

This article was published in *Queer Iberia*, ed. Gregory Hutcheson and Josiah Blackmore, Duke University Press, 1999, pp. 250-74.

THE FOLLOWING WORDS ARE TO CHECK THAT DIACRITICS ARE PRINTED  
CORRECTLY DELETE AFTER PROOFS

Ángel (accented capital A)

hašīš (should be inverted circumflex over s's and macron over i)

Šejj (should be an inverted circumflex over capital S)

`*Abd Allāh* (Should be a open single quote; WP 7 character 2,8), and macron over a. If the typesetter can produce the symbol used for transliteration of the ayn (a sort of superscript, serifless “c”), even better. Note that the open single quote standing for the ayn is found only before an “a” and in the word “Sa`īd.” There is only one instance of ` before “a” where it is not ayn: that is the string “`amor”.

Be sure that the macron prints correctly over an italic letter.

Muḥammad (should be a dot under the “h”). Note that in *ḥubb* the dot needs to come in the right place even though the word is in italics.

`*Abdūm* same character as with Abd Allah, plus macron over u.

Mu'tamid (this is a hamza before the t; WP 7 character 2,7; here I've used WP 5.1 character 1,9 to distinguish it from the single close quote or apostrophe). If the typesetter has the transliteration character, better: it should be sort of a serifless reverse c, superscript.

# Juan Ruiz's Heterosexual "Good Love"<sup>1</sup>

Daniel Eisenberg

To try things out is not so bad;  
Knowing good and evil, one can choose the best (76)  
[Provar omne las cosas non es por end peor,  
e saber bien e mal, e usar lo mejor.]<sup>2</sup>

The topic of this article is the meaning of the most canonical work from the rich Spanish corpus of erotic and sexological literature, the work that is customarily dished out, in small doses, to students of Spanish literature. The topic of the *Libro de buen amor* [*Book of Good Love*] is sex. Although the word used is "love," at the time it was a synonym for sex, a term that did not exist in the sense in which it is most often used today. Love and sex were not clearly distinguished. The *Libro de buen amor* teaches men how to seduce women, how to gain access to their beds, and how to identify the most desirable candidates. It also describes seductions of women, seductions by women, and the consequences of inattention to women's great sexual

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<sup>1</sup>I would like to express my appreciation to Francisco Márquez Villanueva, Steven Kirby, John Dagenais, and José Antonio Cerezo for their comments on drafts of this article, and the readers and editors of this volume for suggestions. An earlier version was delivered in Spanish at the *Primer Coloquio de Erótica Hispana*, Montilla, Spain, 1993, and prior to that at the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, 28 April 1989. It appeared in Spanish as "El buen amor heterosexual de Juan Ruiz," in *Los territorios literarios de la historia del placer. I Coloquio de Erótica Hispana*. Edición de José Antonio Cerezo, Daniel Eisenberg, Víctor Infantes. Madrid: Libertarias, 1996 [recd. 1997]. 49-69.

<sup>2</sup>Translations from the Spanish are my own, although I have had at hand and recommend the translation of Daly, and have taken from it the translation of the stanza on Aristotle. The text of the *Libro de buen amor* used is that of Joset, noting his "Correcciones de urgencia" (*Nuevas investigaciones* 148-50). There is controversy concerning the text of the *Libro de buen amor*; I have excluded from my discussion those sections whose authenticity has been called into question by modern scholars, particularly the prologue and the framing verses.

desire (see Braidotti).

As often happens with erotic literature, the *Libro de buen amor* has been censored. It is the oldest example of censorship in Hispanic literature of which I am aware. The pages containing the consummation of the protagonist's pursuit of Doña Endrina were torn out many years ago, and from more than one manuscript. Also, and it is again a unique case in Hispanic literature, there are entire episodes missing: love, satirical (*cazursos*), and sexual (*de burlas*) songs alluded to in the surviving text but missing from all the manuscripts (see Walsh). It is possible that censorship was also a factor in their disappearance.

The first publication of the work, in the 18th century, was controversial (Buchanan 173). The editor, the scholar Tomás Antonio Sánchez, mutilated it because he found it morally offensive.<sup>3</sup> He at least marked his deletions with ellipses, and therefore his edition is a handy guide to the sexual passages of the work.

Yet we should not congratulate ourselves for our alleged superiority over these censors of previous centuries. The work is still censored in the books in which the largest number of readers meet it: in undergraduate anthologies. That the small woman provides comfort ("solaz," 1609) in bed is not found in *Five Centuries of Spanish Literature* of Barrett, nor in *Representative Spanish Authors* of Pattison and Bleznick, nor in the *Antología general de la literatura española* of Ángel and Amalia del Río. In the *Introducción a la literatura española* of Peñuelas and Wilson this strophe is suppressed, and in addition another (1616), which calls the small woman "terrenal paraíso" [earthly paradise] and notes that she is "mejor es en la prueba que en la salutación" [better in the proof than in the salutation]. They are also missing in *España en su literatura* of Adams and Keller, in its newly revised edition of 1991. Some college professors and students, at least in the United States, are not up to reading about women good in bed.

Although the *Libro de buen amor* deals with sex, the interpretation of the work is problematical, subject of the most divergent opinions. What is Juan Ruiz's perspective on the

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<sup>3</sup>Castro 395. In *Cambio 16*, 25 January 1993, p. 84, we find that it was Sánchez himself who tore the pages from the manuscripts of the work.

sexual acts he portrays? Why is he providing sex education? How is this instruction to be reconciled with his attitude toward the Virgin Mary, whom he calls “comienço e raíz...de todo bien” (19a) [beginning and root of all good]? In short, what, for him, *is* good love?

