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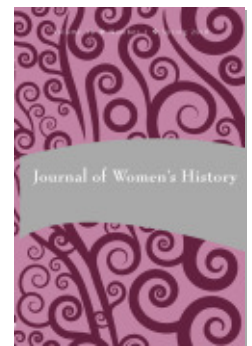
Making a Living in Silk: Women's Work in Islamic and
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MAKING A LIVING IN SILK:

Women's Work in Islamic and Christian Granada, Spain, 1400–1571

Elizabeth Nutting

In the late medieval and early modern world, women's work was universal and vital to local and international economies. Tracing the history of women's silk work in Granada reveals that, through enormous political and cultural change, the economy continued to rely on Muslim women's labor to such an extent that the silk industry could not survive without them. To date, scholars have underrepresented Iberia in the literature on women's work in both European and Islamic historiography. This Iberian context highlights the connections and gaps between Christian and Islamic practice, providing a needed Mediterranean perspective that bridges formerly separate historiographies.

In the wake of the violent Revolt of the Alpujarras (1568–1571), Spanish officials in the Kingdom of Granada in southern Spain worried about the economic future of the city and the surrounding countryside. The economy had been based on the cultivation of silk and the production of finished silk textiles for many centuries. Now, the silk industry was on the brink of collapse because the Spanish government expelled the Moriscos (former Muslims or the descendants of Muslims who converted to Christianity in mass forced baptisms in 1500) as punishment for their treason and to prevent further rebellion. But the silk industry relied on Morisco labor, in particular on female labor, in ways that officials underappreciated until that labor was no longer available. It was in this context that an official complained in 1571 about the increasing costs of silk production: "In the matter of silk, all is lost without the Moriscos because there is no one who knows how to raise silkworms or spin silk thread. It used to cost fifteen *maravedís* to spin a pound of silk, paid to the Morisco or *Morisca* who spun it, and it now costs two and three *reales*."¹ The unknown official spoke of the Morisco (a man) and the *Morisca* (a woman)—using language that elided the gender of the laborers they so desperately missed. In truth, silk spinners and cultivators were almost exclusively women.

The local government made their grave desperation for female labor even more clear when they authorized the exemption of 786 *Morisca* (female) silk cultivators and spinners (here the gender of the workers is clear) from the expulsion edict.² Security concerns about the risks of allowing the rebellious Moriscos to stay in Granada temporarily gave way to economic

concerns. We do not know, however, whether any women actually stayed behind, and if they did it was not enough to save Granadan sericulture. Efforts to replace Morisca labor with slave labor were also insufficient.³ Although officials worried that Granada's Old Christian silk dyers and weavers (typically men) lacked the skills to take over from their Morisco (male) counterparts, Granadan dying and weaving eventually recovered.⁴ It was female labor that was truly irreplaceable, and Granada would never again produce raw or spun silk. In 1575, Granada began importing raw silk from other regions of Spain and from Naples, Italy, for the first time since the introduction of sericulture to Spain in the eighth century.⁵

Women in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Granada spent their days cultivating and spinning silk. Employers poorly remunerated and often took for granted their female workers, but their labor was absolutely vital to the silk industry, which was the basis of the Granadan economy. Granadans accepted women's work as a part of everyday life during the Nasrid period, but it was increasingly obscured and restricted in the century after Christian conquest—a process that culminated with the total loss of Morisca labor and the end of Granadan sericulture. The history of women's work at this crucial juncture in Iberian history reaffirms the importance of women and their paid labor in the premodern Christian and Islamic worlds. And it reveals the intersections between the political, economic, and cultural changes in the Mediterranean and the struggle for the economic survival of families and communities.

This article examines Muslim women's work in fifteenth-century Nasrid Granada (1400–1492) and in post-conquest Christian Granada (1492–1571) in the broader context of Mediterranean silk production. Women participated in a wider variety of roles, wielding considerably more economic power as investors and landowners during the Nasrid period than they would after the 1492 conquest. Women's involvement is evident despite the relative scarcity of sources for the Islamic period compared to the Christian period. The restriction of women's participation to the production of raw materials and their near-disappearance from the written record coincided with decline in the industry. Spanish officials regulated spinning, which Granadans designated as women's work, in an attempt to maintain high-quality production, but this and other protective measures were not enough to save the Granadan silk industry given the incoming tide of intolerance, violence, and expulsion that ultimately determined the fate of Granada's female labor force and of silk production.

A gendered analysis of economic history, as called for by the historian Joanne Ferraro, can better help us understand this crucial period in Mediterranean economic and political history.⁶ Historians of the Moriscos and of conquest-era Granada note the importance of silk to the local economy

and describe the connection between its decline and the disastrous Revolt of the Alpujarras.⁷ Historians also observe that the labor of Morisca women in Granada, like female labor elsewhere in Mediterranean textile production, was common.⁸ But beyond these cursory statements, the significance of the silk industry and of women's labor to the history of Granada remains unexplored. This article puts women, their work, and silk production back into the stories of conquest, conversion, and expulsion in Granada and into economic change in the Mediterranean.⁹

After a surge of scholarship in the 1970s and 1980s, interest in women's work has slowed, particularly for regions other than northwestern Europe.¹⁰ There is even more work to be done to uncover the history of women's work in the premodern Islamic world, particularly outside of the Ottoman Empire and its rich archives.¹¹ Reading against the grain, historians of gender in the Islamic world have used legal sources in creative ways to discover much about women's roles in endowments, in contracts, and in local and regional courts.¹² I use these same methods to turn to the understudied question of women's work at a moment when the Islamic and Christian worlds came into contact.

Female silk work in Granada confirms much of what historians have noted for women workers elsewhere in medieval and early modern Europe and the Mediterranean. Women often, although not always, worked inside their homes and were especially active in textile production and in silk work in particular.¹³ The historian Judith C. Brown has shown that in seventeenth-century Florence, women made up 40 percent of the labor in every phase of wool production—a significant number. But in the silk industry, women made up a remarkable 84 percent of the labor force.¹⁴ In thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Paris, women similarly made up at least 80 percent of the silk work force.¹⁵ Comparable numbers are not available for Granada because royal census data, available for the Christian period only, included limited occupational information for men and none for women.¹⁶ It is therefore impossible to quantify the gender distribution of labor; but the sources suggest that women workers were similarly predominant in Granada, particularly in spinning and sericulture.

Historians of women's labor show that the written record obscured the extent and nature of women's economic activities because women often worked within household industries and the law excluded them from the rights of guild membership and property ownership.¹⁷ This was not true in Nasrid Granada where women fully exercised their rights to own property and created contracts in their own names. In the sixteenth century, the conversion to Christianity, the shift from an Arabic and Islamic to a Spanish and Christian legal system, and the increased persecution of Moriscos and their culture made women's work less visible and limited

women's participation in the economy in Granada. Morisca women were thus increasingly marginalized as women and because they were part of a persecuted religious and ethnic minority.¹⁸

The difficulties in finding women's work in the archives are compounded in Granada by the lack of sources for the Nasrid period compared to the Castilian period. Al-Andalus was a highly literate society that produced many written records, and the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada was no exception, but tragically few of these written records are extant today. The Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros destroyed most Arabic documents in Granada at the time of forced conversion in 1500, and the Spanish banned the use of Arabic soon after.¹⁹ Granadan refugees in North Africa, however, safeguarded some records, and the Spanish preserved others, like those related to land ownership, that they assumed might be useful in their administration of the kingdom. The majority of the sources I use are legal (notarial contracts, fatwas, laws, and court records), supplemented with literary sources and travel narratives. In addition to a variety of published sources, I consulted unpublished manuscripts at the Archivo Histórico de la Alhambra, the Archivo Histórico de Protocolos in Granada, the Archivo General de Simancas, and the Archivo Histórico Nacional.

