Unprinted:
Magic, Reading and Meaning in Early Modern Iberian Manuscript Text

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In the Spanish early modern period, the manuscript not only survived but found new uses and users.[1] Though the impact of the press on the circulation and reception of texts should not be minimized, as Marshall McLuhan proposed in his now-classic *The Gutenberg Galaxy* and Elizabeth Eisenstein argued in her *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, the manuscript was an effective complement to the press if not a competitor.[2] The early modern manuscripts that have attracted critical attention include autograph manuscripts prepared for the press, manuscripts related to groups of professional scribes working under an entrepreneur, and manuscript texts produced by epistolary communities.[3] However, manuscripts were also used in a variety of restricted, private, and wholly clandestine contexts. Manuscripts included lending copies, instructions for the court, dissident literature opposing the monarchy, and delegated writing. Magic texts and talismans; personal writings, such as letters and inheritance documents; and notebooks also took manuscript form. While some of these uses of manuscript text were relatively new, others had medieval predecessors. One use of manuscripts that was also extant in the Middle Ages was the employment of manuscript material for magic and spiritual purposes in the form of an amulet, which was intended to protect people and spaces or to bring about a desired effect.[4] In these contexts, manuscript texts can sometimes convey messages and confer protection without even being read.

The notion that the printed book was a one-book-for-all model that stood in opposition to the adaptable, flowing manuscript has been questioned very effectively by scholars, as Adrian Johns has shown in examining the contingent elements of print and Jeffrey Todd Knight, more recently, showed in the personalized assembly of printed material by owners (Johns 1-57). David McKitterick observed that printing was an essentially human activity, being manipulatable and flexible in the hands of different people (217-29). At the same time, the flexibility of the manuscript and the variety of purposes for which it was used should not be underestimated. While Love has shown that for the last quarter of the seventeenth century, in England, there was certainly a commercial aspect to manuscript circulation and the dissemination of handwritten reading material, it is also clear that in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts to be examined here, manuscript text could extend beyond its most common use as reading material. Manuscripts could convey meaning and produce effects of a different sort than those typically associated with the press, such as the mass dissemination of a standardized text at a relatively inexpensive cost,

[1] By the mid-1990s, early modern manuscript studies was an established field. McGann and McKenzie both proposed theoretical frameworks that emphasized the social and historical contexts of production and reception instead of a manuscript/print divide, and many other studies followed.

[2] The points of view expressed by McLuhan and Einstein were echoed and debated by many, including, for instance, Walter Ong. The bibliography on the impact of the printing press is vast, but for a summary of the major arguments on the impact of the press, see Michael Bristol and Arthur Marotti's introduction. David McKitterick and Adrian Johns offer more gradual accounts of the change generated by the press. On the strength of the manuscript in the era of print, see Harold Love (1993). On the Spanish manuscript in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Bouza, 16–17, 34.

[3] There is a wealth of studies on scribal communities. See Love (1993) and Brian Richardson, especially the first two chapters on the contexts and characteristics of manuscript circulation and handwriting and the work of copyists (1-78). See also Barbierato.

[4] Ryan Giles recently published a book on literary amulets that appear in some of the classics of early Spanish literature. I recently published an article that addresses the talismanic use of manuscript culture.

both in economic terms and in terms of human effort.[5] I am referring to manuscripts that were often tailored to the needs of their compilers, circulated in a partially or completely clandestine manner, and were intended to impact their readers or listeners in ways that included but were not limited to the intellectual realm.[6] Fernando Bouza has demonstrated the diversity of early modern Spain's manuscript practices, which spanned the domains of private, restricted spheres and publics of varying sizes. He has also illustrated the continuities and some of the differences between the three main forms of communication in early modern Spain: oral, textual, and visual (Bouza 17-38). The decision to use one form of communication over the others depended more on context and needs than content. This study examines how texts used in spiritual and magic ways challenge our notions of one particular means of communication: reading.

