right hand.”

O ‘Alī! Do not be unjust to anyone. Judge according to the truth. For every false judge Allāh has a chain of fire. If a single chain were placed on the top of Mount Saiq, it would be turned to ash.”

O ‘Alī! Do not call a Jew by a *kunyah* [teknonym] nor should you call him “O man!” but rather, call him by his name.

O ‘Alī! Whoever reads the Qur’ān, does not do the *ḥalāl* [permissible], nor considers the *ḥarām* [forbidden] to be *ḥarām* [forbidden], he will be counted among those who threw the Qur’ān aside and they shall be in the fire of hell. Ask Allāh for help.

O ‘Alī! Whoever calls to the path must follow it. Whoever follows him, will have the grace of Allāh. Treat servants well.”

O ‘Alī! The evil person has three traits: 1) he does not obey Allāh; 2) he does what he is not supposed to do; and 3) he harms the servants of Allāh.

O ‘Alī! The noble has three traits: 1) he adorns what is between him and Allāh with good works; 2) he adorns his faith with knowledge and works; and 3) he wishes for others what he wishes for himself.

O ‘Alī! The God-fearing person has three traits: 1) he fears to sit with evil people; 2) he fears lying, cursing, contradicting, and telling half-truths; and 3) he leaves half of the *ḥalāl* [permissible] out of fear of falling into the *ḥarām* [forbidden].

O ‘Alī! The hard of heart has three traits: 1) he does not pity the poor; 2) he is not satisfied with little; and 3) he does not benefit from preaching.

O ‘Alī! The sick of heart has three traits: 1) he suffers in obeying Allāh; 2) he suffers because of disobeying Allāh; and 3) he suffers because of the decree of Allāh.

O ‘Alī! A friend has three traits: 1) he puts your interest before his own interest; 2) he puts his person in defense of your person; and his flesh in defense of your flesh; and 3) he keeps your secret.

O ‘Alī! The infidel has three traits: 1) he doubts the religion of Allāh; 2) he loathes the servants of Allāh; and 3) he makes the *ḥarām ḥalāl*.

O ‘Alī! The worst of the people in the eyes of Allāh is he who is feared by others because of his mischief. It is he who eats alone and is denied the blessing of his food.

The one who does not honor his guest is worse than the one who honors the rich; he views the poor with contempt, gives the rich a full handful but gives the poor a half portion.

O 'Alī! The worst of the people is the one who eats the *ḥarām* [forbidden] and who forgets the origin of his sustenance.

O 'Alī! The sign of a truthful person is that he speaks the truth at the time of the signal, at the time of payment, and at the time of need.

O 'Alī! The sign of the liar is that Satan walks alongside him and that is the destruction of the body.

O 'Alī! Invoke Allāh between the *adhān* [first call to prayer] and the *iqāmah* [second call to prayer] because a prayer said at that moment does not go unanswered.

O 'Alī! The ugliest of people is he who hurts himself.

And 'Alī said: "O [Muḥammad]! How does one hurt oneself?"

He said: "O Messenger of Allāh!"

He said: "By not completing his units of prayer and his prostrations and avoiding his ritual prayers."

O 'Alī! When a man is bad but honest, he is better in the eyes of Allāh than a stingy servant.

O 'Alī! The frank person is close to Allāh, near to piety, and far from punishment.

O 'Alī! The frank person is like a tree on the Day of Judgment which will cover with shade all the sincere people with its branches.

O 'Alī! The stingy person is like a tree in hell that drags to hell with its branches all the stingy and proud people who disobeyed their fathers and mothers.

O 'Alī! I saw the following words written on the door to paradise: "Whoever submits His will, heaven is his place of rest. Whoever holds fast to his [own human] will, hell is his resting place."

The fire [of hell] asked: "Why did you create me?"

Allāh answered: "For every arrogant and ungrateful person."

The fire [of hell] responded: "I am made for them."

O 'Alī! The pleasure of Allāh is found in the pleasure of your father and mother and the anger of Allāh is found in their anger. O

'Alī! Honor your neighbor and your guest even if they are unbelievers. And do not turn away a beggar even if he is an unbeliever.

O 'Alī! The worst of thieves is the one who steals for the devil.

'Alī asked: And how is that? O Messenger of Allāh!

He responded: Firstly, there is no evil action for which the devil does not take credit. Secondly, nobody obtains forbidden sustenance without the devil partaking in it as well. Always remember to invoke the name of Allāh

before having sex; otherwise, Satan will take over the child that is produced.

O 'Alī! When someone invokes Allāh with a prayer and what he asks is to his detriment, Allāh tells His angels: "Give him what he wants and shield his voice from Me."

O 'Alī! When Allāh is angered with one of His servants, He give him forbidden sustenance. And when he becomes angry, a devil blesses him, comforts him, occupies him with worldly matters, and alleviates him, telling him that Allāh is the most forgiving of the forgiving.

O 'Alī! When Allāh loves a servant, and he prays, the angels say: "O Lord! Listen to the prayer of this believer."

Allāh says: "Leave me and My servant, for nobody is as forgiving as I am. I have forgiven him because of his prayer and his humility."

O 'Alī! Allāh does not accept ritual prayers with ablutions, nor does he accept charity from what is forbidden.

O 'Alī! Allāh does not accept the repentance of anyone until his stomach is purged from what is forbidden and his body is filled with what is permitted.

O 'Alī! Although man does not stop lying about what is written in the power of Allāh, it does not stop being the truth.

O 'Alī! Give charity for your dead for Allāh has appointed angels to bring the charity of the living to the dead. They rejoice with it and say: "Lord, forgive the one who has brought light to our hearts and who has done charity for us. Give him the glad tidings of heaven."

O 'Alī! On the Day of Judgment Allāh will send some people to heaven and when they will approach it, the doors will be closed on them and turn to fire, and they will be surrounded by fire on all sides, saying: "O Lord! You placed us in the fire before we could reach heaven."

And Allāh will say: "This is what I willed for you because you lived in *ḥarām* [sin] and you adorned yourselves with bold behavior."

O 'Alī! Send your salaams to the Muslims who meet you and thirty good deeds will be written down for you.

O 'Alī! When a servant is suffering from the pangs of death on a Friday, Allāh forgives any sins he performed between one Friday and the other Friday. Allāh will bring light to his heart and weight on his scale.

O 'Alī! The most beloved among the servants of Allāh is the servant who says in prostration: "Lord, if I wronged myself, forgive me, since none but you can forgive sins."

O 'Alī! Do not keep company with one who drinks wine because he is cursed or with one who owes *zakah* [alms] because the skies scream that he is the enemy of Allāh.

O 'Alī! He who follows up [the fast of] Ramaḍān with six [days of fasting] in [the month of] Shawwāl, Allāh writes down that he has fasted forever.

O 'Alī! Do not recite [the Qur'ān] loudly where other people are praying, because that is one thing that destroys the ritual prayer.

O 'Alī! When the time of the ritual prayer approaches, hasten [to prayer], and do not let Satan weaken you. When you wish to do good make haste...

O 'Alī! Whoever hires a person and then does not pay the worker, Allāh annuls his actions and I will fight on his behalf.

O 'Alī! Know that Jibrīl [Gabriel] longed for one hundred things from the sons of Adam: the congregational prayer directed by an Imām, sitting in a gathering of scholars, visiting the sick, accompanying funeral processions, giving someone water to drink, making peace between two parties, and honoring the orphan... O 'Alī! Long for what Jibrīl [Gabriel] longed for!

O 'Alī! When an orphan implores, the Throne trembles and Allāh says: "O Jibrīl [Gabriel]! I will cast whoever makes him cry into hell. And I will send to heaven anyone who makes him laugh."

O 'Alī! Allāh did not create anything more beneficial in a person but his tongue. Through their tongues people enter heaven, and by through their tongues people enter the prison of hell which is like a rabid dog.

O 'Alī! Fast the white days in the middle of each month: the thirteenth, the fourteenth, and the fifteenth for Allāh whitens the faces of those who fast as if they fasted perpetually. He who serves Allāh without knowing weakens his religion and merits, the similitude of which is like a blind man in the desert who is without a guide, whose two draught animals have left him, and who is like white hairs among black ones.

O 'Alī! When you give charity, give what is best, and what is the most *ḥalāl* [good]. Charity with a mouthful of *ḥalāl* [permissible] is more pleasing to Allāh than one hundred dinars of *ḥarām*. And charity of one date of *ḥalāl* [permissible] in your life is more beneficial to you than one hundred dinars you give after your death.

O 'Alī! The donation from relatives from your mother's side is vile and without satisfaction. Nobody can return a gift, the only exception being a father returning the gift of his son.

O 'Alī! Make use of the *miswak* [tooth-stick] for it contains twenty-four benefits for one's faith and for one's body.

O 'Alī! When you do a good deed, do it out of love for Allāh. And when you spend, spend out of love for Allāh because pride in religion is like fire in firewood.

O 'Alī! There is not a new day that dawns but that it says: "O son of Adam! I am the new day and I will bear witness against you regarding what you do on this day." And there is no day that does not do so; so be its companions.

O 'Alī! Do not shame people who bear the stains of sin for there is nobody who does not bear the stains of sin nor redemption for one who curses one who does what is *ḥalāl* [permissible] or asks forgiveness for one who is cursed.

O 'Alī! When you honor Allāh by possessing four qualities, you will be free from any stain, namely, when you are truthful in relating *ḥadīth*, when you are faithful, when you are honest in spirit, and when your stomach is hungry.

25.3 Commentary

The *waṣīyyah* of the Prophet Muḥammad to 'Alī found in Manuscript Gay T-13 from the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid contains several Shī'ite features. To begin with, the name of 'Alī is followed by *'alayhi al-salām* or "peace be upon him," which is normative among Shī'ites, as opposed to *raḍī Allāhu 'anhu* or "may Allāh be pleased with him," which is customary among Sunnīs.

Not only does the invocation *Yā 'Alī* or "O 'Alī" serve as an anaphora, it appears in large red ink. In this and other *aljamiado* testaments of the Prophet to 'Alī, the terms *Yā 'Alī* are repeated in almost a ritualistic fashion. I have seen Arabic manuscripts in which the names Allāh and Muḥammad are treated with special reverence, sometimes written in gold; in this case, however, it is the name 'Alī as opposed to Allāh that is treated reverentially. It is as if the composer, compiler, or translator of these sayings was following the *ḥadīth*, *Dhikr 'Alī 'ibādah* or "Remembering 'Alī is worship."

This work, like the other testaments of 'Alī which circulated among the Moriscos, is drawn from Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Shu'bah al-Ḥarrānī's *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl fī mā jā'a min al-ḥikam wa al-mawā'iz min al-al-rasūl*. The compiler in question was a tenth-century Shī'ite scholar born in Ḥarrān, a town in the vicinity of Aleppo. Reputedly a contemporary of Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Bābawayh al-Qummī (c. 923-991), as well as Mufīd (948-1022), al-Ḥarrānī gathered as many oral traditions attributed to the Prophet and the Imāms as possible. He focused on sayings ignored by previous Shī'ite scholars since they were of little importance when it came to jurisprudential matters. Since they were transmitted orally, and are devoid of chains of transmission, the traditions collected by al-Ḥarrānī are generally not employed as evidence when deriving legal rulings.

They also contain sayings that vary significantly in authority: forged, weak, good, and authentic.

The *waṣīyyah* of the Prophet Muḥammad to ‘Alī found in Manuscript Gay T-13 from the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid combines the two first traditions found in Ḥarrānī *Tuḥaf al-‘uqūl*. For scholars who have not mastered Arabic, an English translation, titled *Tuḥaf ul-Uqoul: The Masterpieces of the Mind*, is available in print and online in pdf format. The Aljamiado *waṣīyyah* is a collage of three testaments, which Badr Shahīn has translated as “The Prophet’s Commandments for Imām ‘Alī,” “Another Brief Commandment of the Prophet for Imām ‘Alī,” and “Another Commandment of the Prophet to Imām ‘Alī.”

Well-known among Twelver Shī‘ite scholars, *Tuḥaf al-‘uqūl* is especially esteemed by Nuṣayrī Shī‘ites, some of whom have memorized its entire contents (Ḍiya‘ī 81). Not only were they citing Twelver Shī‘ite sources, some Moriscos were circulating works that were valued by so-called *ghulāt* Shī‘ites, the theological extremists who deified ‘Alī and the rest of the twelve Imāms. So, either there were Twelvers and Nuṣayrīs in al-Andalus and early modern Spain or Moriscos were encountering such populations during their pilgrimages to Mecca. They may have picked up these books when they passed through Greater Syria on their way to and from the Ḥijāz.

The first part of this *waṣīyyah* from Manuscript Gay T-13, provides a sort of Islāmic horoscope. As Bouras explains, there was an abundance of this type of superstitious literature among the Moriscos. Islamized horoscopes are found in the Ocaña Manuscripts and Manuscript CXVIII de la Real Academia de La Historia. According to Bouras, such literature is intimately associated with Shī‘ism. As the critic explains,

Este mismo concepto se halla totalmente islamizado en la literatura xii del Ḥadīṭ formando un capítulo de referencia en relación con ‘*Adab al-‘yīmā*’ (reglas del encuentro sexual entre los dos esposos); en obras como *Šarā‘i’ al-Islām* de al-Muḥaḥiq al-Ḥīlī y *Kitāb al-Ījtisās* de Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. An-Nu‘mān, denominado Aš-Šayj al-Mufīd, encontramos otra *waṣīyya*, también atribuida a ‘Alī, basada únicamente en este concepto. (320)

[This very concept is totally Islamized in Shī‘ite Ḥadīth literature and forms part of chapters relating ‘*adab al-jimā*’ (the rules governing sexual relations between spouses); in books like *Sharā‘i’ al-Islām* by al-Muḥaḥiq al-Ḥīlī and *Kitāb al-ikhtisās* by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Nu‘mān, known as Shaykh al-Mufīd, we find another *waṣīyyah*, also attributed to ‘Alī, which is based solely on this concept.]

Critical scholars can claim with complete confidence that such superstitious traditions have been falsely attributed to the Prophet. Although there are spurious traditions in this testament, there are plenty of others that are considered authentic and which are found in other canonical Shī'ite and Sunnī sources. It goes without saying that the presence of false traditions proves that the testament cannot be traced back to the Prophet in its entirety, although certain segments possibly can.

Not only has the Aljamiado Morisco testament been edited, it also contains some additions and interpolations. Both the original Arabic and the Aljamiado translation feature the following statement of the Prophet:

O 'Alī! When you lose your strength, say: "Lord! I ask you by the right of Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad that you save me and have mercy upon me, O Most Merciful of the Merciful!"

The original Arabic, and its English translation, however, do not contain the clause that follows:

And 'Alī said: "O Messenger of Allāh! Who are the Members of your Family?" He said: "Every righteous person, O 'Alī!"

This could be construed as a Sunnī effort to undermine the rights of the *ahl al-bayt*. It makes no sense that the Prophet would ask his followers to pray "by the right of Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad" if it meant "every righteous Muslim." As far as normative Islām is considered, only prophets, messengers, and saints, the friends of God, can intercede on behalf of believers. This is not the prerogative of any pious Muslim. This doctrinal addition might represent an effort to sanitize or Sunnitize a work of its Shī'ite elements. The question, however, begs to be asked: Why would Sunnī Moriscos be reading, translating, reproducing, teaching, and disseminating a Shī'ite book and one that was popular among the Nuṣayrīs, theologically extremist Shī'ites who deify 'Alī? I find it difficult to believe that the Moriscos were so ignorant of Islām that they lacked even a basic understanding of the two major divisions in the Muslim faith. If *Tuḥaf al-'uqūl* was popular among the Moriscos in Spain and North Africa, then this seems to suggest the presence of Shī'ite Muslims of Twelver or so-called *ghulāt* provenance.

TRADITION 26

THE TESTAMENT OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD TO ‘ALĪ (II)

26.1 Source

The following is a segment drawn from the *Alguaçia de ‘Alī* or *Testament of ‘Alī* which is found in Manuscript 614 from the Bibliothèque Nationale de l’Algérie.

26.2 Tradition

The prayer of *zuhr* is when people will be brought to hell on the Day of Judgment. It comes on four feet. On its head there are seventy thousand harnesses of iron each. Each of them is pulled by seventy thousand angels who bring it before Allāh, the Most High. If He ordered any of those angels to swallow everything that is beneath the Throne all the way to the bottom of the earth, he would swallow it in one mouthful. When these angels stand before Allāh for sentencing and judgment, the Hour blows sparks of fire greater than all the stars in the skies. Seventy thousand times per hour, all the angels and prophets prostrate themselves on their foreheads, leaving Ibrāhīm [Abraham], peace be upon him, weakened. He stands up saying, “Lord! I do not ask you on this day for Ismā‘īl [Ishmael] or for Ishāq [Isaac] but simply for myself. O Allāh! Save me from the fire of hell.” And Moses, peace be upon him, will say: “Lord! I do not ask you today for my brother Hārūn [Aaron]. I beg that you save me from the fire...”

26.3 Commentary

As Karima Bouras has noted, “La única fuente árabe donde hemos encontrado el original árabe de este texto es un libro de Ḥadīṭ de un autor xii” (101) [The only Arabic source where we have found the original Arabic of this text is a book of *hadīth* by a Shī‘ī author]. As she explains,

Se trata del cuarto capítulo de *Kitāb Al-Ijtisāṣ* de Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. An-Nu'mān denominado Aṣ-ṣayj al-Mufid. Este mismo texto se repite en diversos manuscritos aljamiados existentes en España. Según se ha podido comprobar, son seis los manuscritos que lo contienen: El manuscrito 6016; olim; Q.193 de la Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid. El manuscrito XIII-11 y el LX-5 de la Escuela de Estudios Árabes. El manuscrito XIII; T18 de la Escuela de Pías de Zaragoza (aunque, hoy en día, parece perdido). Fuera de España, existe otra versión de este mismo texto en el manuscrito 774; olim: 290 St Germain de la Biblioteca Nacional de Paris. (Bouras 101-102)

[It is the fourth chapter from *Kitāb al-ikhtisāṣ* by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Ibn al-Nu'mān, known as Shaykh al-Mufid. This same text is repeated in diverse *aljamiado* manuscripts existing in Spain. As has been confirmed, it is found in six manuscripts: Manuscript 6016; olim; Q.193 from the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid. Manuscript XII-11 and LX-5 from the Escuela de Estudios Árabes. Manuscript XIII; T18 from the Escuela de Pías de Zaragoza (although it now seems that it is currently lost). Outside of Spain, there exists another version of the same text in manuscript 774; olim: 290 St Germain from the National Library in Paris.]

Considering that there is a body of prophetic traditions that are shared between Sunnīs and Shī'ites, the presence of a tradition in praise of the *ahl al-bayt* in an *aljamiado* manuscript does not necessarily demonstrate that there were Shī'ite Moriscos. Traditions like, "I am the city of knowledge and 'Alī is its gate" are found in the canonical collections of both branches of Islām. The same, however, cannot be said of traditions that are exclusively Shī'ite in origin. It is not unusual for Shī'ite scholars to cite Sunnī sources. However, it is relatively rare for Sunnī scholars to quote Shī'ite works unless they wish to refute and repudiate them.

Since attempts were made by Catholic authorities to destroy all books related to Islām, the Moriscos no longer had access to the hundreds of thousands of works that circulated until the final days of Islāmic Spain. Of all the works they could have consulted, and all the works from which they could have quoted, why were some Moriscos drawing from Twelver Shī'ite classics? These works are not normally found in Sunnī libraries and bookstores. One would be hard pressed to find such sources in some predominantly Sunnī countries where Shī'ite books are banned as some sort of threat to national security. As far as the evidence is concerned, a Shī'ite current seems to have flowed in the sea of Sunnism that was al-Andalus.

TRADITION 27

THE TESTAMENT OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD TO ‘ALĪ (III)

27.1 Source

The following citation is drawn from the *Alguaçia de ‘Alī* or *Testament of ‘Alī* which is found in Manuscript 614 from the Bibliothèque Nationale de l’Algérie (111).

27.2 Tradition

We must conserve these counsels that Allāh revealed to the Prophet by means of the Archangel Gabriel and which the Prophet transmitted to his son-in-law. ‘Alī has the same status towards MuḤammad as Hārūn [Aaron] had towards Moses.

27.3 Commentary

According to Sunnī Muslims, the Prophet did not leave a *waṣiyyah* of any sort. The presence of numerous variants of the *Testament of the Prophet MuḤammad to Imām ‘Alī*, and the importance placed on preserving them, memorizing them, translating them, reproducing them, and disseminating them might speak to the contrary. Although the successorship of Imām ‘Alī is not explicit in these texts, it is implicit. If ‘Alī was the Prophet’s spiritual successor, argue Shī‘ites, it goes without saying that he should have been his political heir as well. Sunnīs would counter that these so-called testaments are grotesque Shī‘ite forgeries. If so, why were they so dear to some so-called Sunnī Moriscos? If one thing is certain, some Moriscos believed that the Prophet MuḤammad left a final will and testament that was addressed to Imām ‘Alī. Since this is inconsistent with the Sunnī version of early Islāmic history, and such testaments have only been transmitted by Shī‘ites, it suggests that some Moriscos held certain Shī‘ite beliefs.

TRADITION 28

THE TESTAMENT OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD TO ‘ALĪ (IV)

28.1 Source

The following tradition can be found in several parts in the Manuscript S-1 from the Real Academia de la Historia. It is also found in Manuscript 614 from the National Library of Algeria and the Ocaña Manuscript (Bouras 164).

28.2 Tradition

Lord! I ask you by the honor of Muḥammad and those of Muḥammad that you take pity upon me. You are the most Merciful.

28.3 Commentary

Although it is conceivable that a traditional Sunnī or Ṣūfī Muslim would invoke Allāh in the name of Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, the formula in question is more commonly found in Shī‘ite supplications. Although some might argue that “those of Muḥammad” does not necessarily refer to the Prophet’s family, several of the Aljamiado manuscripts in question also contain the Arabic text as well as the translation. The Arabic original clearly reads *ali Muḥammad* or the family of Muḥammad. While seeking the intercession of the People of the House is also a Ṣūfī practice, the invocation in question is found in a manuscript of Shī‘ite provenance. It could be claimed that the Moriscos, who were publicly pretending to be Catholics, and asking the intercession of Christian saints, Catholicized their Islāmic practices by praying to God in the name of the Prophet Muḥammad. This argument, however, is not convincing when one considers the aversion that the Moriscos had to Christianity.

TRADITION 29

THE TESTAMENT OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD TO ‘ALĪ (V)

29.1 Source

The following tradition is taken from Manuscript 614 from the National Library of Algeria.

29.2 Tradition

Yā ‘Alī! You are to me as Hārūn [Aaron] was to Mūsā [Moses] except that there will be no messenger or prophet after me. I counsel you with this testament. If you preserve it and fulfill it you will be praised, die a martyr, and Allāh will resurrect you as a wise jurist on the Day of Judgment.