The *Libro de buen amor* loudly proclaims that it is a didactic work. The author calls it a “libro de testo” (1631) [textbook]. Nevertheless, it is also a book that insists on its correct interpretation. It is an instrument, and its lesson depends on how it is played (70ab). At the same time, its lessons are hidden (68a); one has to understand them and arrive at the sense of the work (68c), says Juan Ruiz. The reader has the responsibility of discovering the work’s meaning, which according to the author is hidden.

Juan Ruiz’s hidden meaning has yet to be completely discovered. Considering his overt references to the work’s meaning and lessons, our current chaos about its interpretation, the critics’ confusion, is surprising. Responses have taken two paths. First, some propose that Juan Ruiz sought ambiguity, that he did not have a clear message.<sup>4</sup> In its more extreme form it is alleged that he did not know what he wanted to say, or that he intended to confuse the reader, such confusion being supposedly healthy and modern. But, as with Cervantes’s alleged ambiguity, we must keep the cultural context of these authors in mind. Ambiguity was no virtue in the 14th century, nor in the 17th. No treatise taught ambiguity, nor was it praised or even discussed. (According to Corominas, the term is first documented in Spanish in the 16th century.) The wise author had something to say to his readers. He might say it poorly, but not from a desire to deceive or mislead. Yet sometimes, with the passage of years and then centuries, the context is lost and the message becomes obscure.

The second answer to the problem of Juan Ruiz’s sexual message turns to the debate over clerical celibacy. According to Zahareas, “the very composition of the poem is related to the socio-religious situation of celibacy and concubinage” (Zahareas 79). A small digression: why is

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<sup>4</sup>“The Archpriest does not offer a moral *dictum* or *sentençia* to his reader because such reductiveness would not be effective, authentic, or apposite for his purpose and world view. What he chooses to do instead is to dramatize—both in style and theme—the problematic complexity of human experience and of reality” (Seidenspinner-Núñez 259).

clerical celibacy still treated as an ideal? That Spanish priests, in the Middle Ages or later, enjoyed female sexual partners and opposed clerical celibacy with all their strength seems to me much to their credit.<sup>5</sup> If there was “laxity” among the Spanish clergy, all the better, and no thanks to Cardinal Cisneros for suppressing it. One of several big mistakes from a great cultural criminal, as I have discussed elsewhere (“Cisneros”). Of course Queen Isabel did not put up the slightest resistance to her confessor Cisneros’ innovations.

Returning to our topic, to take the *Libro de buen amor* as an attack on clerical celibacy is unacceptable. The work is not directed to Juan Ruiz’s superiors in the Catholic church. It is less a defense of women than a defense of pleasure. It gives instruction on seduction, and deals especially with the love of nuns. Nuns, the Archpriest informs us, “tienen a sus amigos viciosos” (1333b) [keep their boyfriends in vices]. I know of no other even potential combination of an attack on clerical celibacy with advice for that typically Spanish figure, the *galán de monjas* [suitor of nuns].

Juan Ruiz is indeed opposed to celibacy, of both nuns and priests. He fears its evil consequences. I believe that scholars, such as Dagenais, are correct when they search outside the text for the keys to its interpretation. I did the same with *Don Quijote (Interpretación)*.

As my title implies, I wish to propose a new meaning for Juan Ruiz’s enigmatic “good love.” My source is not new instances of medieval Spanish texts in which these words appear; many of these have already been gathered without producing a solution.<sup>6</sup> What I have to offer is a new interpretation of the present texts. In short, my thesis is that Juan Ruiz’s “loco amor” [mad love] is not love of women, opposed to “good love” for God, since this explanation leaves the text full of mysteries and contradictions. The situation is more complex. I wish to suggest that the love that is really mad, for Juan Ruiz, is the love of young men. In medieval Spain, love among

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<sup>5</sup>For an introduction to the topic, see Eslava 105-08, who quotes on 106 the observation: “the Spanish cleric was more of a skirt-chaser [*mujeriego*] than his European colleagues.” The same position is found in Linehan, *Spanish Church* 29-30 and 52. I would like to express my appreciation to Francisco Márquez Villanueva for calling my attention to this book.

<sup>6</sup>For the bibliography on these collections, along with other new examples, see Joset 129-47; also Álvarez and Márquez.

males was frequently associated with a lack of Christian patriotism, even a secret sympathy for Islam, a disposition for treason.

Between the two extremes—the loves of God and of young men—, in the central, ambiguous position, is woman. In the precise and often repeated term of Juan Ruiz, it is the “dueña” [duenna], the woman who was not a virgin. The duenna is the correct woman, the available woman: neither virgin nor married.

If Juan Ruiz gives sex education, which he describes as a “saber sin pecado” (15c) [science without sin], it is to avoid a great sin. “Entiende bien mi libro e avrás dueña garrida” (64d) [understand well my book, and you’ll get a pretty duenna].

My evidence for this thesis is drawn from the sexual environment in which an Archpriest of Hita would have lived. Among other things I wish to show that the history of sexual behavior, which seemingly still causes discomfort in some quarters, can help us to understand a Spanish classic.