My focus here is on a selection of manuscripts primarily dating to the sixteenth century that contain magic texts that circulated among either Christians or Moriscos. Despite the differences in the ways in which their owners lived and were able to participate in their societies, both sets of magic manuscripts encourage an engagement with handwritten books that differs from the interpretive act we would usually ascribe to the act of reading. Typically studied separately, both types of magic manuscripts include some of the texts that went unprinted during the early modern period because they more easily achieved their desired impact in handwritten form, were inappropriate for the press, or were altogether prohibited. This study does not intend to compare the Christian and Morisco magic manuscripts studied beyond examining a characteristic common to both: the way in which they challenge the notion that reading necessarily involves hermeneutics, or the way in which these manuscripts counter the idea that books convey meaning only through the act of reading. The examples and manuscripts studied here suggest that users engaged with these material texts as readers, though nearly always through an uncommon form of reading. They read as both readers and believers, or almost solely as believers, with faith in religion, magic, or both. The creation of meaning was not derived solely from the patient digestion of words or from the careful, slow parsing of sentences but from a belief in that materials were capable of transforming their users and the world around them. These two groups of unprinted texts, both of which were clandestine to greater or lesser degrees, evince a set of practices and attitudes that not only contrast with those that were and are still somewhat associated with the press, including standardization, dissemination, democratization, fixity, and economic gain, but also with the characteristics and uses commonly associated with the manuscript, or what could be called manuscript culture. This study examines the reading practices encouraged or even required by these manuscripts and argues for a consideration of these practices as important uses of manuscript material, as well as a part of manuscript culture.

Other than hermeneutics

In his landmark book, John Dagenais notes the "nebulous" character of the term "manuscript culture" as applied to medieval literature, which he remedies with the notion of ethical reading (n. 7 221).[7] This article aims to resolve the ambiguity of manuscript culture in a different way, by opening the term up to include activities other than what would traditionally be conceived of as reading. In doing so, I use a concept from book history that has exclusively, to my knowledge, been used to refer to reading and writing activities. Scholars in Renaissance reading and

[5] For a concise summary of the uses and users of the press, see Bouza 34.

[6] Marotti focuses on the personal uses of manuscript miscellanies from the first half of the seventeenth century. He argues that the unique arrangement of each miscellany expressed the personal concerns of its user. This view was expressed previously by Peter Beal.

[7] In this same note, Dagenais provides a brief genealogy of the notion of manuscript culture.

marginalia, including Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, Bradin Cormack and Carla Mazio, and William Sherman have developed a notion of "use" that refers to a variety of practices that involve the manipulation of text or writing but not necessarily a deep interpretive exchange between user and text. These uses range from the strategic gathering and collecting practices of readers to potentially inconsequential notes scribbled in the margins that bear little connection to the text by which they were found.[8] I expand the term "use" to include not only the reading and writing activities explicitly involved in the production, circulation, and consumption of manuscript texts but also to spiritual and magic, or apotropaic, uses of manuscript text. Regarding the magic texts employed here, even if a type of reading is involved in their use, the primary goal is not the communication of information to a user or encouraging him to uncover a hidden meaning in the text. I thus challenge Cormack and Mazio's statement that "for a book to be usable, it must of course be legible (41)."[9] Fernando Bouza treats some of these unusual uses of manuscript text, noting that while rationality guided the production, exchange, and consumption of some handwritten texts, others encouraged a response that circumvented reason:

> Sin duda, hay muchas y buenas razones para reverenciar la escritura como instrumento de la memoria, el conocimiento y la comunicación, así como para saludar la escritofilia e, incluso, compartir la bibliolatria, tan firmemente asentados en la cultura occidental. No obstante, una parte, no menor, de la creación literaria y del pensamiento contemporáneos podría explicarse a la luz de una voluntad más o menos expresa de recuperar algo–juegos, sueños, sombras, extravíos–de aquel estado originario que la escritura racionalizada habría ayudado a superar. (91)

There are material manifestations and literary portrayals in both the medieval and early modern periods that evince a predilection for using manuscripts in a recuperative, protective, and explicitly magical manner, some of them quite well-known. For instance, a number of scholars, including Bouza, have noted that magic might be afoot in the last scene of Diego de San Pedro's *Cárcel de amor*, first published in 1492, in which the anguished and dying lover Leriano tears his resistant beloved's letters to pieces and consumes them in a cup of water, thereby finally achieving physical proximity with her.[10] Less well-known is the case of Philip III's (1578–1621) architect Francisco de Mora, who lived a century or so after the publication of Diego de San Pedro's *Cárcel de amor*. Upon Saint Teresa's death in 1610, Mora sought out her relics, most particularly her autographs. In his diary, Mora writes that while visiting the saint's corpse in Alba de Tormes, Salamanca, he took a piece of flesh half the size of a garbanzo bean from Teresa's writing arm, wrapped it in a small piece of paper, and placed it in his book of hours. The night after he stole the flesh, he was getting ready for bed and noticed that it was covered in an oil that had soaked through the paper in which he had wrapped it (Mora 4). Mora marveled that the oil had transferred to a page of his own Book of Hours containing text from the Office of the Dead that affirms the charismatic, protective, and redemptive quality of writing. He records his reaction in his *Dicho para el proceso remisorial de la canonización de santa Teresa* (hereafter *Dicho*):

[8] On the range of reading and writing activities that could be subsumed under the category of use, see Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, especially 30-33 and 75–78. See also Sherman xiii; and Cormack and Mazio 1-29.
[9] Cormack and Mazio make this observation in the context of two printed manuals, Albrecht Dürer's *Vnderweysung der Messung* (*The Art of Measurement*) (1525) and Hieronymus Hornschuch's *Orthotypographia*, the first technical manual for printers (1608).
[10] The bibliography on the final scene is vast. Two well-known studies that represent the above points of view include those of E. Michael Gerli and Keith Whinnom.

