

**Valencian spoken loanwords in trilingual documentation of the
Moriscos of Llombai (Valence, 16th century)**
**Préstamos del valenciano hablado en documentación trilingüe de
Llombai (Valencia, siglo XVI)**
**Empréstimos do valenciano falado na documentação trilingüe de
llombai (Valência, séc. XVI)**

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Resumen: El presente trabajo pone de relieve el contacto lingüístico de los moriscos de la aljama de Llombai de mitad del siglo XVI con la realidad romance dominante de su época, a través de un documento de cuentas contables, cargado de préstamos lingüísticos (en esta ocasión, valencianismos escritos en caracteres árabes). Los textos sirven para abrir otro campo de investigación sobre la realidad lingüística, social y económica de la comunidad morisca del Marquesado de Llombai (Valencia).

Abstract: The present paper highlights the linguistic contact of the Moriscos' aljama of Llombai (Valence, s. XVI) with the dominant romance language of their neighbourhood and epoch. Are presented accounting texts loaded with linguistic loans (in this occasion, valencian terms written in Arabic characters). The manuscripts serve to open another field of research on the linguistic, social and economic realities of the Morisco community of the Marquisate of Llombai.

Keywords: Moriscos – Valence – 16th Century – Valencianism loanwords – Aljamiado.

Palabras clave: Moriscos – Valencia – Préstamos lingüísticos – Valencianismos – Aljamiado – Siglo XVI.

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Introduction

Following the recent publication of the book entitled “*Los vasallos moriscos del marquesado de Llobai en época de don Juan de Borja y san Francisco de Borja: entre 1533 y 1539*” in a dual authorship with the researcher Dr. Elia Gozávez Esteve (Gozávez y Constán-Nava 2012). A study into the 400th anniversary of the expulsion of the moriscos, that was awarded with a research grant from the Moriscos Studies Centre (Teruel) and other publications extracted from research on the manuscript OSUNA (C. 587 D. 36-65). This book has been reviewed in several Spanish important newspapers during this year because its newest conclusions. It was the result of merging two methodological assumptions –historical and philological– and documentation on the same subject. It is based on relevant accounting documentation regarding the payments of ‘tandas’ carried by the moriscos vassals to their lords: don Juan de Borja and, later, don Francisco de Borja, Dukes of Gandia.

It also established the prices that the lord had to pay to their vassals when the ‘tandas’ became done. The manuscripts were written in Castilian, Valencian and Arabic language. It focuses exclusively on the population of the Marquis of Llobai, with populations of Catadau, Alfarp and Aledua turning around Llobai.

The research performed over these manuscripts and whose subsequent details are described below, are some of the issues that made me choose the topic that entitles this presentation: “Valencianisms in Valencian Morisco documents from the 16th century”.

I. The manuscript

Before deepening in the topic of the article, it is necessary to consider the importance of the texts from its background in order to give a more contextualised frame to the document itself. Document no. 587 from the



National Historical Archive, Nobility Section², and files 36 to 65 to be more precise, contain bilingual documents written both in Arabic and Spanish/Valencian from different scribes. It belongs to the archive of the Dukes of Osuna. The document itself is divided in several files from which some of them represent the subject of this research. The document OSUNA, C. 587, D. 36-65 consist of ninety sheets from which fifty-five are written mostly in Arabic, or at least contain one sentence in this language.

The texts' chronology covers from 1533 to 1539 and following the description provided by the National Historical Archive and its Nobility Section, they refer to accounts, receipts and letters from the Marquisate of Llombai (with Arabic notes and signatures). I have chosen to divide the files in three different categories:

1/ A first group or category for those texts written in Castilian by the *baile* and addressed to the Christian lord. These texts show received payments or the handing over of wages or salaries; always with the signature the Morisco community representative. In some of the texts we find a brief comment detailing quantities and just a signature; in some others, we notice the certification by the Arab scribe in order to prove that the above mentioned written in Spanish is reliable. Amongst all files these are the least important regarding their linguistic level, even if written by several scribes in Arabic language, in the view of the fact that they just contain signatures.

2/ A second group related straight to the accountancy and records of the day's wages made by turns and paid by the members of the Morisco community to their lord. These are bilingual files and can be divided in three groups:

- a. Those written in Arabic and Castilian Spanish.
- b. Those written in Arabic and Valencian.
- c. Those written in Arabic and Castilian Spanish and Valencian jointly.

II. The Morisco situation in Llombai

The materials and sources on which this research study is based are geographically limited due to their belonging to a very specific geographical

² From now on referred as NHANS.



region of Valencia, and therefore, to the Crown of Aragon: Llombai, Catadau and Aledua. The geographic influence frame creates the possibility of drawing the geographic displacement area of the Morisco day labourers.