That there was much homosexual activity in medieval Iberia is beyond any doubt, although it is seldom discussed. There is no general study of the topic.<sup>7</sup> In the Christian kingdoms of the north, for which little evidence of homosexual love is known before the 15th century, such homosexual activity as there was must have been furtive. In Muslim Spain, called al-Andalus, the situation was quite the reverse. Although homosexual acts were prohibited, the prohibitions were never enforced nor was there even a pretense of doing so. The culture was so tolerant and hedonistic that I would not be surprised to see it resurrected as a potential model for us today. Nowhere in the Islamic world have there been, to my knowledge, more sensual and tolerant periods.<sup>8</sup> Its acceptance of pederastic love, and hashish as well, has yet to be imitated.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>“Sodomy was common in Muslim Spain” (Arié 327). Some information can be found in Arjona. Also see Contintene; Eisenberg, “Granada,” “Homosexuality,” “Slavery,” and “Spain.” On medieval Islamic homosexuality in general, see Pellat, “*Djins*” [Sex] and “*Liwāt*” [Homosexuality]. The unsigned article on homosexuality, attributed previously to John Boswell (Dynes 157), is attributed to Pellat and pointedly annotated by Schmitt in his reprint.

<sup>8</sup>See Norman Daniel, especially 141 and 321.

<sup>9</sup>See Valdés, Arié 326, and Rosenthal.

Not only has the topic been little studied, the loss of source materials has been enormous. The period most relevant to Juan Ruiz—the Nasrid kingdom of 14th- and 15th-century Granada—is particularly obscure, thanks to the systematic destruction of its manuscripts by Cardenal Cisneros (Eisenberg, “Cisneros”). I am obliged to use information from earlier and subsequent periods.

During the Caliphate and *taifas* periods and to the best of our knowledge in Nasrid Granada, homosexuality was practiced by monarchs.<sup>10</sup> It was courtly love—from this, perhaps, the resistance to the theory of Islamic origin of the concept. We know that `Abd ar-Rahmān III, the wise bibliophile al-Hakam II, and `Abd Allāh de Granada preferred boys.<sup>11</sup> The kings al-Mu'tamid of Seville and Yūsuf III of Granada wrote pederastic poetry.<sup>12</sup> Muḥammad VI, king of Granada, was also given to pederasty (Arié 327). The woman who wanted to seduce had to dress

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<sup>10</sup>“The Andalusian chronicles have pointed out the tendency to pederasty (*ḥubb al-walad*) of the caliph al-Hakam II; according to them, the libertinism had spread after the disappearance of al-Manṣūr b. Abī `Āmir and in the period of the last Umayyads. At the beginning of the 11th century...Córdoba was full of libertines boasting of their vile deeds; sodomy was openly practiced. The *taifas* kings have often been criticized for having permitted such a spirit of disobedience and libertinism to develop on Andalusian soil. Possibly the division of Spain into small principalities and the weakness of authority worsened the moral corruption. However, one must note that the accusations of immorality against the Andalusian rulers come from later historians, paid by the Almoravids or the Almohads, who boasted, at the beginning, of their sober customs and moral purity. In reality, the *taifas* kings were just as given to pleasure as their predecessors or the Almoravid and Almohad governors that came after them” (Arié 326).

<sup>11</sup> `Abd ar-Rahmān III: the martyrdom of the boy Saint Pelagius, discussed below. Al-Hakam II: see the previous note. `Abd Allāh: *The Tibyān* 191-92, and p. 25 of the introduction. Tibi's translation, although based on the same unique manuscript, differs substantially from the less annotated translation of Lévi-Provençal and García Gómez, *El siglo XI en 1ª persona* 330-31. Tibi proposes and annotates many different readings, and the differences between the translations are impressive. The sentence that in Lévi-Provençal and García Gómez reads (in Spanish) “The king of Granada only wanted to amass riches, love beautiful women and invite epebes” (330), in Tibi reads: “The prince of Granada coveted money and was fond of good-looking boys and of their company as boon companions” (191). The sentence that in Lévi-Provençal and García Gómez reads: “Regarding my invitations to epebes to attend my parties, since a moderate use of wine was necessary—something for which God must have forgiven me—, why do you have to concern yourself with my drinks and my guests?” (331), in Tibi says: “As for taking boys as boon companions, they were not employed for wine-bibbing and caresses as this would have entailed the use of some wine from which God has turned me away” (192).

<sup>12</sup>On al-Mu'tamid, see Nykl 137. The poetry of Yūsuf III is mostly without translation into any European language. One example is found in Monroe, 372. An introduction to Yūsuf is provided by Moral.

as a boy.<sup>13</sup>

In all countries and periods, subjects imitate the practices of their rulers. Bouhdiba says in *Sexuality in Islam*, referring specifically to Córdoba, Baghdad and Kairwan:

The cities had in their suburbs or in the surrounding countryside highly frequented pleasure gardens, with open-air cabarets and cafés set up on the farms attached to Byzantine, Roman, or Persian castles, or even Christian monasteries. In the best viticultural traditions, the monks provided plenty of wine and pretty girls for the “joyous companions of sincerity,” the *fityāna sidqin* of which Abu Nawas<sup>14</sup> speaks. These taverns were places where many kinds of pleasure were served up without shame and without exclusion. Singers, dancers, gamblers, but also pleasure-seeking young fellows, homosexuals of both sexes, taught the art of pleasure, without let or hindrance, to a youth whom Islam had freed from any sense of shame or guilt.<sup>15</sup>

Many love poems addressed to youths have come down to us.<sup>16</sup> The *Poemas arabigoandaluces* of Emilio García Gómez were scandalous at the time of their publication, first in the *Revista de occidente* and then as a book, just before the libertarian Second Republic.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>“The second caliph of Córdoba, al-Hakam [II], had a well-stocked harem and, nevertheless, reached the age of forty-six without having had children; perhaps men interested him more than women. A Basque Christian slave succeeded in making him a father: she was very young, smart, and pretty, and she adopted a Baghdad custom: abandoning female garments, she dressed as a lad. The caliph from then on called her by the male name she had adopted: Chafar.” (Dufourcq 134-35).