> la mancha, del tamaño y medida de esta señal de la margen, tiénela en ella figurada; y el pedazo de carne es como la señal del medio. Acertóse a meter acaso y de priesa en el oficio de los Difuntos; y la mancha del óleo de tan pequeña cosa, no sólo pasó el papelillo en que se envolvía, mas del trasvés, y casi la mitad a la larga, todo el verso que dice: In capite Libri scriptum est de me ut facerem voluntatem tuam: Deus meus, volui, et Legem tuam in medio cordis mei. [Psalm 39, 8-9] (4)

Mora's creative reading of the oil stain's connection to writing and recording on the heart appears later in his *Dicho,* when in following the instructions of a confessor and in line with Leriano's final decision, he ingests the piece of flesh in a cup of water after having used it to make the sign of the cross (9). At another point in his *Dicho*, Mora describes how he extracted and coveted a folio from Teresa's *Libro de la vida* in which the saint had written, "Esta hoja quedó en blanco, pase adelante," just to have any text in her hand, and how he later applied it to his head and arm to cure himself of ailments (7). In still another moment, Mora writes that he gives a confessor in Madrid Teresa's autograph of the *Fundaciones* and that the latter is transformed. The confessor's reaction demonstrates the inextricable connection between religion and magic when he notes that were he not already religious, Teresa's book would make him so because its extraordinary effects exceed even those of the Holy Scriptures:

> [El confesor] díjome un dia: —Oh, señor Fulano! ¿Y qué libro es este? De todos cuantos he leido en mi vida, que ha sido toda la *Sagrada Escritura*, santo Tomás y otros libros de santos, todos ellos no me han movido tanto como este; y tanto, que si hoy no fuera religioso, solo por lo que he leido dél, me metiera en religión (Mora 8).

Teresa's book conveyed more than words to both Mora and his spiritual leader. Mora wanted to read everything Teresa wrote, but only part of his interest stemmed from the possibility that he might uncover a hidden meaning in her writings. In other early modern contexts, it was explicitly disadvantageous or even destructive to read text that was used in a magic or spiritual manner. Discussing textual amulets a century before Mora, Pedro Ciruelo wrote, in his *Reprobación de las supersticiones y hechicerías* (1538, Alcalá de Hernares), that users were reluctant to open or read their amulets' texts because they would lose their protective qualities (III, iv, f. 37v). Ciruelo's observation was part of a broader complaint that the ignorant did not appropriately value textual, as opposed to oral, communication and could not differentiate between profitable and useless texts. Though Ciruelo considered many amulets to be inventions of the devil, those that did contain solely holy text were less objectionable, but even these were not to be worn. Instead, they were to be read like pages from a book (Ciruelo III, iv, f. 39r).[11] Finding a literal meaning in an amulet's text was the preferred method of use, as opposed to its employment as a tenuous metonym of the source text or its explicit employment as a good luck charm.

It is nevertheless apparent that in some religious practices, such as the use of a mezuzah, material text does not always require reading, activation through reading, or even a conscious acknowledgement of the content of the text in order to have meaning. The user did not necessarily uncover the meaning through hermeneutics at all if hermeneutics can be understood, as Richard Holub writes, "as bringing to understanding of something obscure or foreign, the translation of the unfamiliar into a comprehensible form" (255). For instance, the mezuzah was used personally, as

[11] The earliest extant edition of Pedro Ciruelo's treatise was published in Salamanca by Pedro de Castro, 1538. I cite from Jesús Oscár Flaquer's facsimile of the 1541 edition.

an amulet, despite Maimonides's instructions to the contrary.[12] Some texts, while they had meaning for those who knew about their presence, could not be read every time they were encountered or even read at all for practical reasons. For example, the process of genizah, or the storage of worn Hebrew and sometimes other documents, protected both the text from profanation and the public from profane texts. These texts would only leave the genizah (a word that came to refer both to the process and the room that held the discarded texts) to be relocated to a space of equal or greater inaccessibility, such as underground; they were disused as text, but that text still had some meaning, even if it stemmed only from the language in which it was written and even though those particular copies or partial copies of texts were no longer considered appropriate reading material.[13] Similarly, in a legal context, Ana Gómez-Bravo has noted that books were sworn upon but not read (79). The value afforded to the materiality of these manuscript texts was different and potentially greater than that conferred on their contents. Finally, there is the curious case of folios from two medieval Qur'ans, as well as clearly intentional inscriptions found on the rafters of Pedro IV of Aragon's hall in the Aljafería palace in Zaragoza. The function of the paper and parchment texts would seem to have been one of protection or good luck, with the text functioning as a talisman whose power was generated and sustained by the knowledge of its presence and a general knowledge of its text, as opposed to the reading of its text.[14]