29.3 Commentary

The first segment of the aforementioned tradition is found in the canonical Sunnī and Shī‘ite books of tradition. The final segments are novel. For Sunnī scholars, this tradition resembles the words of praise that the Prophet uttered about his other companions and does not indicate any special status. For Shī‘ites, such a claim suggests that the MuḤammad was trivial in his elocution. On the contrary, they argue, the Messenger of God was careful when it came to conveying meaning. Some Ṣūfīs might suggest that the words in the tradition in question indicate that ‘Alī was second only to MuḤammad in matters of spirituality; not necessarily that he was designated as his successor. Shī‘ites, however, take these words at face value. As far as they are concerned, Imām ‘Alī was the right-hand man of the Prophet; his rank was the same as Aaron, with the exception that ‘Alī did not receive revelation; and that ‘Alī would play the role that Aaron played for Moses; namely, that of a political and spiritual successor.

TRADITION 30

THE TESTAMENT OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD TO ‘ALĪ (VI)

30.1 Source

The following tradition is taken from Manuscript 614 from the National Library of Algeria (Bouras 360).

30.2 Tradition

Yā ‘Alī! He who wishes to bless me, let him say: *Allāhumu ṣalli ‘alā Muḥammadin wa ‘alā ‘ālihi Muḥammad* [May Allāh bless Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad].

30.3 Commentary

Sending prayers and blessings upon the Prophet and his Household in ritual prayers is a religious obligation for all Muslims. However, of all Muslims, the Shī‘ites are those that bless the People of the House the most with thunderous *ṣalawāt* [prayers and blessings] offered in choir after ritual prayers and when the names of the Prophet and his family are mentioned in sermons and speeches. Except for Ṣūfīs, this is not a common practice among Sunnī Muslims. This emphasis on blessing the Prophet and his progeny is associated with Ṣūfism and especially Shī‘ism.

TRADITION 31

THE TESTAMENT OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD TO ‘ALĪ (VII)

31.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the first Ocaña (Toledo) manuscript discovered in 1969 (Bouras 224).

31.2 Tradition

O ‘Alī! When you see the enemy, say three times: *Allāhu Akbar*, [Allāh is the Greatest], Allāh is my Lord and He is greater than fear and fright. If you say this, nothing will be able to harm you.

31.3 Commentary

As Karima Bouras has noted, a remarkably similar text is found in al-Ḥarrānī’s *Tuḥaf al-‘uqūl* (225). This is yet another example of an Aljamiado tradition that seems to have been drawn directly from a Shī‘ite source. Considering their cultural, racial, ethnic, and linguistic ties to the Maghrib, and their supposed religious affinities with North African Sunnī and Šūfī Muslims, why were certain Moriscos quoting the works of Twelver Shī‘ite and Nuṣayrī scholars from the Middle East? Did Shī‘ite works appeal to their sharīfian sensibilities? Why not draw from the works of the majority tradition? Why not rely on Ṣunnī-Šūfī authorities from the Maghrib and al-Andalus? Why import ideas from a minority Muslim tradition found primarily in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran? Why insist on an import in preference to a domestic brand? Ignorance of Islām is not a satisfactory explanation. Certain Moriscos went out of their way to obtain Shī‘ite works, translate them, and disseminate them. Was this motivation entirely internal, or was it external? Were the Ṣafavids striving to spread Shī‘ism among the Moriscos of Spain, the Maghrib, and the Ottoman Empire?

TRADITION 32

THE TESTAMENT OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD TO ‘ALĪ (VIII)

32.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript S-I from the Real Academia de La Historia (Bouras 243).

32.2 Tradition

Yā ‘Alī [O ‘Alī]! Commence your meal with salt and know that salt is medicine for seventy diseases except for death.

32.3 Commentary

As Karima Bouras has noted, this tradition is found in al-Ḥarrānī’s *Tuḥaf al-‘uqūl* (244). Variants of this *ḥadīth*, which are attributed to both ‘Alī and the Prophet Muḥammad, are also found in Bukhārī, Aḥmad, and Ṣadūq. An identical tradition is also attributed to Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir, the fifth Shī‘ite Imām. Many Sunnī *ḥadīth* scholars consider the tradition to be forged; however, most Shī‘ī scholars treat it as trustworthy. Once again, we see the Moriscos citing Shī‘ite sources.

TRADITION 33

THE EXTENT OF KNOWLEDGE OF IMĀM ‘ALĪ

33.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 18 r- f 18 v / 63).

33.2 Tradition

Imām ‘Alī said: “If I had to judge the people of revelation, I would judge the people of the Torah according to the Torah, the people of the Gospel according to the Gospel, the people of the Psalms according to the Psalms, and the people of the Qur’ān according to the Qur’ān. By the Lord of the All Things which are found on the earth, the sea, the fields, the hills, the sky, the day and the night, I know every verse which was revealed and why it was revealed.”

33.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition is found in the primary sources of the Twelver Shī‘ites, including, *al-Kāfī* by Kulaynī (864-941), *Kitāb al-irshād* by Mufīd (948-1022), as well as some later compilations such as *Yanābī’ al-mawaddah* by Sulaymān al-Balkhī al-Qundūzī (d. 1877), a Sunnī scholar of the Ḥanafī rite. According to the tradition:

When the pledge of allegiance was made to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, the Commander of the Faithful, for the caliphate, he went out to the mosque wearing the turban and cloak of the Messenger of Allāh, and giving admonition and warning, he sat down confidently, knitted his fingers together and placed them on his stomach. He then said:

Question me before you lose me. Question me for I have the knowledge of those who came earlier and those who will come later. If the cushion [on which a judge sits] was folded for me [to sit on], I could give judgment to the people of the Torah by their Torah, to the people of the Gospel by their Gospel, to the people of the Psalms by their Psalms, and to the people of the *Furqān* [ie. Qur'ān] by their *Furqān*, so that each one of these books will be fulfilled and will declare, "O Lord, indeed 'Alī has given judgment according to Your decree." By Allāh, I know the Qur'ān and its interpretation [better] than anyone who claims knowledge of it. If it were not for one verse in the Book of Allāh, Most High, I would be able to inform you of what will be until the Day of Resurrection.

Then he said:

Question me before you lose me for by Him who split the seed and brought the soul into being, if you questioned me about [it] verse by verse, I would tell you of the time of its revelation and why it was revealed, I would inform of the abrogating [verse] and the abrogated, of the specific and general, the clearly defined and the ambiguous, of the Meccan and the Medīnan. By Allāh, there is not a party who can lead astray or guide until the Day of Resurrection without me knowing its leader, the one who drives it forward and the one who urges it on. (Mufid 1981: 21-22; Kulaynī)

TRADITION 34

THE ḤADĪTH OF SARJĪL B. SARJŪN

34.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 4953 from the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid. It can also be found in *Cinco leyendas y otros relatos moriscos*, the transliterated version of the manuscript completed by Ottmar Hegyi (1981: 73-85).

34.2 Tradition

Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm [In the Name of Allāh, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful]. This is the *ḥadīth* of Sarjīl b. Sarjūn and the questions he asked ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

It was related [on the authority of] Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī, may Allāh have mercy upon him, from Wahb b. Munabbih, and from Salmān al-Fārisī that he said:

After the Prophet Muḥammad (ṢA) died, and Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, may Allāh be pleased with him, ended up being caliph, he said, while seated the mosque of the *muhājirīn* [emigrants] and the *anṣār* [helpers]: “I see a Christian from the lands of Syria whose name I know not. He is one of the most powerful people in the world and he comes with fifty abbots or friars.”

He [the Christian] approached and called out loudly: “O people of the mosque! Is Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh among you?”

Salmān stood up and told him: “Muḥammad, the one you are inquiring about, is dead.”

The Christian asked: “Is there a caliph after him?”

Salmān said: “Yes. His caliph is Abū Bakr.”

The Christian asked: “Where, then, is Abū Bakr so that I can speak with him and ask him some questions?”

Al-Ḥasan said: “Talk to him and ask him [your questions] for he is right in front of you.”

The Christian then said: “Peace be upon you, O Abū Bakr, and upon your people!”

Abū Bakr responded: “Peace be upon him who follows the path of hell.”

The Christian then said: “O Abū Bakr! I have come from the lands of Syria with challenging questions which I found in some of the writing of my father and my grandfather. If you can answer them correctly, we will know that Muḥammad is a prophet and a messenger, that the religion of Islām is the truth, and that everything else is void.”

Abū Bakr told him: “Ask whatever you wish since there is no might nor power but Allāh.”

The Christian said: “O Abū Bakr! The first thing I wish to ask and the first thing that I wish to know is what motivated me to leave the lands of Syria and why have I come?”

I would also like to know the meaning of *wa al-dāriyāti dharwān* [By those (winds) scattering (dust) dispersing] [51:1]. What is it?

And [I would like to know the meaning of] *al-ḥāmilāti wiqrān* [And those (clouds) carrying a load (of water)] [51:2]. What is it?

And [I would like to know the meaning of] *al-jāriyyāti yusrān* [those (ships) sailing with ease] [51:3], and *al-muqasimāti amrān* [those (angels) apportioning (each) matter] [51: 4]. What are they?

Tell me about the two who spoke with the Lord of Humankind, but who were devoid of flesh and blood.

Tell me about the keys to heaven. Of what are they made?

Tell me what has no soul (*al-rūḥ*) nor blood.

Tell me about something that Allāh created and He later purchased.

Tell me about the water that does not descend from the sky and which does not come from the earth.

Tell me who was the first person to die on earth.

Tell me about the first tree which was blown by the wind.

Tell me about the white highway that crosses the sky.

Tell me about what the rooster says in its cry; what the dog says when it barks; what the donkey says when it brays; what the horse says when it neighs; what the thunder says when it bellows; what the camel says in its cry; what the hoopoe says in its song, what the pigeon says in its song (*al-tasbīḥ*); what the partridge says in its song; what the swallow says in its song; what the lizard says in its call; what the bell says when it rings; what the lion says when he roars; and what the peacock says in its song

Let me know when the night turns into day and where is the day when the night arrives?

And let me know about the first that does not have a second; about the two that do not have a third; about the third that does not have a fourth; about the fourth that does not have a fifth; about the fifth that does not have

a sixth; about the sixth that does not have a seventh; and about the seventh that does not have an eighth.

If you, O Abū Bakr, can answer these questions, we will know that you follow the truth while we follow falsehood.”

Abū Bakr was astonished. In fact, all the people were amazed by the eloquence of the man’s language and his many questions.

Abū Bakr said: “By Him who sent Muḥammad with the message! There is a man among us who judges the people of the Gospel according to the Gospel, the people of the Torah according to the Torah, and the people of the Qur’ān according to the Qur’ān.”

Abū Bakr then called Salmān and told him: “Go to the house of ‘Alī, may Allāh have mercy upon him, and tell him to come to the mosque with haste.”

Salmān went to ‘Alī’s house. He knocked on the door and ‘Alī came out quickly and sent him his salaams.

Salmān said: “Abū Bakr sends you his salaams and asks you to go to the mosque.”

‘Alī said: “Listen to and obey Allāh. After that, [listen and obey] the caliph of the Messenger of Allāh.”

‘Alī then said: “By Allāh! There can be no doubt that a Christian from the lands of Syria [Shām] has come.

Salmān smiled and asked him: “O ‘Alī! Who told you?”

[‘Alī answered:]

“My cousin Muḥammad (ṢA) foretold me about it.”

‘Alī arrived in the company of Salmān. When he entered the mosque, he sent his salaams to Abū Bakr and to the people, sat down next to Abū Bakr, and said: “O Abū Bakr! Salmān came to fetch me. How may I be of service?”

“O ‘Alī! This Christian has come from the lands of Syria with many questions he wishes to be answered. Could you please answer them for him?”

‘Alī said: “O Abū Bakr! What are his questions?”

Abū Bakr said: “Ask [your questions], O Christian! For he will give you the answers to anything you ask.”

‘Alī asked the Christian: “Ask me your questions once again.”

The Christian repeated his questions from the beginning to the end and ‘Alī listened to all of them. When the Christian finished asking his questions, ‘Alī said: “O Sarjīl b. Sarjūn! I will answer all your questions and you will believe in Allāh and His messenger.”

When the Christian heard his name, he was astonished, and asked: “How did you find out my name? Who told it to you? For nobody has ever

known my name. My father gave me this name while I was in my mothers' womb. He wrote in down in a letter. He placed it in a box and wrote at the beginning of the letter: 'I swear that unless someone reads this letter, he will never discover this name.' It is for this reason that nobody knows my name but my father. The day that he died, and I became a man, I learned about these facts. I opened the letter, and I found my name, which I have kept hidden from the people. Until today, nobody has ever known what my real name was. Tell me: Who are you to know my name?"

"I am 'Alī. Your name was taught to me the by Lord of the First and the Lord of the Last."

The Christian then told him: "O 'Alī! If you can answer my questions according to the Gospel, we will know [for certain] that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, and I will become a Muslim at your hands. I will believe in Allāh and in what came to Muḥammad, His messenger."

'Alī then said the following:

"O Lord! Act as a witness between us. O Sarjīl b. Sarjūn! Regarding your question concerning what you brought with you from the lands of Syria: you came with one hundred coins of white silver and one hundred coins of yellow gold. Regarding the reason for your coming: you came to ask about the religion of Islām and whether it was true or not. Regarding the meaning of *wa al-dārīyāti dharwān*, they are the four winds: the cold northern wind, the western wind, the warm summer wind, and the hot and suffocating wind; *al-ḥāmilāti wiqrān* are the clouds that carry water from place to place; *fā al-jārīyyāti yusrān* refers to the boat on the ocean; *fā al-muqasimāti amrān* refers to the angels who distribute sustenance to creation on a daily basis according to the permission of Allāh.

Regarding the two who spoke with the Lord from the people, and who were devoid of flesh and blood: they are the skies and the earth when Allāh told them 'come to me obediently or by force' [41: 10-11]. They replied: 'we prefer to come obediently' according to your order.

Regarding your question concerning the keys to paradise, they are the mouths of the created."

The Christian asked: "How is that so?"

'Alī told him: "When a believer says *Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh waḥdahu lā sharīka lahu wa ashhahu anna Muḥammadan 'abduhu wa Rasūluhu* [I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh, who has no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His messenger], voluntarily and with good intentions, a light emanates from the intentions of the servant in the figure of a green bird. It flies over the seven heavens, lands, and prostrates itself in front of the hands of Allāh, '*aza wa jalla*, [Mighty and Majestic], trembling like the leaves when there is strong wind,

and the Lord of Humankind says: ‘O Word! By My honor and My nobility! And by My exalted place! No word shall leave the mouth of My servants but that I shall forgive him, even though he professes it only once in his life.’

Regarding your question concerning the thing that blows but which does not have a soul, it is the dawn when it blows.

Regarding the thing that Allāh created, and He then purchased, they are the souls of those who die in the path of Allāh,

Regarding the thing that Allāh created, and He then asked about, it is the staff of Moses

Regarding the thing made of water, which did not descend from the heavens, and which did not come from the earth, it is the sweat of horses in the path of Allāh.

Regarding the grave which travels with its inhabitant, it was Yūnus when the whale swallowed him, and he cried out: ‘There is no lord but Allāh, and I am among the wrongdoers’ [allusion to Sūrah 37:142]. Had it not been for the fact that he was one of those who remembered Allāh [*atasbiḥantes*], he would have remained in the stomach [of the whale] until the Day of Judgment.

Regarding your question concerning the first person who died but who did not die on the face of the earth: it was Hābīl [Abel] when he was killed by his brother Qabīl [Cain].

Regarding the first tree that swayed in the wind on earth, it was the tree with which Nūḥ [Noah] build his Ark.

Regarding the white highway which crosses the sky, it was there that Allāh, *tabāraka wa ta’ālā* [blessed and exalted be He], sent the companions of Lūt [Lot].

Regarding what the rooster says in its call, it says: ‘Invoke Allāh! O Negligent Ones!’

Regarding what the dog says when it barks, it says: ‘How terrible [is the chastisement] for the people of the fire!’

Regarding what the donkey says when it brays, it says: ‘The wrath of Allāh is upon the unbelievers.’

Regarding what the horse says when it neighs, it says: ‘How great [is the reward] for the believers.’

Regarding what the thunder says when it bellows, it says: ‘The judgment and the decree belong to Allāh.’

Regarding what the camel says in its roar, it says: ‘Blessed is he who gives of his sustenance without counting to those in need.’

Regarding what the lion says in its roar, it says: ‘I am the bravest of the warriors, and I am of the greatest strength.’

Regarding what the nightingale says in its song, it says: 'I am pleased with little in this worldly life, and I am pleased with little in the life hereafter.'

Regarding what the hoopoe says in its song, it says: 'The worst of the people is the two-faced hypocrite.'

Regarding what the pigeon says in its song, it says: 'Every soul must taste death.'

Regarding what the partridge says in its song, it says: 'The Most Merciful is seated on His throne from where He rules upon His Kingdom.'

Regarding what the swallow says in its song, it says: 'Blessed by the Living, the Ever-Lasting Who Never Dies.'

Regarding what the lizard says in its song, it says: 'Blessed be He who guided us to life in the water and who inspired His obedience in all things.'

Regarding what the bell says when it rings, it says: 'Blessed be Allāh, the One True God.'

Regarding what the peacock says in its song, it says: 'Blessed is he who blesses those who deserve to be blessed.'

Regarding to your question concerning the place of the night when the day arrives, and where the day goes when the night arrives, this is due to Isrāfīl [Uriel]. He takes a black pearl -- which is as wide and as long as the distance traveled by foot over six hundred years -- the distance of the rising sun. While the sun sets, that black [pearl] sets faster than the blinking of eyelashes. Allāh brings out the sun so that nobody can see that pearl.

When the sun sets, another group of celestial angels comes, whose shoe length and width are as long as six hundred years. It is like the darkness that covers the seventh sea. Allāh did not create anything darker in blackness than it. The angel takes a handful of darkness from it and returns to the sun. That angel does not cease casting darkness from his fingers until the day starts to rise.

When he crosses the greatest sea, he releases the darkness and extends his wings. He casts away the darkness with his glorifications [*atasbihes*], sanctifying and praising Allāh until the sun rises and the dawn breaks.

Then, another angel comes, and his name is Sharahīl. He takes the other white pearl and raises it along with the rising sun. Then, the day, with its clarity and brightness appears, along with that of his wife. This is done every day and every night, and Allāh is aware of that

Regarding your question concerning the one which does not have a second: it is Allāh, blessed be He!

Regarding the two who do not have a third, they are Adam and Hawā' [Eve].

Regarding the three who do not have a fourth, they are Jibrīl [Gabriel], Mika'īl [Michael], and Isrāfīl [Uriel].

Regarding the four who do not have a fifth, they are the four books: the *Tawrah* [Torah], the *Injīl* [Gospel], the *Zabūr* [Psalms], and the Qur'ān.

Regarding the five who do not have a sixth, they are the five daily prayers which Allāh prescribed as obligatory for His servants.

As for the six who do not have a seventh, they are the days which Allāh names in the glorious Qur'ān. Our Lord Allāh, the One who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then sat down on His throne on the seventh day.

As for the seven who do not have an eight, they are the levels of the heavens that Allāh created in seven days with His power and might.

These are the answers to the questions you asked. Now: what do you say?"

The Christian said: "By Allāh! You have answered [my questions] according to the Gospel. You have not added or suppressed a single letter."

He stood up and said: "I bear witness that there is no lord but Allāh, the One and Only, without partners, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His true messenger."

He became Muslim, as did his entire entourage who had accompanied him. His Islām was solid. We taught him the *sharī'ah*, and the sunnah of Islām. We ask Allāh that he increase our good out of His grace, honor, and nobility. There is no Lord like unto Him. He is the Sole One what we serve. And He is powerful over all things. *Wa alḥamdulillāhi rabb al-'alamīn* [And praise be to Allāh the Lord of the Worlds].

34.3 Commentary

As explained in chapter twenty-three and chapter twenty-four, traditions like this one, which are reminiscent of the works of al-Bakrī, Wāqidī, and others, appear to be the product of early pro-'Alid and anti-Umayyad Muslim storytellers. By means of educational entertainment, originally in Arabic, and translated into Persian, Malaysian, Indonesian, Spanish, and other languages, these stories sowed the seeds of Shī'ism in both east and west. And while Muslim *ḥadīth* scholars purged many of these accounts, they survived in the periphery of the Islāmic world, in Spain and South-East Asia, as a type of literary and religious time capsules.

If traditionists purged these narrations on the pretext that they were the product of storytellers, the real reason they were rejected was because they respected and revered the People of the House of the Prophet. They were rejected because rulers feared that the love of the *ahl al-bayt* would result

in thrones being toppled. In reality, they are no more fictitious than the accounts that were canonized in the supposedly authentic books of traditions of the Sunnīs and other sects. It mattered not whether they were true or false. They were rejected because they were viewed as subversive.

The *Hadīth of Sarjīl b. Sarjūn* is related on the authority of Hasan al-Baṣrī, who related it on the authority of Wahb b. Munabbih (655-738), a *tābi ʿ* [follower], who related it on the authority of Salmān al-Fārisī, one of the *ṣaḥābah* [companions]. Wahb b. Munabbih was the brother of Hammām b. Munabbih (d. 719), the author of *al-Sahīfah*, one of the oldest surviving collections of traditions, which were related on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (601-681).

Originally from Yemen, Wahb b. Munabbih was of Persian descent through his father, Munabbih b. Kāmil, who had been a companion of the Prophet, and Himyarite descent through his mother. A narrator of *Isrāʿīliyyāt*, namely, Judeo-Christian traditions, Wahb b. Munabbih was accused by some of being a secret Jew. However, this claim is contentious, and some authorities, like al-Nawawī (1233–1277) and Ibn Khallikān (1211-1282), make no mention that he was Jewish by either race or religion. Opinions considering his reliability vary among Sunnī scholars. Shīʿite traditionists, however, generally treat him as untrustworthy.

As for Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (642-728), he is generally accepted as an authority by Sunnī scholars. Shīʿite traditionists cite him often although they have some apprehensions about him. He is cited in many Ṣūfī *silsilahs* following ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. As for Salmān al-Fārisī, whose historicity is questioned by some academics, he is universally accepted as a trustworthy source by all Muslims and holds a special place of honor among Shīʿites. While short, the chain of narration of this tradition would be likely treated as authentic by Sunnī scholars. Shīʿite scholars would likely treat the chain as weak but the content as sound.