<sup>14</sup>Sic. The more customary transcription is Abū Nuwās.

<sup>15</sup>Bouhdiba 131. Bouhdiba also points out that: “Homosexual relations were relatively encouraged by the Arabo-Muslim societies, to the detriment of intersexual relations” (Bouhdiba 200).

<sup>16</sup>There is a small anthology in the chapter “Perversión” (123-28) of the homophobic book of Sánchez-Albornoz. On this topic, see *Continente*, especially 16-18.

<sup>17</sup>Some information on the context and influence of this collection may be found in Anderson 18-19. There are three independent partial translations of this collection, by Lane, Franzen, and Middleton and Garza-Falcón.

Poems are dedicated to the cupbearer, the carpenter, etc.: love that crossed class lines.<sup>18</sup> The verses of Ibn Quzmān, also made available by García Gómez, describe an openly bisexual life style. There exists a third collection, *The Banners of the Champions*, also first translated by García Gómez.<sup>19</sup> Ibn Ḥazm of Córdoba's famous treatise on love, with the typically picturesque Arabic title *The Dove's Neck Ring*, contains many anecdotes about homosexual lovers.<sup>20</sup>

The following unpublished and untranslated Arabic manuscripts exist in the former royal library in the Escorial monastery: *Modesty Abandoned, and the First Fuzz on the Cheek; An Apology for the Love of the First Fuzz of the Cheek*, and *The Scholar's Garden and the Delight of the Wise Man*; together with others that can or must be heterosexual, such as *The Passion of He who Moans, and the Tear of He who Cries; The [Female] Slave Market; A Description of the Burning Lover; The Inlaid Girdle, on the Benefits of Sexual Intercourse*.<sup>21</sup> Again I must point out the richness of Hispanic erotology, even if we do not know the provenance of these texts: in no other library, Western or Islamic, are similar texts found. Their publication and translation would be worthy topics for these.

Finally, we have abundant evidence from 16th-century North Africa or Maghreb (today's

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<sup>18</sup>“Boy-love in the Arab Empire [sic] was a powerful force of reconciliation between races, religion and social classes” (Marc Daniel 65). The author cites on the same page some surprising examples of interreligious love, all by Hispanic authors.

<sup>19</sup>The first English translation, sanitized, was by Arberry. The new translation of Bellamy and Steiner is far superior.

<sup>20</sup>My thanks to Nicholas Heer, who has confirmed this from the Arabic text (personal communication, 1 June 1995).

<sup>21</sup>Márquez, *Orígenes* 38, n. 70. The titles as given by Márquez, which I have translated into English, are *El abandono del pudor y el primer bozo de la mejilla; Excusas sobre el amor del primer bozo en la mejilla; El jardín del letrado y las delicias del hombre inteligente; Ardor del que gime y lágrima del que llora; El mercado de esclavas; Descripción del enamorado ardiente; and El cinturón incrustado, sobre las ventajas de las relaciones sexuales*. For other unpublished Islamic erotological works, see Bouhdiba 142-46. The treatise *Mufākharat al-jawāri wal ghilmān* [*Boasting Match over Maids and Youths*], which he cites as untranslated at that time, has been published in English in al-Jahiz. The only other example known to me of a Islamic erotological work with homosexual content, and available in a Western language, is *Les délices des coeurs* of Ahmad al-Tifāshī. The homosexual portion has been translated from the French by Edward A. Lacey.

Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia). This region had strong ideological and demographic links with al-Andalus. In the final periods of Muslim presence in Spain there was large-scale emigration to North Africa. In earlier centuries there had been much immigration from North Africa to al-Andalus, with family ties between the two regions extending over generations.

By far the best documented North African city in this period is Algiers. Christian prisoners reported to their home countries that male homosexuality was common there to an extent inconceivable in Europe. The *Topografía e historia general de Argel* [*Topography and General History of Algiers*], published by Diego de Haedo,<sup>22</sup> states that sodomy is publicly esteemed in Algiers (1: 177). Algerian *morabutos* [holy men] “are usually enormous sodomites, and proud of it, and they practice the bestial sin publicly in the middle of the market, or on the main street, in front of everybody, and the Moors and Turks are so blind that they praise this behavior, and consider it good” (Haedo 1: 111). A different lifestyle, to be sure, than that of Christian Spain. I do not know even today where in the world sodomy may be freely practiced in public, much less that it receive general applause. But who knows what future behavior will be? Who would have believed, fifty years ago, that pornographic movies would be sold openly today?

If this were not enough, among Sephardic Jews, while they lived in Muslim Andalusia, pederasty was not just tolerated but the norm among the upper classes. In contrast with Iberoarabic homosexuality, that of Sephardic Jews has been amply studied, in English and in Hebrew (although not in Spanish). A good beginning is the classic article published in the Spanish journal *Sefarad*, in 1955, during the Franco period, but in English: “The Ephebe in Medieval Hebrew Poetry.” It would never have appeared if it had been in Spanish. Roth and others have published subsequent studies.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>As set forth in my “Cervantes, autor,” I believe the author was Cervantes, the only significant writer among those imprisoned in Algiers.

<sup>23</sup>The *Sefarad* article is by Schirrmann. See Roth’s “The Care and Feeding,” “Deal Gently,” “Fawn,” “Satire and Debate,” “My Beloved,” “Loving,” and Eisenberg, “Judaism.” A historical study, although it attributes homosexuality exclusively to Arabic influence, is that of Assis. According to Leneman, the book of Zemach and Rosen-Moked deals with the erotic poetry of Samuel ha-Naguid.