Though the above examples are diverse, in all cases, the text holds meaning that is not fully actualized through reading. Though the role of reading in explicitly magic text in the early modern period was not always clear, theologians such as Ciruelo attempted to make it so. Ciruelo wrote that there was a balance to be struck between ensuring that the sacred text of an amulet was accurate and executing a careful reading of that text on the one hand and an overindulgence and excessively profound belief in the text on the other (III, ii, f. 30). Too much emphasis on certain words was perilous, and the amount of belief a user instilled in an amulet determined its threat to religious orthodoxy. He goes as far as to affirm the arbitrary nature of signs in order to refute the notion that an effect that an amulet might have has nothing to do with the possibility that the words possess an inherent value or power:

> Pues el sonido dela voz que se forma en aquel ayre ninguna virtud natural tiene: porque si la voz no significa cosa alguna: claro es que no tiene virtud alguna. Iten, la significacion de la voz algo significam no le conuiene por su naturaleza, sino por voluntad de los hombres que se la quieron dar, queda luego que la sanidad que se causa por el dicho ensalmo no viene por curso natural. (III, iii, 32v)

[12] As Maimonides writes in the *Mishneh Torah* (1170–1180), it is critical that the mezuzah be prepared and used correctly; certainly, it is not to be modified and used as an amulet for personal gain:

> It is a universal custom to write the word *Shad-dai* (Almighty) on the other side of the mezuzah, opposite the blank space between the two sections. As this word is written on the outside, the practice is unobjectionable. Those, however, who write names of angels, holy names, a Biblical text, or inscriptions — usually on seals within the mezuzah — are among those who have no portion in the world to come. For these fools not only fail to fulfill the commandment, but treat an important precept that expresses the Unity of God, the love of Him, and His worship, as if it were an amulet to promote their own personal interests; for, according to their foolish minds, the mezuzah is something that will secure for them advantage in the vanities of the world. (5.4 94–95)

On the mezuzah as amulet in medieval Spain, specifically in the Zohar, see Yisraeli.

[13] On the burial of disused text, see Reif 12 and Peter Cole and Adina Hoffman 13.

[14] On the discovery of the Qur'an folios, see Cervera Fras.

Ciruelo and other Renaissance thinkers, such as Francisco de Vitoria (ca. 1483–1546), Benito Pereira (1536–1610), and Martín Del Río (1551–1608), made a distinction between beneficial, licit magic, which drew on both supernatural and natural phenomena — but that did not challenge the oneness of God — and illicit magic, which aimed to cause harm and relied on demonic forces.[15] Magic was also divided according to its causes. Del Rio proposed that magic be classified based on the means by which the magic worked (including natural, artificial, and diabolical causes), or its end goal (final cause). Intention, specifically whether the magic had good or maleficent intent and whether or not it drew on lawful methods, was key in typologies of magic. The innate qualities of things, human agency, and the malice of evil spirits also impacted the status of various magic texts or specific occurrences of magic. In demonic magic, for instance, the person conducting the magic did not need any particular skill or education but rather relied on the power of the demon, who, in turn, as Waddell notes, was dangerous because it did not have human proclivities towards conscience, knowledge, and ingenuity (34). In all cases, typologies like these suggest a relationship other than that of text and reader that can be aptly summarized in Del Rio's definition of magic as an art or faculty whereby strange wonders can be produced by means of natural powers of creation that cannot be grasped by common understanding: "Ut sit ars seu facultas, vi creata, et non supernaturali, qusedam mira et insolita efficiens, quorum ratio sensum et communem hominum captum supera" (I, ii, 13). It was through atypical uses of material text that users attempted to produce these strange wonders.