The town council subject of study is Llombai, given the fact that this is the population which gives name to the Marquisate to which the documents belong. In the analysed time frame, Llombai was located in a noble Mudejar area with a notoriously mixed population: Christian and Muslim. The aforementioned texts describe the locations in which the day labour takes place as well as the movements of the day labourers; mostly journeys to carry goods and merchandise, correspondence (delivery notes) and sometimes to accompany Christian senior officials.

The situation of the vanquished Mudejar population compared with the Christian one made them occupy a well-defined location appropriate to their defeated position (GOZÁLVEZ 2006, 196; HALPERIN 1980, 52-54): this way Llombai became the administrative, political and commercial centre populated by old victorious Christians as well it hosted a nucleus of Muslim population which represented the administrative issues of the communities of Catadau, Alfarp and Aledua that had an exclusive Mudejar population (GOZÁLVEZ 1998, 68; GOZÁLVEZ Y CONSTÁN-NAVA, 16-31).

This reality shows the coexistence between both communities: “The low number of inhabitants in Llombai did not mean a problem for the Christian university and the Mudejar *al-jama* (later Morisco) to share the same geographic area, even if that happened within a different socioeconomic reality” (GOZÁLVEZ 1998, 68), even the different interests of each community contributed to the distancing between them (GOZÁLVEZ 2006, 168). If we let aside the socioeconomic ups and downs between them, we can assert that they had resemblances even if with different interests which contributed to their distancing.

Several important figures appear mentioned in the document: one of them, the *baile*. During the 16th and the 17th century, the Marquisate had a single *baile* who resided in Llombai. The *baile* combined several functions and tasks which were delegated by the general attorney or “by the power of customs” to this figure (GOZÁLVEZ 1998, 198). His most important and specific task was to be “the judge of all matters arising from the economic exploitation of the Marquisate”. Apart from that he was the figure in charge of dealing with all



the judicial issues concerning the Morisco population (*ibid.*; PILES 1970; CABEZUELO 1998, 34-35).

At the time the documents were written, Mr Gabriel de Llanos held the position of Llombai's *baile*. As it can be observed in the analysed texts, the files which refer to this character belong to the second group and so his name only appears in the Arabic texts, whereas the Romance ones never mention him. On the other hand, in those files belonging to the first group, it will be the *baile* himself who writes and therefore, appears implicitly. Gozávez Esteve states that the *baile* did not always perform his duties with the professionalism expected from such a figure: "Halfway the 16th century the tenant accused the *baile* Gabriel de Llanos for his numerous mistakes" (2006, 198).

The Muslim community of the Marquisate was represented by the *al-ğama'*, which was the only socio-political-religious institution that represented the community before the Christian lord. First of all through the figure of the *al-faqīh* to lodge the Mudejar community demands and later, through the figure of the *al-amīn* who, after his conversion, was the only valid representative (apart from the elder council) after having disappeared the *al-faqīh* given his religious functions. The *al-amīn* was the main administrator of every *al-ğama'* (GOZÁLVEZ 2006, 198-199) and this position was occupied by Miquel Pili in the documents subject of study. The *al-amīn* was the president of the local council and the daily routine guide of the community, but those responsibilities did not prevent him from being a great ally for the lord, the Marquis of Llombai Francisco de Borja.

Francisco de Borja did not receive his title of 4th Duke of Gandia after the death of his father, the 8th of January of 1543 (MARTÍ FERRANDO 2002, 145). This is why the person who appears in the texts referred as the Duke is Juan de Borja y Enríquez, Francisco de Borja's father. On the other hand, in the monarch's relations with the capital of Valencia the figure of *the rational* is of great importance and appears mentioned several times along the text as Joan Garsía, who appears 20 times along the whole document OSUNA, C. 587, D. 36-65 from the NHANS.

III. The linguistic loanword: valencianisms

I have chosen not to give the consideration of *aljamiado* to the Arabic written language found on the texts of the document OSUNA, C. 587, D. 36-65 from

NHANS (CISCAR PALLARÉS 1994, 157), given the fact that it is not a romance language written in Arabic and it does not arrive to the point to be considered as Arabic either; in fact there are plenty of Romance nuances in this language, creating an ensemble of three languages (Arabic, Castilian Spanish and Valencian) written in Arabic characters. Where is the border between the linguistic loanword from Arabic and the *aljamiado* itself?