A Kingdom of Silk

Mediterranean silk production flourished after the Islamic conquests. By the eighth century, sericulture had spread throughout the Islamic Empire, and silk textiles were readily available throughout the Mediterranean.²⁰ There is evidence of the presence of mulberry trees in al-Andalus in 740, just three decades after the conquest of the Peninsula in 711.²¹ In the ninth century, references to silk in Andalusian documents were frequent enough to indicate that silk production had become commonplace.²²

By the tenth century, Almeria in southeastern Granada had grown wealthy from the profits of Mediterranean shipping and silk manufacture. According to Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad al-Idrisi (d. 1165), the author of an important medieval book of geography in Arabic, there were eight hundred silk workshops (*tirāz*) in Almeria devoted to the production of silk, and Almeria's ports were busy with ships from all over the Mediterranean.²³ Muhammad b. Abi Bakr al-Zuhri (d. twelfth century), the author of the *Kitab al-Jughrafiya* (*Book of Geography*), described Andalusian silk in the markets of Ethiopia and Ghana.²⁴ Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatib (d. 1375) praised the quality of the silk produced in his hometown, Granada: "This silk has no equal in the silk produced in Iraq, which is less fine, less smooth, and less strong."²⁵

The Sierra Nevada Mountains provided the ideal environment for growing mulberry trees.²⁶ Rural workers of the mountainous Alpujarras region between Granada and Almeria, usually women, collected the leaves of mulberry trees and fed them to silkworms kept in special boxes (*paneras*) in rural houses.²⁷ When the silkworms reached maturity, women workers extracted the fibers from the cocoons and spun the filaments into thread.²⁸ Traders brought silk thread to the markets of Granada, Almeria, or Malaga twice per year. Merchants sold silk thread and finished textiles in the *qaysariyya* (Spanish *alcaicería*), the silk market that was in each of the kingdom's three major cities.²⁹ Some of that silk was then exported from the ports of Almeria and Malaga to other Mediterranean port cities and from there to Africa, Asia, and Europe. Luxury Granadan silks were known for their bright colors, especially deep reds, and their geometric, floral, and calligraphic patterns.³⁰

Iberian silk reached its peak during the rule of the Fatimid Dynasty (909–1171), which never controlled Iberia but brought stability to the region and encouraged commercial connections between Spain and the Islamic Mediterranean. Jewish and Muslim merchants dominated a thriving trade in commodities that linked Iberia, North Africa, Sicily, and Egypt with trans-Saharan routes to the south and the Silk Road to the east.³¹ But by the fifteenth century, a changing economic landscape had already damaged the Granadan silk industry. Italians increasingly dominated Mediterranean trade, and, despite fierce competition from Italian producers in high-end textiles in particular, silk continued to form the basis of the local economy until the expulsion of the Moriscos in 1571.

Women and Silk

Silk and silk work has long been associated with women around the world. In ancient Chinese tradition, it was women who were privy to the secrets of silk production. The legendary Silk Princess smuggled the secret of sericulture out of China to the West on the Silk Road.³² Byzantine state-run silk factories employed many women, mostly as spinners, and women ran Paris's small medieval silk industry.³³ In French romance tales, women (and especially Eastern or Muslim women) frequently appeared as silk workers.³⁴ Islamic tradition allowed only women to wear silk, ensuring that the consumption as well as the production of silk was associated primarily with women.³⁵

Many Mediterranean cultures of antiquity held that an ideal, virtuous woman be indoors, hidden from public view, and occupied with spinning or other textile work.³⁶ Medieval Byzantine hagiographies repeated this notion, and it is also present in Homer's *Odyssey* and the Bible.³⁷ Echoes of

this ancient association between spinning and virtue in the medieval Islamic world reveal the multiple meanings of work and confirm the strong link between women and textile work. In his book on marriage etiquette, the Abbasid-era theologian Abu Hamid Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Ghazali (d. 1111) wrote that a good wife “should remain in the inner sanctum of her house and tend to her spinning.”³⁸ Abu al-Walid Muhammad b. Ahmad Ibn Rushd (d. 1198, known in the West as Averroes), however, believed that restricting women to procreating, spinning, and weaving resulted in female poverty and dependence on men.³⁹

The Almerian geographer al-Zuhri recognized that female labor and skills were essential to the high quality of finished Andalusian silk and its international reputation. He noted a gender division of labor in Almerian silk production that would remain unchanged for centuries: “And all the people [of Almeria], men and women, make things with their hands. The most important industry for women is spinning, which gives the silk its price, and the most important industry for men is weaving.”⁴⁰ Al-Zuhri, unique among his contemporaries, thus acknowledged female labor and insisted on its importance to the production of high-quality silk.

Nasrid Granada (1400–1492)

By the fifteenth century, Genoese merchants controlled Granada’s silk exporting, which increasingly consisted of raw silk, called *spagnola* or *more-sche* in Genoa.⁴¹ Granada also exported some silk—both raw and finished—to neighboring Castile. By the time the Christians marched through the gates of the Alhambra in January 1492, the international reputation of Granadan silk was in decline. Silk production, however, remained essential to the local economy and to daily life, although it now focused on raw materials and lower-quality finished textiles—products that had always been primarily the domain of women.

The evidence from notarial records and fatwas (hypothetical judicial opinions) from the Nasrid period shows women participating in both the formal market economy of the kingdom and an informal household economy. Granadan women worked at home, but they also interacted with the public on a regular basis, including both men and women. Women were silk spinners and cultivators as well as brokers, moneylenders, and employers. Women frequently recorded their economic transactions with notaries and took their concerns to a *mufti*, a Muslim legal official.

