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Slavery and Religious Violence in the Early Modern Mediterranean: A Regional Perspective

1 Introduction

On an unknown date in the late eighteenth century, probably in 1785 (the year of the Spanish-Algerian peace agreement) or in 1791 (the ratification of the agreement), three Algerian slaves, the leaders of the community of the Muslim arsenal slaves of Cartagena (Murcia), Spain, and Alfonso de Albuquerque, the marine general commander, walked together to the neighborhood of Santa Lucia to the slaves' "mosque."[1] There, they officially relinquished their rights to the structure. They continued walking together to the slaves' cemetery, again relinquishing the slaves' right over it, this time on condition that local freed Muslims living in the city (excluding converts to Christianity) could continue using the cemetery. This property transfer raises a number of questions, which our source, authored in 1955 by Eduardo Cañabate Navarro, the official chronicler of the city of Cartagena, does not answer.

Archival documents shed light on the earlier history of this "mosque," which begins on December 6, 1733, when Faxia (also spelled Jaxia and Xaxia), a free Muslim and resident of Cartagena, bought a house in the city from Doña Juana de Navarrete, an unmarried resident of Murcia. The house was located in the city center on Los Cuatro Santos Street, close to the parochial church. A few months later, in front of another notary in Cartagena, Faxia obtained a copy of her bill of sale. She also announced that she had purchased the house – to which everybody soon referred as a "hospital-mosque" – on behalf of the Muslim arsenal slaves with money from their collective saving fund so that it would serve them as a shelter and a charity hospital for the poor.[2]

1 Unfortunately, our source does not provide us with a precise date, see: Eduardo Cañabate Navarro, "El castillo de los moros y sus antecedentes históricos," Archivo Municipal de Cartagena 6 (1955): no. 7256.

2 "Caudal que de común tienen los dichos moros esclavos," AGS, SMA, Leg. 709, copy of a notarial record from 4.5.1734.

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During the eighteenth century, Cartagena's population boomed and with it the number of slaves and freed slaves, the large majority of whom were from the Maghrib. This demographic trend was tightly linked to the establishment of the arsenal between 1732 and 1782. Indeed, the life span of the hospital-mosque overlaps with the period during which the arsenal was built. Between 1750 and 1770, there were always around 1,000 Muslim slaves in the arsenal, but in the following decades the number dropped to no more than two to three hundred.[3] To put this figure in context, in 1756, the city's general population was 28,467 and it kept growing, hitting 50,000 in 1799.[4] Muslim slaves formed a significant portion of the population.

The rising numbers of slaves and the establishment of the hospital-mosque must have heightened the residents' anxieties. At some point in the second half of the 1730s, residents and magistrates broke in, smashing the mosque lamp and burning the prayer mats.[5] They sought to shut the mosque down, but to no avail. Over time they grudgingly came to accept it. In fact, for a good forty years the episcopal and municipal authorities defended the hospital-mosque. In 1755, the municipality negotiated with the slaves the swap of the house Faxia had bought for a newly erected building in the city's outskirts. Fifteen years later, in the fall of 1770, under inquisitorial and then royal pressure, the hospital-mosque was demolished. However, in response to an Algerian threat to retaliate against Christians held captive in Algiers, the arsenal officers recommended to the king that the structure be rebuilt. The king accepted the recommendation and on July 9, 1774, the slaves received their new funeral house.

The story of the hospital-mosque includes all the elements this article explores – slaves claiming religious privilege they deemed theirs, local authorities violating the slaves' expectations, word about the event traveling across the sea, and the dey of Algiers issuing a threat that resulted in the Spanish concession of the contested privilege to the slaves. By exploring this and other seventeenth-century cases centered on Islamic cemeteries and the burial of Muslim slaves in Spain, this article advances two arguments. The first concerns religious violence exerted upon slaves – more specifically, forced baptisms or the desecration of slaves' bodies – and its regional effects. I

3 Maximiliano Barrio Gozalo, "La mano de obra esclava en el arsenal de Cartagena a mediados del setecientos," *Investigaciones históricas. Época moderna y contemporánea* 17 (1997): 79–100.

4 Rafael Torres Sánchez, "La esclavitud en Cartagena en los siglos XVII y XVIII," *Contrastes: Revista de historia moderna* 2 (1986): 81–101.