From where does this tradition come? Based on content, I would venture to say that it derives from seminal Shīʿite sources. There is a large body of debate literature between clerics from the People of the Book and the Imāms of the *ahl al-bayt* in which the spiritual leaders of the Shīʿites manifest superiority of knowledge. Examples of such interconfessional discussions can be found in Ṣadūq's (948-1022) *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*. The name Sarjīl ibn Sarjūn sounds similar to the name Shamʿūn b. Ḥamūn, the monk who pays allegiance to ʿAlī after the battle of Ṣiffīn and which is related in *The Book of Sulaym ibn Qays* (32-37). The Aljamiado-Morisco tradition also shares some similarities with a tradition in which ʿAlī is questioned by a Jewish person and which is found in Ṣadūq's *Khiṣāl*.

Shīʿite sources also abound with traditions that demonstrate that the

intellectual and spiritual merits of Imām ‘Alī surpass those of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān. In this case, Abū Bakr, the Prophet’s supposed successor, is stumped by the questions posed by a Christian cleric. Abū Bakr himself admits that: “There is a man among us who judges the people of the Gospel according to the Gospel, the people of the Torah according to the Torah, and the people of the Qur’ān according to the Qur’ān” words drawn directly from the first sermon delivered by Imām ‘Alī when he became the fourth caliph. The *ḥadīth* in question also supports the Shī‘ite claim that the Imāms, like the Prophet, supposedly understood and spoke the languages of all animals. There is a Shī‘ite tradition, for example, in which Imām al-Ḥusayn explains the meaning of dozens of animal sounds. In a tradition recorded in Majlisī’s (1627-1699) *Bihār al-anwār*, Imām Ḥusayn reportedly revealed the meaning of many such cries and songs:

When a vulture cries, he says: “O children of Adam live as you may live! But the end of it will be death.”

When an eagle (hawk) cries, he says: “O Knower of the Hidden and O Who Resolves the Problems.”

When peacock cries, he says: “O my Lord! I had been unjust to myself and was deceived of my beauty so pardon me.”

When a francolin (a bird) cries, he says: “The Merciful upon its eternal throne is sitting.”

When a rooster cries, he says: “Whoever acknowledges Allāh never forgets to remember Him.”

When a hen cries, she says: “O Lord of Justice! You are just and Your word is just, and O Lord! O Just!”

When a sparrow hawk cries, he says: “I have my faith in Allāh and upon The Day of Judgment.”

When a courser (a bird) chirps, she says: “Be hopeful with Allāh and you will be given your sustenance.”

When a falcon cries, he says: “One who obeys Allāh he is never unlucky.”

When a peregrine cries, he says: “Glory to Allāh who is right and certainly right.”

When an owl hoots, he says: “To abandon humans is peace.”

When a crow caws, he says: “O provider of the sustenance bless me with the food which is legitimate.”

When a crane cries, he says: “O my Lord! Guard me against my enemies.”

When a stork cries, he says: “Whoever is in seclusion is safe from the torment of people.”

When a duck quacks, he says: “O Lord! You are the Forgiver of me.”

When a coffin bird (hoopoe) sings, he says: “One who violates the commands of Allāh, how unfortunate he is.”

When a turtledove coos, he says: “O knower of hidden and whisper,

O Lord.”

When a bear growls, he says: “You are the Lord, O Lord! There is no Lord except you.”

When a magpie chirps, he says: “Glory to Him from whom nothing is hidden and is never going to be hidden.”

When a parrot mimics, he says: “Who remembers his Lord his sins are going to be pardoned.”

When a sparrow sings, he says: “I beg forgiveness from those things, which cause Allāh to get angry.”

When a nightingale sings, he says: “There is no God except Allāh! Certainly, and surely.”

When a partridge coos, she says: “The Truth is closer and closer.”

When a quail sings, he says: “O children of Adam! About death how heedless you are.”

When a *suzanik* (a bird) cries, he says: “There is no God but Allāh, Muḥammad and his offspring are the selection of Allāh.”

When a robin coos, she says: “O the only One! O the Unique! O the Singular who is independent, absolute.”

When a roller cries, he says: “O my Lord! Set me free from the fire of hell.”

When a lark chirps, he says: “O my Lord! Forgive every sin of the sinners.”

When a *warshān* (a bird) cries, he says: “If you would not forgive me, I will be unfortunate.”

When a ray (a fish) communicates, he says: “There is no power except Allāh’s who is ever exalted and ever majestic.”

When an ostrich cries, she says: “There is no lord except Allāh deserving to be worshiped.”

When a swift chirps, she recites the chapter of al-Ḥamd and then she says: “O Acceptor of the repentance from those who repent, O Lord! Praise is only to You.”

When a giraffe cries, he says: “There is no lord except Allāh who is the only One.”

When a lamb cries, he says: “Death, as an advisor is sufficient.”

When a young goat cries, he says: “Death came to me too early; my sins were more in number and were multiplying.”

When a lion roars, he says: “The command of Allāh is important, utterly important.”

When a bull cries, he says: “O Son of Adam! Be patient and very patient, you are before One who is seeing you and He cannot be seen, that one is Allāh.”

When an elephant cries, he says: “From death there is no escape or any way to avoid it.”

When a cheetah growls, he says: “O Ever Respected! O Dominant! O Loftiest in Pride! O Lord!”

When a camel cries out, he says: “Glory to one who humiliates the

proud ones.”

When a horse neighs, he says: “Glory to our Lord who is Glorious.”

When a wolf howls, he says: “Whoever Allāh protects, he will never be ruined.”

When a jackal howls, he says: “Condemned is one who persists upon his wrongdoing.”

When a dog barks, he says: “Disobedience to Allāh is sufficient for disgrace.”

When a rabbit cries, he says: “Do not destroy me, O my Lord! Praise is only for you.”

When a fox howls, he says: “The world is an abode of deceit.”

When a deer cries, he says: “Free me from difficulties.”

When a rhinoceros cries, he says: “Help me; otherwise, I am going to perish.”

When a caribou cries, he says: “For me, Allāh is sufficient and He is the Guardian. Allāh is sufficient to me.”

When a tiger growls, he says: “Glory to one who has His prestige due to His overwhelming power.”

When a snake hisses, he says: “How unfortunate is one who disobeys You, O Merciful!”

When a scorpion cries, he says: “The vilest thing is loneliness.”

Imām al-Ḥusayn mentioned that Allāh has not created anything but it has its own glorification by which he praises his Lord. At that time, the Imām recited 17:44: “There is not anything which is not glorifying His praise, but you do not have a perception of it.” (Erfan n. page; Alhassanain n. page)

Considering that the Christian leader from Syria challenged Abū Bakr, saying, “If you can answer them correctly, we will know that Muḥammad is a prophet and a messenger, that the religion of Islām is the truth, and that everything else is void,” and that the first caliph was unable to respond and was obliged to refer him to Imām ‘Alī, the implication is that the truth was with the latter. If this is the case, then the *Ḥadīth of Sarjīl b. Sarjūn* could be seen as some sort of extended metaphor for the Prophet’s saying: “‘Alī is with the truth and the truth is with ‘Alī” (Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Haythamī, Ibn Qutaybah, Zamakhsharī, Ṭabarānī, Ḥākim, Tirmidhī, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, Muttaqī al-Hindī, Ṭūsī...).

The tradition of Sarjīl b. Sarjūn seems Shī‘ite in spirit. Although certain elements, such as the sounds of animals, appear to trace back to Twelver Shī‘ite sources, the contrast between Abū Bakr and ‘Alī, in which the former is accepted as a legitimate but less qualified caliph while the latter is presented as the preferred caliph who had inherited the knowledge of the Prophet, aligns more with moderate Zaydī Shī‘ite beliefs. This is a gentle Shī‘ism, devoid of the animosity of the Twelvers towards Abū Bakr, ‘Umar,

‘Uthmān, and other companions that reaches vitriolic proportions, namely, accusations of apostasy, immorality and infidelity which are accompanied by ritual cursing. It is a tempered Shī‘ism that was close to Sunnism and Ṣūfism in many regards but insistent on the spiritual and political status of Imām ‘Alī. This was the early, foundational pro-‘Alid Islām that was spread in Malaysia, Indonesia, North Africa, and al-Andalus.

TRADITION 35

SOME SAYINGS OF IMĀM ‘ALĪ

35.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 187 v – f 188 r / 569).

35.2 Tradition

It was related that ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be pleased with him) said:

Six things are good:

Dignity is good, but it is better among those who rule and govern.

Honesty is good, but it is better among the rich.

Chastity is good, but it is better among religious scholars.

Suffering is good, but it is better among the poor.

Repentance is good, but it is better among the youth.

Shame is good, but it is better among women.

‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, stood up and said:

The unworthy leader is like barren soil.

The religious scholar [*‘alim*] who is unchaste is like a river from which nobody benefits.

The rich man who is not frank is like a ship without water.

The poor person without endurance is like a tree without fruit.

The unrepentant young man is like a candle which provides no light.

Furthermore, the woman who has no shame is like meat without salt.

35.3 Commentary

This complete tradition is found in al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Daylamī’s *Irshād al-qulūb* or *Guidance of the Hearts*, an eighth-century work which

provides advice from the Qur'ān and the teachings of the twelve Imāms. Daylamī was one of the Twelver Shī'ite religious leaders of his time who excelled in Islāmic jurisprudence, *ḥadīth* sciences, and *'irfān* [gnosis]. Since the work does not contain chains of narration, it is treated as a work of moral and ethical guidance instead of a book of traditions that can be relied upon to derive legal rulings. This is another case of Moriscos relying upon early Shī'ite works of prophetic and Imāmic traditions.

TRADITION 36

I AM NOT OF THE HERETICS OR THE HYPOCRITES

36.1 Source

The following tradition is found in ms. S2 of the Gayangos Collection at the Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia. It has been transcribed by Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes (1924-2003) as *Tratado de los dos caminos* [*Treatise on Travel Routes*] (2005: 406).

36.2 Tradition

It is related that during the time of ‘Umar, the caliph of the Messenger of Allāh, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, there came to Sayyid ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with both of them, a group of believers, descendants of those who lived where Sayyid Mūsā and Sayyid Khiḍr, peace be upon them, had passed, and who would not give them anything to eat, and they told him:

O Leader of the Believers! We have come to ask a favor of you. We are believers who believe in the oneness of God and the prophethood of our Lord [Sayyidinā] Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. If you grant us this favor, we have brought you ten camels loaded with gold.

He asked them: “And what is it that you ask of me?” They responded:

Lord, all those who read the Holy Qur’ān blame our ancestors when they read these words that say *fā abawa’ an yuzīfuhumā* [they denied them hospitality] (Qur’ān 18:77), and they say that our forefathers were the most unfortunate and miserly people of their time since they refused to even give half a loaf of bread to such excellent persons as were Sayyid Mūsā and Sayyid Khiḍr, may peace be upon them. Since this is a great shame which falls upon our ancestors and us, we would like you to change the *bā’* [the letter b] to a *tā’* [the letter t] so that, instead of saying *fā*

abawa’, namely, “they refused,” it would say “they went to inform them” what to eat, since this can be done by simply removing the dot from under the *bā*’ [the letter b], and placing two dots on top of it, which is something easy to do, and which would resolve the predicament in which we find ourselves. In reward for this change, you will receive these ten camels loading with gold.

Sayyid ‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, responded with great anger and indignation:

I am not of the heretics or the hypocrites, nor have I fallen out of grace with my Lord until I change the letters which His divine greatness has sent. Your gold means nothing to me even if you had ten mountains of it.

36.3 Commentary

Three variants of this tradition exist in the Twelver Shī‘ite sources that I consulted. The tradition, in its various forms, presents Imām ‘Alī as a person committed to protecting the integrity of the Qur’ān and the teachings of the Prophet Muḥammad. It stresses that Imām ‘Alī was a guardian of Islām. This is yet another case of Moriscos relying upon Twelver Shī‘ite traditions.

TRADITION 37

IMĀM ‘ALĪ AND THE NIGHT OF POWER

37.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Libro de dichos maravillosos (misceláneo morisco de magia y adivinación)* [*The Book of Marvelous Sayings: A Miscellaneous Morisco Manuscript on Magic and Divination*] (68).

37.2 Tradition

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “Whoever reads ‘Indeed, We sent the Qur’ān down’ [Sūrah 97] one hundred times after the afternoon prayer on Friday, Allāh will give him the certainty of sustenance in this world.”

37.3 Commentary

This tradition is found in Twelver Shī‘ite sources and popular prayer manuals.

TRADITION 38

IMĀM ‘ALĪ AND THE DIVINE DECREE

38.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f 197 v / 590).

38.2 Tradition

‘Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, was asked about the divine decree. He said: “The divine decree is a thick forest. Do not enter it, for you will get lost!”

38.3 Commentary

The *aljamiado* tradition regarding the divine decree is derived from several Shī‘ite sources. The first of these sources is a longer *ḥadīth* from Imām ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib which is found in Ṣadūq’s *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* [*The Book of Divine Unity*], among other books of Shī‘ite *aḥādīth*. It reads as follows:

A man came to the Commander of the Faithful and said: “O Commander of the Faithful, tell me about the divine decree.” He replied, “It is a deep ocean, so do not enter it.” The man said: “O Commander of the Faithful, tell me about the divine decree.” The Imām answered, “It is a dark path, so do not follow it.” The man said: “O Commander of the Faithful, tell me about the divine decree.” The Imām answered, “It is a secret of Allāh. Do not enquire about it.”

This may be the source of the *aljamiado* tradition found in manuscript Junta 3. The only difference is that the *aljamiado* text reads “dark forest” whereas the original Arabic reads “dark path” which semantically conveys the same sense.

The second Shī'ite source for the *aljamiado* tradition regarding the divine decree derives from a Imām 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib's *Nahj al-balāghah* [*Peak of Eloquence*] which reads: When Imām 'Alī was asked about the divine decree he replied: "It is a dark path, so do not follow it. It is a deep ocean, so do not enter it. It is the secret of Allāh, so do not burden yourself with it." Although the *aljamiado* tradition may derive from Ṣadūq's *Kitāb al-tawhīd*, it seems more likely that it was drawn from Imām 'Alī's *Nahj al-balāghah* since this latter book had a much larger circulation than the former.

For many Shī'ite Muslims, Imām 'Alī's *Nahj al-balāghah* comes second only to the Qur'ān itself. Although some Sunnī scholars do study *Nahj al-balāghah*, they tend to view it as a literary work, as opposed to a religious one, which they use to master classical Arabic grammar and rhetoric. As such, *Nahj al-balāghah* is little known to most Sunnī Muslims, rarely read, and hardly ever found in their homes. The fact that the Moriscos were quoting traditions from Imām 'Alī's *Nahj al-balāghah*, and perhaps even Ṣadūq's *Kitāb al-tawhīd*, demonstrates that the major Shī'ite books continued to circulate in al-Andalus after 1492, suggesting, once again, the presence of Shī'ite Muslims in Spain.

The traditions we have quoted are found not only in *Nahj al-balāghah* and *Kitāb al-tawhīd*. They are also found in major compilations of Shī'ite *aḥādīth* such as *al-Kāfī* by Kulaynī (864-941). However, due to the sheer size of these encyclopedias of prophetic and Imāmic traditions, it seems unlikely that they would have been preserved during a period of persecution. Books like *Nahj al-balāghah* and *Kitāb al-tawhīd*, however, are similar in size to the Qur'ān or an average book. Hence, they were far easier to conceal than encyclopedic works.

TRADITION 39

IMĀM ‘ALĪ’S DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD

39.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (422).

39.2 Tradition

While ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, was delivering a sermon, a man asked him: “O Commander of the Faithful! Describe the world for us!” He responded:

It resembles a house: it starts with toil and ends in death. There will be account for the *ḥalāl* [permissible] within it and punishment for the *ḥarām* [forbidden] within it. Whoever is sane of mind and healthy in it is safe from harm. And whoever is sick in it harms himself. Whoever enriches himself in it is fortunate. And whoever is poor in it is sad.

39.3 Commentary

The aforementioned *aljamiado* tradition is drawn from a tradition of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib found in *Dustūr ma‘ālim al-ḥikam*, an anthology of sayings, sermons, and verses attributed to the first Imām, compiled by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Salamah b. Ja‘far b. ‘Alī al-Quḍā’ī (d. 1062). It reads:

In the beginning, this world is a hardship, and, in its ending, it is annihilation. Whatever is permitted in it must be accounted for, and whatever is forbidden in it must be punished. Whoever acquires wealth in it is tested, and whoever is in need in it stays at home away from it. Whoever gazes at it is blinded by it, and whoever reflects on it understands it. (24)

Despite differences in translation, the first two lines of this *ḥadīth* are identical. I have translated the *aljamiado* tradition as literally as possible from the original Spanish to English. The *ḥadīth* from *Dustūr ma‘ālim al-ḥikam* was translated from the Arabic original into English by Asadullāh ad-Dhaakir Yate. The Arabic original used by the Morisco author appears to have been identical to the version that has reached us in *Dustūr ma‘ālim al-ḥikam*.

Al-Quḍā’ī was a Shafī’ī judge, preacher, and historian of Persian origin who was based in Egypt. Although he was not Shī‘ite, the works he wrote on the sayings of ‘Alī, the life of the Prophet, and the history of the Fāṭimids all appealed to the Ismā‘īlī rulers of the time, thereby assuring their broad dissemination. Four versions of al-Quḍā’ī’s *Dustūr ma‘ālim al-ḥikam* have been found in Spain: one is in Arabic, one is in *Aljamiado*, and the two others are bilingual (Harvey 2008: 146). While the popularity of this work among the Moriscos does not prove the presence of Shī‘ites in Spain, it does, however, demonstrate the devotion that Spanish crypto-Muslims had for Imām ‘Alī. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that works like *Dustūr ma‘ālim al-ḥikam* are more commonly read and cited by Shī‘ite Muslims despite the Sunnī identification of the author.

TRADITION 40

IMĀM ‘ALĪ’S DESCRIPTION OF THE DEATH OF A GOOD MUSLIM

40.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (429).

40.2 Tradition

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “When a good and diligent servant dies, the ground on which he used to perform his ritual prayers cries out for him, and the heavens cry out for his good works. After, they read for him where they had previously cried for him in the heavens and the earth and those who were witnesses.”

40.3 Commentary

The aforementioned *aljamiado* tradition resembles several Shī‘ite *aḥādīth*, including a saying cited in *al-Kāfī*. As Kulaynī (864-941) reports, Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (d. 799), the seventh Shī‘ite Imām, said:

When a true believer [*mu‘min*] dies, the angels, the ground on which he used to perform his ritual prayers, and the doors of heaven through which his good deeds used to ascend, all cry out for him. His death causes a vacuum in Islām which can never be filled. This is because believing scholars form the fortress of Islām like the fortress which surrounds a city.

Despite the fact that the Morisco version relates the *ḥadīth* on the authority of Imām ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and the Arabic version from *al-Kāfī* transmits it on the authority of Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim, the first sentence in each version is identical, and the minor differences in word choice are the result of

translation. However, the final sentences do differ considerably, making one wonder whether only the first sentence of the *ḥādīth* is authentic and the final lines have been interpolated. The other possibility is that Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim was expanding upon the knowledge passed down to him from his forefather, Imām ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. They may also represent two different traditions, stated in different contexts, which simply shared the same start. In any event, the Aljamiado-Morisco tradition traces back to a Shī‘ite source; in this case, Kulaynī’s (864-941) *al-Kāfī*.

TRADITION 41

IMĀM ‘ALĪ’S DESCRIPTION OF A RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR

41.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 5267 of the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid which has been edited as the *Libro y tratado de buenas doctrinas, castigos y costumbres*.

41.2 Tradition

It was related that ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “When a scholar does not act in according with his knowledge, his knowledge is of no benefit to him. How can another person benefit from his knowledge, if he does not benefit from it himself even if he joins knowledge with rest.”

41.3 Commentary

The aforementioned *aljamiado* tradition resembles several Shī‘ite traditions, including the following found in *Nahj al-balāghah* in which Imām ‘Alī says: “Knowledge is accompanied by action for whoever knows, acts. Knowledge calls out for action. If it responds to the call then it remains... otherwise, it moves away from him” (70). The same words were also uttered by Imām Ja‘far al-Šādiq in Kulaynī’s (864-941) *al-Kāfi*. There are many similar traditions in Shī‘ite books of *aḥādīth*, none of which match precisely with the *Aljamiado-Morisco* version. Still, a Shī‘ite origin seems in order for this Spanish Muslim saying.

TRADITION 42

A SHĪ'ITE SALUTATION FOR VISITING THE GRAVES

42.1 Source

The *Libro de dichos maravillosos (misceláneo morisco de magia y adivinación)* [*The Book of Marvelous Sayings: A Miscellaneous Morisco Manuscript on Magic and Divination*] contains the following salutation which is supposed to be recited when visiting graveyards (189).

42.2 Tradition

Peace be upon the people of “There is no god but Allāh.”
How do you find yourselves? “There is no god but Allāh.”
O Allāh! By the right of “There is no god but Allāh.”
Forgive those who say: “There is no god but Allāh.”
And make us follow in the footsteps of those who say: “There is no god but Allāh.”
There is no god but Allāh before anything.
There is no god but Allāh after everything.
And there is no god but Allāh who creates and sustains all things.
Blessed is Allāh before everything.
And blessed is Allāh after everything.
And blessed is Allāh who creates and sustains all things.
Glory be to Allāh before everything.

42.3 Commentary

The aforementioned salutation was taught by Imām ‘Alī. According to Shī’ite traditions, whoever enters a graveyard and recites these words, Almighty God will grant him the reward of fifty years of worship and will erase the punishment of fifty years of wrongdoings for him and his parents:

Peace be upon the group of "There is no god but Allāh."
 From the group of "There is no god but Allāh."
 O group of "There is no god but Allāh"
 In the name of "There is no god but Allāh."
 How have you found the profession of "There is no god but Allāh?"
 O He to Whom "There is no god but Allāh" is said
 I beseech You in the name of "There is no god but Allāh."
 To forgive anyone who professed that "There is no god but Allāh"
 And include us in the group of those who professed that "There is no god
 but Allāh."
 Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.
 'Alī is the friend of Allāh. (duas.org n. page)

The salutation in question is found in popular Shī'ite prayer and pilgrimage books. Although the final *'Aliyyan walī Allāh* ['Alī is the friend of Allāh] is absent from the Morisco version, the rest of the prayer for visiting graveyards is almost identical. The traditional Sunnī salutation given upon entering graveyards is more sober, a simple: *al-salāmu 'alaykum ahl al-diyār min al-mu'minīn wa al-muslimīn, inshā' Allāh bikum lāhiqūn, as'al Allāha lanā wa lakum al-āfiyyah* [Peace be upon you, O inhabitants of the graves, believers and Muslims, God-willing we will join you. I ask Allāh to keep us and you safe and sound]. The Morisco prayer shares some similarities with a passage that appears in the *Munājāt* of the Algerian Shaykh Aḥmad al-'Alawī (1869-1934), a Šūfī of the Shādhilī-Darqāwī *silsilah*. It is still recited by his followers, Sunnīs who adhere to the Mālikī *madhhab*. Still, the Morisco salutation seems more in line with Shī'ite sources and customs.