Andalusian refugees of the conquest collected and preserved Arabic documents in the libraries of North Africa. In 1485, the Moroccan jurist Ahmad b. Yahya al-Wansharisi (d. 1508) began compiling *Maliki* fatwas from the libraries and archives of Fez into an extensive collection, called

the *Mi'yār al-Mu'rib wa al-Jamī' al-Mughrib 'an Fatawī 'Ulama' Ifriqiya wa al-Andalus wa al-Maghrib* (*The Clear Measure and the Extraordinary Collection of the Judicial Opinions of the Scholars of Ifriqiya, al-Andalus, and the Maghrib*).⁴² The *Mi'yār* included fatwas from over five hundred years of jurisprudence from the western Islamic world, including a number from fifteenth-century Nasrid Granada. Like many other legal texts, fatwas are prescriptive, and scholars must use them with caution. They are most valuable for what they can tell us about the legal concerns and attitudes related to women's work and silk production.⁴³

Al-Wansharisi's *Mi'yār* included judicial opinions dealing with a variety of issues involving all phases of silk production, confirming what we already know about the ubiquity of silk in Islamic Spain. A female silkwormer appeared in a fatwa written by the Granadan jurist Muhammad al-Saraqusti (d. 1459).⁴⁴ A tax collector had threatened the female silk worker, saying that he would have her whipped if she did not pay him by the end of the day. The woman borrowed the required amount, promising to repay the lender in kind with silk. Al-Saraqusti responded, arguing that the woman should not have been responsible for the payment because the tax collector threatened and coerced her. It is not clear whether the silk worker was a cultivator, spinner, or weaver, but the fatwa showed women both producing silk and using silk as collateral for a loan, revealing the interdependence of silk, work, and credit for women.⁴⁵

Two other fatwas in the collection, while not referring specifically to the silk industry, reveal the impressive range of economic activities of Granadan women. A fatwa attributed to al-Saraqusti described a woman lending money to customers, selling goods, and collecting debts—activities that required her to extensively interact with the public.⁴⁶ Another Granadan jurist, Abu al-Qasim Ibn Siraj (d. 1444), described a case in which a woman owed her male employee years of back wages.⁴⁷ These fatwas describe Granadan women in positions of economic authority. Neither the high positions these women held nor their frequent interaction with the public merited any additional commentary. The fact that they were women did not seem to affect the legal reasoning—the gender of the parties was incidental to the question at hand. The fatwas indicate not only that women worked in silk and acted as brokers, lenders, and employers; but that this case was not unusual or noteworthy from a legal standpoint.

Most of the Arabic documents from Granada extant in Spanish archives are records of property ownership from the last decades of Nasrid rule. The Spanish preserved these notarial records in their archives in case of future disputes about land ownership. These documents include an astonishingly high number of women recorded as buying, selling, inheriting, donating, mortgaging, renting, and lending property.⁴⁸ Ninety-five percent of the

records in one such set of papers refer to a woman conducting family business or exercising rights over property. Although women in the premodern Islamic world frequently appeared in contracts, this is a particularly high number.⁴⁹ The historian Maya Shatzmiller suggests that this may reflect a shift in gender roles that resulted from decades of war with Christians, as men were often away fighting or dead while women managed business and property at home.⁵⁰ Whatever the reasons, the high number of women in these records indicates that Nasrid Granadan society accepted women's participation in the legal culture as an everyday occurrence. Granadan women frequently bought and sold property and registered these transactions in their own names with a notary.

The surviving notarial records provide some evidence of women's participation in the silk industry. In 1486, Umm al-Faṭḥ bint 'Uthman al-Madyun borrowed 3 *arṭāl* (a measure of weight, the plural of *raṭl*) of very high-quality silk thread from another woman, Umm al-Faṭḥ bint Ibrahim b. 'Abdun.⁵¹ The silk thread was worth an impressive 150 dinars, and the contract stipulated that Umm al-Faṭḥ bint 'Uthman repay the loan in silk thread of the same quality within a year. As collateral, Umm al-Faṭḥ bint 'Uthman put up a room in a house. This document shows that both women engaged in some phase of silk production, probably spinning or weaving because the silk transferred was in the form of spun silk thread. The silk thread was not low-end silk destined for everyday household use—rather, it was high quality silk of the kind sold in *qaysariyya* shops or exported abroad. Women thus participated in some phase of production of the highest quality silk—the type of silk for which Granada was famous.⁵²

Silk, whether silk thread or finished silk cloth, was a source of wealth for Granadan women. Evidence from wills and dowries reveals that Granadan women owned many things that were of enough value to leave as an inheritance to family members or to include in a marriage contract. Aside from various kinds of property (including houses, agricultural land, and shops), the most valuable goods that showed up in women's wills and dowries were finished textiles, often made of silk and raw silk thread. In 1467, for example, Umm al-Hasan bint Abi al-Hajjaj left her son Muhammad one *raṭl* (a measure of weight) of spun silk.⁵³ The 1488 marriage contract of Abu J'afar Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Fajjar and Umm al-Faṭḥ bint Abi al-Qasim al-Hanna included silk gauze cloth from Murcia and Baeza.⁵⁴

After Conquest (1492–1571)

In this city and its Kingdom, so much silk is cultivated and harvested that the King is paid fifty thousand ducats in royalties from it. The silk

*trade is so extensive in this city that nearly all of the common people make their living in silk. Ordinarily there are in this city one thousand weavers' shops, where all kinds of silks are woven and created. There are more than three hundred spinning wheels for gathering silk.*⁵⁵

When Pedro de Medina traveled to Granada in 1548 and wrote this description of the city, Granada was still a kingdom of silk. Medina described an entire city engaged in the production of silk cloth—a city with thousands of weavers and spinners. Nearly everyone, Muslim and Christian, had a hand in some part of the lengthy process of turning tiny silk worms into colorful Granadan silk.

In contrast to the wide variety of economic activities in which women participated during the Islamic period, after conquest (1492) and conversion (1500) women worked almost exclusively in silk cultivation and spinning. During the Nasrid period, contracts included women as individuals, but after the conquest, wills, dowry contracts, and criminal cases rarely included them beyond their roles as wives, widows, and daughters. Women, however, continued to make up much of the silk industry's labor force, even as their names became less frequent in the written record and their work became less varied. As they had in al-Zuhri's day, women picked mulberry leaves and cultivated silkworms in the Alpujarras, and they spun and wove silk in their homes in the hills of Granada and the coasts of Malaga and Almeria. They continued to rely on silk for the survival of their families.

Spanish authorities sought to regulate the silk industry, at first maintaining the Nasrid system and gradually replacing existing customs and laws with their own. Two decades after the conquest, Spanish authorities issued ordinances to limit women's participation in the sale and dying of silk, officially excluding women from participating in economic activities that had been accepted in Nasrid Granada. These ordinances were among the first major changes made to the existing economic structure of the city.

The very excellent gentlemen of Granada declare, that because they have been informed, that because certain people . . . buy silk from unknown persons . . . that appears to have been stolen by fault of the merchants who hide it in the silk they give to the *maestras* [female masters], spinners, and *rodeteros* [winders], we order and mandate that from this point forward no person shall buy silk . . . that has been dyed or is to be dyed by any woman, slave, child, or suspicious person but rather only from a known person or a merchant who deals in silk, under penalty of two thousand *maravedís*.⁵⁶

Although we do not know how effective the prohibition was, Spanish authorities thus rendered women's participation in the public economic

life of the city suspicious and detrimental to the industry. This is a striking contrast to the neutral way the earlier fatwas viewed women's engagement in business.

As Spanish authorities excluded women from some kinds of work, they intensified women's interest in another as they began to regulate spinning. This was unusual, as spinning was typically unregulated in both the Christian and Islamic Mediterranean—one of the reasons it was so open to women in the first place.⁵⁷ Although guilds or other institutional structures did not regulate spinning, it did require skill, particularly if the manufacturer wished to produce silk of high enough quality to export. Spanish officials dealt with this contradiction by increasing their regulation of silk spinning. In 1513 a royal letter created the new position of inspector of silk spinning. The letter explained the decision: "As I have been informed that because there is no person in charge of caring for the way that silk is and has been spun in the Kingdom of Granada . . . [it] is not clean."⁵⁸ This first step, intended to ensure the value of the finished product, was followed in 1535 by ordinances that required "master" spinners to meet training and certification standards.