5 The attack is mentioned in a document summarizing the grievance of the Algerian dey on the matter, see: Archivo Histórico Nacional (hereafter AHN), Inquisition, Leg. 3733, fol. 301, undated. The document only indicates that Alonso de Zorilla, the administrator of the Trinitarian hospital in Algiers, sent his account, which details the dey's grievance, on September 8, without providing the year. However, given that de Zorilla served as the hospital administrator from December 1734 until his death on July 5, 1740, the Inquisition must have received this account at some point between September 1735 and September 1739. See Alonso Porres, "Los hospitales trinitarios de Argel y Túnez," *Hispania Sacra* 48 (1996): 639–717, here 688–89.

argue that these eruptions of violence, which seem to mark and reinforce the religious Christian-Muslim divide, were in fact indicative of assumptions regarding slaves' rights shared by both Christian and Muslim slaves and rulers. The second argument regards the long terms effects of such dynamics. I argue that in the long run, violations of these privileges led to their codification. In other words, negative reciprocity – namely, a dynamic of violent challenge and riposte on a Mediterranean scale – was transformed over time into positive reciprocity in the form of regulation of slaves' religious privilege geared to prevent violence.[6]

The implications of these arguments go beyond the specificity of this aspect of slavery in the western Mediterranean. The case of violence against slaves suggests that in order to understand the broader history of slavery of Maghribis in Iberia and Iberians in the Maghrib, we need to study them as part of the same connected history and approach them from a regional perspective.[7] In recent years, scholars have turned to study processes and connections across political borders conditioned and shaped by dynamics that derive from tensions between the local and the global. Scholars of slavery have contributed much to this growing body of scholarship, and the stimulating conference organized by the editors of this volume offers a superb example of this corpus. While this perspective has been extremely productive, its stress on the local and the global excludes the possibility that connected political constellations could be shaped by a third intermediate scale, that of the region.[8] This is the case of the Mediterranean, in which ever-changing empires, city-states, and other political formations have been entangled over the *longue durée*. Studying slavery in the western Mediterranean from a regional perspective means taking into account one of the scales with which slaves and slave owners framed their own lives, and implies exploring the ways in which the traffic of humans was shaped by the region, and in turn reshaped it. More specifically, this perspective entails examining how slavery densified, or to the contrary disintegrated, practices, movement, and relations in the Mediterranean, thus reconstructing how the region gained or lost its palpability for slaves and enslavers living around its shores.

The presence of state-authorized Islamic burial plots and an Islamic hospital-mosque in Spain goes against two Spanish historiographical truisms. According to the first, Islam vanished in Spain after the expulsion of the Moriscos (Spain's forcefully

6 On the logic of challenge and riposte, see Pierre Bourdieu, "The Sentiment of Honor in Kabyle Society," in *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, ed. John G. Peristiany (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966): 191–241. On negative reciprocity: Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1972).

7 Sanjay Subramanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," in *Beyond Binary Histories, Re-Imagining Euroasia to c. 1830*, ed. Victor Lieberman (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999): 289–316.

8 For an illuminating analysis of such a process in the twentieth-century central Mediterranean and its theorization, see Naor Ben-Yehoyada, *The Mediterranean Incarnate: Region Formation Between Sicily and Tunisia Since World War II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017): 20–21.

converted Muslims and their descendants) between 1609 and 1614.[9] According to the second, by the eighteenth century slavery became a colonial problem rather than a peninsular one.[10] These Islamic institutions prove how problematic these narratives are. The debates over their existence thus raise a number of questions. The first regards their nature and existence – was there an Islamic hospital-mosque in eighteenth-century Cartagena? Did Muslim slaves have their own cemeteries in a number of Spanish Mediterranean port cities? Secondly, and importantly, what were the conditions that enabled the establishment and existence of such institutions and how exceptional were they? To explore these questions, this article begins by looking at how a host of actors viewed the hospital-mosque of the arsenal slaves in Cartagena and how they sought to mobilize it for contrasting ends. I then proceed to discuss the conditions that enabled the hospital-mosque – the presence of communities of Maghribi slaves in Iberia and the presence of similar Christian communities in the Maghrib. The discussion highlights how slave communities in the Maghrib were influenced by events happening to slaves in bonded communities in Iberia and vice versa.