TRADITION 43

THE PRAYER OF THE PROPHETS

43.1 Source

The following prayer is found in the *Libro de los amuletos* [*The Book of Amulets*].

43.2 Tradition

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.
My God! My God! I call upon You by [4:125] and [4:164]
You saved Ishmael from having his throat slit;
You freed Joseph from prison;
You created Adam with Your hands;
You raised Enoch to an elevated place;
You save Noah in the Ark;
You freed Šāliḥ's camel from hard rock;
You revealed the Psalms to David;
You revealed fifty pages to Seth, the son of Adam;
You subjected the jinn, human beings, and birds to Solomon, and you granted him great power;
You revealed ten pages to Abraham and you freed him from the burning fire;
You revealed ten pages of the Torah to Moses, Your spokesman and chosen one
You brought forth John after bringing the wife of Zacharia into good shape when she had reached old age;
You gave Joshua, the son of Nūn, the sign and the sight to such an extent that you stopped the sun in the sky for him;
You gave Jesus, the son of Mary, Your Spirit and Word, and the Gospel, and you made miracles by means of his hands
By the names and the gifts that you granted him.
You chose your beloved and Prophet Muḥammad above all the worlds and you revealed to Him the glorious Qur'ān and the wise reminder;

You placed him as the Seal of the Prophets and his book as the guardian over all books. (172)

43.3 Commentary

The aforementioned prayer is a variant of *Du'ā' mashlūl*, the *Prayer of the Paralytic*, a famous supplication that was reportedly written by Imām 'Alī, and which is popular among Twelver Shi'ites. It reads:

O You who restored Joseph unto Jacob;
 O You that cured Job of his illness;
 O You who forgave David his sin;
 O You who raised Jesus and saved him from the clutches of the Jews;
 O You who answered the prayer of Jonah from the darkness;
 O You who chose Moses by means of your inspired words;
 O you who forgave Adam's omission and raised Enoch to an exalted station by your Mercy;
 O You who saved Noah from drowning;
 O you who destroyed the ancient tribes of the 'Ad and the Thamūd so that no trace of them remained, and who destroyed the people of Noah aforetime for verily they were the most unjust and the most rebellious, and who overturned the ruined and deserted towns;
 O You who destroyed the people of Lot;
 And annihilated the people of Shu'ayb;
 O You who chose Moses as a Spokesman;
 And who chose Muḥammad as your beloved;
 O You who gave wisdom to Luqmān;
 And who bestowed upon Solomon a kingdom the like of which will never be merited by anyone after him;
 O You who afforded succor unto the Two-Horned On against the mighty tyrants;
 O You who granted Khidr immortality;
 And who brought back for Joshua, the son of Nun, the Sun after it had set;
 O You who brought solace to the heart of the mother of Moses;
 And who protected the chastity of Mary, the daughter of Imrān;
 O You who fortified John, the son of Zachariah, against sin, and abated the wrath for Moses;
 O You who gave glad tidings of the birth of John to Zachariah;
 O Thou who saved Ishmael from have his throat slit substituting him for the Great Sacrifice;
 O You who accepted the offering of Abel, and placed the curse upon Cain;
 O Subduer of the foreign hordes who opposed Muḥammad -- the blessings of Allāh be upon him and his progeny. Bless Muḥammad and his Family, as well as all your messengers, the angels near to You, and all your obedient servants. (duas.org n. page)

Du'ā' mashlūl is regularly recited in Twelver Shī'ite public and private places of prayer. Sunnī and Şūfī Muslims have their own prayer manuals. Although there is some occasional overlap, namely, cases of Şūfīs using prayers from Imām Ḥusayn and Imām Zayn al-'Abidīn, among others, this is not normative in mainstream Sunnism. In most times and places, reciting Shī'ite prayers in Sunnī mosques would be met with objections. Either the Moriscos were practicing a type of syncretic Islām -- which combined Sunnī, Shī'ite, and Şūfī aspects -- or there were pockets of Shī'ites among them. It is also conceivable that, under the weight of Catholic oppression, the doctrinal lines that divided the various Muslim denominations had started to fade. At a time when Muslims were forcibly converted to Christianity, and virtually all these New Catholics continued to covertly practice Islām, attachment to anything Islāmic was understandable. Although such fusion is possible, the textual evidence that has been transmitted through Aljamiado literature suggests that some Moriscos were well-aware of the differences between Sunnism, Şūfism, and Shī'ism.

TRADITION 44

THE MARTYRDOM OF IMĀM ‘ALĪ

44.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 155 v – f 156 v / 497-500).

44.2 Tradition

A young man walked past the door of a Jewish girl and he saw the most gorgeous girl through the window.

The young man said to himself: “I must marry this young lady today.” And he entered her house.

The mother of the young lady was blind. When he sat down, she asked: “What brings you to my house?”

He replied: “I wish to marry your daughter today.”

The woman said: “You do not have the means to provide a brid-price for my daughter since my daughter is very wealthy and owns many things. My daughter shall not marry any man unless he kills ‘Alī, because he killed my husband and my sons. I shall only give you my daughter if you kill him.”

The young man responded: “I would not do what you have asked me to do even if the King in heaven ordered me to do so. May He forgive me!”

He left the house and came across an older man with a white beard and beautiful clothing. It was Iblīs, may Allāh curse him! He (the Devil) told him: “O young man! From where do you come?”

He said: “From here. I was just speaking with this woman.”

He (the Devil) said: “You came to ask that her daughter become your wife?”

The young man said: “Yes.”

He (the Devil) said: “She must have asked for a large dowry.”

He (the young man) said: “Yes. What I was asked to do, I would not do for everything that exists in the earth and the skies.”

They then returned to the woman and they concluded the terms of the marriage.

The mother-in-law told him: “You will not be able to kill him with your sword. Give it to me! I will swipe it over the sweat of a horse and you will have to come serenade me for one night. Then, you will be able to kill with it.” So, he gave it to her, and did as she said with it.

In the morning, the young man went to the mosque and lay down in front of the door, with his cloak below him, and his sword beneath his cloak. ‘Alī arrived at the mosque with a large group of people, including al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, to perform the morning prayers. When ‘Alī saw the man resting as such, he told him: “Wake up from your slumber: fire with fire.” And he tapped him with his foot in his foot. The young man got up, grabbed his sword and stabbed ‘Alī in the chest. ‘Alī said: “I am dead.” The young man then ran away screaming: “I have killed ‘Alī!”

A young man stopped him, grabbed him by the arms, and brought him back to the mosque. The people wanted to kill him on the spot.

‘Alī said: “No. The will of Allāh had to be fulfilled. Do not kill him! According to the sunnah, you only have the right to give him the same blow (that he gave me) on the same side. And whoever kills him, he must be killed in return: and arm for an arm, a foot for a foot, and each side for the same side.”

Al-Ḥasan took the sword of his father ‘Alī and stabbed the young man, yet he did not cut a thing. ‘Alī said: “O Ḥasan! Do you not know that the sword of *Dhū al-ḥiqār* does not cut the flesh of anyone who testifies that there is no lord but Allāh.” Al-Ḥusayn pulled out his own sword and he cut off the head of the young man.

‘Alī said: “Put my weapons on me and mount me on my horse. And may nobody follow me! For I will go die where Allāh promised me that I would die.”

So, they placed him on his horse, and armed him with his weapons. And he left the city. And once he was out of sight, nothing more was ever heard of him. May the mercy of Allāh be upon him. *Amīn*.

44.3 Commentary

Although this tradition differs in some respects to the events described in standard Twelver Shī‘ite sources, the gist of the story is the same. According to both Sunnī and Shī‘ite sources, the man who killed ‘Alī was ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam (d. 661), something that the Aljamiado version fails to mention. The names of the protagonists may have been forgotten by the Morisco writer or may have been viewed as being of little importance.

Both Sunnī and Shī'ite sources agree that Ibn Muljam was a Khārijite, as was the woman he loved, as well as her malicious and vindictive mother. In the *aljamiado* version, the young man is never mentioned by name nor is his sectarian affiliation ever mentioned. Rather than being Khārijites, the woman he fell in love with, and his evil mother were Jewish. Khārijism seems to have long disappeared from Spain by the 1600s. Hence, rather than being Khārijites, those who plotted the death of 'Alī as presented as Jews in the *aljamiado* version. One enemy replaced the other.

Considering that Spanish Jews were in the same position as Spanish Muslims, it is sad that the Morisco author decided to scapegoat the children of Israel who were his brethren in both monotheism and suffering. Since Muslims and Jews were being persecuted by Catholics, presenting the plotters of 'Alī's death as Christians could have had a more powerful impact.

According to Shī'ite sources, the beautiful young lady was Qatam, the daughter of al-Akhdar of Taym, whose father and brother were killed by 'Alī at al-Nahrawān. All sources agree that she was one of the most beautiful women of her time. In the Shī'ite version, Ibn Muljam did not come across the lovely lady and his mother by chance. As we read in Mufid's *Kitāb al-irshād*, a group of Khārijites had gathered in Mecca to lament their losses at Nahrawān. Rather than confront 'Alī in battle, they decided that they should focus on the political assassinations of their enemies. They made a pact to do so after performing the pilgrimage. How Shī'ite sources composed over twelve generations after the fact could have known of such a meeting is anyone's guess.

'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam decided to kill 'Alī. Al-Burak b. 'Abd Allāh al-Tamīmī decided to kill Mu'āwiyah, and 'Amr b. Bakr al-Tamīmī decided to kill 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ. Ibn Muljam set off to Kūfah where he gathered with his fellow Khārijites. While he was waiting for the opportune time to assassinate 'Alī, Ibn Muljam visited one of his colleagues from Taym al-Rabāb. It was at this man's house that he fortuitously met Qatam, the attractive young lady with whom he fell madly and murderously in love.

He asked to marry Qatam, her mother agreed, and they became engaged on the spot. Qatam asked him "What bride-price do you suggest for me?" He responded: "Make your decision on that." Qatam replied: "I have decided that you should give me three thousand dirhams, a serving boy, a servant, and the murder of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib." "You can have all you asked for," responded Ibn Muljam. "But as for the murder of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib; how can I do that?" Qatam suggested that he should surprise 'Alī when he least expects it. He then decided to lie in wait for 'Alī in the great mosque, attack him, and kill him.

According to the *Kitāb al-irshād*, it was Ḥujr b. ‘Adī, the companion of ‘Alī, who screamed “The Commander of the Faithful has been killed!” It also says that Ibn Muljam had spent the night in the mosque performing *i’tikaf* [spiritual retreat] as were his companions and his wife Qatam.

According to another account cited by Mufīd, ‘Alī came out for the dawn prayer. No sooner has he called out: “The prayer, the prayer,” that swords were flashing, and someone shouted out, “Judgment belongs to God, ‘Alī, not to you and your companions.” ‘Alī shouted to his companions: “Do not let the man escape you.” It was then that ‘Alī was struck. Shabīb b. Bajura also attempted to strike him but missed. He fled to his paternal cousin’s house who, when he discovered that he tried to kill ‘Alī, killed Shabīb.

Although it is not mentioned in the *aljamiado* version, it was a man from Hamdān who followed Ibn Muljam, flung his coat over his hand, took away his sword, and brought him before the Commander of the Faithful. The third assassin was able to escape.

The Morisco version accurately reflects the response of ‘Alī towards his assassin. He said: “A life for a life. If I die, kill him as he killed me. If I live, I will consider my judgment on him.” Although the people wanted to shred him to pieces, Ibn Muljam was taken to prison. After the Commander of the Faithful died, Ibn Muljam’s head was cut off according to the instructions that the Imām had given.

Contrary to the *Aljamiado* version, Twelver Shī‘ite sources report that Imām ‘Alī died in Kūfah, surrounded by his family, and was not mounted on a horse to die in a secret place promised by Allāh. It is correct, however, that Imām ‘Alī was buried in secret by his sons al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn to prevent his grave from being desecrated by his enemies. According to Twelver traditions, Imām ‘Alī had given the following instructions to his sons:

When I die, you two put me on my bier. Then take me out and carry (me) in the back of the bier. You two will protect the front of it. Then bring me to al-Ghariyyayn. You will see a white rock shining with light. Dig there and you will find a shield and bury me at it. (Mufīd 1981: 15)

After ‘Alī died, Twelver traditions report that his sons did exactly as their father had instructed. They heard a rustling and whistling of the wind until they arrived at al-Ghariyyayn. They found the white rock that was shining with light. They dug and found a shield on which was written: “This is one of the things which Noah has stored for ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.” The tradition fails to mention the language and alphabet in which this statement was written. It piously assumes that the Imāms knew all languages, something

that some rationalist religious authorities reject as unfounded and unproven. After the Imām was buried, and the funeral prayers were performed, traces of the place were removed, and the location remained known only to the sons of the Imām and a few of his closest companions.

The *aljamiado* version seems to rely partially on Sunnī traditions which hold that 'Alī's place of burial is unknown. However, the Twelver Shī'ites insist that 'Alī's burial place was always known to his family. When the political situation permitted, and the grave no longer risked being destroyed by the ruling authorities, the Imāms revealed its location to their followers.

Although it draws in part from Sunnī sources, the *Aljamiado* tradition on the martyrdom of 'Alī also includes elements that are found in Shī'ite sources. Most importantly, it is the Shī'ites, more than any other Muslims, who regularly gather to recite accounts of martyrdom with a particular predilection for the deaths of Ḥusayn and 'Alī. Since the Moriscos were fond of drama and theatre, these types of passion plays appear to have appealed to them. If so, they served as a bridge between European, Arab, and Persian theatrical traditions.

TRADITION 45

THE GENEROSITY OF IMĀM ḤASAN

45.1 Source

The following tradition is recorded in *Ms. S 2 de la Colección Gayangos, Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia*. It has been transliterated by Álvaro Galmés de Fuentes (1924-2003) as the *Tratado de los dos caminos [Treatise on Travel Routes]* (2005: 438-439).

45.2 Tradition

A person once came to Sayyid Ḥasan, the son of Sayyid ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with him, and asked him to give him something. He excused himself for not having much to give but reassured him that the little he had, he would give it to him. He told him: “Sir, I would be thankful [for any help you can provide] and receive your favor.” He then called for his treasurer and told him to give him fifty thousand dirhams. He gave them to him, and the man had to bring two men to help him carry such a weight. Sayyid Ḥasan even gave them his cloak as payment for carrying. The treasurer then told him that he did not even have one dirham left and he responded: “I trust that my Creator will give me a reward without measure.”

45.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition, which exists in a variety of concise and more detailed versions, is found in numerous Shī‘ite and Ṣūfī sources. The tradition in question, and those that precede and follow it, seem to have been taken from Qushayrī’s (986-1074) *al-Risālah al-Qushayriyyah fī ‘ilm al-taṣawwuf*, which has been translated as *al-Qushayrī’s Epistle on Ṣūfism* by Alexander Knysch (262). The complete Twelver Shī‘ite version of the tradition is as follows:

A person once came to Imām Ḥasan and asked him to help him in his need. The Imām said to him: “You put me under an obligation by asking me a

favor and it has become incumbent upon me to give you enough money to meet this requirement and worthy of being presented to a man of your status. But, at this moment, my financial position does not allow me to give you as much as I should. Whatever amount a man might spend for the cause of Allāh, it would seem insignificant (when set against the infinite bounties of Allāh to him) but I am helpless, for I do not possess as much as I should give you as a sign of my gratitude to you for letting me know about your need. Now, if you are willing to accept as much as I can afford to give you and do not want me to procure more from other sources, I shall be glad to present to you the little amount I possess, though it will fail to fulfill my obligation to you.”

The man said: “O son of the Messenger of Allāh! I shall be glad to accept whatever amount you bestow upon me and feel grateful to you and believe you to be incapable of giving more.”

The Imām then told his treasurer to fetch whatever remained of the three hundred thousand dirhams he had put in his custody. The treasurer brought fifty thousand dirhams (the rest had already been spent on similar occasions), whereupon Imām Ḥasan said: “I also remember giving you five hundred dinars (gold-pieces)” and the treasurer said that he had them in his possession. The Imām told him to fetch the dinars as well and then asked the man to fetch some porters to carry this fortune to his house.

When he brought two porters, Ḥasan him the entire fortune and as he was leaving the Imām took off his upper garment and gave it to him, saying it is also my duty to pay the wages of the laborers for carrying the money to your house, sell this garment and give the money to them as wages.

At this, the slaves of the Imām said to him “we have been left with nothing to buy us our food, you have given away your entire fortune.” The Imām said: “I have perfect faith in the bounty of Allāh *ta’ālā* and I earnestly hope that He will grant me a bounteous reward for this act of kindness...” The Imām gave away such a large fortune, keeping back nothing with him and yet he felt sorry at the thought that he had not given the man his due. (cf. Javed 16-18)

TRADITION 46

AL-ḤUSAYN IS FROM ME AND I AM FROM AL-ḤUSAYN

46.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 23 r / 65)

46.2 Text

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “Al-Ḥusayn is from me and I am from al-Ḥusayn.”

46.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition is found in Bukhārī (d. 870), Tirmidhī (d. 892), Aḥmad (d. 855), Ibn Mājah (d. 887), Ḥākim (d. 1014), Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 965), Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 849), Busayrī (d. 1438), Suyūṭī (1505), Abū Nu‘aym (d. 1038), Dūlābī (d. 922), Ṭabarānī (d. 918), Ibn Ḥajar (d. 1449), and Tabrīzī (d. 1341). It is also found in the major Twelver Shī‘ite books of traditions. The tradition is generally ranked as *ṣaḥīḥ* or authentic although some traditionists treat it as *ḥasan* or good which is one grade lower. Such traditions play a key role in Shī‘ite Imāmology.

TRADITION 47

AL-ḤUSAYN IS THE YOUTH OF GLORY

47.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 56 v- f 57r / 84-85).

47.2 Tradition

The Messenger of Allāh said: “Whoever wishes to see one of the youths of glory, let him come and look at al-Ḥusayn.”

47.3 Commentary

The aforementioned Aljamiado-Morisco tradition finds its parallel in the famous *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet says: “Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the chiefs of the youth of paradise and Fāṭimah is the chief of the women of paradise” (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, Ṭabarānī, Nisā’ī, Aḥmad, Ḥākim, Abū Nu‘aym, Haythamī, Lumzī, Ibn Ḥibbān, Ibn Ḥajar, Tabrīzī).

TRADITION 48

IMĀM AL-ḤASAN AND IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN ARE THE BASIL OF THE WORLD

48.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 23 r / 66).

48.2 Tradition

The Messenger of Allāh said: “Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the basil of the world.”

48.3 Commentary

This tradition is a variant of a *ḥadīth* found in Bukhārī in which the Prophet says: “They [al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn] are my two sweet-smelling basils in this world.” When a person asked ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar (d. 693) whether a Muslim could kill flies, he replied:

The people of Iraq are asking about the killing of flies while they themselves murdered the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allāh. The Prophet said: “They [al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn] are my two sweet basils in this world.”

Although this may sound like an expression of sympathy, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar was a supporter of Yazīd (d. 683). Rather than blame him for slaughtering the Prophet’s grandson, he placed the blame on the Iraqis, namely, the Shī‘ites of Ḥusayn. At the very least, the son of ‘Umar acknowledged how dear Ḥasan and Ḥusayn were to the Prophet. Another similar tradition is found in Abū Nu‘aym, which reads:

The Messenger of Allāh was leading us in prayer. Ḥasan, who was still a child, would come to him while he was in prostration, and sit on his back or sometimes on his neck. The Prophet would lift him tenderly. When the prayer was finished, they (the Muslims) asked him: "O Messenger of Allāh! You are doing to this boy what you do not do to another person?" "He is my basil," he replied."

TRADITION 49

IMĀM AL-ḤASAN AND IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN ARE THE BEST OF PEOPLE

49.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 23 v-f 25 v / 66-67).

49.2 Tradition

In his book *al-Awlī*, Imām Aḥmad al-Rabbānī writes that Ibn ‘Abbās said: “One day we were with Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā (Ṣ), when Fāṭimah arrived in tears saying: “Yā Rasūl Allāh [O Messenger of Allāh]! I came to let you know that al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn went out and have not returned. I do not know where they slept or where they are.”

The Messenger of Allāh said: “Fāṭimah, my daughter, do not cry and do not be afflicted for the One who created them is more merciful towards them than both you and I.”

He raised his hands to the sky and said: “My Lord and my Creator! If they have traveled by land or by sea, guard them and protect them for you are powerful over all things.”

While he was saying these words, Gabriel descended and said: “O Muḥammad! Do not be afflicted and do not be sad for they are blessed in this life and in the hereafter and even more so are their parents, glorified be all of them. I came to inform you that they are sleeping under the protection of Ibn Najjār and that Allāh, *ta ‘ālā* [Most High], has appointed an angel to guard them.”

As soon as Muḥammad Muṣṭafā heard what Gabriel (AS) said, he set off walking with his friends until he arrived at the place indicated to him by Gabriel and they found them sleeping there. Al-Ḥasan was hugging his brother al-Ḥusayn while an angel guarded them covering them with his

wings, one below them, and one above them.

As soon as he saw them, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) bent down and kissed them until they woke up. With al-Ḥasan on his right side and al-Ḥusayn on his left, they left the place of Ibn Najjār in Gabriel's company. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) told them: "We have honored you as much as the Mighty and Powerful has honored you."

While they were walking, their father, who had been looking for them, came across them and said: "Yā Nabī Allāh [O Prophet of Allāh]! The burden you bear belongs more to me than to you and I wish to take it from you."

Muṣṭafā (ﷺ) responded: "Leave this blessed burden for they and their parents are better than the rest." They finally reached the *masjid* where the people had gathered.

The Prophet (ﷺ) stood up while he carried them on his shoulders and said: "O friends and companions! Would you like me to show you those who are the best of people in both lineage and descent?"

They asked him: "Who are they? O Messenger of Allāh!" He told them: "Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn for their grandfather is Muḥammad and their grandmother is Khadījah. Their father is 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and their mother is Fāṭimah al-Zahrā', the daughter of Muḥammad (ﷺ). Their uncle is Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib and their aunt is Umm Hānī, the daughter of Abī Ṭālib. They are the best of people in uncles and aunts on the side of their mother for their uncle is Qāsim and their aunt is Zaynab, the children of Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā (ﷺ)."

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) added: "O my Lord and my Creator! You know that al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are glorious and their parents are glorious. Hence, may my companions and my ummah be glorious as well." After this, Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā sat down.

49.3 Commentary

According to the author of the *Crónica*, this tradition was taken from the book *al-Awlī* by Abū al-Ḥasan Mubāshshir Rabbānī, a Ṣūfī shaykh. Although the author of the *Crónica* cites some Ṣūfī sources, he does so to support Shī'ism. The salient aspects of this tradition include 1) the belief that Ḥasan and Ḥusayn were divinely protected by God and His angels and 2) the belief that were "the best of people" or *khayr al-bashar*. The conviction that Muḥammad, Fāṭimah, 'Alī, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn were "the best of people" is central to Shī'ism and forms part of the Fāṭimid *adhān* which includes the segment: '*Aliyyun khayr al-bashar wa 'iṭratuhumā khayr al-ṭar*, namely, "Alī is the best of people and his descendants are the best of descendants."

