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**Fuchs, Barbara, Larissa Brewer-García, and Aaron J. Ilika, eds.  
and trans. “The Abencerraje” and “Ozmín and Daraja”: Two  
Sixteenth-Century Novellas from Spain**

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Spanish influence. By labelling this obsession as Foucauldian Orientalism, Fuchs deftly illustrates that the search for the hand of the bard is evidence of the tenuous relationship English literary history has with its Spanish debt. The search for Shakespeare thus takes the form of a desperate attempt to supplant the evidence of Spain within English letters.

*The Poetics of Piracy* is a welcome addition to a growing body of work that emphasizes the cultural relationships of imperial Spain with other European nations. Fuchs's work should come as a rallying call to specialists and non-specialists alike to examine cultural borrowings and to re-evaluate the relevant literary traditions. If this book is short it is because it needs to be so; a truly systematic treatment of literary appropriation is not conceivable in a single volume. Fuchs's work should be the springboard for the rest of us to begin our own researches into transnational cultural transference.

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**Fuchs, Barbara, Larissa Brewer-García, and Aaron J. Ilika, eds. and trans.**  
***“The Abencerraje” and “Ozmín and Daraja”: Two Sixteenth-Century Novellas from Spain.***

Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014. Pp. x, 139. ISBN 978-0-8122-4608-7 (hardcover) \$39.95.

This book offers a combination of a critical study and a very careful translation into English of two sixteenth-century Moorish novellas from Spain: *The Abencerraje*, anonymous text, and *Ozmín and Daraja*, an intercalated story from *Guzmán de Alfarache* by Mateo Aleman.

The book presents these two novellas as part of the traditional idealized relationship between Moors and Jews. These texts circulated extensively throughout Europe during early modern times; they influenced the expansion of European Orientalism while permanently connecting Spain to its Moorish traditions. According to the study, the two novellas “may have helped popularize the notion of an exotic Spain abroad, however, within Spain they played a very different role, insisting on the quotidian reality of Moors and Moorishness and on their indisputable place in the Spanish imaginary as in its society” (8).

The components of this book comprise a chronology, an introduction, a translation of the novellas, additional material, and a bibliography. The brief historical chronology spans from 711 to 1615 and focuses on the relationship between Christians and Muslims and the Christians' conquest of the Iberian Peninsula. Considering that the plots of *The Abencerraje* and *Ozmín and Daraja* take place between 1484 and 1489, but that the books were not published until 1561 and 1599 respectively, the historical context is very useful for readers. The introduction presents a critical study based on Fuchs's previous academic works rather than the broad exploration that is common in this type of publication. The reader will find, however, a very clear and concise argument that focuses on *maurophilia* and the Moors in Spain. In general terms, the author addresses the idealization that existed in the relationship between Moors and Christians despite the episodes of persecution that provide a frame for the two stories. The positive result of such admiration is a rich and unique Spanish culture that is also present in the maurophile novellas. The purpose of this argument is to contextualize both texts within the meaning of the Moorish novel and their historical moment. To provide context, the study refers to the Granada War (1482–92) because it was the historical event that both stories narrate. The texts were actually written after the war; the study argues that the coexistence ended because the Crown forced all Granada's Muslims to convert to Catholicism. In fact, with the Catholic Counter-Reformation, the meaning of Christianity changed; to gain privileges, it was necessary for individuals to prove the purity of their blood. The Crown implemented repressive legislation regarding Moorish culture; in 1568, this legislation prompted an uprising in Granada known as the War of Alpujarras.

The consequences were devastating for the Moriscos, who were enslaved or exiled from Granada. When *Ozmín and Daraja* was written, the Moriscos had suffered tremendous repression for decades. The novella, however, portrays a world one hundred years earlier, when the Moors, like the story's protagonists, were admired. The analysis indicates that the constant foregrounding of the fascination with Moors "is one of the signal ideological interventions of this maurophile text and [is] particularly striking in contrast to the heightened anti-Morisco rhetoric of the late sixteenth century" (7). According to this study, the "extraordinary fate of Muslims and Moriscos in the loaded century between the fall of Granada and the final expulsion makes maurophilia a particularly trenchant genre" (8). These texts, however, legitimize the Moor and

tacitly connect their amiable protagonists to the Moriscos whom readers might encounter in their own era. In general terms, this examination represents a contribution to maurophilia literary studies. It not only offers historical and recent contributions but also provides an original addition that complements Fuchs's previous publications.

In addition to its critical overview, this book briefly summarizes both stories, addresses the issue of authorship, and mentions contemporary publications and the meaning, influence, and first translations of the texts. We learn, too, that the criteria for the novellas' translation are based on standard critical publications such as Francisco López Estrada's first edition of *The Abencerraje* (1980) and José María Micó's edition of Aleman's *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1997). To complement the recent sources, Bartholomew Yong's early modern translation of *The Abencerraje* (1598) and James Mabbe's translation of *Ozmín and Daraja* (1622) were also consulted.

After the presentation of a very careful translation into English of both texts, additional and very valuable material for future researchers and students is provided. This material has also been translated into English and contains examples of maurophile literature related to the novellas. In particular, the supplementary material includes Ginés Pérez de Hita's *Civil Wars of Granada* and some official documents that describe the legal actions of Moriscos and Muslims from 1492 to 1614. We are told that the documents provide an important context for the texts "as they suggest the strength of the anti-Muslim and anti-Morisco animus, against which the texts offer their idealized protagonists" (111). The book's bibliography is very useful, unlike the notes, which are insufficient. Given that this is a critical edition, one expects more footnotes to clarify concepts, vocabulary, and historical situations.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight the importance of this book. It deserves recognition as the first modern translation and, as such, is an invaluable contribution to future critical studies—making the novellas accessible to new readers—and a powerful tool for teaching at the university level.

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