One caveat is that I will be employing the terms "captive" and "slave" interchangeably. I do so for two reasons. First, the sources often employ these terms interchangeably. Second, in the early modern western Mediterranean many captives labored as slaves while waiting for the ransom to arrive. On the other hand, a number of slaves, who after years in slavery gave up on the prospects of their being ransomed, suddenly succeeded in arranging their ransom. In the western half of the Middle Sea, "captivity" and "slavery" were dimensions in the life of bonded individuals rather than exclusive conditions.[11]

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9 For recent notable exceptions, see Trevor Dadson, *Los moriscos de Villarrubia de los ojos (siglos XV-XVIII): Historia de una minoría asimilada, expulsada y reintegrada* (Madrid: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2015); Enrique Soria Mesa, "Los moriscos que se quedaron. La permanencia de la población de origen islámico en la España moderna (Reino de Granada, siglos XVII-XVIII)," *Vínculos de historia* 1 (2012): 205–30; and Bernard Vincent, "Musulmanes y conversión en España en el siglo XVII," in *El rio morisco*, ed. Bernard Vincent (Valencia: Universitat de València, 2006): 75–88.

10 Tamar Herzog, "How Did Early-Modern Slaves in Spain Disappear? The Antecedents," *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts* 3 (2012): 1–7. The claim that slavery disappeared is heard not only in the Spanish case, but also more broadly in the European one. Thus, the *Cambridge World History of Slavery* moves from slavery in medieval Europe to slavery in Europe's colonies, skipping early modern Europe. See David Eltis and Stanely L. Engerman, *Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, *AD 1420–AD 1804* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) and David Eltis et al, *Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 4, *AD 1804–AD 2016* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Similarly, an excellent recent collection of articles on slavery in Spain and Latin America betrays the same perspective. The chapters in the section on eighteenth-century slavery focus exclusively on Spain's colonies. See Aurelia Martín Casares, ed., *Esclavitudes Hispánicas (Siglos XV al XXI): Horizontes socio-culturales* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2014).

11 Cf. Michel Fontenay, "Esclaves et/ou captifs: Préciser les concepts," in *Le commerce des captifs: Les intermédiaires dans l'échange et le rachat des prisonniers en Méditerranée, XVe–XVIIIe siècle*, ed. Wolfgang Kaiser (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2008): 15–24. On the distinction in Roman, Christian, and

2 What We Talk About When We Talk About a Hospital-Mosque

Did a slave mosque really operate for decades out in the open in eighteenth-century Cartagena? Answering the question is difficult for at least two reasons. The first lies in our expectations for an answer in neat, exclusive terms – "yes" or "no." However, for Muslims, any space can serve for ritual prayer, "hence the saying of the prophet that he had been given the whole world as a *masdjid*" (mosque).[12] Indeed, even a cemetery, like the one the Muslim arsenal slaves of Cartagena had, could serve as a place for prayer, and thus be thought of as a mosque, too.[13] More specifically, hospitals in the Ottoman world often served multiple functions beyond the admission and care of medical patients. Many of these institutions had a space preserved for a mosque, and their staff included muezzins and imams in addition to launderers.[14] The floor plan of the third and last incarnation of the mosque designed in 1774 by the arsenal military engineer hints at these functions. The engineer designated functions to each of the rooms and spaces in his plan – an entry hall, kitchen, patio with a well and drain, two storage rooms for wood and working tools, and an ablution room ("lavatorio"). Only one room was described as "for whatever end." The latter, the largest together with the ablution room, must have been planned to and served for prayer. This clearly was not a congregational mosque, the main mosque of an Islamic neighborhood or city, which hosted the special Friday noon prayers. However, the slaves performed there acts of worship, which from their perspective meant the place was in effect a mosque, too.

The second difficulty in answering the question stems from the fact that the individuals, groups, and institutions that generated our data either tried to shut the hospital-mosque down or protect its existence grudgingly or wholeheartedly. In fact, the house was articulated differently according to the institutional domains in which it

Jewish traditions, see Andrés Díaz Borrás, *El miedo al Mediterráneo: La caridad popular valenciana y la redención de cautivos bajo poder musulmán 1323–1539* (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, InstitucioÓn MilaÓ y Fontanals, Departamento de Estudios Medievales, 2001): 5–18. Algerian sources use the word "slave" (*'abd*) exclusively to refer to blacks. Enslaved European captives were referred to as "captive" (*asîr*), "Christian" (*naçrâni*), or "European" (*'ilj*); see Lemounar Merouche, *Recherches sur l'Algérie à l'époque ottoman*, vol. 1, *Monnaies, prix et revenus, 1520–1830* (Paris: Bouchene, 2002): 211; Nabil Matar, *Britain and Barbary, 1589–1689* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005): 114–15; Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, eds., *Ransom Slavery Along the Ottoman Borders (Early Fifteenth–Early Eighteenth Centuries)* (Leiden: Brill, 2007): xiv.