According to an article in *Aspects of Jewish Culture in the Middle Ages*, in Spain there was a “courtly aristocratic culture involving romantic individualism [in which there was] intense exploration of all forms of liberating sexuality, heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality. Ask your average suburban rabbi his views on homosexuality and he will tell you there is nothing more un-Jewish than this, oy-veh. But not if you study Spanish Jewish culture. Homosexuality is central to it” (Cantor 184-85).

During the Spanish middle ages, Judaism reached heights of culture and political and military power unknown between Biblical times and the modern state of Israel. There existed a Jewish kingdom in medieval Spain, the 11th-century Zirid kingdom of Granada, whose Muslim ruler was a powerless figurehead. There exists no full treatment of it. In Zirid Granada Jews were not *dhimmi* [second-class citizens], as they were elsewhere in Muslim Spain, but the governors and generals. There is plentiful source material on the period, among it much pederastic poetry, and by good fortune the memoirs of the last Zirid monarch have survived.<sup>24</sup> The Alhambra was built, according to a well-documented theory of Bargebuhr, as a new Jewish Temple 1000 years after the destruction of the Second Temple of Jerusalem. What remains of it, besides some foundations, is the famous Fountain of the Lions. The twelve lions represent the twelve Jewish tribes of the Old Testament. This theory has received little attention in Spain; that the Alhambra may have had a Jewish origin was unacceptable to the dominant Spanish authority on al-Andalus, García Gómez (Bargebuhr 9-10 and 195-96).

In the Zirid kingdom of Granada, pederasty was even more widespread than in other parts of Muslim Andalusia. It was seen as authorized by the Bible, as part of the Jewish nationality: the sacred homosexuality of the Biblical books of *Kings*, and the homosexuality of the great poet-king David. This line of discussion is taboo in modern Judaism. The Hebrew language permitted direct and unfiltered access to these holy texts, and to the pederastic poetry. As Jews soon had to incorporate themselves into Christian Spain, as the Muslim territory shrunk, the language itself

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<sup>24</sup> Abd Allāh; see note 11.

became associated with the occult, magic, and mysticism.<sup>25</sup>

Homosexual pleasures were not only freely available in Jewish and Muslim Spain, but they were believed to be more refined than heterosexual ones. A priceless scrap of information reveals that male prostitutes, in 12th-century Seville, charged more than the female ones, and had a higher-class clientele. The female prostitutes were for the farmers.<sup>26</sup> In a Jewish poem of the period, the womb is spoken of as *Sheol*, hell.<sup>27</sup> In a later report, Muslims looked down on the Christians for rejecting boys as sexual partners; they believed that “the Gauls and those living in northern countries are insensible of pleasure; that it is only themselves who have the true smack of voluptuousness.”<sup>28</sup> In 16th-century Algiers, again according to Haedo, “Sodomy is honorable, because he who supports more boys [*garzones*] has higher status [*es más honrado*]. Their patrons take better care of them than of their own wives and daughters. Many of the Turks and renegades, who are great and old men, not only want no other wives than these boys, but boast of never having known a female, rather they despise them and don’t want to set eyes on them” (Haedo 1: 176-77).

The hedonism and sexual tolerance of al-Andalus were destined to disappear. It is important to note, however, that in conflict with what the early historians tell us, the beginning of their destruction and a great step toward it arrived not from the north but from the south, with the puritan Almohads. It was they who destroyed the libraries of Córdoba, and split a more or less united caliphate into the small *taifas* kingdoms, unable to defend themselves from the Christians. We should remember that the Christians who lived under Islam in al-Andalus, called Mozarabs, were just as hedonistic as the Muslims, if not more so. I quote from an Iberoarabic legal treatise of the period: “Muslim women should be forbidden to enter the abominable churches of the

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<sup>25</sup>See Eisenberg, “Judaism.”

<sup>26</sup>“Female prostitution existed principally in the cities; the clientele was the urban lower class (*plebe*) and, above all, the farmers who came to town for its market” (Arié 327).

<sup>27</sup>Carmi 316. The author of the poem is Ibn Gabirol.

<sup>28</sup>Chorier 284. On the bibliographical problems of this book, see Foxon, 38-43.

Christians, because their priests are libertines, fornicators and sodomites. Also Christian women should be prohibited from entering churches at times other than prayers and feast days, because in the churches they eat, drink, and fornicate with the priests, and there is no priest that does not have at least two of these women to sleep with.”<sup>29</sup> So much for the Mozarabic priests, according to this source: libertines, fornicators, and sodomites. A different sort of Christianity than that which the Christian kingdoms sought to impose on southern Iberia.

It is also true that Andalusian hedonism, and especially the homosexual practices, alarmed northern Europe. One needs recall the strong pressure from the French on the small Christian kingdoms of the north of the Iberian peninsula.<sup>30</sup> Without this pressure, perhaps they would not have fought for centuries against their neighbors to the south. It is questionable, for example, whether Alfonso VI would have conquered Toledo without the influence of Constance, one of his French wives.<sup>31</sup>

Medieval Christians exaggerated Andalusian homosexuality, making the topic even more sensitive than it already was. Mohammed was for them the great libertine, champion of all forms of sexuality.<sup>32</sup> Homosexuality was, for the Christians, a contagious malady, superficially very attractive. There was no need for a *Book of Evil Love* to depict its attractions. Christian

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<sup>29</sup>The text taken from Sánchez-Albornoz 129. A slightly different translation is found in Levi-Provençal and García Gómez 150.

<sup>30</sup>“The Gauls, of all people, have the greatest abhorrence for this strange Venus” (Chorier 284).

<sup>31</sup>On the wives of Alfonso VI, see Palencia. On their influence and the perception of the Toledan monarch as “effete,” see also Martínez, and Cantarino 165.