As this question was dealt with by C. Barceló in his book, we have to consider several different influences when stating the Romance contributions to Valencian Arabic: “romance *lexical contributions to Arabic are [...] learned expressions, foreign words, many of which adapted from Semitic consonantism*” (BARCELÓ TORRES 1984, 131). Apart from the aforementioned, we have several Arabic words that Romance took as loanwords and then returned to Arabic with Romance nuances, like the example of *almàssera*.

The aim of this research work was only to leave this debate open in order to focus in it in a deeper way in future studies. As an example, it goes without saying that in several paragraphs of the texts, the language could either be Castilian/Valencian written in Arabic and mixed with some Arabic or the other way around: Arabic language with Castilian/Valencian written in Arabic characters. An example of this can be found in the file 587-55 f. 3 sect. 2, which is totally bilingual as can be noticed in the following page:

- L1. ‘Ali Alboi brought flagstones
- L2. *forn* to Llombai and brought
- L3. *coses* to *almàssera*
- L4. He carried oil to the *çeller* and *en-*
- L5. *vasó* oil in the *çeller*.

علي البوي صَعَجَ حَجَرَ إِلَى
لُفُورُنْ مَنَا لُونَيْيِرْ صَعَجَ
فُوصِشْنَ إِلَى الْمَاحْصَرَ
جَبْدُ زَيْةَ إِلَى صِيلِيِرْ أَنْ
بَجَرَ زَيْةَ فَصِيلِيِرْ

In this example we can see that the word *almàssera* has followed a double change; that is to say that the Arabic word (المعصرة *al-ma‘ašira*) becomes Valencian (*almàssera*) before being arabized again (الماحصر *al-mahšira*). A first linguistic approach would give the wrong impression making us think that it is Castilian Spanish (*almazara*), but we opted for its Valencian equivalent (*almàssera*), due to: an obvious *imala* in the vowel of the second radical from A > E, and the lengthening of the first vowel with ‘*alif*. This is how we arrive to the word *almàssera*. Subsequently, this word already turned into a valencian term is rewritten with an Arabic spelling modified following the oral

characteristics of Valencian; that is to say *المحاصر* *al-māḥṣira* and not *المعصرة* *al-ma‘aṣira*.

This phenomenon in which an Arabic Word becomes a Castilian Spanish/Valencian first and then becomes again Arabic as a completely transformed term which replaces the previously existing one, takes place in some cases like *ges*.

Arabic loanwords show clearly the preponderance of nouns before adjectives, verbs and adverbs (C. BARCELÓ TORRES 1984, 273). In the following table, a relation between the different Castilian/Valencian (mostly Valencian) terms written in Arabic found in the texts is shown to clarify the previous statements:

Word / File	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	63	64	65	T ³
<i>Açebib/pasas</i>														2	2
<i>Albarà</i>		3	6		1	7	1							10	28
<i>Almàssera</i>		37	8			8	9	1						13	76
<i>Batlle</i>		1	4					1							6
<i>Capa</i>													1		1
<i>Çeller</i>		3	2			8								2	15
<i>Cort</i>							1	1							2
<i>Coses</i>	2					1									3
<i>Duc</i>		6				1									7
<i>Embajador</i>							1								1
<i>Emvasar</i>						3	1								4
<i>Forn</i>	3			4	4	6									17
<i>Ges</i>							1								1
<i>Governador</i>		1												3	4
<i>Graner</i>						1	1							3	5
<i>Hostal</i>		2				22	3								27
<i>Iglesia</i>													1		1
<i>Joan Garsía</i>		3	1			7	1							8	20
<i>Jornal</i>	12				8			1					1		22
<i>Lebrillos/Lebrel</i>		2	1												3
<i>L'obra</i>		1													1
<i>Llibre</i>						1									1
<i>Marquès</i>		3	7		6									2	18
<i>Palejar</i>		3	1			1								4	9

³ Total number of times that the terms appears along the whole document.

<i>Plaça</i>		1	1												2
<i>Pòlissa</i>						1		1	1	1	1				5
<i>Provisión</i>		1													1
<i>Sèquia</i>		17	10			13	3	1						9	57
<i>Tapières</i>							1							3	4
<i>Total</i>	17	84	41	4	19	79	24	5	1	1	1	1	3	59	339

As the table shows clearly, we can only find two verbs (*palejar* y *envasar*) among all the other nouns. The terms can be divided in groups as follows:

Titles: Battle, Duc, Embajador, Governador, Marquès.

Places / buildings: Almàssera, çeller, graner, forn, hostal, iglesia, Cort, l'obra, plaça, sèquia.

Technical / business: albarà, pòlissa, jornal.

Products: Açebib, capa, coses, ges, lebrillos, llibre, provisión, tapières.