12 Joshua Pedersen, R.A. Kern and Ernst Diez, "Mosque," in *Brill's Encyclopaedia of Islam*, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-871X_ei1_COM_0155.

13 Pedersen, Kern and Diez, "Mosque."

14 Miri Shefer-Mossensohn, "Charity and Hospitality: Hospitals in the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern Period," in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts*, ed. Michael Bonner, Mine Ener and Amy Singer (New York: State University of New York Press, 2003): 121–44, here 131.

was debated – the municipal council, local notaries' desk, marine, inquisitorial, and royal administration, or the Algerian Beylick government. The first extant mention of the institution was devoid of ambiguity. In 1734, a few months after Faxia purchased the house, she met a notary in Cartagena and declared that it would serve as a shelter and a charity hospital for the poor. If she assumed or knew it would later serve the inmates for prayer too, she did not share this information with either the seller or notary.

The idea of a mosque was first introduced at some point in the second half of the 1730s when Algerian Dey Ibrahim ben Ramdan referred to it as a "mosque" in a grievance against the Cartagenero residents who attacked the building.[15] The dey described a set of objects and activities without clearly articulating the relations among them: "The mosque which the Moors have bought at their expense and which was granted them by the bishop (*diocesano*) for the burial of [their dead] was confiscated, its lamp was broken, its prayer mats were burnt, and the [slaves] were from celebrating their rites and from burying their dead."[16] The indistinctive listing of "mosque," "lamp and prayer mats," "burial space," and "rites" betrays the dey's understanding of the overlap between prayer and burial, and thus his lack of a sense of urgency to articulate the nature of the house in exclusive terms. Similarly, in their negotiations in 1754–1755 over the swap of the first house, residents, slaves, notaries, and municipal authorities comfortably referred to the establishment as either "a little hospital" (*hospitalito*) or "a hospital house or a mosque" (*Casa Hospital o Mesquita*). To the degree that these documents reflect the power dynamic between the slaves and the city's leading elite, the barter was consensual and satisfied the slaves' needs. In this sense, the use of the word "mosque" at this stage was not meant to mobilize opposition against the establishment. The slaves did not deny that the place served for prayer, and the double nature of the house was a fact accepted by all.

From the perspective of the court in Madrid, the conjunction of the signifiers "mosque" and "hospital" made no sense, creating an unbearable ambiguity. We see this when we look at the attempts of the marine state secretary to figure out what was happening in Cartagena and his irritation with what he perceived as ambiguity. In his response to the query of the marine state secretary in 1757, the marine general intendant of Cartagena described the mosque-hospital as a shelter, a charity hospital for poor Muslims, and a space for ablution. When the structure hosted no-one and there were no cadavers to purify and bury, the place was closed. Unsatisfied by the information the general intendant provided, the state secretary wrote: "a house

15 AHA, Inquisición, Leg. 3733, Fol. 301.

16 "Se había quitado a los Moros la Mezquita que tenían comprada a su costa y se les había concedido por aquel diocesano para sus entierros quebrándole la lámpara, quemándoles las estenas, y privandoles de hacer sus ceremonias y entierros de sus difuntos," AHA, Inquisición, Leg. 3733, Fol. 301.

which your honor calls once a mosque, and other times a hospital [. . .] well, what the noun 'hospital' designates is very different from a 'mosque'."[17]

This instance seems to have been the last time when the terms "hospital" and "mosque" served descriptively. From this point on, their use or avoidance was evocative and meant to generate or prevent action. This becomes clear when we read the inquisitorial account on the hospital-mosque composed in 1769. According to the inquisitorial author, the "mosque" had a live-in muezzin reciting the *adhan*, the call for worship, from a room on the second floor: believers convened twice a day, left their shoes downstairs, walked up the entrance steps barefoot, kissed the steps, and prayed loudly in a large hall adorned with a lamp with three wicks and floors covered by prayer reed mats.[18] This account stressed the public nature of the mosque, framed as offensive in order to move the king to shut it down.