Unintelligibility, meaning, and reading in grimoires and notebooks of magic

Despite the partial acceptance of certain types and uses of magic on the part of Christian theologians such as Ciruelo and the fact that there were editions of well-known grimoires published in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the presence and prohibitions of the Inquisition stunted the growth of a robust industry of printed grimoires.[16] The Inquisition's prohibition of works on magic, first in the Toledo and Valladolid Indexes in 1551 and again in Valladolid's of 1559, instead fostered the creation and clandestine circulation of handwritten books of magic. Most extant grimoires are fragmentary manuscript copies that passed through the hands of the Inquisition, and as Morales Estéves notes, drawing on Martín Soto and Pedraza García, many of these manuscripts were recreations of codices from France, which were themselves copies of still other grimoires (Martín Soto 108-109; Pedraza 2007, 66-68). Apart from the threat of the Inquisition, however, one reason why grimoires went unprinted was due to the belief in the power of the handwritten word (Tausiet 484; Morales Estévez). For a magician's magic to be most successful, he needed a handwritten textbook, in his own hand if possible, and adapted to his particular needs. It is for this reason that despite common elements, including recipes for casting spells and creating talismans, there is a significant amount of variation among manuscript copies of ubiquitous Iberian grimoires, such as the late medieval *Clavícula de Salomón* (*Clavícula*) and the *Libro de san Cipriano* or *Ciprianillo*, the latter being attributed to St. Cyprian of Antioch. This was so true that some scholars argue that there were as many different grimoires as users, particularly in the case of the *Ciprianillo*. Barreiro and others have argued that there is no cohesive copy of that text until 1650 (Barreiro 122). Similarly, some texts that were supposed to be copies of the *Clavícula* could barely be recognized as such, and in fact, the word clavícula became a general term for books of magic. The versions and varieties of the *Clavícula* were united in their attribution of a wide range of magic to Solomon and in their instructions on how to summon demons and bind them, but some versions distinguished themselves by claiming to possess

[15] See, for instance, Ciruelo II, I, f. 17v, and Del Rio lib. I, proœem, 1.
[16] See Mellado 305.

previously unknown information that Solomon had recorded in life and that was discovered upon his death and burial.

The diversity of texts functioning as copies of the *Clavícula* and the *Cipriano* was also reflected in the presence of more informal books of magic, which could contain both high and popular magic and both black and natural magic. These same manuscripts could include text composed or quoted in Latin, the vernacular, and a host of primarily Hebrew invocations, with some of this magic being unknown to but not necessarily unusable by its owner (Morales Estévez 537). The library of Amador de Velasco y Mañueco of Toledo, who was imprisoned by the Inquisition in 1576 (process in AHN Inquisition 97/8), contained books of religion and science, including texts of Arabic and Venetian astrology, works by Aristotle, books on nature and human anatomy, and so forth. It also, however, held one book that Velasco Mañueco had compiled himself. This book was composed of quires of magic formulas for problems ranging from the need to ward off wolves to the desire to secure the attentions of a man or woman to how to achieve sufficient speed in order to fly to how to have a successful hunt, all indexed by Amador de Velasco Mañueco himself. During his Inquisition process, described in the "Halle manuscript," Universitätsbibliothek Halle Yc 20º (1), he is accused of aiming to obtain information in other ways, specifically of asking someone to teach him how to become invisible and, if it were possible, to cover 300 leagues in a single night without being detected (Sierra 241-242). The Florentine merchant Pedro Bernardi was also tried by the Inquisition, in Zaragoza in 1509. He too possessed a magic compilation, but it was one that he had stolen after having been denied his request to borrow it. Bernardi notes that this book's handwriting is small and illegible both ("muy ruynmente scripto"), which Bernardi attributes to his ignorance of Latin, but the Inquisition process suggests that his difficulties may have extended other elements because it reports that Bernardi mentions names and symbols that he was unable to comprehend: "había ciertas figuras con ciertos nombres en aquellas escriptas de manera que no lo pudo entender este respondiente" (Archivo Histórico Provincial de Zaragoza Inquisición ES/AHPZ - J/00020/0018, cited in Pedraza 1993, 152).

Still another notebook that could be used in seeking immediate, specific results was Jaime Manobel's *Dietario mágico*, which had multiple uses in addition to magic compilation, including as a leger.[17] Manobel was a necromancing cleric and swindler born in 1572 in Huesca who was detained and imprisoned by the Inquisition in 1590. His book is some 40 leaves. Its cover bears no title, and its interior covers contain printed images of Christ on the cross, St. John, and Mary Magdalene. Manobel's *Dietario* reflects two main areas in which he hoped magic would have an effect: to cure the sick and to facilitate and mediate relationships between men and women. Manobel offers prescriptions for treating chaffing, softening ulcers, combating lice, curing hemorrhoids, and more, as well as pure magic, including instructions for invoking the devil, two recipes that make a woman love a man, another such recipe to ensure that the female friends of the clerics do not leave the church, and a demonic invocation to open doors and take other actions, which requires the use of animal or human blood. His compilation also includes astrology, including an astrological wheel but without the accompanying questions (25r); physiognomy; and a text on the meaning of "bienquerer," which demonstrates how magic can be used to bring about something virtuous, rather than something simply practical, such as good health, or to produce perform something maleficent upon the magician touching the inscribed material text to his body or clothing ("y basta que lo toques en la carne o en la rropa que trae uestida") (5r). Consistent with the mixing of virtue and vice, and religion and magic, however, on the reverse side of the same folio in which the instructions regarding bienquerer are written, there is a table for invoking the devil that contains letters, symbols, and very recognizable words ("amor" and "satan"), followed