The language of labor and guild legislation was not typically gender specific—one way the archival record obscures the presence of women. In the Spanish language, the masculine pronoun is used as gender neutral, which elides the presence of women unless the author specifically includes them. The language of the 1535 ordinances, however, markedly departed from gender neutrality, revealing that female labor dominated silk spinning. The first part of the ordinances required that each spinner (the gender neutral *hilador*) pass an examination to become certified. The ordinances further required that each spinner hire assistants—using language that specified the possibility of using girls as assistants (*muchachos o muchachas, qual mas quisieren*). The final section referred not to spinners but to *las mujeres* (the women), revealing the gender of the spinners referred to throughout the document. Employers, the law said, must pay women eighty-five maravedís per thousand silkworm cocoons they spun into thread or per day of work.⁵⁹ Two other laws referred to master silk spinners with the feminine *maestra* rather than the gender-neutral and masculine *maestro*, which laws used to refer to dyers and weavers.⁶⁰ This gender-specific language confirms that women dominated silk spinning, even as ordinances and laws increasingly regulated and brought it into the public spaces of the city.

Notarial and court records of the Christian period obscure women's work as part of a household economy that was officially managed by men. Notaries in sixteenth-century Spain usually identified men by their professions as well as by their important family relationships, and they only rarely identified women by their profession.⁶¹ A statistical analysis of

Morisco wills demonstrates that notaries defined 4.5 percent of women by occupation, compared to 74.5 percent of men.⁶² Most of the women defined by occupation were domestic servants, one of the few professions women held that was outside of the home and not related to a family business. A typical case is the service contract recorded by the Morisco notary Alonso de Gabano in 1551 between Ysabel Alahondia Borgín and Miguel el-Jayar. While de Gabano identified both by their residence in Granada, in the parish of San Gregorio, he recorded el-Jayar by his occupation (as a velvet weaver) and labeled Alahondia by her relationship to a man (her son Diego Diaz).⁶³

In the indexed sixteenth-century notarial documents of the archives of the Colegio Notarial in Granada, notaries identified male Christian immigrants and Morisco men as spice merchants, bakers, carpenters, shoemakers, dyers, velvet weavers, laborers, butchers, and tailors. Such men were not, however, identified as silkworm cultivators or silk spinners, suggesting that notaries considered these professions in the domain of women.⁶⁴ In addition, the records occasionally described women only as "wife of/ widow of/ daughter of" a man who worked in the silk or other industry. A list of debts owed in the will of the Morisca Leonor Hernández Ymbrana, for example, indicated that she engaged in the cultivation of silk.⁶⁵ This suggests that women's work was more common than the notarial evidence would otherwise indicate.

Court inventories reveal the importance of silk production in the household. A collection of sixty-eight inventories, taken during the revolt when Moriscos fled the violence of the Alpujarras for North Africa, demonstrates both the continued importance of silk cultivation and spinning to rural Granadan households and provides clues about women's work.⁶⁶ Most of the documents are inventories of the items found in Morisco households that the Spanish government confiscated when their owners fled Spain. The owners of the items listed in the inventories included both men and women, as in the 1562 inventory of Beatriz de Tordesillas. Tordesillas was a woman who owned extensive tools for producing silk and other textiles, although any member of her family could have used the items listed. Even when the owners were women, it is impossible to know for sure who used the *paneras* to cultivate silkworms or who regularly sat at the spinning wheel coiling silk thread. In the inventories, as in other records, women's work is subsumed into a household economy that did not differentiate between male and female labor.

Upon closer inspection, however, there are indications that the women of the household were often the ones doing the actual work of silk production. Diego de Gaytero, a Morisco from the region of Almería, for example, fled to North Africa in 1559. When Spanish authorities went to de Gaytero's house to confiscate his belongings, one of his neighbors protested, claiming

that half of the seven pounds of silkworm cocoon confiscated by the state belonged to him because de Gaytero's wife had cultivated the silk from his mulberry leaves and accordingly owed him a fee of 10 percent. De Gaytero's wife, otherwise not mentioned in the document, appears in this aside as the person doing the work of cultivating silk.⁶⁷

Other archival sources confirm the vital place of women's silk work in rural Granada until the Revolt of the Alpujarras. In 1569, Hernando de Guzmán and Álvaro el Guajany submitted a petition to the royal Spanish government for permission to travel from the city of Granada to the Morisco town of Pinillos in the Alpujarran countryside for the annual silk harvest. Authorities likely required special permission because of the violence of the Morisco revolt. De Guzmán and el Guajany warned the crown that if it denied their petition and they were unable to return to the mountains, they would be unable to "raise [silk], [and they would] have nothing with which to pay [their] taxes."⁶⁸ At the end of their petition, the men added that they would need to go "with our women to cultivate the silk."⁶⁹ The men revealed only at the end of their petition the vital role their wives played in the family economy, hoping that would persuade the Spanish authorities to help their families produce silk for the sake of increased tax revenue.

Morisco families depended on silk production to survive, and over the course of the sixteenth century, the precarious status of the Moriscos and the instability of the silk industry were deeply connected. Granada's silk industry was a shadow of what it had once been when the Spanish arrived in 1492, more dedicated to the production of raw materials for European markets than to the manufacture of more profitable finished cloth. This process accelerated in the sixteenth century as Spanish royal policy and the declining fortunes of the Moriscos undermined the industry and culminated in the Revolt of the Alpujarras—caused in part by the overly burdensome taxation of the silk industry.⁷⁰ The participation of women as combatants in the rebellion (noted by both major chroniclers of the conflict, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza and Luis Mármol del Carvajal) suggests that women were as deeply invested in attaining a degree of economic stability and a place in Granadan society as Morisco men.⁷¹

Beyond Granada

Although the Kingdom of Granada no longer benefitted from women's labor after the 1571 expulsion, the expelled Moriscos continued to make silk as they always had. Murcia and Valencia continued to produce raw silk with Morisco labor, some of it migrant, until the 1609–1614 expulsion, at least some of which manufacturers exported to Granada for Christian weavers to produce finished cloth and for Christian merchants to sell.⁷² In

a 1615 Inquisition case, the Morisco Francisco Pérez, who called himself by his Arabic name 'Ali, recounted his expulsion from Granada as a child. When his family left the kingdom following the revolt, they moved to La Mancha in central Spain but "went with others to Murcia for the silk season."⁷³ The historian Stephanie Cavanaugh found evidence of expelled Granadan Moriscos continuing to work, even as silk merchants, traveling to court to sell silk.⁷⁴

Morisco exiles in North Africa continued to make silk.⁷⁵ Although legal sources, like the seventeenth-century fatwas collected by 'Abd al- Sa'id Aziz b. al-Hasan b. Yusuf al-Zayyati (d. 1645), rarely distinguished between people from Granada or al-Andalus and other people living in North Africa, travelers often did make notice of such differences in their written accounts.⁷⁶ Al-Hassan b. Muhammad al-Wazzan al-Fasi (d. c. 1554, known in the West as Leo Africanus), for example, described Granadan sericulture in Morocco:

This city was ruined, and all the land remained desert for 120 years after [the civil wars during the reign of Marinid Sultan Abu Sa'id 'Uthman (1398–1420)] until some of the people of Granada arrived in Mauritania [Morocco] and it began to be renewed, and they planted a great many white mulberry trees because the Granadans are great silk merchants, and they also planted sugarcane, but that did not earn them much profit because it was inferior to the canes of al-Andalus.⁷⁷

Al-Wazzan, himself a Granadan immigrant, proudly depicted Granadan silk as a force for renewal in the economy of Morocco, although he provided few details on Moroccan silk production.⁷⁸

A few decades later, the Portuguese cleric Antonio de Sosa (d. c. 1585) recounted that the Moriscos in Algiers, called *mudejares* when they were from Granada and *tagarinos* when they were from Aragon or Valencia, frequently cultivated silk.⁷⁹ De Sosa, who was living in Algiers as a captive, remarked with contempt that Algerian women rarely did any work, preferring to use Christian captive labor, saying that "there are some women who spin now and again, but they soon tire of it."⁸⁰ Morisca women, moreover, were more industrious and continued to make silk in Algeria: "Few women know how to work on silk, unless it be some renegade or Morisca from Spain who learned it in her homeland, or daughters born of these women, whose mothers taught them the skill."⁸¹ Thus people continued to associate Morisca women with silk work, passing their skills to their daughters, in North Africa.

The Spanish chronicler Luis del Mármol Carvajal (d. 1600) added about Cherchall on the Mediterranean coast in what is now Algeria:

Mudejares, Andalusians, and *tagarinos* have populated the whole of the plain. They are ingenious and courageous men who have many very good lands, with great olive groves and vineyards inside the ancient walls. They have planted a great number of mulberries for the cultivation of silk, which is their primary agricultural enterprise, because the land is very good for it.⁸²

Mármol referred to the silk producers in Cherrchall as “ingenious and courageous men”—his language denied the significance and even the presence of women. Granadans, and women in particular, continued to produce silk in North Africa, but once again women and their labor appear only inconsistently in the written record. De Sosa suggests that women kept making silk. The other sources, however, are frustratingly silent—again subsuming women’s work in a household and community economy.

Conclusion

Historians continue to debate the effects that Spanish imperial policies had on the economies of Spain and the early modern world. In their study of the Castilian wool industry, the historians Carla Rahn Phillips and William Phillips argued for significant continuity in the Spanish economy despite conquest and overseas imperialism, claiming that “the fundamental bases of the economy changed very little.”⁸³ While it is true that Spain remained agricultural, the immense changes in the silk industry reveal an economy that nonetheless felt the effects of imperial expansion in critical ways. Work in the silk industry was segregated by gender as well as by religious group, with Muslims or Moriscos doing certain tasks and Christians doing others. The loss of Muslim and in particular female Muslim labor thus irreparably damaged the silk industry. Although more research is needed, silk work was not the only industry that relied exclusively or nearly exclusively on Muslim or Jewish labor and so was likely not the only industry devastated in this way by conquest and expulsion.⁸⁴

Like women elsewhere in the premodern world, women in Granada made cloth. Evidence from Granada confirms what historians have demonstrated for other parts of the Mediterranean—that women’s work was essential to economies that relied on textile, and especially silk, production. Women’s work was equally universal in both the Islamic and Christian Mediterranean. More research is needed to understand the implications of this ubiquity for societies across and beyond the Mediterranean, but the case of Granada suggests that women’s work had a significant impact—one that is often hard to see—on local and international economic and political structures.

Although women's work was vital to the production of silk in Granada, and women exclusively had extensive knowledge of and skills in silk cultivation and spinning, their Granadan contemporaries and twenty-first century historians alike have taken their participation in the economy for granted and failed to recognize their labor. Women's work became more restricted and less visible in the written record as the Spanish increased their persecution of Moriscos over the course of the sixteenth century. The undervaluing of women's work was one factor in the decline of silk in Granada, as officials realized too late that without Morisca women they could not produce raw silk. The connected stories of religious and cultural persecution and the decline of silk in Granada demonstrate the impossibility of separating livelihood and basic survival from the grander narratives of political continuity and change. Through conquest, forced conversion, war, expulsion, and immigration, Morisca women continued to produce silk as they always had.

NOTES

¹Archivo General de Simancas (hereafter AGS) Cámara de Castilla, legaljo (hereafter leg.) 2172. Quoted in Antonio Luis Cortés Peña and Bernard Vincent, *Historia de Granada: La época moderna* (Granada: Editorial Don Quijote, 1986), 142. *Maravedis* and *reales* were early-modern Spanish coins. In Spanish, a group of men and women are referred to using the masculine plural. Therefore, "Moriscos" includes both men and women, but the singular "Morisco" refers to a man.

²Instituto Valencia de Don Juan, leg. 1, folio 51. See Cortés Peña and Vincent, *Historia de Granada*, 143; José Enrique López de Coca Castañer, "La seda en el Reino de Granada: Siglos XV y XVI," in *España y Portugal en las rutas de la seda: Diez siglos de producción y comercio entre oriente y occidente*, ed. Comisión Española de la Ruta de la Seda (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona Publicacions, 1996), 57; and Manuel Garzón Pareja, *La industria sedera en España: El arte de la seda de Granada* (Granada: Archivo de la Real Chancillería, 1972), 249.

³Aurelia Martín Casares, *La esclavitud en la Granada del siglo XVI: género, raza y religión* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2000), 482.

⁴Cortés Peña and Vincent, *Historia de Granada*, 143.

⁵*Ibid.*, 144. On the limited recovery of the silk industry, also see A. Katie Harris, *From Muslim to Christian Granada: Inventing a City's Past in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 26.

⁶Joanne M. Ferraro, "The Manufacture and Movement of Goods," in *The Renaissance World*, ed. John Jeffries Martin (New York: Routledge, 2007), 94–95. Whether the expansion of Christian power, the conquest of Granada, and the expulsion of the Moriscos impacted larger economic structures is an ongoing debate among historians. Some historians today still claim (as John Elliott did in 1963) that a

weak economy, created in part by intolerant Spanish policy towards its Muslim and Jewish minorities, was the primary cause of imperial decline in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See John H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469–1716* (London: Edward Arnold, 1963), 122–23; and James Casey, *Family and Community in Early Modern Spain: the Citizens of Granada, 1570–1739* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3. On the history of English-language critiques of Spanish imperial policy in general, see Julián Juderías y Loyot, *La leyenda negra y la verdad histórica* (Madrid: Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos, 1914); and Richard Kagan, “Prescott’s Paradigm: American Historical Scholarship and the Decline of Spain,” *American Historical Review* 101, no. 2 (1996): 423–46. On the historiography of the expulsion of the Moriscos specifically, see Julio Caro Baroja, *Los moriscos del reino de Granada: ensayo de historia social* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1957), 257.