In contrast to the inquisitorial perspective, the Cartagena marine administrators, who sought to maintain the relations as peaceful as possible with Algiers, tended to undermine the mosque-like aspect of the slaves' house. To appease Algiers after the demolition of the second incarnation of the hospital-mosque in 1770, these administrators advocated for the rebuilding of a funeral house for the slaves. In their correspondence with Madrid and the Inquisition on the matter, they described the contentious institution as "the little hospital of the Moors commonly called mosque" or the house "the common people call mosque."[19] In other words, they suggested that while the place might have been called a mosque, it was not necessarily one. The king's permission to rebuild a funerary facility for the slaves, backed up by the Inquisition, echoes this position. The king conditioned his consent to rebuild a funeral house on never using the word "mosque" to describe it: "And so that the name mosque will not prevail – a name which the Moors unavoidably might use among themselves to refer to the house – special care should be taken not to give [the house] that designation in any oral or written order or in any document in which there might be a mention of [the house] . . . "[20] The king and inquisitors cared more about form and appearances than about content, more about names than about actions. The royal order implied acceptance of non-public religious rites, while strictly prohibiting any references that might point out either these rites or their acceptance in effect.

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17 "Una casa, que una vez llama VS Mezquita, y otras Hospital [. . .] pues el que indica el nombre de Hospital es mui distinto del de Mezquita," see: AGS, MSA, Leg. 709, 9.7.1757, Julián Manuel de Arriaga y Ribera to Francisco Barrero.

18 22.9.1769, AGS, MSA, Leg. 709.

19 "El Hospitalito de los Moros, vulgarmente nombrado Mezquita," Governor Carlos Reggio 3.11.1770, AGS, SMA, Leg. 709, and "el vulgo la llamaba Mezquita," Joseph de Roxas, interim commander general 12.7.1774, AGS, SMA, Leg. 709.

20 "Y para que no prevalezca el nombre de Mezquita que los Moros darán acaso entre si a la casa sin que pueda evitarse [. . .] se tenga especial cuidado de no darla tal denominación en ninguna orden verbal o por escrito, ni en ningún documento en que pueda ofrecerse hacer mención de ella," 23,4,1774, AGS, SMA, 709.

What was the nature of the slaves' hospital-mosque then? Everybody agreed that the slaves prepared their dead for burial in their hospital-mosque. When one of the arsenal slaves died, his comrades, accompanied by six to eight armed guards, carried the body to the hospital-mosque. There, the slaves washed the body, shaved it, and wrapped it in funerary shrouds. Then, they carried it to their cemetery, buried it, and offered funerary prayers.[21] Not only was there a consensus about this, but everybody also approved it without hesitation – after all, even slaves had to bury their dead, and nobody was interested in decaying bodies spreading disease. Whatever the slaves practiced at the hospital-mosque beyond ablution rites, if anything at all, turned it into a contentious institution. We identified three stances on the matter: those who could not care less about the name given to the slaves' house or how the slaves used it (slaves, locals, arsenal officers, and Algerians), those who demanded a clear-cut answer – a "mosque" or "a hospital" (marine state secretary), and those who took advantage of the second half of the hyphenated name "hospital-mosque" to bring about its closure (inquisition and king). Currently, the documentation at our disposal does not lend itself to penetrating the hospital-mosque's walls and discovering how exactly the slaves used it.

3 What Conditions Enabled a Hospital-Mosque in Early Modern Spain?

In contrast to this impasse, the records disclose that the conditions that enabled the establishment of such a contentious institution at the heart of one of eighteenth-century Spain's central ports, more than a century after the expulsion of the Moriscos between 1609 and 1614, were the presence of Christian slave communities in the Maghrib that enjoyed matching privileges. The existence of these parallel Christian bonded communities in the Maghrib provided Maghribi authorities with leverage to secure certain privileges for Maghribi subjects enslaved in Spain. To better understand the nature of this entanglement, we need to scale up our exploration and examine the affair from a regional perspective. More specifically, we need to examine the Maghribi slave community of Cartagena and the connections and relations its members maintained with their communities of origin.

21 Beyond the information provided by the sources, this reconstruction is based on the Islamic ideal funerary form. See Leor Halevi, *Muhammad's Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007): 64–74, 159–60, and 168–77. It is likely that funerary practices in Algiers and Morocco differed from this ideal: indeed, it is even more likely given the exceptional circumstances that the slave practice was further distanced from that ideal.