TRADITION 50

IMĀM AL-ḤASAN: THE FINAL RIGHTLY GUIDED CALIPH

50.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 22 r-f 22 v / 65)

50.2 Tradition

The Prophet Muḥammad said: “After me, the caliphate will last for thirty years, after which it will become a Kingdom lead by a King, and not a caliph.”

50.3 Commentary

According to Muslim accounts, the Prophet Muḥammad died in 632. He was succeeded by Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, and (in the Shī‘ite view) al-Ḥasan who ruled as caliphs until the year 662 when Mu‘āwiyah became the sole ruler of the Muslim world, marking the shift from caliphate to kingdom. This tradition seems to support the claim that Imām al-Ḥasan was the fifth and final rightly guided caliph.

Although Western Orientalists have traditionally held that Sunnism represents orthodox Islām while Shī‘ism represents a heterodox branch of the religion, some scholars now suggest that the rule of the rightly-guided caliphs was much closer to the Shī‘ite model of the Imāmate than to the Sunnī model of the caliphate. As Roger Collins explains,

The dynastic succession to the caliphate achieved by the Umayyads might and generally has been taken as no more than the shady maneuverings of a family determined to obtain and then cling to power. This is tied directly

to the view of the Umayyad concept of the caliphate as being just secular. On the other hand, the equally clear but materially less successful dynasticism of their 'Alid opponents is seen as being at the heart of the growth of the unorthodox Shī'ite form of Islām and thus a powerful ideological force. Recent suggestions that the earliest forms of the orthodox Sunnī caliphate, as manifested in the Umayyads as well as their four "Rightly-Guided" predecessors, were much closer to the Shī'ite model of the Imāmate than it later became possible to admit or recognize, indeed deserve some serious attention. (129)

TRADITION 51

A ḤADĪTH FROM IMĀM AL-ḤASAN ON REPENTANCE

51.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 5267 from the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid.

51.2 Tradition

Al-Ḥasan, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: “Whoever asks Allāh to forgive him one hundred times after his ritual prayers, Allāh offers to give him many sons and wealth, and this is little when it comes to the power of Almighty Allāh.”

51.3 Commentary

This tradition, and traditions like it, abound in Islāmic literature, particularly in prayer manuals of all Muslim schools, sects, and denominations. Such sayings are attributed to the Prophet, Imām ‘Alī, and Imām Ḥasan, as well as figures like Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Although the wording varies, the stress on seeking forgiveness one hundred times per day is the same. The *wird* of the Algerian Shaykh Aḥmad al-‘Alawī (1869-1934), a Ṣūfī of the Shādhilī-Darqāwī *silsilah*, includes the recitation of *astaghfirulla*, “I ask forgiveness of Allāh,” ninety-nine times. It is still recited by his followers, Sunnīs who adhere to the Mālikī *madhhab*. While not exclusively Shī‘ite, the Morisco tradition in question is commonly found in Twelver Shī‘ite sources, among others.

TRADITION 52

WAGING WAR AGAINST IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN

52.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f 157 r – 157 v / 500-501).

52.2 Tradition

Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta contains numerous Shī'ite traditions, some of which are found in the canonical books of traditions of the Twelvers, and others which are unique. The manuscript includes a chapter titled “De Alhussainni” or “About Ḥusayn.” It explains that al-Ḥusayn was one of the greatest divorcers of women that ever existed. The tradition explains that Ḥusayn sent Abū Bakr to a wealthy man to ask for his daughter's hand in marriage.

When Abū Bakr asked the man whether he would give his daughter's hand in marriage to al-Ḥusayn, the girl's father started to cry. Abū Bakr asked him why he was crying, and the man responded: “How can I not shed tears when the man with the noblest lineage in the world has asked for my daughter's hand in marriage and I cannot give her to him.”

Abū Bakr asked him why and the man replied “Ḥusayn is the greatest divorcer of women on in the world. If I give him my daughter in marriage, and he divorces her, I must agree with him since I heard the Messenger of Allāh say: “He who is against al-Ḥusayn is against ‘Alī. And he who is against ‘Alī is against Muḥammad. And he who is against Muḥammad is against Jibrīl [Gabriel]. And he who is against Jibrīl [Gabriel] is against Allāh.”

The man said that this was the reason he was crying. He told Abū Bakr to ask Ḥusayn to promise that he would not divorce his daughter. If Ḥusayn accepted, the father would give him everything he owned. Then, both he

and his wife would be at his service. Abū Bakr went to Ḥusayn and conveyed the father's request. Ḥusayn responded that: "I would never marry with such a condition even if I were given the world. I refuse to give up the right that God has given me in exchange for her and her wealth. Go in peace then!"

52.3 Commentary

I have not been able to locate the aforementioned *ḥadīth* in its complete form in any of the Sunnī and Shī'ites books of sayings that I surveyed. Although the tradition lacks a chain of narrators, it is similar to various sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad regarding the merits of Imām al-Ḥusayn, including:

The Messenger of Allāh said of 'Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn: "I am at war with him who makes war on them and I am at peace with him who makes peace with them." (Tirmidhī)

The Messenger of Allāh said: "O 'Alī! You are the leader in this world and the leader in the hereafter. Your friend is my friend and my friend is the friend of Allāh, and your enemy is my enemy, and my enemy is the enemy of Allāh. Woe to him who hates you after me." (Ḥākim)

The Messenger of Allāh said to 'Alī: "He who loves you loves me and he who hates you hates me." (Ḥākim, Dhahabī)

The Messenger of Allāh said to 'Alī: "May Allāh love him who loves you and hate him who hates you!" (Ṣadūq)

The Messenger of Allāh said: "'Alī is from me and I am from 'Alī. May Allāh curse him who fights 'Alī!" (Ṣadūq)

The Messenger of Allāh said: "He who insults 'Alī, insults me. He who insults me, insults Allāh. And he who insults Allāh, Allāh will cast him into hell." (Ḥākim, Nasā'ī, Aḥmad, Khawārizmī, Ṭabarī, Suyūṭī)

The Messenger of Allāh said to 'Alī: "Blessed is he who loves, verifies, and supports your words, and woe to him who hates you and denies the truth of your words!" (Ṭūsī)

The Messenger of Allāh said to 'Alī: "O 'Alī! Your friend is my friend and my friend is the friend of Allāh. Your enemy is my enemy and my enemy is the enemy of Allāh." (Ṭūsī)

On one occasion, the Prophet Muḥammad looked at 'Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn, and said: "I am in war with those who will fight you, and in peace with those who are peaceful to you" (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad; Ḥākim; Haythamī; Ṭabarānī; Ibanī; Baghdādī; Haythamī; Dhahabī; Ṭabarī; Tabrīzī)

Finally, during the Event of Cloak, when verse 33 of chapter 33 of the Qur'ān was revealed, the Messenger of Allāh reportedly said:

O Allāh! These are my *ahl al-bayt*. They are my confidants and my supporters. Their flesh is my flesh and their blood is my blood. Whoever hurts them hurts me. Whoever displeases them displeases me. Whoever makes peace with them will make peace with me. Whoever has enmity against them will have enmity against me. Whoever is a friend to them is a friend of mine. It is because they belong to me and I belong to them. (Ordonī n. page)

Although the words, “He who is against al-Ḥusayn is against ‘Alī. And he who is against ‘Alī is against Muḥammad. And he who is against Muḥammad is against Jibrīl [Gabriel]. And he who is against Jibrīl [Gabriel] is against Allāh” would seem sound to Shī‘ite traditionists, and are supported by other prophetic traditions, the context in which these words were uttered seems questionable.

To begin with, Imām Ḥusayn was supposedly married to Shāhzanān, daughter of Yazdegerd III (d. 651), although some scholars have called this into question; Laylah, the daughter of Abū Murrah b. ‘Urwah b. Maṣ‘ūd al-Thaqāfi, a woman from the tribe of Quda‘ah; Rabāb, the daughter of Imru‘ al-Qays b. ‘Adī of Kalb of Ma‘d; and to Umm Ishāq, daughter of Ṭalḥah b. ‘Ubayd Allāh of Taym. Imām al-Ḥusayn had six children and was stable in his family life. The same cannot be said of his brother Ḥasan

According to both Sunnī and Twelver Shī‘ite sources, Imām al-Ḥasan was unstable in his family life, marrying and divorcing women prolifically. The sources state that he had seventy, ninety, one hundred and fifty, two hundred or even three hundred wives during his life. The report of seventy wives comes from Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī al-Madā’inī (d. 843). He was a partisan of the ‘Abbāsids. Ibn Adī said of him: “He is not strong in *ḥadīth*.” Madā’inī does not provide any evidence to support his claim that al-Ḥasan had seventy wives. The report of ninety wives appears in *Nūr al-Absār* by Shiblajī (d. 1298 AH). The reports of two hundred and fifty and three hundred wives are found in *Qūt al-Qulūb* of Abū Ṭālib Makkī (d. 380 AH). He wrote that:

Ḥasan b. ‘Alī married two-hundred and fifty wives, and it is said three-hundred wives. ‘Alī was very much annoyed and grieved by it, because when Ḥasan divorced a woman, ‘Alī felt embarrassment before her family.

‘Alī used to say that “Ḥasan is habitual divorcer. You people should not give your daughters to him.”

Then a man from the tribe of Hamdān said: “O *amīr al-mu‘minīn* [Leader of the Believers]! By God, we will give him our daughters; and he may retain whomsoever he wishes and may divorce whomsoever he dislikes.”

Hearing it, ‘Alī was very much pleased and recited the following poem: “If I would be in-charge of any gate of paradise I would tell the tribe of Hamdān, ‘Enter into paradise with peace.’”

Imām Ḥasan had likeness of the Prophet in facial features as well as in manners and character. The Holy Prophet told him, “O Ḥasan! You are like me in features and character and manners.”

Also, he said, “Ḥasan is from me and Ḥusayn is from ‘Alī.” Ḥasan often married four wives in one sitting and then divorced four wives in one sitting. (Rizvī n. page)

According to Twelver Shī‘ite accounts, Imām al-Ḥasan had fifteen children from nine different women. He had one son and two daughters from Umm Bashīr daughter of Abū Maṣ‘ūd ‘Uqbah b. ‘Amar b. Tha‘laba al-Khazrajī. Imām al-Ḥasan had a son from Khawlah daughter of Manzūr al-Fazarī. He had three sons from a slave wife and a son from another slave wife. He also had two sons and one daughter from Umm Ishāq, daughter of Ṭalḥah b. ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Taymī. Ḥasan also had four daughters from various mothers. In Kūfah, he married Ju’dah bin Ashath who reportedly poisoned him at the instigation of Mu‘āwiyah who had promised marriage between her and his son and successor, Yazīd, a promise he did not fulfill.

So far as Twelver Shī‘ite scholars are concerned, Imām al-Ḥasan was the embodiment of Islām. As Muḥammad Rizvī claims in *Imām Ḥasan: The Myth of His Divorces*, the second Imām never had more than four permanent wives, although he did have some slave wives, which are permitted under Islāmic law (Rizvī, *Imām Ḥasan: The Myth of His Divorces*). If the Prophet stated that Imām Ḥasan resembled him in manners, some scholars reason that he could not possibly have been a shameless divorcer of women who made the Throne of God tremble with displeasure over seventy times. Such behavior was contrary to the conduct of the Messenger of Allāh. However, as much as contemporary Twelver Shī‘ite scholars may speak of the divorces of Imām al-Ḥasan as a myth or a slanderous allegation made by Sunnīs, they are presented as fact in their own books of tradition, including Kulaynī’s *al-Kāfī*.

It appears that some Moriscos confused Imām al-Ḥasan with Imām al-Ḥusayn. This is true not only in those *aljamiado* manuscripts which claim that it was al-Ḥasan who was killed in Karbalā’ but in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa*, a work on the lives of the twelve Shī‘ite Imāms, which was translated from Arabic into Latin script by the Hispanic Tunisian Taybilī.

TRADITION 53

A ḤADĪTH FROM IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN

53.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f. 36 r / 73).

53.2 Tradition

Imām al-Ḥusayn said: “We are those who return the *salām* [greeting of peace] and we are those who offer food. We are those who perform their prayers while the people sleep at night. We are those who fast one day and then eat the next day. And we are those who are kind to children and who respect the elderly.”

53.3 Commentary

I did not come across this tradition in the sources that I surveyed. Nonetheless, Shīʿite sources contain a large body of teachings regarding charity, piety, prayer, fasting, kindness to children, and respect for elders. It should be noted that unlike Sunnīs, who focus on the sunnah of the Messenger of God, the Shīʿites place the sayings of their Imāms on par with those of the Prophet Muḥammad. In fact, their books of traditions deal primarily with the teachings of the Imāms. In Shīʿite books of *aḥādīth*, the teachings of the Prophet can account for as little as one percent. As such, they follow the supposed sunnah of the Imāms more than the sunnah of the Prophet although Shīʿites would argue that they are one and the same.

TRADITION 54

THE POETRY OF IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN

54.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 48 r-f 48 v / 80)

54.2 Tradition

Imām Ḥusayn recited the following verses at Karbalā’:

Lord of Creation
You made my grandfather Your beloved
You selected him
And you created the Heavens and the earth for him
If I have fallen into sin
I seek your forgiveness, my Lord

May these innocent ones
Murdered by tyrants
With evil hearts
Who spilled their weapons and their blood
Serve as sacrificial offerings
Receive them, Lord, in your service

The sole remaining survivor
I commend to you, Lord
Give him the strength
To leave this desolate place
With his mother and his aunt
O Lord! Be their savior, shadow, and guide!

54.3 Commentary

Imām Ḥusayn, like his predecessors and successors, cited verses of poetry at key moments in his life. The poem in question follows Spanish metric patterns. Consequently, it cannot be a direct and literal translation of an original Arabic poem. It could, however, be a loose rendering of a poem cited by Imām Ḥusayn.

The sole survivor, namely, the heir of Ḥusayn, was none other than 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn who would come to be known as Zayn al-'Abidīn or the Adornment of the Worshippers. The aunt who accompanied him was the independent, brave, and outspoken Zaynab. The fourth Imām, however, did not leave Karbalā' in the company of his mother. According to some sources, her name was Shahr-bānū, the supposed daughter of Yazdegerd III, the last Sassanid emperor of Persia. Half a dozen different names and genealogies are found in other sources. It is said that she was a Persian princess. It is said that she was a Persian but not a princess. It is said that she a princess from India. It is also said that she was a concubine.

According to most accounts, the ambiguous mother of the fourth Imām died after giving birth to him. Another account alleges that she witnessed the massacre of her family at Karbalā' and preferred to drown herself in the Euphrates to avoid the humiliation of captivity. And yet another account alleges that she miraculously made it to Persia on Ḥusayn's horse. The claim that Zayn al-'Abidīn's mother was a princess from Persia or India is a matter of myth. There is also no reliable evidence that she was present at Karbalā'.

As for the poem itself, it recounts the rupture of Islām into Sunnism and Shī'ism. For the followers of the family of the Prophet, slaughtering his grandson was the point of no return. Considering the presence of the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*], and its emphasis on the martyrdom of Imām al-Ḥusayn, the claim that the Moriscos were oblivious to the differences between Sunnism and Shī'ism is unconvincing.

TRADITION 55

THE PROPHET FORETELLS THE MARTYRDOM OF IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN

55.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 32r-/71)

55.2 Tradition

[Zaynab] told her brother [al-Ḥusayn]: “I need to tell you, dear brother, that I heard your grandfather, the Messenger of Allāh (Ṣ) say that the blood of al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib would be spilled on the face of the earth on the day of ‘Ashūrā in the month of Muḥarram... Know, my brother, that the Angel Gabriel (AS) descended to your grandfather, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā (Ṣ), gave him a strip of green silk which contained some white earth, and said:

“Yā Muḥammad! This is the earth from which al-Ḥusayn was created and on which he shall spill his blood on the day of ‘Ashūrā’. On the year in which this command and judgment will be fulfilled, through the divine wisdom of Allāh, al-Ḥusayn will die. This white earth will become red as if blood dripped from it.”

55.3 Commentary

This is a widely known tradition among Shī‘ites and found in many of their sources. It is also found in many Sunnī sources. It is related by Umm Salamah, the wife of the Prophet Muḥammad, in the following terms:

I saw Ḥusayn sitting in the lap of his grandfather, the Prophet, who had a red block of soil in his hand. The Prophet was kissing the dust and

weeping. I asked him what that soil was. The Prophet said: "Gabriel has informed me that my son, this Ḥusayn, will be murdered in Iraq. He has brought this earth for me from that land. I am weeping for the suffering that will befall my Ḥusayn." Then the Prophet handed the dust to Umm Salamah and said to her: "When you see this soil turn into blood, you will know that my Ḥusayn has been slaughtered." (Hākim, Dhahabī, Ibn Kathīr, Suyūfī, Ibn Ḥajar)

TRADITION 56

THE MARTYRDOM OF IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN

56.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 52 r- f 54 v / 82-83).

56.2 Text

When the cursed and ungodly Shimr b. Harshanah approached, Imām al-Ḥusayn, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu*, asked him: “O Shimr! What do you want and why have you come to me? The one who was damned and cursed said: “I come to tell you to bid farewell to this world as this is the final moment of your life.”

Al-Ḥusayn admonished him and warned him as others had done. He also reminded him that his grandfather was Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā (Ṣ) and that all his ummah will be judged on the fearful and narrow Day of Judgment, the day in which the only voice that will be heard is the voice of the Most-High and the All-Powerful.

The wretch answered: “Yā Ḥusayn! Your head is worth much wealth and honor.”

Al-Ḥusayn then told him: “Yā Shimr! Is the wealth of this world better than the wealth of the hereafter considering that the wealth of this world is fleeting and the wealth in the hereafter is everlasting?”

Shimr responded from his infernal entrails: “Yā Ḥusayn! Cut the crap. The only life that I am sure of is this life and this is the only one I care about.”

The glorious saint told him: “Yā Shimr! Are you pleased with the fact that you will live forever in the eternal fire among demons under the curse of Allāh? If you are pleased with that, then do with me as you please.”

Al-Ḥusayn bowed down his just and holy head and said out loud: *Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh. Ashadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūl Allāh.*

Inna lillāhi wa inna ilayhi rāji'ūn [I testify that there is no god but Allāh. I testify that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. To Allāh we come and to Him is the return]. The blessed saint had barely finished saying these blessed and holy words when the man condemned to eternal hellfire gave him a blow of his sword severing his head from his body.

Authentic and trustworthy writings from that time state that the Throne [of God] shook, the seven heavens and the seven earths trembled, and that all the angels cursed the companions of Yazīd with the most powerful curses. A terrible storm, warm winds and dark clouds arose. Since nobody could see anyone, it caused great terror and fear. They believed that the world was coming to an end. They attempted to repent for the act they had committed but their repentance was of no avail. The storm lasted for one hour. When they saw that it was abating, the day was clearing up, and the world was returning to the way it was, the cursed Shimr returned, took the holy head in his hand, and took it back to the cursed army. He approached them reciting these verses:

Since I have killed al-Ḥusayn
 This head will bring me fine silver and gold.
 It is true that Ḥusayn b. 'Alī was the best of creatures imaginable
 From all who existed until the day of his death
 His enemies formed a whirlwind around him
 Yet he was the bravest man the world had ever seen
 I won this promised prize.

56.3 Commentary

This account is consistent with Shī'ite sources on the death of the grandson of the Prophet. A former partisan of 'Alī, who fought for him at Ṣiffīn (657), Shimr Dhī al-Jawshān, a *tabī'ī* [follower of the companions of the Prophet], and leader of the Hawazīn tribe, gradually turned against him and ended up playing a direct role in the death of his son, Imām Ḥusayn. The murder of the third Imām was avenged by Mukhtar al-Thaqāfī (d. 687) during his uprising in 685. After the Umayyad forces were defeated, Shimr fled from battle. He was hunted down, beheaded, and his body was fed to dogs.

TRADITION 57

THE PRIEST WHO PROFESSED THAT ḤUSAYN WAS THE WALĪ OF ALLĀH

57.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f. 54 v – f 55 v / 83-84).

57.2 Tradition

It is related that the people of the cursed army remained by that river until the next morning. They placed the head [of al-Ḥusayn] on the top of a lance and they started to march with it towards the city of Damascus, with Shimr at their head.

Along their route, they reached a church in whose tower was a Christian priest. When he saw them arriving, he descended from the tower, and asked them: “By the Lord you worship! Tell me whose head you bring.”

They told him that it was the head of a rebel who rose up against Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiyah. He asked them for his name. They told him: “His name is al-Ḥusayn the son of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. His mother was Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’, the daughter of Muḥammad (S).”

The priest then told them: “I beg you in the name of Allāh, *ta ‘ālā*, and by your law, that you grant me the honor of hosting you here this evening. You will be lodged with the honor you deserve for I promise you that I have found in our gospels that al-Ḥusayn is the *walī* [friend] of Allāh and that his murderer will be in perpetual fire.”

57.3 Commentary

Among other sources, the aforementioned event is related by Yūsuf b. ‘Abd Allāh Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī (1185-1256) in his *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣ*. Although he

was the grand-son of Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 1200), the Ḥanbalī scholar, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī followed the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence and was known to harbor Shī'ite sentiments. The tradition in question reads:

On their way to Shām, at every halt, Yazīd's army had the practice of removing Imām Ḥusayn's head from the chest (which was specially made for his head). They then placed his head aloft the lance. At one of their halts at a church, they removed the Imām's head from the chest as was their practice, raised it atop the lance and guarded it. They inclined this lance against the church. A lone Christian priest inhabited this church.

At around midnight, this priest witnessed an amazing spectacle. He saw a ray of light extending from Imām's head to the skies. Amazed, he then inquired from Yazīd's men, "Who are you?" They responded, "We are Ibn Ziyād's soldiers." The priest then sought the identity of the severed head. They replied that it was the head of Ḥusayn b. Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, son of Fāṭimah, daughter of the Prophet. Amazed, he requested, "Will you let me keep this head for the night's duration in exchange for ten thousand dinars? I will return it (when you are ready to leave this place)?"

They acquiesced and handed over Imām's head to that priest in exchange for the agreed amount. The priest then cleansed Imām's head and applied fragrance to it. He held the head closely and wept for the entire night. In the morning, he confessed to the Imām's head: "There is no god but Allāh. Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family. I am your slave." (Ashura.com n. page)

It is related that he left his church and devoted the rest of his life to the service of the household of the Prophet.

TRADITION 58

THE JEWISH MAN WHO PROFESSED THAT ḤUSAYN WAS THE FRIEND OF ALLĀH

58.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 57 r –f 58 r / 85).