[17] Manobel's notebook (AHN, Inquisición 90, exp. 6) is available in its entirety through the Portal de Archivos Españoles, http://pares.mcu.es/. Accessed 10 January 2018.

by a recipe for placing what one desires inside a stone (6r). Magic notebooks such as Bernardi's and Manobel's could also contain high magic, which could be incomprehensible even to the person who copied it. Even if the user could not comprehend the magic or put it into practice, it was still usable as a badge of prestige or a prop for a performance, as Morales Estévez notes (553).

The Meaning of Reading: the magic texts of the Moriscos

The wholly prohibited texts contained in Morisco manuscripts undeniably had value for their users, but as in the case of the notebooks discussed above, the importance of those texts was derived less from the originality of their content than from the appropriateness of their selection and arrangement for a particular population or purpose. The majority of the some 200 extant Morisco manuscripts are miscellanies with varying degrees of thematic coherence, containing textual fragments of longer work, most particularly translations of works in Arabic, including legends of pre-Islamic and Islamic prophets and eschatological texts, as well as unintentionally incomplete texts. The codices often mixed texts destined for private use, such as letters, bills, and ephemerides, with those intended for use by the Morisco public.[18]

One clear thread in the manuscripts of the Moriscos is that many contain text from the Qur'an. Living centuries after the first known uses of Qur'anic fragments in a magical manner (after the tenth century), the Moriscos drew heavily on Qur'anic material. They used Qur'anic text in divination, potions, talismans, aromatic substances, and spells. The Qur'an's powers were unlocked through the use of verses written on paper, parchment, cloth, or even the body as talismans and through the simple reading of such verses. The power of the Qur'an was also realized in a more internal fashion through the mixture of rose water and saffron and the wetting and drinking of scraps containing religious formulas. The Qur'an was thus often the foundation of Morisco magic and usually inseparable from magic, but both the licit and illicit magic employed by the Moriscos could include semi-Quranic and extra-Qur'anic phenomena, such as the seal of Solomon and a five-pointed star, as well as phenomena of seven, including the seven consonants that do not appear in the first surah of the Qur'an, seven of the names of Allah (corresponding to the consonants noted above), the seven angels, the seven days of the week, and the seven planets.[19] Among the manuscripts of the Moriscos, there is also evidence of instances of what could be called "pure magic," in which these symbols could be coupled with pseudo-Kufic, inscribed in squares, and at times, inserted in tubes and buried underground or under a floor to effect or prevent a certain action or happening, such as avoiding the destruction of the love between two people or manipulating the characteristics of stones (López Baralt 261-276).

The existence of cases of "pure magic" in both grimoires that circulated among Christians and in Morisco manuscripts containing texts with magic intent shows that reading was not necessarily simply a process of uttering or reading handwritten words and extracting a meaning that could be applied and understood in the world at large. Rather, it was a process that involved a significant belief and hope in a force in addition to God or even at odds with the divine. The possibility for the creation and realization of meaning was not derived from textual semantics, at least not from textual semantics that could be understood apart from the occult world. As with the notebooks mentioned above, text was, at times, unintelligible or lacking in literal meaning for its Morisco users and even for the preparer of the text. López Baralt notes a spell in the work that Labarta has edited as the *Libro de dichos maravillosos* (Junta XXII, M-CCHS RES RESC/22, early sixteenth century) of Biblioteca Tomás Navarro Tomás (CCHS-CSIC), hereafter *Dichos*, intended to control a storm. In this spell, the user must pronounce a series of magic words of

[18] On the category of Aljamiado literature, see Montaner.
[19] On the system of magic elements in *El libro de dichos maravillosos*, see Labarta 1993, (xxxii-xliii).