The presence of Maghribi slaves and slave communities in early modern and, more specifically, eighteenth-century Spain is a forgotten fact.[22] Their existence was one of the common accidents of the Mediterranean practice of captive taking and enslavement. In the western half of the sea, Maghribis captured and enslaved Iberians (but also Portuguese, French, and Italians), and the latter captured and enslaved Maghribis.[23] This enslavement differed in at least three ways from both Atlantic slavery and the slavery of sub-Saharan Africans in the Mediterranean. First, Christians and Muslims knew each other on the basis of *longue durée* violent and peaceful exchanges. Second, the short distance separating Iberia from the Maghrib meant that as slaves Christians and Muslims could maintain contact with their kin and communities by sending letters and oral messages. Finally, a number of these slaves obtained release through compensation, exchange, or flight, options unavailable for sub-Saharan slaves in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic. Thus, the slavery of Christians and Muslims in the Mediterranean was shaped by the history and geography of the region, and in turn, reshaped the region.

Mediterranean slave communities were not simple extensions of the slaves' home community, but rather new political, social, and religious configurations. For example, the community of the arsenal slaves of Cartagena was not based exclusively on political lines. Most of its members came from Morocco and Algiers, but there were members from Tunis, Tripoli, and Istanbul. Formally speaking, not all members were Muslims, as a small number of slaves had converted to Christianity.[24] The boundaries of slave communities stretched across the sea between the Maghrib and Iberia. This happened because ransom, a policy geared to separate Christians from Muslims, unintentionally and unexpectedly intensified the links between Christian and Muslim Mediterranean communities. Since ransom required the exchange of information, slave owners who bought their slaves to profit off their ransom encouraged their "investments" to contact family members, inform them about their place of captivity, and ask them to collect money to pay the ransom fee. The majority of this circulation was motivated by masters and slaves' desire to orchestrate ransom, but even slaves

22 See footnote 10 above.

23 On Majorcans corsairs, see Natividad Planas, "Pratiques de pouvoir au sein d'une société frontalière: Le voisinage du Royaume de Majorque et ses îles adjacentes avec les terres d'Islam au XVIIe siècle" (PhD diss., European University Institute, 2000); on Valencians, see Vicente Graullera Sanz, "La esclavitud en Valencia en los siglos XVI y XVII (causas de caída en cautiverio)," in *Primer congreso de historia del país valenciano, celebrado en Valencia del 14 al 18 de abril de 1971*, vol. 3, *Edad moderna* (Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1976): 239–50. On corsairs from Cartagena, see José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez and Vicente Montojo Montojo, *Entre el lucro y la defensa: Las relaciones entre la monarquía y la sociedad mercantil cartagenera: Comerciantes y corsarios en el siglo XVII* (Murcia: Real Academia Alfonso X El Sabio, 1998). Piracy, however, was not exclusively organized along religious lines, see Planas, "Pratiques de pouvoir," and Joshua White, *Piracy and Law in the Ottoman Legal Mediterranean* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017).

24 AGS, MSA, 709.

who gave up on the prospects of obtaining their freedom engaged in this epistolary exchange. They informed their relatives about their lives, and reported about other enslaved community members who died or converted during captivity.[25] The circulation of letters and information was predicated upon the constant mobility of captured, redeemed, and fleeing slaves, merchants, and friars, all of whom at least on occasion carried letters from slaves to kin across the sea. For example, on January 9, 1735, a British ship that arrived in Algiers from Cadiz carried on its deck two runaway Turkish slaves, who carried with them many letters from Muslims enslaved in Cadiz.[26] In circulating information about themselves and about others, captives functioned as their communities' new gatekeepers, declaring who was in and who was out. This circulation allowed captives to both grease and maintain kinship ties with their relatives across the sea, and become their communities' new fringes. These spatially reconfigured communities were not face-to-face nor imagined ones: rather, they were constituted through social claims embedded in texts and oral news that ideally produced co-presence and contemporaneity.

Another regionalizing effect of slavery was that religious and political authorities extended their reach via this epistolary exchange and gained a foothold in hostile territory. This happened because whenever the arsenal slaves of Cartagena felt that what they perceived as their religious privilege was violated and their legal possession was at risk, they immediately wrote home reporting the problem. The privileges they had in mind were only articulated at the moment of their violation and during the exchange that ensued. Christian and Muslim slaves in the Mediterranean expected not to be converted or baptized by force, be allowed to bury their dead according to their rite, and have the legal authorities in the place of captivity prevent the desecration of cadavers of dead slaves. A number of the letters carried by the aforementioned runway Turkish slaves who arrived in Algiers in 1735 concerned what the slaves thought were violations of the privileges they had deemed theirs. Upon the reception of such reports, Moroccan governors and Algerian pashas issued threats demanding Spain amend the situation.