<sup>32</sup>See Norman Daniel, 101-02, 144 and 160. Again the 16th-century sources, *prima facie* applicable to late Islamic Spain, are much more abundant: “Most of the acts of the practitioners [of Islam] were identified...with lust [*lujuria*]” (Bunes 218). “They practice a large number of sexual aberrations” (Bunes 224). “There is no variety of this sin [lust] that they do not use, and they locate their happiness both in this world and in that to come” (Bunes 235). “Mohammed was one of the most sensual [*carnal*] men that has ever existed.... As he knew that he was a fraud, to win the support of the idolaters he permits and legalizes their vile passions” (Bunes 235). “Celibacy is almost a sin.... They believe that the Muslims serve their Prophet better, the more immodest [*deshonesto*] acts they commit, and they do not respect their step-daughters, sisters-in-law, and female relatives” (Bunes 236). “The enjoyment of pleasure is, according to the opinion of the Spaniards, the goal of Muslims” (Bunes 239).

emigration to Granada has yet to be studied, but we know that it existed<sup>33</sup> and it seems likely that sexual freedom was one of its attractions. Sánchez-Albornoz, clearly alarmed at the prospect, even said that “Without the Reconquest, homosexuality, so widely practiced in Moorish Spain, would have triumphed” (Sánchez-Albornoz 38). This is a picturesque worry: triumphant homosexuality seems an oxymoron. It would mean the extinction of the human race. Yet even a near-contemporary of ours saw homosexuality as a real and powerful threat.

What disturbed the Christians was not a chaste love between men—what we would today call “platonic.”<sup>34</sup> The problem was the expression of this love in genital acts. To indulge in these was both sacrilege and treason. Not only was this pleasure viewed as contagious, it was also incurable. He who indulged was lost forever. He would never give it up. The danger could only be controlled with the bonfire and the gallows, and these measures were employed.<sup>35</sup>

The existence of homosexual pleasures in Europe was perceived as a threat to the family and to the security of women. Homosexuality in the Christian kingdoms also made them militarily vulnerable, or so it was thought. Although by the 14th century Granada was little threat to Castile, there was a great fear, even an exaggerated fear, of invasions from the south.

According to the Christians, homosexuality made men weak. It made them poor soldiers, less able to defend their country. The evidence was the Christians’ progress: the victories of the champions of heterosexuality over the depraved, sodomitical Muslims. Although we lack a study of the concept of chastity in medieval Spain, Christians unanimously attributed the so-called “loss of Spain” to the Muslims to the sexual license of 8th-century King Rodrigo. They also

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<sup>33</sup>We know the name of one emigrant: “Almañor of León, scribe and secretary of the King of Granada, my Lord, for Castilian” (*Relaciones* 89 and 136).

<sup>34</sup>The identification of chaste love as “Platonic” is an error, apparently created by the mad Don Quixote. There is no example earlier than Cervantes. See my *Interpretación*, 132 n. 60 (in the earlier *Study*, 124 n. 58).

<sup>35</sup>“[Sodomy] is against the public good, since it prevents the multiplication of the human species.... The people...considered sodomy [*el pecado nefando*] as a ‘contagious’ [*pegajoso*] vice, from which, once contracted, those infected could free themselves only with difficulty.... Fire was the only appropriate treatment, since once a man took up this vice, no one nor any thing, other than fire, could move him to forsake it” (Herrera, 262-63). Examples of executions of homosexuals are found in Münzer, 82 and 264 (hanging), and Ayala 157-58 (burning).

believed that Christian chastity or continence, compared with the sexual indulgence of the Hispanic Muslims of all periods, made possible the beginning and progress of the so-called “Reconquest.”<sup>36</sup>

History was written to reflect this interpretation. According to late medieval Castilian historians, the birth of the idea of “reconquering” Spain was attributed to Alfonso II of León, called “The Chaste,” lord of the fictitious but also chaste vassal Bernardo del Carpio, called the “archetype of the Hispanic hero.” (The Cid would not achieve this status until the end of the 19th century.<sup>37</sup>) The baths facilitated sex as well as cleanliness; the Catholic Isabel closed those of Granada after conquering it. Three centuries earlier, Alfonso VI destroyed the baths in Christian Spain, and began the central phase of the “Reconquest” by conquering Toledo.

Finally, to some extent Iberoarabic sexuality depended on the capture and importation of Christian slaves by raiding parties. We do not know the extent, and the topic also has yet to be studied in depth, but it seems safe to say that although the dependence was not complete, it was still significant. We know that Iberian “Arabs,” like the renegades and other inhabitants of Algiers in the 16th century, preferred, as sexual partners, Christian slaves, both male and female. Native women and boys, and black Africans, were less valued.<sup>38</sup> Like the existence of eunuchs—“manufactured” in al-Andalus by Jewish physicians—, this sexual use of slaves was a serious problem for the Muslim world in general, provoking the enmity of the Christian kingdoms whose children were stolen and neutered. The boy Saint Pelagius was martyred for opposing the sexual desires of `Abd ar-Rahmān III. After his sanctification he was celebrated in a poem of the Saxon

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<sup>36</sup>The concept of the Reconquest, that is, the recovery of territory illegally conquered and occupied by Muslim invaders, is the predominant theme of traditional Castilian historiography of the Middle Ages. However, it is rejected by revisionist historians, and by the present writer. See Linehan, *History* 1-21 (1. Ways of Looking Back) and 95-127 (4. The Invention of the Reconquest).

<sup>37</sup>See on Alfonso II and Bernardo del Carpio Chapter II of my *Interpretación*.