58.2 Tradition

Yazīd ordered that the head of Ḥusayn be removed from his presence. During this reunion, there happened to be a Jewish man from the children of Israel. He asked Yazīd: “O Leader of the Believers! Whose head is this?”

Yazīd responded: “It is the head of a rebel that I ordered to be killed.”

The Jewish man asked him what his name was. Yazīd told him that he was called Ḥusayn the son of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

The Jewish man responded: “My Lord, we have found in our Torah that Ḥusayn is the *walī* of Allāh and that his murderer will be in perpetual fire. I can assure you that when Moses died, and left his children among us, we raised them, cared for them, and favored them. Just look at the cruelty you have committed with al-Ḥusayn, the son of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, the daughter of the Prophet Muḥammad (ṢA). May you be cursed and condemned to perpetual fire. None but an evildoer like you could have committed such a thing.”

Outraged, with his infernal demonic insides burning, he immediately ordered that they cut off the Jewish man’s head. The punishment was immediately enacted, and his head was cruelly cut off by the blow of a sword. As the head was severed from the body and landed on the floor, it opened its eyes, and said: “*La ilāha illā Allāh. Muḥammadan Raṣūl Allāh. Al-Ḥusayn walī Allāh* [There is no god but Allāh. Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. Ḥusayn is the friend of Allāh] And his murderer will burn in hell”

58.3 Commentary

The aforementioned Morisco tradition appears to be an extended version of a *ḥadīth* found in Majlisī's *Bihār al-anwār*, which reads:

A Jewish leader entered to see him [Yazīd] and asked: "What is that head?" "It is the head of a rebel" [responded Yazīd]. He [the Jewish leader] asked: "Who is he?" [Yazīd responded]: "al-Ḥusayn." He [the Jewish leader] asked: "The son of whom?" [Yazīd responded]: "The son of 'Alī." He [the Jewish leader] asked: "Who was his mother?" [Yazīd responded]: "Fāṭimah." He [the Jewish leader] asked: "And who is Fāṭimah?" [Yazīd responded]: "The daughter of Muḥammad." He [the Jewish leader] asked: "Your Prophet?!" He [Yazīd] responded: "Yes." He [the Jewish leader] said: "May Allāh multiply your reward! Yesterday he was your Prophet and today you killed the son of his daughter!" He then went to the basin (*al-ṭashī*), kissed the head, and said: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh and that your grandfather Muḥammad was the Messenger of Allāh" and then left. Yazīd then ordered that he be killed.

There are a few discrepancies between these versions. The Morisco tradition stresses the miraculous, namely, that the amputated head of the murdered Jewish convert to Shi'ism professed the tripartite testimony of faith. The version that I found in *Bihār al-anwār* does not supply these dramatic details. The dialogue in Majlisī's versions is more succinct while the verbal exchange in the Morisco one is far more detailed.

It is generally estimated that Majlisī completed his monumental compilation of traditions in 1698 whereas the *Crónica y relación* was published in Spanish in 1639. It is improbable that Majlisī would draw from a Spanish work; however, he may have had access to the Arabic original of the Morisco work on the life of the twelve Imāms. There is, however, another nearly identical account related by Majlisī in his *Bihār al-anwār*; though, in this case, the protagonist is a Christian. It reads:

It is reported that Zayn al-'Abidīn said: When the head of al-Ḥusayn was brought to Yazīd, he convened sessions for wine drinking and had the head of Ḥusayn brought, placed before him, and he would drink wine in front of it.

One day, a messenger from the king of Rome was present at one such session of Yazīd, and he was one of the nobles and greats of Rome. He said, "O King of the Arabs! Whose head is this?" Yazīd said to him, "What is this head to you?" He said, "When I return to our king, he will ask me about everything I saw. So, I would like to report to him about the story of this head and its owner so that our king may share in your joy and happiness." Yazīd said, "This is the head of Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib."

The man from Rome said, "Who is his mother?" He said, "Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allāh."

The Christian said: "Fie on you and on your religion! I have a religion better than yours. Verily, my father is one of the descendants of David, and there are many generations between David and my father. But the Christians honor me and take some of the earth from beneath my feet as a blessing because of my father as one of the descendants of David. But you kill the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allāh, while between them there is only one mother! What sort of religion do you have? (Qa'im n. page)

The Christian then proceeded to relate the story of the Church of the Hoof, located in a city on some mythical island located between Oman and China which takes one year of sailing to reach. He explains to Yazīd that the Christians honor the hoof of a donkey that Jesus used to ride. As he explains to Yazīd,

This is their manner and habit regarding the hoof of the donkey they think Jesus, their prophet, used to ride. And you kill the son of your Prophet's daughter? Yazīd said, "Kill this Christian so that he cannot expose me in his cities." When the Christian realized this, he said to him, "Know that I saw your prophet last night in my dreams. He said to me, 'O Christian! You are of the people of heaven!' I was surprised by what he said to me. Now I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh." Then he jumped to the head of Ḥusayn, embraced it, began to kiss it, and cried until he was killed. (Qa'im n. page)

Although the protagonist in the Aljamiado-Morisco tradition is Jewish, and the main character in this tradition -- which is found in Majlisī's *Bihār al-anwār*, and which is included in Muḥammad Legenhausen's *Jesus through Qur'ān and Shī'ite Narrations* (465-468) -- is Christian, the plot is virtually the same. Although there might be a historical kernel in such accounts, they are ideologically motivated works of literature. Once again, the source of inspiration of the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] seems to be Shī'ite.

TRADITION 59

THE POETRY OF ZAYNAB, THE SISTER OF ḤUSAYN AND THE DAUGHTER OF ‘ALĪ

59.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 50 v / 81)

59.2 Tradition

Our beloved and loved one
The son of the most honorable man
Has died today
He was destroyed while surrounded by his enemies
In the desert of Karbalā’
Rests my brother, dead and buried

59.3 Commentary

Zaynab bint ‘Alī, the daughter of Imām ‘Alī and Fāṭimah al-Zahrā, and the sister of Imām Ḥusayn, was a valiant and outspoken Shī‘ite Muslim woman. A witness to the atrocities that took place in Karbalā’, and the humiliating treatment that her family suffered at the hands of the Umayyads in Damascus, she defiantly denounced the despotic Yazīd to his face. She delivered heart-rending speeches and lamentation assemblies in Damascus, and elsewhere, essentially ensuring that the memory of Imām Ḥusayn and his suffering remain a permanent part of Shī‘ite Muslim consciousness.

As an outspoken orator, it would not be unexpected for a cultured woman of her kind to recite verses of poetry to mark certain occasions. The problem with the poetry cited in the *Crónica y relación* is that it abides by Spanish norms of rhyme and meter. Consequently, we cannot speak of a

literal translation of any original Arabic poetry. At best, we could conceive of loose translations that were adapted to the Spanish language. Although the poems in question are not of the greatest literary value, they demonstrate that Muslims, in this case Shī'ite Muslims, participated in the Spanish Golden Age, a period, ranging from 1492 to 1659, in which Spanish literature and art flourished. Consequently, studies and anthologies of Spanish Golden Age literature should include some of the finer examples of poetry and prose produced by the Moriscos.

TRADITION 60

THE ANGELIC APPOINTMENT OF ZAYN AL-‘ABIDĪN

60.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which forms part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f. 65 v – f. 67 r / 89-90).

60.2 Tradition

After the death of al-Ḥusayn, which we related, and after the cursed Yazīd was hopelessly cast into the eternal fire, there remained the second son of al-Ḥusayn, who was known as ‘Alī. His title was that of Zayn al-‘Abidīn which he earned due to his devotion and constancy in the service of Allāh. Among the many things that Allāh, *ta ‘ālā* [the Most High], did by means of his servant, is the following.

On one occasion, he woke up in the middle of the night, as was his custom, to perform his supererogatory nightly prayers in front of the *miḥrāb*. While he was in the middle of his prayers, Satan appeared in front of him in the form of a serpent with the sole purpose of interrupting his prayer and distracting him from the prayer he was performing. The blessed [Imām] did not utter a word nor did he make any movement until he completed his prayer. Allāh, *ta ‘ālā*, then revealed to him that it was the cursed Satan. He told the devil: “Go away! Flee from here, O cursed one!” The cursed one fled feeling miserable while the blessed one returned to his prayer. While he was in his prayers, he heard: “You are Zayn al-‘Abidīn.” Henceforth, he was known by that name.

60.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition appears to derive from the following Shī'ite *ḥadīth* which can be found in 'Abbās al-Qummī's (1877-1940) *Muntahā al-amāl*, among earlier sources:

The reason for Imām 'Alī b. Ḥusayn being given the title of Zayn al-'Abidīn was that one night, as he stood for prayers in his place of worship, Satan manifested himself in the form of a huge serpent with the intention of distracting Imām 'Alī bin Ḥusayn from his prayers. But when Imām 'Alī b. Ḥusayn took no notice of him, the Satan approached him and bit his big toe causing pain to run through him, but despite this act of his, Imām 'Alī b. Ḥusayn continued to remain oblivious of him and carried on with his prayers. When, after the completion of his prayers, Imām 'Alī b. Ḥusayn realized that it was Satan, he cursed him saying: "O Accursed! Go away," and once again engaged himself in worship. It was at this moment that he heard an angel call out three times: "You are the adornment or embellishment of the worshippers." (cf. Erfan n. page)

TRADITION 61

IMĀM ‘ALĪ ZAYN AL-‘ABIDĪN’S VIRTUES AND EXCELLENCE

61.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f. 66 v- f. 67 r / 90).

61.2 Tradition

His virtues and excellence were so great that when he wanted to perform his ritual ablutions, he would lose his color, and his face would turn a tone somewhere between white and yellow. While he was in prayer, his entire body would tremble. When his people would ask what overcame him each time, he answered them: “Do you not know that I am not entering into your presence. Rather, I am entering the presence of my Creator. Hence, I cannot help but tremble when I face his divine presence.”

61.3 Commentary

In his *Kitāb al-irshād* or *Book of Guidance into the Lives of the Twelve Imāms*, Mufīd writes that:

None of ‘Alī’s children or his family was more like him and nearer to him in manner of dress and understanding than ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them. (One day) his son, Abū Ja‘far, (Muḥammad al-Bāqir), peace be upon them, came to him. He had carried out in worship what no one had ever carried out. He saw that his color had gone yellow from weeping all night; his eyes had used up all their water from being awake all night; his forehead was bruised, and his nose squashed from prostrating; and his legs and feet were swollen from standing in prayer.

Abū Ja'far, peace be upon him, reported: "I could not control myself from weeping when I saw him in that state and I wept, may Allāh have mercy on him. Behold, he was thinking and he turned to me a short time after I had come and said: 'My son, give me some of those parchments in which there is the (practice of) prayer of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him.'"

"I gave them to him, and he read something from them for a while. Then he let them go from his hand in exasperation and said: 'Who is strong enough to perform the worship of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him?'"

[Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn reported: 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Qurayshī told us:]

When 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them, used to perform ritual ablutions, his skin would turn yellow. "What is it that has afflicted you?" his family asked him. "Don't you know Whom you are preparing to stand before?" he asked. (383-84)

TRADITION 62

THE WISDOM OF IMĀM ‘ALĪ ZAYN AL-‘ABIDĪN

62.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 67 r- f 67 v / 90).

62.2 Tradition

Yahyā al-Anṣārī said: I saw him in Medina many times and among his sayings, he used to say: “I wonder at the powerful, the rich, and the arrogant one who only yesterday was nothing but a squirt of filthy semen and tomorrow he will be nothing but food for maggots. I wonder at one who doubts about Allāh when he sees His creatures, and this creation. I wonder at the one who denies and who forgets what will become of him when he has already seen what has become of his ancestors. I wonder at the one who builds for this life, which is fleeting, and yet neglects eternal life.” And when someone would come forward to ask him a question, he would reply: “Welcome be he who seeks sustenance for the next life.”

62.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition is found in *Kashf al-ghummah fī ma‘rifah al-ā‘immah* by ‘Alī b. ‘Isā (d. 1294 or 1294) who was known as Bahā’ al-Dīn al-Irbilī, a famous Shī‘ite *ḥadīth* scholar, historian, and literary figure. The tradition is also found in *Nāsikh al-tawārikh* by Muḥammad Taqī Sipīhr Kāshānī (1801/1802-1879/1880). It has been cited in a large number of Shī‘ite sources well into the present. What is important to note is that the author of the *Crónica y relación*, though steeped in Ṣūfism, seems to have operated within the scholarly tradition of Shī‘ism.

TRADITION 63

THE BLESSED LINEAGE OF IMĀM ‘ALĪ ZAYN AL-‘ABIDĪN

63.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 67 v / 90).

63.2 Text

Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā, *ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi al-sallam*, [may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], said that for Allāh, *ta ‘ālā* [the Most High], there are two parts of his servants, one from the Arabs of Quraysh, and the other, from the Jacham of Persia, his mother, the daughter of Cashri, and his father al-Ḥusayn. Much could be said and written about their many excellences.

63.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition is paraphrased from Ibn Khallikān’s (1211-1282) *Wafayāt al-a ‘yān wa anbā’ abnā’ al-zamān*. His famous biographical dictionary reports that Imām ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Abidīn stated that: “I am the son of the two good (communities).” Ibn Khallikān explains that “With this, he, peace be upon him, referred to the well-known tradition: ‘Allāh, the Most High, has two good (communities) among His creatures. His (good community) from the Arabs is Quraysh and from the non-Arabs is Persia.’”

This tradition is equally found in Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Tulūn al-Dimashqī’s (c. 1485-1546) *al-A’immah al-ithnā ‘ashar*. Although he was a Sunnī from the Shāfī’ī school of thought, Ibn Tulūn could be considered a follower of the spiritual authority of the *ahl al-bayt*, one who published the work in question to familiarize Sunnīs with the twelve Imāms from the progeny of the Prophet Muḥammad.

TRADITION 64

IMĀM ‘ALĪ ZAYN AL-‘ABIDĪN AND IMĀM MUḤAMMAD AL-BĀQIR

64.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 68 r – f 68 v / 91).

64.2 Tradition

Muḥammad b. Muslim al-Makkī, *raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu* [may Allāh be pleased with him], said: One day, while we were with Jābir b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī, ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn passed by holding his son Muḥammad, who was still a little boy, by the hand. His father told him: “Honor your uncle.” His uncle asked him: “Yā ‘Alī! Who is this boy?” He responded: “He is my son Muḥammad.” Jābir then hugged him, kissed him between his eyes, and said: “Yā Muḥammad! The Messenger of Allāh (Ṣ) sends you his salaams. One day, while he was holding Ḥusayn, who was a little boy, in his arms, he told me: ‘Yā Jābir! I wish to inform you that al-Ḥusayn will have a son named ‘Alī and on the Day of Judgment a voice will call out saying: ‘Rise up Zayn al-‘Abidīn! And ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn will rise up. This ‘Alī will have a son call Muḥammad. Yā Jabir! When the day comes that you see him in person, send him my salaams.’” And so it was since he lived but a little after this event.

64.3 Commentary

A similar tradition is found in the *Kitab al-irshād* of Mufīd, one of the scholarly pillars of Twelver Shī‘ism. It reads:

[Maymūn al-Qaddah reported on the authority of Ja‘far b. Muḥammad, on the authority of his father, peace be upon them:]

I (i.e. al-Bāqir) visited Ja'far b. 'Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī, may Allāh be pleased with him. I greeted him and he returned my greeting. Then he said to me: "Who are you?" That was after he had lost his sight.

"Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them," I answered.

"My young child come close to me," he said. I went closer and he kissed my hand. Then he stooped down to my foot and kissed that. I turned away from him.

Then he said to me: "The Messenger of Allāh, may Allāh bless him and his family, sends his salutations to you."

"Peace and Allāh's mercy and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allāh," I said. "How is that? O Jābir!"

He told me: "One day I was with him when he said to me: 'Jābir, perhaps you will live until you meet one of my descendants called Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them, on whom Allāh will bestow light and wisdom. When you do, send him my salutations.'" (Mufīd 1981: 394)

It is also reported on the authority of Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh in a direct tradition:

"The Messenger of Allāh, may Allāh bless him and his family, said to me:" "It will happen that you will live until you meet one of my children descended from al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, called Muḥammad, who will split wide open knowledge of religion. When you meet him, send my salutations to him.'" (Mufīd 1981: 394-95)

TRADITION 65

IMĀM MUḤAMMAD AL-BĀQIR AND THE NIGHT OF POWER

65.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Libro de dichos maravillosos (misceláneo morisco de magia y adivinación)* (68).

65.2 Tradition

Abū Ja‘far [Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir] said: “Whoever wants Allāh to forgive him, his household, relatives, and neighbors, should read: ‘Indeed, We sent the Qur’ān down during the Night of Decree’ [*Sūrah* 97] on Friday as many times as there are days in year. He will see the Prophet Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, [in a dream]. He will see proof that he will be freed from the fire of hell. He will be protected from poverty and sickness. It will protect and save him from misfortune.”

65.3 Commentary

While I did not find this exact tradition in the sources that I surveyed, similar instructions are found in Shī‘ite sources and prayer manuals.

TRADITION 66

IMĀM JA‘FAR AL-ŞĀDIQ AND THE INNER MEANING OF THE ARABIC ALPHABAT

66.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f 228 r / 658-659).

66.2 Tradition

The letter *ālif* stands for the name of Allāh. The letter *bā’* stands for the religion of Allāh. The letter *jīm* stands for the nobility of Allāh. And the letter *dāl* stands for the law of Allāh.

Regarding the *hā’*, the *wāw*, and the *zāy*, the *hā’* stands for hell, and the *wāw* protects the ones (close) to Allāh from the wind of hell.

Regarding *h* and *ṭ*, the *h* stands for those whose sins will be forgiven when they ask for pardon while the *ṭ* stands for the tree of paradise which is known as *Ṭūbā*. There is not a single castle in paradise that is unreachable by its branches which are covered in precious stones and pearls. The *yā’* stands for the hand of Allāh which is outstretched towards all of His creation.

Regarding the *k*, *l*, *m*, and *z*, the *kāf* is the word of Allāh to Moses. As for the *lām*, it means that those who do not defend themselves against evil are those who disbelieve in the painful punishment.

Regarding the *ṣād*, the *‘ayn*, the *fā’*, and the *dād*, the *ṣād* stands for those who truly professed *Lā ilāha illā Allāh*. The *‘ayn* stands for Allāh’s forgiveness of the believers. The *fā’* stands for the fact that Allāh stands over His believing servants. The *dād* stands for the rule of equity: he who sows evil, will reap bitterness.

The *qāf* represents the sinner with his manifest sin on the Day of Judgment.

66.3 Commentary

Although the tradition in question is missing both its beginning and its end, being devoid of a chain of narrators, and missing much of the Arabic alphabet, its potential source can still be determined by one who is familiar with Shi'ite traditions.

The *aljamiado* tradition in question seems to derive from one of several sayings of the Shi'ite Imāms. The first possible source for the *aljamiado* tradition is the following *ḥadīth* by the eighth Imām, 'Alī al-Riḍā, which is found in Ṣadūq's *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, among other works. Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā relates the tradition on the authority of his forefathers down to the first Imām, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, who said:

The letter *alif* stands for Allāh's blessings [*Ālā*].

The letter *bā* stands for Allāh's joy [*bahjat*] (also for the Ever Remaining, and the Originator of Heavens and the earth).

The letter *tā*' stands for the completion of the affairs through the Riser from the progeny of Muḥammad (Ṣ).

The letter *thā*' stands for the reward [*thawwāb*] for the good deeds of the believers.

The letter *jīm* stands for Allāh's Exaltation [*jamāl*] and Glory [*jalāl*].

The letter *hā*' stands for Allāh's Forbearance [*ḥilm*] towards sinners (it also stands for the Ever-Living, the Truth, and the Forbearing).

The letter *khā*' stands for the sluggishness of the disobedient ones in the presence of Allāh, the Mighty and High.

The letter *dāl* stands for Allāh's Religion [*dīn*] (which He has approved for His servants).

The letter *dhāl* stands for the Lord of Glory and Honor [*dhū al-jalāl wa al-ikrām*].

The letter *rā*' stands for the Affectionate [*al-Ra'ūf*] and the Most Merciful [*al-Raḥīm*].

The letter *zā*' stands for shaking on the Day of Judgment.

The letter *sīn* stands for Allāh's Luminance [*sanā*] (and His eternity).

The letter *shīn* stands for Allāh's Wish whatever He wished and intention whatever He intended. "And you do not wish except that Allāh wishes" [76:30].

The letter *ṣād* stands for the One whose Promise is True [*ṣādiq al-wa'd*] in carrying the people over the Bridge [*ṣirāṭ*] and imprisoning the oppressors in the hell.

The letter *ḍād* stands for the loss [*dīl*] of whoever opposes Muḥammad (Ṣ) and his progeny (AS).

The letter *ṭā*' stands for the prosperity [*tubā*] and good ending for the believers.

The letter *dā'* stands for the optimism of the believers about Allāh and the pessimism of the unbelievers in Allāh.

The letter *'ayn* stands for the All-Knowing [*'Alīm*] and the letter *ghayn* stands for the Self-Sufficient [*al-Ghanī*] who is absolutely never in need.

The letter *fā'* stands for the Splitter [*al-Fāliq*] of the seeds and fruit kernels and for the flames of the fire.

The letter *qāf* stands for the Qur'ān whose compilation and recitation depends upon Allāh.

The letter *kāf* stands for the Sufficient [*al-Kāfī*].

The letter *lām* stands for the absurdity [*laghw*] of the unbelievers in the lies which they ascribe to Allāh.

The letter *mīm* stands for the Sovereignty of Allāh on the Day of Judgment on the Day on which there will be no other sovereignty. Allāh, the Mighty and High, says: "To whom belongs the Kingdom this Day?" At that time, the spirits of His prophets, messengers, and proofs (AS) will speak and say: "To Allāh, the One, the Subduer (of All)." Thus, great be His glory will respond: "This day every soul shall be rewarded for what it has earned; no injustice (shall be done) this day; surely Allāh is quick in reckoning" [40:16-17].

The letter *nūn* stands for Allāh's favor [*nawāl*] for the believers and His punishment [*nakāl*] for the unbelievers.

The letter *wāw* stands for the affliction [*wayl*] with the punishment of the Day of Judgment for the ones who disobey Allāh.

The letter *hā'* stands for the insignificance of those who disobey Allāh.

The letter *lā* as in [*lā ilāha illā Allāh*] "there is no god but Allāh," is the expression of sincere devotion. There is no servant who says it sincerely except paradise becomes incumbent upon him.