The same dynamic emerges in the case of the hospital-mosque of Cartagena. In the second half of the 1730s, the Algerian Dey Ibrahim ben Ramdan was informed that the residents and magistrates of Cartagena damaged the mosque-hospital and harassed the Muslim slaves who used it. In response, the dey made a threat. If the Muslims were not allowed to use the mosque-hospital, the dey would shut down the Christian churches and hospital in Algiers.[27] This was a serious threat, as there were a

25 For a discussion of various forms of information captives produced and circulated, their routes, and their social and political effects, see Daniel Hershenzon, *The Captive Sea: Slavery, Communication and Commerce in Early Modern Spain and the Mediterranean* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 2008): 93–162.

26 2.18.1735, AGS, SMA, leg. 701.

27 AHA, Inquisición, Leg. 3733, Fol. 301.

number of churches in the prisons of captives in Algiers and a Trinitarian hospital at the time.[28] In 1761, Dey Baba Ali sent the Spanish authorities a long list of grievances regarding the Algerians enslaved in Cartagena.[29] The first and most revealing was that Christians had appropriated the plot the Muslims used as a cemetery.[30] The incident, which discloses that in addition to the hospital-mosque, the king's slaves had a cemetery of their own, demonstrate this dynamic of challenge and riposte on a Mediterranean scale. Should the Muslim not receive it back, Baba Ali threatened, he would shut down the churches in Algiers. Finally, a number of similar threats were issued by Dey Muhammad ben Othman between 1770 and 1774.[31] The dey was responding to the demolition of the second house, pressuring the arsenal authorities to provide the slaves with an alternative structure outside the arsenal. This back and forth shows how slavery, captivity, and ransom extended the power of Maghribi institutions into Spain, allowing them to exert power not only over their subjects, but also over the Christians that enslaved them.

The continual interventions of Algerian deys enabled the existence of a hospital-mosque in Cartagena. On December 31, 1765, Diego de Rojas y Contreras, bishop of Cartagena and president of the council, expressed this stance clearly in his reply to the marine intendant who complained about the slaves' hospital-mosque. Shutting down the hospital-mosque, the bishop explained, "offers some difficulty, because of the fear of what the Moors could do with the Catholic churches that there are in [North] Africa."[32] Likewise, in internal correspondence that preceded the demolition of the second hospital-mosque, the arsenal officers recommended to frame the demolition as a security concern in order to limit the reaction of Algiers. Indeed, the Inquisition accepted the recommendation, offered the slaves monetary compensation for the house (which the slaves refused to accept, insisting on an alternative structure), and demolished a few houses adjacent to the hospital-mosque to make the story more credible.[33] Despite these measures, Algiers threatened to retaliate, and soon the

28 On the religious establishments of Christian captives in the Maghrib, see Ellen Friedman, "Trinitarian Hospitals in Algiers: An Early Example of Health Care for Prisoners of War," *Catholic Historical Review* 66 (1980): 551–64; Porres Alonso, "Los hospitales trinitarios de Argel y Túnez, *Hispania* Sacra 48 (1996): 639–717"; and Clara Ilham Álvarez Dopico, "The Catholic Consecration of an Islamic House: The St. John de Matha Trinitarian Hospital in Tunis," in *Sacred Precincts: The Religious Architecture of Non-Muslim Communities across the Islamic World*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Leiden: Brill, 2015): 291–309.

29 This point is important. Not all grievances regarded religious privileges, and some focused more broadly on slaves' living conditions, such as chaining, the nature of labors they had to carry out, and mistreatment by their owners.

30 16.8.1761, AGS, SMA, Leg. 705.

31 AGS, MSA, Leg. 709, 2.11.1772.

32 "Por el recelo de lo que pudieron hacer los Moros, con las Yglesias Catholicas, que hay en África," AGS, MSA, Leg. 709, 31.12.1765.