<sup>38</sup>Márquez, *Orígenes y sociología* 172. Although the term “Arabs” is widely used and the culture was self-identified as Arabic, I put it in quotation marks because the proportion of ethnic Arabs was small.

nun Hroswitha.<sup>39</sup>

So the fight against Andalusian homosexuality was fundamental for the Christians. It is an important part of the context of the “Reconquest,” and of the expulsion of the Jews. It also seems to be related to the delayed imposition of clerical celibacy in Castile. *Barraganía* (the priests’ keeping of “housekeepers”) was a defensive measure. Until Islam was conquered and its libertinism abolished, one could not deprive the priests of their female friends.

I have spoken at length about sexual behavior, but not about Juan Ruiz. One cannot but conclude that Juan Ruiz knew something, and perhaps a great deal, about what I have just presented. His familiarity with Iberoarabic civilization would not only be logical in a man from Hita, in the kingdom of Toledo, it is found in the text itself. “Después fiz muchas cánticas...para judías e moras” (1513ab) [I wrote many songs...for Jewish and Moorish girls], he tells us. He uses Arabic words.<sup>40</sup> Various commentators have pointed out the Arabic background of his concepts of female beauty<sup>41</sup> and of literature.<sup>42</sup> Besides the songs for Jewish girls, Juan Ruiz displays in several places his knowledge of Jewish culture: that the Jews had their own butchers, governed by religious laws, for example. There were two synagogues and a midrash, a rabbinical school, in Hita.<sup>43</sup>

It seems, then, unavoidable to conclude that Juan Ruiz was well informed about homosexual behavior among Hispanic Muslims and Jews. Given the Christian position on the

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<sup>39</sup>See Aguilera, and Flórez 105-31. In the present volume, Jordan reviews the literature on Pelagius; this article only reached me after mine was completed.

<sup>40</sup>See Martínez, and Márquez, “Nuevos arabismos.”

<sup>41</sup>“The ‘problems’ which plague Juan Ruiz’s pretty girl disappear when seen in an Arabic literary context” (López-Baralt, “Bella” 83). Also see López-Baralt, “Juan Ruiz y el Šeyj Nefzawī.”

<sup>42</sup>For example, “behind Juan Ruiz resounds the echo of a long tradition of Hispano-Islamic literary pride” (Castro 412); “his art consisted in harmonizing in a Castilian and Christian fashion the two fundamental tendencies in Arabic literature of the preceding centuries, sensuality and moral exemplarity” (Castro 442). Note that the various versions of Castro’s book differ significantly in their treatment of the *Libro de buen amor*. On these revisions, see Joset, *Nuevas investigaciones* 59-60.

<sup>43</sup>See Cantera and Lacave. Criado points out that “The Jewish community of Hita, as it appeared at the time of its liquidation, was very different from those of the rest of the peninsula. It was not isolated in special quarters or ‘ghettos,’ nor was it outside the town walls, but spread throughout all the streets of the town, with its houses adjacent to those of the Castilian nobles” (Criado 144).

subject, it follows that the sexual teachings of his *Libro de buen amor* offer an alternative, and are intended as a weapon against what he understood to be bad love. According to the Archpriest, female sexual partners are abundant. In the mountains they practically rape the men. Sexuality and Catholicism are compatible, he suggests in the parody of the canonical hours. Marriage, although a protection against lust (1593), is not indispensable. “No ha muger en el mundo, nin grande nin moçuela, que trabajo e serviçio no la traya al espuela” (612bc) [there is no woman in the world, neither old nor young, that work and persistence can not bring to heel]. Love is beneficial: it makes the stupid man *sutil* [wise], the coward daring, the lazy quick (156). It makes the old man cast off his age and keeps the young man young (157ab).

Success can be had by following some easy principles. “Vençerse la dueña non es cosa tan maña” (621d) [to win a duenna is not so hard a task]. “Mugeres e varones por palabras se conosçen” (677cd) [women and men meet each other through words]. “Dil’ juguetes fermosos, palabras afeitadas con gestos amorosos; con palabras muy dulçes, con dezires sabrosos, creçen mucho amores e son más desosos” (625) [tell her charming tales, polished language with loving gestures; with very sweet words, with tasty speech, love grows and with it desire]. Above all, avoid excess in wine (528b).

Women want a happy man as lover (626b); happiness makes men beautiful (627a). According to Duena Endrina, the woman kissed and embraced has been conquered (685). “Por mejor tiene la dueña de ser un poco forçada que dezir: ‘Faz tu talente,’ como desvergonçada” (631ab) [the duenna prefers to be pressured rather than to shamelessly say “have at it”]. Do not tire of pursuing her (623b), and if there are difficulties, one can turn to those effective servants, the professional go-betweens.

In short, “sey sutil e acuçioso e avrás tu amiga” (648b) [be shrewd and diligent and you’ll have your sweetheart]. There is a woman for you. If Juan Ruiz tells of the advantages of love of women, if he teaches the techniques to achieve a happy heterosexual life, if he assures us that we are surrounded by seducible, lusty women (if they don’t seem so in the street, they will be in bed), if he teaches that Christianity need not be identified with celibacy, if he paints the strength

of the attraction to women, an attraction which one need not resist because its consequences are healthy, according to the poem (155-57).... If Juan Ruiz does all this, then the logical implication is that he is opposed to homosexuality, and fighting against it.