⁷Baroja, *Los moriscos del reino de Granada*, 107; David Coleman, *Creating Christian Granada: Society and Religious Culture in an Old-World Frontier City, 1492–1600* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 15, 27; and Harris, *From Muslim to Christian Granada*, 13. On the connections between silk and revolt, see Kenneth Garrad, “La industria sedera granadina en el siglo XVI y su conexión con el levantamiento de las Alpujarras (1568–1571),” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 5 (1956): 73–104.

⁸Mary Elizabeth Perry, *The Handless Maiden: Moriscos and the Politics of Religion in Early Modern Spain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 25, 76.

⁹There is a rich historiography on the shifting dynamics of Mediterranean trade. Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); Eliyahu Ashtor, *Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983); and Eric Dursteler, “On Bazaars and Battlefields: Recent Scholarship on Mediterranean Cultural Contacts,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 15, no. 5 (2011): 413–34.

¹⁰A recent exception is Sharon Farmer, *The Silk Industries of Medieval Paris: Artisanal Migration, Technological Innovation, and Gendered Experience* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). Work from previous decades includes Louise Tilly and Joan Wallach Scott, *Women, Work, and Family* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978); Brown and Goodman, “Women and Industry in Florence”; Natalie Zemon Davis, “Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyon,” *Feminist Studies* 8, no. 1 (1982): 46–80; Martha C. Howell, *Women, Production, and Patriarchy in Late Medieval Cities* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Merry E. Wiesner, *Working Women in Renaissance Germany* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986); Cristina Segura Graiño and Ángela Muñoz Fernández, *El trabajo de las mujeres en la edad media hispana* (Madrid: Asociación Cultural Al-Mudayna, 1988); Judith Bennett, “‘History that Stands Still’: Women’s Work in the European Past,” *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 2 (1988): 269–83; Marta Vicente, “Images and Realities of Work: Women and Guilds in Early Modern Barcelona,” in *Spanish Women in the Golden Age: Images and Realities*, ed. Magdalena Sánchez and Alain Saint-Saëns (Wesport, CT and London: Greenwood Press, 1996), 127–39; Judith Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women’s Work in a Changing World, 1300–1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); and Clare Crowston, “Women, Gender, and Guilds in Early Modern Europe: An Overview of Recent Research,” supplement, *International Review of Social History* 53, no. S16 (December 2008): 19–44.

¹¹On labor in general, with a chapter on women's work, see Shatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World*; on Jewish women's work in the Islamic world, see Karin Hofmeester, "Jewish Ethics and Women's Work in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Arab-Islamic World," supplement, *International Review of Social History* 56, no. S19 (2011): 141–64; and for discussions of women's economic activity in general that includes some discussion of work, see Fariba Zarinebaf-Shahr, "The Role of Women in the Urban Economy of Istanbul, 1700–1850," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 60, no. 1 (2001): 141–52; and Haim Gerber, "Social and Economic Position of Women in an Ottoman City, Bursa, 1600–1700," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12, no. 3 (1980): 231–44.

¹²On fatwas, see David Stephan Powers, *Law, Society, and Culture in the Maghrib, 1300–1500* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and Judith E. Tucker, *In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). On court records, see Ronald C. Jennings, "Women in Early 17th Century Ottoman Judicial Records: The Sharia Court of Anatolian Kayseri," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 18, no. 1 (1975): 53–114; Leslie P. Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); and Ramadan Al-Khowli, "Observations of the Use of Shari'a Court Records as a Source of Social History," in *Beyond the Exotic: Women's Histories in Islamic Societies*, ed. Amira El-Azhary Sonbol (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005). On *waqf* (charitable foundations) and contracts, see Gerber, "Social and Economic Position of Women"; Gabriel Baer, "Women and Waqf: An Analysis of the Istanbul *Tahrir* of 1546," *Asian and African Studies* 17, no.1–3 (1983): 9–27; Abraham Marcus, "Men, Women, and Property: Dealers in Real Estate in 18th Century Aleppo," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26, no. 2 (1983): 137–63; Margaret Lee Meriwether, "Women and Waqf Revisited: The Case of Aleppo, 1770–1840," in *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (Leiden and New York: Brill, 1997); Beshara Doumani, "Endowing Family: Waqf, Property Devolution, and Gender in Greater Syria, 1800 to 1860," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40, no. 1 (1998): 3–41; Fariba Zarinebaf, "Women, Patronage, and Charity in Ottoman Istanbul," in *Beyond the Exotic: Women's Histories in Islamic Societies*, ed. Amira El Azhary Sonbol (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005); Randi Deguilhem, "Consciousness of Self: The Muslim Woman as Creator and Manager of Waqf Foundations in Late Ottoman Damascus," in *Beyond the Exotic: Women's Histories in Islamic Societies*, ed. Amira El Azhary Sonbol (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005); and Maya Shatzmiller, *Her Day in Court: Women's Property Rights in Fifteenth-Century Granada* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

¹³On Italy, see Luca Molà, *The Silk Industry of Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000) and Ferraro, "The Manufacture and Movement of Goods," 94; on Ottoman Turkey, see Gerber, "Social and Economic Position of Women," 237; on Western Europe, see Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 110; on Byzantium, see Molly Fulghum Heintz, "Work: The Art and Craft of Earning a Living," in *Byzantine Women and their World*, ed. Ioli Kalavrezou (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 141; and Robert Sabatino Lopez, "Silk Industry in the Byzantine Empire," *Speculum* 20, no. 1 (1945): 1–42, 6.

¹⁴For the silk industry, Brown does not include merchants or warehouse owners (who would likely have been male), but she also does not include workers who planted and harvest mulberries and raised silkworms (mostly women). Judith C. Brown and Jordan Goodman, "Women and Industry in Florence," *Journal of Economic History* 40, no. 1 (1980): 73–80, 79–80.

¹⁵Sharon Farmer, *The Silk Industries of Medieval Paris: Artisanal Migration, Technological Innovation, and Gendered Experience* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 107.

¹⁶Archivo General de Simancas, Cámara de Castilla, leg. 2150.

¹⁷Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyon"; and Vicente, "Images and Realities of Work."

¹⁸Mary Elizabeth Perry has discussed the problems of finding Spanish Muslim women in the archives given this double marginalization. Mary Elizabeth Perry, "Finding Fatima, a Slave Woman of Early Modern Spain," *Journal of Women's History* 20, no. 1 (2008): 151–67.

¹⁹Leonard Patrick Harvey has a detailed account of the book burning, see *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 333–35. For a discussion of Spanish policies toward Arabic writing during this period, see Harvey, *Muslims in Spain, 1500 to 1614* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005); and Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, *The Orient in Spain: Converted Muslims, the Forged Lead Books of Granada, and the Rise of Orientalism* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013).

²⁰Mary Schoeser, *Silk* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 27–28; and Xinru Liu, *Silk and Religion: An Exploration of Material Life and the Thought of People, AD 600–1200* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 141–47.

²¹David Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Interaction: Byzantium, the Muslim World, and the Christian West," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58 (2004): 197–240, 199.

²²Schoeser, *Silk*, 28.

²³Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad al-Idrisi, *Kitab Nuzhat al-Mushtaq fi Ikhtiraq al-Afaq* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafah al-Diniyah, 1990), II: 562; and Olivia Remie Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900–1500* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 174.