Proper names: Joan Garsía

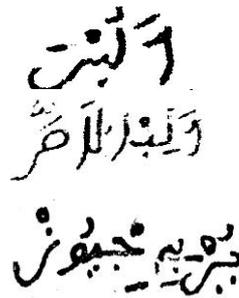
Actions: Palejar, envasar.

Examples:

L'obra (File 587-51 Page 3)

La plaça (File 587-51 Page 1)

Provisión (File 587-51 Page 5)



As we can appreciate, there is no toponyms' list as we decided to leave this as a separate section which will be parsed in the next chapter of the research with a total amount of 29 loanwords.

Another contribution of the Valencian language to spoken Arabic is the use of the commonly found verbal periphrasis coming from the verbs مشى *mašaā* (as an auxiliary verb, always conjugated in 3rd person singular) + رأى under the oral form وَ (without preposition or link conjunction) + the action (as an infinitive form of a verb). This structure can be considered as a loan translation from other Castilian verbal periphrasis such as “*ir a ver de + action*”, “*haber de + infinitive*” or “*ir a + infinitive*”; and above all of them in the very common Valencian expression “*vore de + infinitive*”.

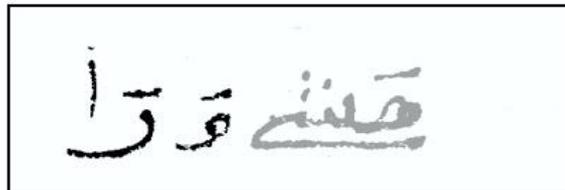
1077

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File 587-50 Page 1



File 587-52 Page 3

Conclusions

One of the most significant characteristics of this manuscript are the “oral nuances found in the written language”. This definition that looks as an antithesis itself means nothing but a terminological adaptation to refer to the way in which scribes tried to capture in their writings what they heard in their daily life. Scribes’ writings were based on a very weak linguistic education in what regards to classical Arabic, and above all, in what regards to their writing level.

This shows and explains how they try to write in the dialectal version of Arabic which they listen to in their daily life; as a consequence this remains as an evidence of a language with very few rudiments of classical Arabic surrounded by plenty of linguistic loanwords, the vast majority of which coming from Valencian. We have seen several examples up to this point which show how this phenomenon takes place; this idea strengthens the aforementioned phenomenon: we can find the same term written in several different ways coming from different scribes or even from the same one.

This brings out our thesis about the very weak education the scribes had and why this is emphasized when they write in Arabic. At the same time, we notice that the de-arabization amongst the Muslim community is more pronounced in favour of other prevailing languages like Castilian Spanish and Valencian. It



cannot be described as a romance language written in Arabic characters, basically due to the big amount of Romance aspects present in the Arabic written language of the document, but a mixture of the three languages (Castilian Spanish, Valencian and Arabic) written in Arabic characters.

The concept of loanword in this document cannot be reduced to those ideas which dialectal Arabic takes from Castilian Spanish and Valencian just to be rewritten again in Arabic characters, due to the fact that we have other contributions that have no relation with just plain terminology, such as the characteristic structures of Latin languages or the verbal periphrasis adapted from Castilian Spanish and Valencian. These have not found a place in this presentation to adjust it better to the time and frame given.

The aforementioned ideas can be noticed in this writing attempt; the will to transmit only detailed information without caring at all about linguistic canons, given that the main objective is to achieve understanding from the reader and in any case to attain any improvement in the reader's linguistic knowledge. The writer only intends to spread the information amongst those who can read it and so the scribes outweigh the informative channel over the linguistic one (scribes are not cultured and thus they do not need to keep up the appearances of the language).

As far as this point is concerned, we notice a sort of “linguistic comfort” and a blatant lack of attention in what they write: they simply write without taking into account if a word is written twice in two different ways because priority is given to the point where the information arrives to the reader or to the fact that it is written and it leaves a trace to at least be useful subsequently in front of the Christian civil servant in order to defend the salaries of the community members (the most important thing is the “note”, not its orthography).

In this case, scribes do not try to transmit a linguistic reality trying to preserve the Islamic connotations in it as it happens with *aljamiado*, where religious matters appear as the heart of the text when trying to set out the Arab-Islamic reality in a non-Arabic language.

To conclude, these texts have been very useful to open another field of research over the linguistic, social and economic reality of a Morisco community in the frame of the Marquisate of Llombai, although the particular



characteristics and conclusions cannot be generalised for the moment as those of the whole Muslim community living in that location from 1533 to 1539.

What these texts show clearly is not just a little example of Arabic language, very reduced in terms of output given the fact that we are talking about an accountancy book, but some nuances of the linguistic reality of the Morisco community and more specifically, the linguistic reality of its scribes.

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