Two other points: Juan Ruiz's esteem for Ovid (429)<sup>44</sup> also reflects his heterosexualism. Ovid was seen in the western Middle Ages as the classical author who defended the love for women as superior to that for young men,<sup>45</sup> the author who taught (according to *Libro de buen amor* 612) that there is no woman, of any age, who cannot be seduced. Ovid's homosexual counterpart, as seen in the medieval West, was Virgil; Juan Ruiz only cites him as an example of lust (265).<sup>46</sup>

Also, when Juan Ruiz cites Aristotle as authority:

Como dize Aristótiles, cosa es verdadera,  
el mundo por dos cosas trabaja: la primera,  
por aver mantenençia; la otra cosa era  
por aver juntamiento con fenbra plazentera. (71)

Wise Aristotle says, and what he says of course is true,  
That all men struggle most for two things: first, what

[he must do

To feed himself and keep alive, and second, in this view,  
To have sex with a pleasing woman who is compliant, too.

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<sup>44</sup>See the note of Joset to the passage. Juan Ruiz's alleged use of Ovid has been strongly attacked by Márquez, *Orígenes y sociología* 95 n. 216.

<sup>45</sup>Ovid "preferred girls to boys, because in these sorts of amusements he liked a reciprocal and not a selfish enjoyment. He said that he delighted in love 'which dissolves on both sides.' Hence it was that boy's love affected him less" (Chorier 281).

<sup>46</sup>A then-famous passage in the *Georgics* refers to pastoral homosexuality; Virgil was also seen as a magician. See Chorier 281 ("Maro" is Virgil) and Spargo.

Aristotle never said this, we now know.<sup>47</sup> The world is run by many other things than these two: by the desire for fame, or to create or enjoy beauty, or simply to reproduce oneself and thus survive, in this way, death. But it fits perfectly with the medieval image of Aristotle. It would never have been attributed to the Middle Ages' wise homosexual, Plato.

Where is homosexuality, or boy-love, treated openly in his *Book*? Nowhere. Juan Ruiz never mentions it. He created a poetic world from which pleasurable homosexual practice is absent.<sup>48</sup> Cervantes didn't mention the eroticism of Don Quixote's favorite author Feliciano de Silva, not even to attack it, fearing—I conclude—that even criticism would be counterproductive. Juan Ruiz the same.<sup>49</sup> He does not mention the love of young men, not even to attack it.

For Juan Ruiz the sensuality of the south of the Iberian peninsula has been converted into gastronomy. The “carnal” man loves meat (*carne*), not sex. “The pleasures of the flesh” are lambs, sheep, goats, cows, and bulls (1214-15).<sup>50</sup>

In the *Libro de buen amor* there is neither pregnancy nor children. There are hardly any male figures at all, and the author makes extensive use of animal fables. According to the author, “solo, sin compañía, era penada vida” (1317d) [life without companionship, alone, was only pain] but it does not seem that male companionship would have has much to offer him. His only “compañero” (113c) [companion] in the work, a Ferrand García who appears briefly as a messenger, betrays him. In the mountains there are no men, only women. What men exist are minor and sexually unattractive characters. The absent lover Pitas Payas is only present in a story. There is a mayor of Bugía, in África, who meaningfully is a monkey (323), and don

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<sup>47</sup>See the note of Gybbon-Monypenny in his edition, 123, and also Rico.

<sup>48</sup>Vasvari, in this volume, unveils allusions to penetrative sodomy (only) as a punishing or aggressive, but not pleasurable act.

<sup>49</sup>Silva is mentioned in the first chapter of *Don Quixote*. I pointed out the need for a study of his eroticism in “Research Topics” 86.

<sup>50</sup>On the eroticism of the episode of Don Carnal and Doña Cuaresma, see Márquez, “Carnaval,” 182-83, and the bibliography cited there.

Cabrón his vassal (327).<sup>51</sup> Love is not represented by the usual young Cupid, but by the burly don Amor, married to Lady Venus; that Juan Ruiz's Love is not a child is often noted. Also present is the fat Don Carnal. None of them is an attractive object for anyone's amorous thoughts.

Juan Ruiz even battles lexically against the love of boys. The term used in the Castilian Middle Ages for homosexuality was *garzonía*, and the ephebe was a *garzón*: a Gallicism with the nasty (and of course untrue) suggestion that boy-love was a French import. Juan Ruiz gives the word a new meaning: his *garzón* wants to marry three women (189).

I will close by looking at two of the concluding passages of the work. After another review of sins, the arms the Christian can use against them, the need to be vigilant against our enemy the devil, we find two adjacent episodes. These—the praise of the small duenna, followed by the defects of Don Hurón—have traditionally been treated as unrelated.

In fact the episode of Don Hurón, “moço del Arçipreste” (1618) [the Archpriest's boy] and the only young man found in the work, has hardly been examined. It is a bit surprising that despite the abundance of research on the *Libro de buen amor*, no one, to my knowledge, has considered whether the typical archpriest would have a “apostado donçel” (1619c) [handsome young man], and if so, what his duties would have been.

What the text does suggest is that no one would ever want to have such a lad as servant, nor allow him in one's house. Boys are liars, thieves, drunkards, dirty, stupid, lazy, and incompetent. But instead of the boy, one has a better option: the *little* duenna. She is, both physically and morally, the lesser of two evils (1617cd). The famous episode of the little woman is introduced with Christ's words, “Bendichos, a mi venid!” (1605d) [Blessed ones, come to Me!].

And so I close. Juan Ruiz says, in conclusion, “fizvos pequeño libro de testo, mas la glosa...es bien grand prosa” (1631ab) [I made you a small textbook, but the gloss...is a long piece of prose]. “Entiende bien mi libro” (64d) [Understand my book well], he asks. “La manera del libro entiéndela sutil” (65b) [be subtle in your interpretation]. Such has been my goal in this

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<sup>51</sup>*Cabrón* (he-goat) in Spanish is strongly associated with lust, and is a dirty word.

article.

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