²⁴Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr al-Zuhri, *Kitab al-Jughrafiya* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniya, 1989), 123, 26–27.

²⁵Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatib, *Al-Ihata fi Akhbar Gharnata* (Beirut: Dar Kutub al-'Ilmiya, 2004), I:17; and Rachel Arié, *L'Espagne musulmane au Temps des Nasrides (1232–1492)* (Paris: Éditions de Boccard, 1973), 355.

²⁶Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain*, 173.

²⁷A *panera* is a box or basket made of esparto grass used for housing silk-worms. See Gonzalo de las Casas, *Arte nuevo para criar seda* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1996), 7–8.

²⁸Arié, *L'Espagne Musulmane*, 355.

²⁹In the Kingdom of Granada, the *qaysariyya* was always the silk market, although elsewhere in the Arabic-speaking world it could mean other types of markets as well. It is used in modern Spanish only as a place name (for example, the neighborhood of Granada that used to be the silk market is still known as the *Alcaicería* but without the meaning of a place where silk is sold). Arib ibn Sa'd, *Le Calendrier de Cordoue*, trans. Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 91, 33.

³⁰For examples, see Jerrilynn Denise Dodds, *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art distributed by Henry A. Abrams, Inc., 1992).

³¹Commerce in this period is well-documented thanks to the riches of the Cairo Geniza. See the work of Shlomo D. Goitein, especially Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*.

³²Susan Whitfield, *Life along the Silk Road*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 73–89; and Luce Boulnois, *Silk Road: Monks, Warriors, & Merchants on the Silk Road*, trans. Helen Loveday (Hong Kong and New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 179–83.

³³Angeliki E. Laiou, "Women in the Marketplace of Constantinople, 10th–14th Centuries," in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography, and Everyday Life*, ed. Nevra Necipoğlu (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 268–70; Heintz, "Work: The Art and Craft of Earning a Living," 140–1; H. J. Schmidt, et al., *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Ḥarīr"; and Miller Tanya Stabler, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris: Gender, Patronage, and Spiritual Authority* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 67–78.

³⁴E. Jane Burns, *Sea of Silk: A Textile Geography of Women's Work in Medieval French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

³⁵Schmidt, et al., "Harir."

³⁶Karen K. Hersch, "The Woolworker Bride," in *Ancient Marriage in Myth and Reality*, ed. Lena Larsson Lovén and Agneta Strömberg (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010), 126.

³⁷Heintz, "Work: The Art and Craft of Earning a Living."

³⁸Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulum al-Din* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazim, 2005), 2:2, 500. Translation from al-Ghazali, *Marriage and Sexuality in Islam: A Translation of al-Ghazali's Book on the Etiquette of Marriage from the Ihya'*, trans. Madelain Farah (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984).

³⁹Abu al-Walid Muhammad ibn Ahmad Ibn Rushd, *Averroes on Plato's Republic*, trans. Ralph Lerner (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974), 59. The original Arabic text is no longer extant.

⁴⁰al-Zuhri, *Kitab al-Jughrafiya*, 102. See also Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain*, 174.

⁴¹Arié, *L'Espagne Musulmane*, 362.

⁴²For al-Wansharisi's biography, see Powers, *Law, Society, and Culture in the Maghrib*, 4–7; and Vincent Lagardère *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Al-Wansharisi, Abu al-Abbas b. Yahya b. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahid b. 'Ali (834–914/1431–1508)." *Ifriqiya* generally includes modern Libya, Tunisia, and eastern Algeria, and the *Maghrib* here refers to Morocco and western Algeria. Ahmad b. Yahya al-Wansharisi, *Al-Mi'yar al-Mu'rib wa-l-Jami' al-Mughrib 'an Fatawa Ahl Ifriqiya wa-l-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, 13 vols. (Rabat: Wizarat al-Awqaf wa-al-Shuun al-Islamiya lil-Mamlaka al-Maghribiya, 1981). Selections translated to French in Ahmad b. Yahya al-Wansharisi and Vincent Lagardère, *Histoire et Société en Occident Musulman au Moyen Age: Analyse du Mi'yar dal-Wansarisi* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 1995).

⁴³Judith Tucker gives an excellent overview of the historiography and methodology of using fatwas for social history. Tucker, *In the House of the Law*; and Judith Tucker, "'And God Knows Best': The Fatwa as a Source for the History of Gender in the Arab World," in *Beyond the Exotic: Women's Histories in Islamic Societies*, ed. Amira El Azhary Sonbol (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005). See also David Stephan Powers, *The Development of Islamic Law and Society in the Maghrib: Qadis, Muftis, and Family Law* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Variorum, 2011); and E. Tyan and J. R. Walsh, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Fatwā."

⁴⁴There are conflicting opinions about whether the author of this fatwa is Muhammad al-Saraqusti (Granada, d. 1459) or Abu 'Abd Allah al-Saraqusti (Zaragoza, d. 1084). See Shatzmiller, *Her Day in Court*, 161; and editorial note in al-Wansharisi and Lagardère, *Histoire et Société en Occident Musulman*, 174–75.

⁴⁵al-Wansharisi, *Al-Mi'yar*, 5:237–38.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 5:238–39.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 6:71; Al-Wansharisi and Lagardère, *Histoire et Société en Occident Musulman*, 199.

⁴⁸Luis Seco de Lucena, trans., *Documentos árabeo-granadinos: Edición crítica del texto árabe y traducción al español, con introducción, notas, glosarios e índices* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Islámicos, 1961); and Amalia Zomeño, "Repertorio documental árabeo-granadino: Los documentos árabes de la Biblioteca Universitaria de Granada," *Qurtuba* 6 (2001): 275–96.

⁴⁹Ronald Jennings found that 40 percent of property sales involved women in Kayseri (Anatolia) in the seventeenth century. Abraham Marcus found a roughly corresponding figure of 63 percent for Aleppo (Syria) in the eighteenth century. Jennings, "Women in Early 17th Century Ottoman Judicial Records," 97–101; and Abraham Marcus, "Men, Women, and Property: Dealers in Real Estate in 18th Century Aleppo," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26, no. 2 (1983): 137–63, 145.

⁵⁰Seco de Lucena, *Documentos árabe-granadinos*; and Shatzmiller, *Her Day in Court*, 1.

⁵¹The high number of women in these documents with the nickname “*Umm al-Fath*” is a mystery. In Arabic it means “Mother of Conquest,” so perhaps it is an honorary reference to male relatives fighting Christian armies.

⁵²“Escritura por la cual Omm-Al-Fath, hija de Abu Ishac Ibrahim Ben Abdon confiesa haber vendido a Omm Al-Fath, hija de Otsman tres libras de seda, 1486,” Repositorio Institucional de la Universidad de Granada, leg. 71, Carpeta 35. See also Luis Seco de Lucena, “Escrituras árabes en la Universidad de Granada,” *Al-Andalus* 35, no. 2 (1970): 315–54, 344.

⁵³Seco de Lucena, *Documentos árabe-granadinos*, 47–49.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 113.

⁵⁵Pedro de Medina, *Libro de grandezas y cosas memorables de España, libro de la verdad* (1555; reprint, Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1944), 191.