Finally, the letter *yā'* stands for Allāh's hand which is expanded over all His creatures for sustenance. Glorified and Exalted is He from what the polytheists profess. (458-461)

The second possible source for the *aljamiado* tradition is the following *ḥadīth* from Imām 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib which is also found in Sadūq's *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, among other canonical works of Shī'ite *aḥādīth*. In the *ḥadīth* in question, Imām 'Alī said:

The letter *alif* stands for "Allāh, besides whom there is no god, the Ever-living, the Self-Subsisting."

The letter *bā'* stands for "the Ever-Remaining even after end of the creation."

The letter *tā'* stands for "the Oft Returning (in mercy) who accepts the repentance from His servants."

The letter *thā'* stands for "the Firm Creator" "Allāh confirms those who believe with the sure word in this world's life" (14:27).

The letter *jīm* stands for “high is His praise, and sacred are His names.”

The letter *hā'* stands for “the Truth [*haqq*], the Ever-Living [*hayy*], and the Forbearing [*halīm*].”

The letter *khā'* stands for “the All-Informed of what the servants do.”

The letter *dāl* stands for “the Rewarder of the Day of Judgment.”

And the letter *dhāl* stands for “the Lord of Glory and Honor” [*dhū al-jalāl wa al-ikrām*].

The letter *rā'* stands for “the Affectionate towards His servants.”

And the letter *zā'* stands for “the Beauty of the worshiped.”

The letter *sīm* stands for “the All-Hearing and All-Seeing;”

The letter *shīm* stands for “the Thankful to His believing servants.”

The letter *ṣād* stands for “the Most Truthful in His promise and threat.”

And the letter *ḍād* stands for “the Punisher [*ḍār*] and the Beneficial.”

The letter *tā'* stands for “the Pure [*Tāhir*] and the One who Purifies.”

The letter *zā'* stands for “the Manifested and the One that Manifests His signs.”

The letter *ʿayn* stands for “the All-Knowing of His servants.”

And the letter *ghayn* stands for “the Aid of all those from His creation who seek help.”

The letter *fā'* stands for “the Splitter of the seeds and fruit kernels.”

The letter *qāf* stands for “the All-Powerful over all of His creation.”

The letter *kāf* stands for “the Sufficient who there is none like unto Him and He begets not, nor is He begotten.”

The letter *lām* stands for “the Kind over His servants.”

The letter *mīm* stands for “the Master of Sovereignty.”

The letter *nūn* stands for “the light of heavens from the Light of His throne.”

The letter *wāw* stands for “the One [*Wāhid*], the Unique and the Needless, who begets not, nor is He begotten.”

The letter *hā'* stands for “the Guide for His creation.”

The letter *lā'* stands for “there is no god but Allāh.”

And finally, the letter *yā'* “stands for ‘Allāh’s hand which extends over all His creatures.” (462-465)

Although there are differences in content between the Arabic *aḥādīth* which explain the inner meaning of the Arabic alphabet, the spirit of the traditions is the same as they all reinforce the belief that the Imāms of the *ahl al-bayt* were granted the gift to interpret the esoteric aspects of the Qur’ān.

Some mainstream Sunnīs reject the allegorical and numerical interpretation of the Arabic alphabet. The Shī’ites and Ṣūfīs, however, have cultivated ḥurūfism, a mystical science of the sacred alphabet in which letters form a matrix of meaning: archetypal, internal and spiritual, and outer

and physical. According to Muslims mystics, each Arabic letter is a manifest veil which can be unveiled to reveal its esoteric meaning. Such esoteric interpretations are found mainly in Ṣūfīsm and in the sayings of the Shī'ite Imāms.

Although it is possible that the *aljamiado* tradition regarding the inner meaning of the Arabic alphabet was drawn from a Ṣūfī or Ismā'īlī source, it seems more likely that it was taken from a Twelver Shī'ite source.

TRADITION 67

IMĀM JA‘FAR AL-ŞĀDIQ ON KNOWING ALLĀH

67.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 204 r / 607).

67.2 Tradition

Ja‘far al-Şādiq was asked: “Why is it that we pray to Allāh, glorified and exalted be He, and he does not respond to our prayers?” Ja‘far said: “It is because you pray to One whom you know not.”

67.3 Commentary

The aforementioned *aljamiado ḥadīth* is well-known among Şūfis and Shī‘ites. It is drawn from traditional Shī‘ite sources such as Şadūq’s *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* in which Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim relates the tradition on the authority of his father, Imām Ja‘far al-Şādiq. The tradition reads: “A group of people asked [Imām Ja‘far] al-Şādiq, ‘We pray but our prayers are not granted.’ He responded, “‘If that is the case, it is because you pray to One whom you know not.’” The *aljamiado* tradition appears to have been drawn from a Shī‘ite source.

TRADITION 68

THE AMULET OF IMĀM JA‘FAR AL-ŞĀDIQ

68.1 Source

The following tradition is found in Manuscript 3 of the Biblioteca de la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas, which is now known as the Biblioteca del Instituto de Filología del CSIC (f. 224 v / 651).

68.2 Tradition

It was related by ‘Alī al-Faraj, may Allāh have mercy upon him, that he said: A man was brought to one of the caliphs to be executed because of accusations that were alleged. Abū Ja‘far al-Şādiq, may Allāh be pleased with him, saw him in that state, gave him an amulet (*al-hirz*) and told him: “Place it on your side.” And he placed it on his side. He was brought to the caliph and he ordered that his head be cut off. The executioner took out his sword and approached him to cut off his head and it fell out of his hands. He took the sword for a second time and nothing had power over it. They searched him and stripped him. They found the amulet on his side on which was written the following blessed words: “*Lā illāha illā Allāh ḥaqqān ḥaqqān. Lā ilāha illā Allāhu īmanān wa taşdiqān. Lā ilāha illā Allāh ‘ubudiyatān wa riqqān. Lā illāha illā Allāh ta‘abudān wa riqqān.*” namely, “There is no god but Allāh, in Truth, in Truth. There is no God but Allāh, in faith and sincerity. There is no god but Allāh in bondage and in slavery.”

68.3 Commentary

Unlike many *aljamiado aḥādīth*, this tradition does in fact contain a chain of narration, albeit a shortened one consisting of only the final authority from the chain. The tradition in question is related on the authority of ‘Alī al-Faraj, which seems to refer to Abū al-Faraj ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Isfahānī (d. 967), the Zaydī author of such important works as *Kitāb al-aghānī*, and *Maqātil al-ṭalibīyyīn*.

Due to the difficult situation in which they found themselves, with their libraries being burned, and much Islāmic information being passed down orally from memory, it comes as no surprise that the Moriscos often confused names. Although he was a Zaydī Shī'ite, Abū al-Faraj used to quote *aḥādīth* on the authority of Imām Ja'far al-Šādiq.

The fact that the Moriscos were quoting *aḥādīth* on the authority of Abū al-Faraj in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spain provides further evidence that Shī'ite traditions, both Zaydī and Imāmī, had been circulating in al-Andalus, and that they continued to circulate after the fall of Granada. Although I have not been able to find this precise *ḥadīth* in the sources that I surveyed, the tradition regarding the miraculous protection provided by Imām Ja'far al-Šādiq's amulet appears to be of Shī'ite provenance. I did, however, locate a similar prayer, a supplication for grief, which was composed by Imām 'Alī. What is more, the Aljamiado-Morisco prayer seems to be the first part of the standard Twelver Shī'ite supplication of prostration, which is recited after certain Qur'ānic verses. Its complete form, which is found in standard manuals of Islāmic jurisprudence, reads:

Lā illāha illā Allāhu ḥaqqān ḥaqqān. Lā ilāha illā Allāhu īmanān wa taṣdiqān. Lā ilāha illā Allāhu 'ubudiyyatān wa riqqān. Lā ilāha illā Allāhu 'ubudiyyatān wa riqqān. Sajdatu laka yā Rabb ta'abudān wa riqqān. La mustankifān wa la mustakbirān bal anā 'abdun dhalīlun ḍa'īfun khā'ifun mustajīrun.

[There is no god but Allāh, in Truth, in Truth. There is no God but Allāh, in faith and sincerity. There is no god but Allāh in bondage and in slavery. I prostrated to you, O Lord, in prayer in bondage and slavery, neither reprehensible nor arrogant. Rather, I am a miserable and feeble slave who is fearful and who seeks your aid.]

TRADITION 69

THE MIRACULOUS ENCOUNTER WITH IMĀM JA‘FAR AL-ŞĀDIQ

69.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 69 r – f 70 v / 91-92)

69.2 Tradition

After the death of Muḥammad al-Bāqir, he was succeeded by his son Ja‘far b. ‘Abd Allāh, who was known by the title al-Şādiq which means the Truthful. Al-Iyāḍ, the son of Cahed [?], may Allāh have mercy upon him, said:

I performed the Ḥajj in the year 113 (AH) [732]. I went to Mecca. After I performed the ‘*asr* [afternoon] prayer, I climbed Mount Abū Qubays.

There, I came across a man who was sitting down in prayer to his Creator, saying “*Yā Allāh! Yā Allāh!*” [O Allāh! O Allāh!] until he would lose his breath

After that he would say “*Yā Ḥayyu! Yā Ḥayyu!*” [O Living! O Living!] until he was out of breath.

After which he said *Yā Arḥām al-Raḥīm!* [O Most Merciful of the Merciful!] seven times.

He then recited: “Lord and Creator! I feel like eating some grapes. Give me some and provide me sustenance from them. And grant me clothing for I am a thin man who fears the cold for it is your responsibility to provide for this servant.”

Al-Ayyāḍ said: By Him who created me! He has not even finished his prayer when I saw appear next to him a basket of grapes on one side of him, and two new sets of clothing on the other side of him. The most amazing thing was that grapes were out of season at the time, and he wanted to eat

them. So, I asked him: “Would you like to eat in my company?” After I said this, he raised his eyes, and told me: “Why did you not ask me earlier? I could have requested food on your behalf. Still, come, and do not hide anything.” I arrived and ate a fruit. I had never tasted such a thing. I could not tell whether I was eating grapes or something else. I ate my fill and the basket was still full and there was no shortage.

He then told me: “Take one of these sets of clothing which pleases you the most.” I responded that I had no need for any clothing. He told me: “Give me some privacy so that I can put on some clothing.” I gave him privacy. He got undressed, put on the new clothing, placed his old garments over his arm, and headed down the hill towards Mecca, as I followed behind him.

On his way back to Mecca he came across a man who told him: “Cover me, and Allāh will cover you with His mercy.” He gave him the clothing he was carrying, and he went on his way. I asked the man: “Tell me. Who is the man who gave you that clothing?” He responded: “It is Ja‘far al-Šādiq, the son of Muḥammad al-Bāqir.” I tried to catch up with him, but I lost sight of him, and never saw him again.

69.3 Commentary

The Aljamiado tradition speaks of a certain Iyāḍ who might be al-Fudayl b. ‘Iyāḍ (d. 803), a Muslim ascetic and scholar who studied at the hands of Imām Ja‘far al-Šādiq. The event that is related, however, involved al-Layth b. Sa‘d (d. 791), the leader of the Laythī school of Islāmīc jurisprudence. It is quoted in many Šūfī sources, including Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār’s (d. 1221) *Tadhkirat al-Awliyyā’*. It reads:

Tabarī narrates from Wahb that he heard al-Layth b. Sa‘d (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu*) say,

I was on my way to Ḥajj by foot, in 113 Ḥijrī and I reached Mecca Mu‘azzammah. At around the time of *‘asr*, I reached Jabal Abū Qays, and I saw a pious man sitting there making *du‘ā’*.

He was saying *Yā Rabbī, Yā Rabbī* [O Lord! O Lord!] so many times, that breathing became difficult.

Then in the same way, he said *Yā Ḥayy, Yā Ḥayy* [O Living! O Living!] then *Yā Rab, Yā Rab* [O Lord! O Lord!] then in the same say, he said *Yā Allāh, Yā Allāh* [O Allah! O Allah!] in one breath continuously.

He then said *Yā Raḥmānu, Yā Raḥmānu, Yā Raḥīmu, Yā Raḥīmu* [O Compassionate! O Compassionate! O Merciful! O Merciful!] and then he went on to say *Yā Arḥām al-Rāhimīn* [O Most Merciful of the Merciful].

He then said, “O Allāh I desire to eat grapes. Please bless me with some, and My clothes have become old and tattered Please give me new ones.”

Ḥaḍrat Layth says, By Allāh, he was still completing his *du‘ā’*, when I saw a basket of grapes kept before him, whereas it was not even the grape season and I did not see any grapes near him before his *du‘ā’*. I also saw that there were two pieces of cloth kept near the grapes. I have never seen such beautiful material before.

He then sat down to eat the grapes. I went up to him and said, “Huzoor! May I also have a part in this?” And he asked how this was so, so I said, “I was saying *amīn* as you made the *du‘ā’* [supplication].” He said, “Well, then, step forward and join me.”

I also began to partake in the grapes. They were so tasty that never have I eaten such delicious grapes. I ate until I was satisfied, but the basket remained as it was before, full of grapes.

He then offered one piece of cloth to me, and I said that I had no need for it, so he tied one around his waist, and he draped the other over his shoulder.

He then descended from the mountain and I followed him. As he drew close to Ṣaffā and Marwah, a beggar called out to him and said, “O Descendant of the Prophet (*ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) [peace and blessings be upon him]! Give these clothes to me and Allāh will dress you in the clothes of paradise.”

He immediately gave the two pieces of cloth to the beggar. I enquired from the beggar about the identity of this pious man and he informed me that he was Ḥaḍrat Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (*raḍī Allāhu ‘anhu*) [may Allāh be pleased with him].

I then looked for him so that I may listen to some words of wisdom from him and attain his blessings, but he had disappeared from my sight.” (Naqeeb n. page)

The religious identification of ‘Aṭṭār is subject to debate. Some scholars state that he was a Sunnī while others insist that he was a Shī‘ite. The possibility also exists that ‘Aṭṭār transitioned from Sunnī/Ṣūfism to Shī‘ism during his life. It is also possible that he was a Sunnī in jurisprudence but a Shī‘ite in spirituality. In fact, many Ṣūfīs adhered to a Shī‘ism of love as opposed to law and politics.

TRADITION 70

IMĀM JA‘FAR AL-ŞĀDIQ’S SAYING REGARDING ‘ISĀ

70.1 Source

The following tradition about the Prophet Jesus or ‘Isā is found in the *Tratado de los dos caminos* [*The Treatise on Travel Routes*] (452).

70.2 Tradition

It has been reported that Sayyid ‘Isā [Lord Jesus], peace and blessings be upon him, looked at the world and it appeared to him in the form of an older woman adorned with clothing of a thousand colors. He asked her: “How many husbands have you had?” She responded: “There have been so many that I cannot count them all.” He asked her: “Did they divorce you, or did they die?” She responded: “No, rather, I killed them with my poison.” He told her: “Verily, the husbands that you now have, who are devoid of consideration or judgment, are blind and oblivious to what you have done with their predecessors.” He added: “Those who yearn for the world are like those who drink from the sea. The more water they drink, the thirstier they get until it eventually kills them.”

70.3 Commentary

The tradition concerning the Prophet ‘Isā or Jesus found in the *Tratado de los dos caminos* [*Treatise of the Travel Routes*] is well-known in Muslim ascetic circles. The following variant is found in *Mawsū‘at Rasā’il* by Abū Bakr b. Abī al-Dunyā (d. 894), *Ihyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn* by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), and *al-Zuhd* by Imām Aḥmad b. al-Ḥanbal (d. 855):

It is reported that the world was revealed to Jesus and that he saw it in the form of a toothless hag covered with every adornment. “How many men have you married?” Jesus asked her. “I cannot count them,” the hag

replied. "Did they all die before you, or did they all divorce you?" Jesus asked. "Neither, for I killed them all," she replied. Jesus said, "What wretches they are, your husbands that remain! For they do not learn from your former husbands how you killed them one after the other, nor are they on their guard against you." (Khālīdī 109-110) [cf. John 4:15-18]

Imām Aḥmad and Imām al-Ghazālī were both Sunnīs. Although al-Ghazālī was a Šūfī, and an outspoken opponent of the Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlīs, he had a deep love for the *ahl al-bayt* and commonly quoted the Imāms in his works, including ʿAlī, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Zayn al-ʿAbidīn, and Jaʿfar al-Šādiq.

Abū Bakr b. Abī al-Dunyā was a Shīʿite traditionist who authored over one hundred books, including accounts of the martyrdom of Imām ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī. A slightly different version of the tradition, found in Majlisī's *Biḥār al-anwār*, the famous collection of Shīʿite traditions, reads as follows:

It has been reported that Abū Abd Allāh [Imām al-Šādiq] said, "The world took the form, for Jesus, of a woman whose eyes were blue. Then he said to her, 'How many have you married?' She said, 'Very many.' He said, 'Then did they all divorce you?' She said, 'No, but I killed all of them.' He said, 'Then, woe to the rest of your husbands! How they fail to learn from the example of the past ones!'" (cf. Qa'im n. page; Aalulbayt Global Information Center n. page)

The tradition is also found in *Kitāb al-zuhd* [*The Book of Asceticism*] by Ḥusayn b. Saʿīd al-Ahwāzī (d. 868), a traditionist who was a companion of eighth, ninth, and tenth Shīʿite Imāms.

The Morisco author of the *Tratado de los dos caminos* [*Treatise of the Travel Routes*], who was well-traveled, apparently guiding pilgrims from Spain to Arabia by land, crossing through Muslim regions in Europe and the Levant, was familiar with both Šūfī and Shīʿite sources. This Shīʿite infused Šūfism or Šūfī infused Shīʿism was found among the Bektāshīs of Albania, the Qizilbāsh of Bulgaria, the Alevīs of Turkey, and some of the Twelver Shīʿites of the Levant.

For the Moriscos, it appears that the pilgrimage to the holy land was both spiritual and educational. They seem to have brought back books to help revive religious knowledge among their co-religionists in Spain. Had they traveled through North Africa, the Sunnī influence would have been stronger. However, the routes that they took seem to have brought them into contact with a variety of supposedly heterodox Shīʿite-Šūfī denominations.

TRADITION 71

THE MIRACLES OF IMĀM MŪSĀ AL-KĀZIM

71.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of ms. D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 70 v – f 73 v / 92-94).

71.2 Tradition

After the death of Imām Ja‘far al-Šādiq, he was succeeded by his son Mūsā, who was known by the title of al-Kāzim. Ḥasan b. Adam, *raḥamu Allāh* [May Allāh have mercy upon him], said that Shaqīq al-Balkhī told him:

I went on the Ḥajj during the year 149 (AH) [767 CE] and I reached Jerusalem. While I was walking around, looking at the crowds and the variety of people from all parts, I saw a handsome man, with fine features, with well-defined limbs, wearing wool clothing, a wool turban, and sandals on his feet. He sat all alone. I said to myself: “On the basis of what I can see, this man is a mystic: a just a good man. By God! I must go to him to see whether he is as I think.”

As soon as he saw me coming towards him, he said: “Yā Shaqīq! Many people have been misled by their thoughts and at times judging produces uncertainty.” As soon as he finished saying these words, he disappeared from in front of me.

I said to myself: “This is incredible that he knew my name and what I carried in my heart. Without a doubt, this must be a saint. I must find him and ask him to forgive me. Despite all my efforts, I could not catch up with him and lost sight of him. I decided to rest. I left, went to the *ḥarām* [sacred precinct], and entered therein, and I found that he was busy performing his ritual prayers while tears flowed onto the ground. I told myself: This is my friend. I want to wait until he completes his prayers so that I can I approach him.

Once he completed his prayers, I stood in front of him, and he said: “O Shaqīq! Do you not know that Allāh *ta‘ālā* [Most High] says: ‘I forgive him who repents, who has complete faith, and whose actions are just.’” After he uttered these words, he disappeared once again from my presence. I told myself: This is a great man. He has judged my heart on two occasions.

When it came time for our departure, I arrived at a deserted area. There, I saw my friend who was on top of a well with a bucket in his hand to draw water which fell from his hand and into the well. Secretly, and attentively, I watched him raise his hands to the sky and say: ‘Lord! You are my Creator and you have promised me water. You feed me and you give me strength and sustenance when I want food. My Lord and My Creator! Do not abandon me on this occasion.’”

Shaqīq said: By Him who created me! He had not even completed his supplication when I saw the water rise to the surface of the well. He stretched out his hand, took hold of the bucket, drew water, performed his ablutions, and completed four units of ritual prayer. He took two handfuls of sand and tossed them in the bucket. He started to mix it and drank it.

It was then that I approached him. I sent him my salaams, and he returned them. I asked him: “Provide me with that which Allāh has provided you.” He responded: “O Shaqīq! He never removes His mercy from us in private or in public. Increase your knowledge of Allāh *ta‘ālā* [Most High]. He took the bucket and gave to drink. By Him who brought me into the world, I have never drunk anything better, smoother or sweeter in my life.”

The next day, we left, and I felt no thirst or hunger for many days. I did not see him again until we reached Mecca where I saw him in the shrine of Abī Turāb, at midnight, performing his prayers with tears running down his cheeks until dawn when he performed the *fajr* prayer. He continued to pray until the sun rose and performed *ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā*. He completed the circumambulation of the Ka‘bah seven times wearing different clothing than what he wore before. All kinds of people approached him to express their reverence. I asked one of them: “Who is that man?” He responded: “That man is Mūsā al-Kāẓim, the son of Ja‘far al-Şādiq.”

71.3 Commentary

Shaqīq b. Ibrāhīm al-Balkhī (d. 810) was a Şūfī sage from the school of Khorasān. He is said to have been the disciple of Ibrāhīm b. Adham (c. 718-c. 782), an early Şūfī saint and ascetic. According to some sources, Ibrāhīm b. Adham was the descendant of ‘Abd Allāh, the brother of Imām Ja‘far al-Şādiq.

Shaqīq al-Balkhī is considered a disciple of Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim. As some Ṣūfī *silsilahs* indicate, the spiritual transmission passed from Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim to Shaqīq al-Balkhī. A short book of traditions, *Musnad Mūsā al-Kāẓim*, is extant. It contains traditions that Shaqīq al-Balkhī learned from Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim and was compiled by Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Shafī‘ī al-Bazzāz. Traditions like the one above support the Ṣūfī and Shī‘ite notion that Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim inherited the spiritual secrets of his illustrious ancestors.

The encounter between Shaqīq al-Balkhī and Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim is found in Majlisī’s *Biḥār al-anwār* in identical format. Since the *Crónica y relación* predates the *Biḥār al-anwār*, it is possible that Majlisī relied on the original Arabic version of the work when compiling his imposing encyclopedia of traditions. Otherwise, both Majlisī and Ibrāhīm Taybilī, the author, compiler, or translator of the *Crónica*, had access to the same common source.

TRADITION 72

THE MIRACLE OF IMĀM ‘ALĪ AL-RIDĀ AND THE LION

72.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 73 v – f 75 v / 94-95).

72.2 Tradition

After the death of Mūsā al-Kāzīm, he was succeeded by his son ‘Alī al-Riḍā. One of the signs of his excellence is as follows.