33 AGS, MSA, Leg. 709, 9.8.1770.

arsenal officers pleaded with the king to build a new funerary facility for the slaves, a suggestion he accepted.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Muslim slave cemeteries and spaces for prayer became common in European port cities in the Mediterranean. Malta and Livorno had mosques or spaces for prayer, and Marseille, Tolon, and a number of Italian cities provided their Muslim slaves with burial plots.[34] Did Spain, with its particular long-term history of entanglements with the Magherbi world and the expulsion of Spain's Muslims and their descendants (the Moriscos), follow the model of other cities in the European Mediterranean? More specifically, how common were spaces used for prayer, funerary rites, and burial in early modern Spain? If we broaden our perspective to include the seventeenth century, we find a number of incidents of heated debate over the proper burial of Muslim slaves in Spain. During the seventeenth century, Algiers submitted at least four grievances about the desecration of slaves' bodies (and many more on broader issues such as labor conditions and fair execution of ransom agreements). In 1629, Algiers complained about burning slaves' cadavers, in 1658 about the same in Malaga, in 1663 about the same in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, and then once again in 1696.[35] These grievances were always accompanied by threats of retaliation, which in some cases were executed. These dynamics of challenge and riposte on a Mediterranean scale often began locally when a slave owner or local official mistreated slaves or led to or allowed the desecration of their cadavers. The slaves or their friends sent the word about the event back home. In response, local rulers contacted their counterparts and demanded that the situation be amended, otherwise they would retaliate.

These cases allow us to formulate the following hypothesis about the regionalizing effects of religious violence exerted upon slaves, or rather about how such violence shaped the region in which it occurred. In the early modern Mediterranean, negative reciprocity was transformed into a positive one. Over time, religious violence and threats against slaves led to the securing of what Muslims and Christians perceived as slaves' religious privilege. We see this when we look at the Spanish responses to the grievances just mentioned. If the royal responses to the first incidents were local, reproaching the

34 On Marseille and Tolon, see Régis Bertrand, "Les cimetières des 'esclaves turcs' des arsenaux de Marseille et de Toulon au XVIII[e] siècle," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 99–100 (2002): 205–17. On Malta, see Ma'cûncizâde Mustafa Efendi, *Le captif de Malte. Récit autobiographique d'un cadi ottoman* (Toulouse: Anacharsis, 2019): 42, 53. On Livorno, see Cesare Santus and Guillaume Calafat, "Les avatars du 'Turc': Esclaves et commerçants musulmans en Toscane (1600–1750)," in *Les Musulmans dans l'histoire de l'Europe. Tome 1: Une intégration invisible*, ed. Jocelyne Dakhlia and Bernard Vincent (Paris: Albin Michel, 2011): 493. On other Italian cities, see Salvatore Bono, *Schiavi musulmani nell'Italia moderna: Galeotti, vu' cumprà, domestici* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1999): 241–52.

35 AGS, Estado, Leg. 3444, fols. 107, 112, 2.6.1631; AGS, Estado, Leg. 2675, 10.22.1658; Archivo de la Corona de Aragón (hereafter ACA), Consejo de Aragón, Leg. 607, fol. 33, January 1663; AHN, Estado, Leg. 670, 5.1696. For a detailed discussion of this dynamics, see Hershenzon, *The Captive Sea*: 118–39.

authorities in Malaga in 1658 and in San Lúcar in 1663, by the end of the century, in 1696, the Spanish monarch ordered the governors of all Spanish territories in which Muslim slaves lived to provide them with cemeteries – "in all cities and towns inside and outside of Spain."[36] The degree to which local governors obeyed the injunction remains unclear, and yet the order is indicative of what appears to have been a trend that eventually resulted in the return of Muslim cemeteries and funerary rituals to Spain.[37]

4 Conclusion

The dynamic that slowly led to the establishment of Islamic institutions in Christian Spain, as well as Christian institutions in the Maghrib, was regional. It was shaped by the historical and geographical specificity of the region, and it had regionalizing effects, slowly integrating the Maghrib and Iberia. The region in this case was not merely a category of analysis, but also one of practice. The presence of multiple communities of Christian and Muslim slaves across the western Mediterranean meant that Iberia for Maghribis and the Maghrib for Iberians became part of their social and affective horizon, even if feared and hated. The intensity of information flow was such that the people living around the sea were sometimes intimately aware of the lives of those living across it. For Mediterraneans, the region was not a distant concept but rather a familiar spatiotemporal construct, indeed a lived reality.

Abbreviations

ACA Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Consejo de Aragón
AHN Archivo Histórico Nacional

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36 ACA, Consejo de Aragón, Leg. 672, fol. 39, 8.7.1696.

37 The Majorcan viceroy confirmed the acceptance of the order and reported that the vice regal criers would spread it, see ACA, Consejo de Aragón, Leg. 965, 9.23.1696.

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