⁵⁶“Ordenanzas hechas por la ciudad de Granada para el labor y venta de la seda (1512, 19 marzo, Granada),” in *Documentos para la historia de la seda en el Reino de Granada (siglos XV–XVIII)*, ed. Rafael Marín López (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2008), 57.

⁵⁷Other professions, including weaving, that were more often guild controlled excluded women outright (with some exceptions, most often for the widows of guild members). For an overview, see Joyce Burnette, “The Changing Economic Roles of Women,” in *Routledge Handbook of Modern Economic History*, ed. Robert Whaples and Randall Parker (New York: Routledge, 2013). On the Netherlands and Flanders, see Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly, “Craft Guilds in Comparative Perspective: The Northern and Southern Netherlands, a Survey,” in *Craft Guilds in the Early Modern Low Countries: Work, Power, and Representation*, ed. Maarten Roy Prak (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006); on Germany, see Merry E. Wiesner, “Spinning Out Capital: Women’s Work in the Early Modern Economy,” in *Gender, Church, and the State in Early Modern Germany: Essays by Merry E. Wiesner* (New York: Routledge, 2014); on the Islamic world, see Shatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World*, 351–52.

⁵⁸“Carta real de merced de la reina D.a Juana, firmada por su padre el rey Fernando, creando el cargo de veedor de la seda y nombrando para el al licenciado Galindez de Carvajal (1513, septiembre 4, Valladolid),” in *Documentos para la historia de la seda en el Reino de Granada (siglos XV–XVIII)*, ed. Rafael Marín López (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2008), 61.

⁵⁹“Ordenanzas de Granada sobre el hilar de la seda en madeja (1535, junio 8, Granada),” in *Documentos para la historia de la seda en el Reino de Granada (siglos XV–XVIII)*, ed. Rafael Marín López (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2008).

⁶⁰“Ordenanzas de Granada sobre los hiladores de sedas (1589, septiembre, Granada),” in *Documentos para la historia de la seda en el Reino de Granada (siglos XV–XVIII)*, ed. Rafael Marín López (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2008); and

“Ordenanzas hechas por la ciudad de Granada para el labor y venta de la seda (1512, 19 marzo, Granada),” in *Ibid.*

⁶¹This was typical notarial practice throughout early modern Iberia. See Marta Vicente, “Images and Realities of Work: Women and Guilds in Early Modern Barcelona,” in *Spanish Women in the Golden Age: Images and Realities*, ed. Magdalena Sánchez and Alain Saint-Saëns (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996); and Darlene Abreu-Ferreira, “Work and Identity in Early Modern Portugal: What Did Gender Have to Do with It?,” *Journal of Social History* 35, no. 4 (2002): 859–87.

⁶²Amalia García Pedraza, *Actitudes ante la muerte en la Granada del siglo XVI: los moriscos que quisieron salvarse*, 2 vols. (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2002) 1:383–85.

⁶³Colegio Notarial de Granada, Archivo Histórico de Protocolos, protocolo 68, folio 670r.

⁶⁴Amalia García Pedraza, *Inventario de protocolos notariales: Granada, siglo XVI* (Granada: Colegio Notarial de Granada, 2008).

⁶⁵García Pedraza, *Actitudes ante la muerte*, 1: 386.

⁶⁶Juan Martínez Ruiz, ed., *Inventarios de bienes moriscos del Reino de Granada, siglo XVI: lingüística y civilización* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1972).

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 250.

⁶⁸Archivo Histórico de la Alhambra, leg. 12, folio 27.

⁶⁹Martínez Ruiz, *Inventarios de bienes moriscos*, 250.

⁷⁰Garrad, “La industria sedera granadina.”

⁷¹Aurelia Martín Casares, “De pasivas a beligerantes: las mujeres en la guerra de las Alpujarras,” in *Las mujeres y las guerras: el papel de las mujeres en las guerras de la Edad Antigua a la Contemporánea*, ed. Mary Nash and Susanna Tavera (Barcelona: Icaria Editorial, 2003).

⁷²Cortés Peña and Vincent, *Historia de Granada*, 143.

⁷³Archivo Histórico Nacional, Inquisición, leg. 553, folio 24.

⁷⁴Stephanie Cavanaugh, “The Morisco Problem and the Politics of Belonging in Sixteenth-Century Valladolid” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2016), 112.

⁷⁵For a discussion of the economic activities of the Andalusians in Morocco, with some information about silk production, see Muhammad Razzuq, *Al-Andalus-siyyun wa-Hijratuhum ila al-Maghrib: Khilala al-Qarnayn 16-17* (Casablanca: Afriqiya al-Sharq, 1989), 266–67.

⁷⁶Abd al-‘Aziz b. al-Hasan al-Zayyati, *Al-Jawahir al-mukhtara fi-ma waqafu ‘alayhi min al-nawazil bi-Jibal Ghumara*, Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc, D-3832; and Bibliothèque Fondation Roi Abdül Aziz al-Saoud, #584.

⁷⁷Al-Wazzan is referring to a city he called "Camis Metgara" in Italian, which Louis Massignon identified as the Thursday market (*al-khamīs*) of the Zenata Matgara tribe, located about 25 kilometers southwest of Fez. Louis Massignon, *Le Maroc dans les premières années du XVIe siècle; tableau géographique d'après Léon l'Africain* (Algiers: Typ. A. Jourdan, 1906), 189. Al-Wazzan's book was originally written and published in Italian, which he learned during his captivity in Rome. Hassan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzan al-Fasi and Giovanni Battista Ramusio, *Delle navigationi et viaggi: in molti luoghi corretta, et ampliata, nella quale si contengono la descrizione dell'Africa* (Venice: Giunti, 1554), 34r. English translation: Hassan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzan al-Fasi, *The History and Description of Africa, and of the Notable Things Therein Contained* (1600; reprint, London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1896).

⁷⁸For more information on al-Wazzan and his life, see Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim Between Worlds* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006).

⁷⁹This work was long attributed to Diego de Haedo who is now believed to have only edited the work that was actually written by Antonio de Sosa. Diego de Haëdo, *Topografía e historia general de Argel* (Madrid: Diego Fernandez de Cordoua y Ouiedo, impressor de libros, 1612), 9r. See the recent English translation and its introduction for more about the identity of the author, Antonio de Sosa, *An Early Modern Dialogue with Islam: Antonio de Sosa's Topography of Algiers (1612)*, trans. Diana Armas de Wilson (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).

⁸⁰Haëdo, *Topografía e historia*, 28v (misabeled as 27v); translation to English in Armas's other than the word "hilar" (spin), which she mistranslates as "weave." De Sosa, *An Early Modern Dialogue*, 203.

⁸¹Haëdo, *Topografía e historia*, 28v (misabeled as 27v).

⁸²Mármol called Cherchall "Sargel." Luis del Mármol Carvajal, *Descripción general de Affrica* (Granada: Rene Rabut, 1573), 5:211r–v.

⁸³Carla Rahn Phillips and William D. Phillips, *Spain's Golden Fleece: Wool Production and the Wool Trade from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), xiii.

⁸⁴Brian A. Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, c. 1050–1614* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 425–31; and Maya Shatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 331.