uncertain literal meaning or perhaps without literal meaning several times while performing a series of actions.[20] López Baralt writes that the words are vocalized in both extant manuscripts so that the storm conjurer or *tempestarius* can read them, even if he cannot understand them (279). Similarly, in their edition of one of the Morisco manuscripts uncovered in Ocaña in the 1960s, the *Misceláneo de Salomón*, Albarracín and Martínez Ruiz, following Robin Skelton, propose that certain illicit spells contain unintelligible words on purpose. These words may not be simply abbreviations or mnemonic devices but serve to intentionally awaken the intuition and analytic thought, as in other traditions of magic ("el objeto del ensalmo, del amuleto con dichas palabras escritas, es adormecer la inteligencia crítica consciente de tal modo que pueda obrar libremente el elemento intuitivo, y el 'mensaje' pueda ser transmitido, sin intervención del pensamiento consciente" (35-6)). Yet another way in which the meaning of words both readily intelligible and of indeterminable connotation was received was the inscription of words in saffron, musk, or camphor on paper, which was then placed in rain, rosewater, or much more arduously, water from the sacred well in Mecca; diluted; and then consumed either by being drunk or inhaled as a vapor (López Baralt 264).

Though some of the characters, figures, and words employed in spells and talismans lacked meaning apart from activities with an explicitly magical intent, it was nevertheless important to inscribe and communicate them properly. The desire to pen strings of characters together in a precise order did not necessarily bring with it, however, great concern for the literal meaning of the characters on the page, in the event that they possessed one. The material texts produced from recipes in works such as the *Fablamiento del Alcoran,* in which fragments or complete versions of Suras 2–72 are used to ease pain and cure illness, and in the *Dichos* can be considered distinct from amulets because they are produced via a specialized process that requires precision in terms of following instructions (Viladrich 189; Labarta 1982-1983, 167). For instance, in the *Dichos*, the instructions for seeing what one wants in a dream prescribe a series of rituals, actions, and affirmations that require accurate execution. After performing ablutions and dressing in clean clothing, users must turn to face the Qibla (toward Mecca), abstain from lying with women, and read verses from Suras 91, 92, 95, and 115 seven times each. The penultimate indication instructs the user to ask God to make what he or she wishes to see, as well as what God desires to manifest to the user, appear in a dream. The precision required to achieve the desired outcome includes the need to request concurrently what is actually desired and to affirm the endless wisdom of God, as underscored in the last instruction:

> Pues ello es que sí verá aquello en la noche primera; si no, verlo á en la segunda noche o en la cinquena o en la setena; y si no lo verá, pues ya se abrá olvidado alguna cosa de su leír. (5)

The type of reading required for a talisman such as the above to be effective does demand the accurate pronunciation of Qur'anic material but not necessarily deep reflection on it or the internalization of it, even if the material was very likely known to the user. The Qur'anic text is clearly meaningful to its Morisco users, but the principal generation of meaning in this case appears to be the correct performance of the series of ritual acts, not a deep reflection on the text. Similarly, in a section towards the end of the codex (479v-536v) of which the *Dichos* is a part, there are myriad talismans containing prayers and Qur'anic material in which reading is guided more by magical principals than intellectual ones. Starting on folio 518r, there is a lengthy text to be applied to a person upon burial. The text is to be placed under the deceased person's head while a text is

[20] The manuscript is available in its entirety through the The Manuscript@CSIC portal.

spoken to him or her. At the close of the section, there is a note that all living Muslims, both men and women, should learn the prayer, preferably by writing it down and reading it:

> Y quien no alcançará saberla leir o saberla de corraçón, escríbala en pergamino o papel, y póngala debaxo de su cabeça fuesa cuando morrá, que Dios no le menoscabará su gaulardón. (523v, 188)

In this case, while reading or memorizing the prayer seem to have been the preferred methods of committing it to memory, copying the prayer or presumably having it copied by another on parchment or paper and having the material text placed appropriately under the head upon death was sufficient. The fact that the prayer functions upon the death of a given user regardless of whether or not he or she could read or memorize it in life is telling. This suggests that reading, or at least direct reading, is not required to activate the apotropaic capabilities of the prayer. Rather, the prayer can be read by someone else who has a general knowledge of its content and a profound belief in its magical properties.

Conclusions

The magic treatises and the texts contained in Morisco manuscripts, both those centered on magic and those that were squarely religious, formed a part of the groups of manuscripts that circulated in a restricted or entirely clandestine manner in the age of print. The early modern unprinted texts examined here evince varieties of engagement and consumption that may not be captured in typical conceptualizations of medieval and early modern manuscript reading practices. In the case of the magic texts examined here, the manuscript book appears in contexts in which the text is acknowledged, albeit sometimes in an ambiguous way, but is a locus of activity that may have little or nothing to do with reading. A swindler out to make money did not necessarily need a magic book that had actually previously yielded magic or contained something that looked like magic. Nor did he necessarily need a copy of a book that was accepted as a legitimate copy of a given magic text in his time. He simply required one that looked convincing enough to deceive his credulous, paying patrons. Pedraza writes:

> El "primo" [customer] queda así sujeto a la voluntad del pícaro timador, lo que en efecto es una buena forma de intervenir en las voluntades ajenas, aunque alejada de las artes mágicas. De hecho, ni siquiera el libro necesita ser original o verdadero, cualquier libro con invocaciones inventadas sirve para este fin. Una vez esquilmada la fortuna del timado, y recuperado el libro, se actúa en otro lugar contra otro individuo de la misma manera. En definitiva, se trata de la actuación de un pícaro. (72)

Here, the physical book and the visual effect of the text on the folio, seen from afar, have a value greater than the book's content. In this regard, it is not only that the book was equal to its content, as in the legal use discussed by Gómez-Bravo, in which books were sworn upon, but also that the physical appearance of the text and the mere fact of its inclusion in a book were more important than the book's content.

In the case of the swindler, the manuscript text is a prop that if anything, discourages any intellectual engagement on the part of the *primo*, much less any sort of interpretation. One case that shows another kind of engagement but actually involves a sort of reading is books of fates, or *Libros de suertes*. As Ciruelo notes, sortilege could take many forms, all of them bad in the eyes of God:

> La vii y postrera arte devinatoria se llama sortiaria; quiere dezir 'que adevina por las suertes lo que ha de ser.' Estas suertes se echan en muchas maneras: o con dados, o con cartas de naipes, o con cédulas escritas. Y desta manera ay un libro que llaman de las suertes, donde se traen reyes y prophetas que digan por escripto las cosas que a cada uno le han de acaescer. Otros hazen las suertes por los psalmos del psalterio; otros, con un cedaço y tiseras, adevinan quién hurtó la cosa perdida o dónde está escondida; y otros hazen otras liviandades de tantas maneras que no se podrían contar. Y todas ellas pueden llamarse suertes y quien las usa peca mortalmente porque con ellas sirve al diablo y se aparta de Dios, y quiebra el voto de la religión christiana que hizo en el baptismo, porque haze pacto secreto con el diablo, enemigo de dios y de los christianos, siervos de Dios. (II, iv, 24v)

As Alonso Guardo notes, the same title could be applied to different texts, such as grimoires like the *Clavícula* that circulated among Christians (522). In bibliomancy, books, including the Bible, were opened to pages at random, and the first paragraph or a paragraph that caught the eye of the magician was interpreted so as to provide an appropriate response to a given problem. Reading was not guided by a method of interpretation that necessarily imagines, however implicitly, the author's intention but by one in which the only relevant intentions are those of the magician and those he aims to affect. *Libros de suertes* were based on chance, allowing the reader to ask a question about the future and find a pre-prepared answer in the book, with some of these books containing pre-formulated questions, such as "si se hará rico" or, more generally, "si será lo que quieres." Others enabled the user to ask any question, but he or she would receive more ambiguous answers. Some of these answers were often in a form that skirted the rational, even if the intent of the question and the answer were quintessentially rational, such as earning money. Guardo mentions a Morisco "open" *Libro de suertes* edited by Kobbervig and available in two versions in which users predict the future by throwing a square stick inscribed with four letters of the Arabic alphabet (alif, ba, gim, dal), numbers, or other marks three times (Kobbervig 23). The combination that results from the three tosses is then mapped to a particular answer, which could be supported with verses of the Qur'an (Guardo 535). In the *Libros de suertes*, though the user seeks a specific outcome, the path to that outcome is dictated by chance rather than one's ability to read deeply.

The content of the unprinted texts studied here lends itself to modes of production and consumption that differ from the uses typically ascribed to manuscripts and printed books. Manuscript magic texts, while circulating in printed form in some cases, were often personalized by the owner of the manuscript. At the same time, they could serve an entirely impersonal purpose, acting as props or including magic unknown to their owners or other users. Personalization could, in turn, limit the understanding of the manuscript to the creator of the manuscript text or to a group similar to the creator of the manuscript. Reading to acquire knowledge and seek answers hidden in the text, whether critically or cursorily, distantly or closely, is what we typically do with text, but there are other possibilities. The practices and attitudes examined here, both those that are readily recognizable as reading and those that are not, are uses of manuscript text. They should be considered when using the term "manuscript culture," even if they are eliminated in the process of defining manuscript culture for a particular context. These uses examined here are not limited to early modern manuscripts. Rather, these manuscripts take on greater meaning, at least for this author, because they correspond to an era in which printed books are so extensively studied, especially by scholars working in Renaissance English, though less rational experiences with material texts are often neglected. Here, I have aimed to show forms of engagements that be considered varieties of reading, as well as uses that involve no reading at all. In both cases, these

unprinted texts remind us just how much these physical books and their material text could move and inspire their users.

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