In the city of Khorasān, there was a woman named Zaynab who claimed the best of lineages tracing back to Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’. She was fond of boasting of her noble lineage.

Word of her claims reached ‘Alī al-Riḍā, and he asked the people for information, whether they knew her, and whether she truly descended from the lineage of Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’. Nobody was able to confirm that her claims were true.

As a result, he had her summoned, and she entered his presence. He asked her how she knew that she descended from the good lineage of Fāṭimah. However, she was unable to give him a response for which reason the people said: “This woman has lied about her claims.”

She responded arrogantly: “Who are you to ruin my lineage and caste? I will destroy yours and tear it to pieces. I am confident that I have more descent from the Prophet than you do!” When the blessed [Imām] heard these words, he became overwhelmed with righteous indignation and became angry.

The king of Khorasān had seven types of prisons for evildoers, one of which was called the Den of Lions. ‘Alī al-Riḍā took the woman by the hand, brought her before the king, and said:

Know, O king of Khorasān -- may Allāh exalt your person -- that this woman has lied against Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’, the daughter of Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā (ṢA) claiming that Fāṭimah is not our ancestor. She even claims to have more legitimate descent than I do. I ask you for permission to use your lions to judge our dispute. If her claims are correct, her flesh will be forbidden for them. Cast her, then, to the lions.

When she heard his argument, she said: “Go down first so that I can see how they react towards you.” Without saying a word, ‘Alī al-Riḍā stood up and went outside. When the king asked him where he was going, he responded that he was going to the Den of Lions. The king, and all those who were with him, got up, and all were waiting to see what would become of him.

As soon as he opened the door of the Den of Lions, and entered therein, the lions humbled themselves before him, and sat down with their tails wagging from side to side. Then, he called them, and, one by one, they came to him, and he rubbed their backs with his hand, leaving the people dumbfounded and frightened from such a singular sight. He then left them without any emotion. The king then ordered the woman to go down and do the same, which she refused to do, and resisted. The king then ordered his people to lower her down. She was barely in when she was torn to pieces by the lions. This was only one of the many superlative signs that Allāh showed to his servant ‘Alī al-Riḍā.

72.3 Commentary

This tradition appears to draw from three similar traditions. In the first tradition, which is found in *al-Kharā’ij wa al-Jarā’ih*, a Shī‘ite book of tradition, compiled by Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rawandī (d. 1177), a woman falsely claimed to be Zaynab, the daughter of ‘Alī, in the presence of the caliph Mutawakkil (d. 861).

Imām ‘Alī al-Naqī (d. 868), the tenth Imām, challenged her to descend into a lion’s den since lions supposedly did not harm the true descendants of ‘Alī. She refused to enter the lion’s den out of fear of being devoured, thus proving she was a fraud. In another version mentioned by Dwight M. Donaldson in *The Shī‘ite Religion*, Zaynab claimed to be the daughter of Imām Ḥasan b. ‘Alī (213). The Imām does not descend into the lion’s den in any of these versions nor is Zaynab devoured by the lions.

The second tradition is found in Ṭabarī’s *Dalā’il al-Imāmah* and al-Bahrānī’s *Madīnat al-ma‘ājiz*. It is related that the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 786-809) imprisoned Imām ‘Alī al-Riḍā. The caliph ordered that lions be released into the Imām’s cell in the hope that they would devour him. However, when they entered, they wagged their tails, congratulated the

Imām, and assured him that Allāh would protect him from the evil intentions of the caliph. When the caliph received word of what had happened, he released the Imām.

The third tradition is found in *Madīnat al-ma‘ājiz*, a Shī‘ite book on the miracles of the twelve Imāms, by Hāshim b. Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī. In this case, Imām Ḥasan al-‘Askarī was thrown to the lions by Naḥrīr, an ‘Abbāsīd official. When the servant returned later to see what had become of the Imām, he found him praying, surrounded by the lions.

The Morisco version of the event appears to draw from the most dramatic elements from all three traditions. It is also possible that the Morisco document confused Imām ‘Alī al-Riḍā with Imām ‘Alī al-Naqī. Curiously, al-Baḥrānī died around 1696, which means the author of the *Crónica* [*Chronicle*], a work which dates from 1639, was potentially relying on a recently released book. It is also possible that the author located the tradition in an older anthology of Shī‘ite or Ṣūfī traditions.

TRADITION 73

THE DIVINE KNOWLEDGE OF IMĀM MUḤAMMAD AL-TAQĪ

73.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f. 75 v-f 76 r / 95).

73.2 Tradition

After the death of ‘Alī al-Riḍā, he was succeeded by his son, Muḥammad al-Bāqir [sic. al-Taḳī or al-Jāwād], who was also known as al-Murtaẓā. One day, he passed by the place where al-Mā’mūn, the son of Hārūn al-Rashīd, was sitting. When al-Mā’mūn saw him, he said: “Yā Muḥammad!” Muḥammad al-Taḳī responded: “*Labayka! Yā amīr al-mu’minīn!*” [At your service, Leader of the Believers]. Al-Mā’mūn asked Muḥammad al-Taḳī what he was hiding in his hand, which was concealed in the sleeve of his clothing. It happened to be a small fish that he had caught with a hook. Allāh provided Muḥammad al-Taḳī with the answer: “*Yā amīr al-mu’minīn! Allāh ta’ālā* [the Most High], in His might, created tiny fish so that the king of the caliphs could catch them with light hooks.” He said this when he was only eleven years of age. According to the story, al-Mā’mūn was very frightened by this response. He stared at him and said: “After all, you are the Ibn al-Riḍā, the Truthful.”

73.3 Commentary

The aforementioned tradition is found in Sulaymān b. Ibrāhīm al-Qundūzī’s *Yanābi’ al-mawaddah*, a collection of traditions relating the merits of *ahl al-bayt*. The religious affiliation of the author is disputed. Some suggest that he was a Shī’ite. Others argue that he was a Ḥanafī Sunnī who followed the

Naqshbandī Ṣūfī path. There are also those who believe that the book was merely attributed to Qundūzī.

Since the compiler of *Yanābi' al-mawaddah* died in 1877, this was certainly not the source used by the author from the seventeenth century. In his work, Qundūzī claims to cite a *ḥadīth* collection called *Mawwadat al-qurbah* which was written by 'Alī al-Hamadānī (1314-1384) a Persian Ṣūfī who belonged to the Kubrāwī order. If this is correct, then this could be the source of the *ḥadīth* in question. The tradition was probably found in other works as well.

TRADITION 74

THE GENEROSITY OF IMĀM ‘ALĪ AL-HĀDĪ AL-NAQĪ

74.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna.

74.2 Tradition

After the death of ‘Alī al-Murtazā [sic. Muḥammad al-Taqī], there remained his son ‘Alī al-‘Askarī [sic. ‘Alī al-Hādī al-Naqī]. One day, he left the city of Sāmarrā’ to go to a nearby city. During that time, an Arab came looking for him and they told him to which city he had gone. The Arab then went in search of him and found him. After the man send him his salaams and he [the Imām] returned it to him, he [the Imām] asked him: “What is it that you want, O Arab brother?”

The Arab responded: “I wish to inform you that I am one of the inhabitants of Kūfah, famous for your ancestor ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and... al-Ḥusayn, may Allāh be pleased with them, and that I am overwhelmed and overcome with debts. I cannot bear the burden and I do not see how I can free myself [from debt] besides throwing myself at the feet of your holiness.”

He [the Imām] then told the unfortunate man: “I am pleased to fulfill your needs.” He [the Imām] brought him along and hosted him that night. When Allāh, the Most High, woke him up the next day, he [the Imām] told the Arab: “I want one thing from you. Allāh requires that you do not contradict me or act contrary to my wishes.”

The Arab responded: “I will not contradict your words or commands.” Then, Alī al-‘Askarī [sic. ‘Alī al-Hādī al-Naqī], may Allāh be pleased with him, took out ink and paper and wrote a letter which stated that he [the

Imām] owed the Arab a certain quantity of money.

He [the Imām] then told him: “Take this paper. When you see that I am surrounded by the largest audience, ask me to pay your debt on the basis of this document, and make sure to raise your voice. I beg you, by Allāh, that you do not act otherwise.”

The Arab took the paper in his hand and bid him farewell. Waiting for the moment in which all the friends of the caliph were in the middle of the plaza of that city, the Arab arrived with the document and asked for his debt to be paid forcefully.

‘Alī al-‘Askarī [sic. ‘Alī al-Hādī al-Naqī], may Allāh be pleased with him, with a happy and peaceful face, asked him to hold on to it for a little longer and that he would then pay him the debt. All those who were present were astonished at the aggressive tone of the Arab.

News of the event reached the caliph of the city who, without delay, sent him [the Imām] one thousand gold coins with which to pay the Arab, and told him that if it did not suffice to pay the debt, that he would send him another thousand, which he [the Imām] received. He [the Imām] had the Arab brought to him and said: “Take these thousands of gold coins and pay your debts.”

The Arab responded: “O descendant of the Messenger of Allāh! One-third of this money suffices to pay my debt.” The blessed one said: “Pay your debts [with that] and spend what remains on your wife and children.” The Arab responded: “May Allāh reward you for what you have done. The Lord alone knows how needy I was when I came to you.”

He took the money and left, giving thanks to his creator, and praising the nobility of this blessed man. This act is worthy of praise and may encourage others to do good, taking as example the magnanimity of this saint who was willing to assume a debt to help an Arab. There are few who would be willing to do so in our days. If today, a person like the Arab appeared, he would not find anyone to console him with a good word before being chased off, offended, and disparaged.

His [the Imām’s] body is buried in Sāmarrā’, in Iraq. We pray to Allāh, the Most High, that this blessed saint will pardon the author, the translator, and the one who ordered this work to be translated. [We pray to Allāh, the Most High, that this blessed saint will pardon] those who enjoy listening to such writings, those who confirm them, and those who believe in them thanks to the merciful Lord so that they will be among the blessed in this life and the next. Amen.

74.3 Commentary

The tradition in question is found in various historical sources, including 'Abd Allāh al-Shubrāwī's (d. 1758/1759) *Kitāb al-Ithāf bi ḥūb al-ashraf*, among others. Some of the references for this tradition are late. Hence, the Morisco work must also have relied upon older sources, most probably *hadīth* books, historical accounts, or stories of saints. The various versions of the event are synthesized by Bāqir Shareef Qarashī in his *Life of Imām 'Alī al-Hādī: Study and Analysis*

Historians mentioned that one day Imām al-Hādī went from Samarrā' to a village he possessed. A nomad man came to him but did not find him in his house. His family told the nomad that Imām al-Hādī had gone to his garden.

The nomad went and found Imām al-Hādī there. He said to him with faint voice, "O son of the messenger of Allāh, I am from the nomads of Kūfah who believe in the guardianship of your grandfather 'Alī b. Abū Ṭālib. There is a heavy debt on me, and I have no one to go to except you..."

Imām al-Hādī had pity on him but he himself was in lack of money and did not have anything to help this nomad with. He wrote on a piece of paper with his handwriting that he was in debt to the nomad and he mentioned a certain amount.

He said to the nomad, "Keep this paper with you. When I go to Surra Man Ra'a (Samarrā'), and when some people come to my meeting, you come and ask me to pay back your debt. You are to insist upon this from me and mention that I have not paid you your debt. Do exactly as I say to you!"

When Imām al-Hādī went to Surra Man Ra'a and a group of people, among whom were some officials and secret policemen, attended his meeting, the nomad came, showed the piece of paper, and asked Imām al-Hādī to pay back the debt mentioned in the paper.

Imām al-Hādī apologized that he could not pay back the debt and the nomad insisted. When people left the meeting, the policemen went to al-Mutawakkil and told him about this matter.

Al-Mutawakkil ordered his men to send thirty thousand dirhams to Imām al-Hādī and they did.

When the nomad came, Imām al-Hādī said to him, "Take this money and pay back your debt and spend the rest on your family!"

The nomad found that great and said to Imām al-Hādī, "My debt is less than the third of this amount... but Allāh is more aware where He reveals His mission." The nomad left for his family delightedly while praying [to] Allāh for Imām al-Hādī who had saved him from poverty and neediness. (n. page)

TRADITION 75

IMĀM ḤASAN AL-‘ASKARĪ AND THE CALIPH OF BAGHDĀD

75.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 79 r – f 82 r / 97-99).

75.2 Tradition

The caliph of Baghdad was told that Imām ‘Alī [al-Hādī] Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī had a large quantity of arms and weapons of war in his home which he plotted to use to claim the caliphate for himself. No sooner had the caliph heard this that he sent a large troop of Turks during a dark night and broke into the home of the glorious saint.

They found him alone, his door closed, in a seated position, wearing an outfit made of horsehair, and with a woolen headdress on his head. He was facing the *qiblah*, and there was nothing between his forehead and the ground but sand. They took him by surprise and brought him to the caliph of Babylonia who was around a fountain where food was served. He came towards them.

As soon as the caliph saw him, he sat him down next to him. He asked those who had brought him if what was reported was true. They explained what they had seen and the posture in which they had found him. When the caliph saw that everything had been lies and malice, he ordered that a glass a wine be brought to him which he gave to Abū al-Ḥasan.

“*Yā amīr al-mu‘minīn!* [O Leader of the Believers!] By the Lord who created me, I have never intoxicated my flesh or my blood, so spare me.” Having heard his response, he [the caliph] insisted no more.

The caliph then said: “*Yā Abū al-Ḥasan*, recite a verse for me so that I can derive some benefit.”

He [the Imām] responded: “*Yā amīr al-mu'minīn!* [O Leader of the Believers!] I promise you that I have little memory for verses [of poetry].”

The caliph repeated: “It is pointless to deny me the pleasure of hearing something from your sweet tongue since I have longed for this moment for a long time.”

As much as he [the Imām] tried to excuse himself, he could not. He then recited to him the following verses...

As soon as al-'Askarī, may Allāh be pleased with him, finished his verses, the caliph cried intensively until all his tears had soaked his beard and clothing. All of those who were with him cried as well.

He then ordered that the wine be taken away from the table and repented enormously from that moment on. He told him: “*Yā Abū al-Ḥasan!* Great is the good that I have received from you. Let me know if you owe anything to anyone.”

He [the Imām] told him that he owed four thousand gold coins in Iraq. He [the caliph] gave it to him right away. He [the Imām] took it and turned it over to the poor and the needy. On this note, he [the Imām], bid him farewell, honored, and gratified.

These are some of the excellences and virtues of this blessed and glorious saint who is buried in Sāmarrā' in Iraq. We ask that Allāh, the Most High, pardon the author, translator, reader, and listener of this work. Amīn.

75.3 Commentary

The Aljamiado-Morisco tradition in question appears to be a collage drawn from several Sunnī and Shī'ite sources, including Ṭabarsī's (1073-1153) *I'lām al-warā*, Mas'ūdī's (896-959) *Murūj al-dhahab*, and Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī's (1185-1256) *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣ*.

Ṭabarsī was a leading Twelver Shī'ite scholar who authored the famous Qur'ānic commentary titled *Majma' al-bayān*. Since sectarian demarcations were not always evident during the early centuries of Islām, it is uncertain whether Mas'ūdī identified as a Sunnī or a Shī'ī. If he was a Sunnī, he was one who loved the *ahl al-bayt* and believed that 'Alī was superior to the other caliphs.

Although the Ḥanafīs and the Ḥanbalīs accepted him as one of their jurists, Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī's *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣ* expresses Shī'ī beliefs. For example, he stressed the *Ḥadīth of Thaḳalayn*, namely, that the Prophet Muḥammad left behind two-weighty things, the Qur'ān and the *ahl al-bayt* which, if followed, would supposedly guide Muslims along the straight path. The problem, however, was that the Shī'ites could never agree upon which descendants of the Prophet to follow.

Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī reportedly believed that the Imāms were infallible which is a late Twelver Shī'ite dogma. He was apparently convinced that the twelfth Imām, Muḥammad al-Mahdī, was still alive. A good synthesis of the accounts of Ṭabarsī, Mas'ūdī, and Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī is found in *The Life of Imām 'Alī al-Hādī: Study and Analysis* by Bāqir Shareef Qarashī. It reads:

Some villain went to al-Mutawakkil and informed him against Imām al-Hādī claiming that he had books, arms, and monies and that he might revolt against the government of al-Mutawakkil, who became worried and terrified when hearing that.

Al-Mutawakkil ordered some of his Turk[ish] policemen to attack the house of Imām al-Hādī in the night and arrest him. They attacked Imām al-Hādī unexpectedly and found him in a simple house wearing a garment of wool and there was nothing between him and the ground save a carpet of sand and pebbles while facing the *qiblah* and reciting this saying of Allāh,

Nay! do those who have wrought evil deeds think that We will make them like those who believe and do good that their life and their death shall be equal? Bad it is that they judge. [45:21]

They took him to al-Mutawakkil while he was in that state that represented the asceticism of [the] prophets and [the] spirituality of [the] apostles. Al-Mutawakkil was drunk at the table with wine.

When he saw Imām al-Hādī, he offered him a glass of wine but Imām al-Hādī shouted at him, “By Allāh, it has never mixed with my blood and flesh at all.”

Al-Mutawakkil asked the Imām, “Recite me some poetry!”

Imām al-Hādī said, “I seldom recite poetry.”

Al-Mutawakkil insisted on him saying, “You must recite me some poetry!”

Imām al-Hādī found himself obliged to recite some poetry and so he recited the following verses that changed the ecstasy of al-Mutawakkil into sorrow and weeping,

*They were on the tops of mountains,
Guarded by strong, brave men, but those tops sufficed them not.*

After glory, they were taken down from their positions,

and put into holes. How bad the abode they dwelt in!

A crier called them after been buried:

Where are the thrones, crowns, and treasures?

Where are the faces that were at ease and [in] luxury

that curtains and screens were put before them?

The grave showed those faces where worms were fighting on them.

How long they ate and drank!

But after that long eating, they were eaten!

Al-Mutawakkil was shaken and intoxication flew from his head. He

began terribly crying. The attendants in the meeting feared for Imām al-Hādī that al-Mutawakkil might assault him and they thought that al-Mutawakkil would take revenge on him.

Al-Mutawakkil ordered his men to take the glasses of wine away from the meeting. He turned to the pure Imām and said to him reverently, “O Abū al-Ḥasan, are you in debt?” Imām al-Hādī said, “Yes, four thousand dinars.”

Al-Mutawakkil ordered four thousand dinars to be given to Imām al-Hādī and returned him back to his house with respect and honor.

This event showed the *jihād* of Imām al-Hādī and his fixed situation towards that tyrant. He did not care for his rule and power. He preached to him and warned him of the punishment of Allāh and said to him (through poetry) that he would die, that neither his armies nor his authority would save him from death, and that his delicate body would be food for worms in the grave.

Certainly, al-Mutawakkil had never heard such preaching before. Instead, he filled his ears with the voices of songsters and songstresses. And finally, death came to him while he was between musicians and cups of wine and the mention of Allāh did not come to his mind throughout his life. (n. page)

TRADITION 76

IMĀM ḤASAN AL-‘ASKARĪ

76.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f. 82 r – f 82 v / 99).

76.2 Tradition

Upon the death of ‘Alī [sic: Ḥasan] al-‘Askarī, he was succeeded by his son al-Ḥasan, who was called al-Khālīs, which means pure, clean, and without any flaws whatsoever. He was also called the honored one of Allāh, since Allāh had ordered in His eternal wisdom that Imām Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Fāṭimī would come from his loins, the one who is awaited by the masses, who is known as al-Fāṭimī, who is mentioned by the scholars, and whom Allāh decreed that he would enter the world from the purest of births. Al-Ḥasan lived for twenty-eight years and is buried in Sāmarrā’ along with his father. May Allāh grant us rest in his company. *Amīn*.

76.3 Commentary

Although he is most commonly known by the title of al-‘Askarī, namely, the man born in the military camp of Sāmarrā’, the eleventh Imām was also known as al-Hādī [the Guide], al-Zakī [the Pure], the Khāss [the Peculiar], al-Sāmī [the Silent], al-Sirāj [the Lamp], al-Taqī [the Pious], and al-Khālīs [the Pure].

TRADITION 77

IMĀM MUḤAMMAD AL-MAHDĪ

77.1 Source

The following tradition is found in the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] which form part of Manuscript D.565 of the Biblioteca della Università di Bologna (f 83 v – f 84 v / 100).

77.2 Tradition

After the death of al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad, he was succeeded by his son Muḥammad al-Khālīṣ [the Pure]. His title is Abū al-Qāsim al-Khalīfah al-Ṣālīḥ [the Righteous Caliph]. He is the last of the twelve Imāms from his lineage and he is Imām al-Mahdī, as his ancestor, the Messenger of Allāh (Ṣ) said. He will return at the end of times when he will meet with our Lord Jesus (AS).

It should be known that during the time of the caliph Mu‘tamid, who was a cruel tyrant, and fearing the cruelty and tyranny of the caliph, the branch [of the family of the Prophet] had retired [from the public sphere] and went into hiding. Over time, however, they produced the greatest blessing that the world will ever know. This is the reason that Allāh had decided in his eternal wisdom to hide him from the eyes of the people. Scholars are divided with regards to his age.

Blessed be he who lives to see him and who becomes his follower. Blessed be he who becomes a believer at his hands and who follows him, becomes one of his soldiers, and helps him to purify and to clean the world from filth and sin which are so deeply rooted in it.

It will be a time in which the oppressed will receive justice and the oppressed will be satisfied. It will be a time in which tyranny comes to an end and all tyrannical governments are overthrown. Blessed be those who see him and live during his time.

This is the true account of Imām Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Fāṭimī, the one who is awaited by those who are inclined to virtue, rectitude, and

justice, and the one who is feared by tyrants, habitual delinquents, and those who are opposed to justice and virtue.

77.3 Commentary

Considering that the *Crónica y relación de la esclarecida descendencia xarifa* [*Chronicle and Account of the Purified Sharīfian Descendants*] provides a pious account of the lives of the twelve Imāms and stresses that the Mahdī of the Muslims is the twelfth Imām, we appear to be dealing with a Twelver Shī'ite tract that was disseminated by Moriscos in North Africa and Spain.

Whether the work was authored by a mainstream Twelver Shī'ite, a Zaydī who accepted the twelve Imāms, or by an Alevī or a Bektāshī has yet to be determined definitively. There are certainly some scholars who will attribute it to the Alevīs or Bektāshīs due to its Šūfī content. However, the Twelver Shī'ism of the seventeenth century was also infused with Šūfism. As Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-'Amilī al-Mashgharī, commonly known as al-Ḥurr al-'Amilī (1624-1693), said: “Šūfism is Shī'ism and Shī'ism is Šūfism.” Since the *Crónica y relación* appears to have been translated into Spanish from the Arabic language in 1639, the attitude of this sage was representative of the state of Shī'ism at the time. One might even wonder whether one of his contemporaries may have authored the work.

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