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### **Review of Mayte Green-Marcado, Visions of Deliverance: Moriscos and the Politics of Prophecy in the Early Modern Mediterranean**

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**Green-Mercado, Mayte. *Visions of Deliverance: Moriscos and the Politics of Prophecy in the Early Modern Mediterranean*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019. xi + 310 pp.**

Green-Mercado's erudite study has ambitious, clear, and corrective goals. While studies on the Morisco population within Spain are plentiful, Green-Mercado aims to explore the "migration of Moriscos around the Mediterranean" (12) via the prophecies that Morisco populations found particularly meaningful before the expulsion of 1609-1614. Those prophecies were called *jofores*, and they were written in Arabic or Aljamiado. Extant ones in Arabic are few, but more than 200 Aljamiado *jofores* survive, with a number of the latter being translations of Arabic originals. Previous studies of the *jofores* approached them as polemics, or as a means of consolation and identity (13): Green-Mercado finds such treatments unsatisfactory because of the inherent assumptions that Morisco identity and culture were stable. Appropriately for someone mentored by Mercedes García-Arenal, Green-Mercado argues that there were no fixed notions of Morisco identity in the Mediterranean world in the early modern period. Instead, she prefers to treat the *jofores* as "dynamic examples of religious and political discourses" (13). She contends that the way the *jofores* were read, commented upon, and understood by Moriscos can illuminate their political life and agency, aspects of their lives that have been underappreciated in modern scholarship. The prophecies the Moriscos valued catalyzed their resistance to Christian imperial power, but they also allowed non-imperial actors to join in intellectual and political debates of the early modern Mediterranean.

*Visions of Deliverance* is divided into three sections, with two chapters each. Section 1 investigates the politics of prophecy in sixteenth-century Iberia, with chapters devoted to an assessment of Agustín de Ribera—a baptized, Christian visionary whose revelations became increasingly Islamic over time—as well as an examination of prophecy and martyrdom in the revolt of the Alpujarras (1568-70). Section 2 investigates the circulation of prophecies from the eastern to the western Mediterranean. The chapters in Section 2 focus first on the ways in which prognostications with Rome at the center shifted from the Ottomans to Spanish Moriscos to Venetian diplomats, and then on Morisco insurrection plots in Valencia and Aragón after 1570. Section 3 explores the use of prophecy by Moriscos for strategic purposes: here, Green-Mercado gives us a microhistory on Gil Pérez, a Morisco informant for the Spanish Inquisition, as well as an assessment of Morisco efforts to establish diplomatic ties and military support from the French king Henri IV.

Green-Mercado is a sensitive and astute reader, and the evidence she presents is very often poignant. We learn that Morisco communities put pivotal importance on owning a Qur'an, whether or not their members could read; muleteers and merchants were crucial agents for the transmission of books and manuscripts. We see Morisco family members compete over mentoring a visionary protégé. We learn how often the *jofores* involved calls to repent, wherein Moriscos were adjured to “awake from negligence and convert to Islam” (82). The demoralizing effects of the subjugation of Granada in 1492 were never-ending in Morisco memory. The martyrdoms of leading Morisco families in Aragón were profoundly violent and had long-lasting reverberations, which Spanish inquisitors intentionally engineered. Women, along with *alfaquis*, were crucial intermediaries for Morisco coalescence and resistance (75-76). Prophecies bound the Ottoman and Morisco communities together, whether those prognostications were imported into Spain or produced from within. Yet after the expulsion, the prophecies that circulated among Moriscos altered. Rather than elevating hopes for Ottoman intervention and naval support, the prognostications post-1614 emphasized obedience: the current state of affairs had to be accepted without resistance.

Throughout, Green-Mercado takes great care to dispute any notion that Spain's Moriscos could or should be divided into binary categories of authentic/inauthentic and resisters/collaborators (66, 94, 169, 211). She excels in documenting the ambivalence and fluctuating reactions of Morisco reactions to the *jofores*, and points out that such uncertainties and contradictions occurred in every social and economic class. She resists the notion that inquisitorial sources are so contaminated with prejudice and paranoia that they should not be used; she declines to push her materials toward a teleological end, as if they must be read as forecasting the expulsion. Her study moves successfully from local to wider Mediterranean contexts, and illustrates in stunning fashion just how many communication networks, spurred by individual contacts, were operating among Spain, North Africa, and the Ottoman Empire. Her book certainly demonstrates that Moriscos “were as much a part of the Islamic world as Ottomans were part of the early modern European world” (16). Equally notably, her evidence indeed appears to demonstrate that Morisco insurrections in Aragón and Valencia after 1570 were not phantoms of inquisitors' imaginations, but indeed were planned, financed, and endorsed (more or less) by Morisco communities in those two regions.

This monograph is compelling; the research rests on a wide range of archival materials. At the same time, I thought that Green-Mercado's insight into the ways in which practices generate identity was not sufficiently pulled through the book's contents: occasionally, the connection between that perception and her

evidence was quite obvious, but was not highlighted. Sometimes, the reasoning struck me as circular. Green-Mercado works hard to establish a prototype of what Morisco prophecy must have contained by the second half of the sixteenth century in order for Spanish inquisitors to take it seriously, but then the template she has created dictates her analysis of prophecies, and then she deploys it once more to further identify other insurrectionist possibilities (195). There is a lack of attention to the relationships among aristocratic lords, Morisco workers, and inquisitors. The mob violence that accompanied the Inquisition-sanctioned deaths of Morisco notables needed more explanation, given that the victims involved were sentenced at final *autos de fe*: how are we to explain the inquisitors' loss of control in such situations? Finally, there are a number of copy-editing errors that I would not have expected to see in a publication from Cornell University Press. Nevertheless, this is a strong contribution to a very important field in early modern history.

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