Given the tensions that do exist in Órgiva—arising from language differences, dialectal differences within Spanish, and language ideologies; class, conventionality, and respectability; civilizational identities; and conceptions of proper Islamic practice—how is the town’s high level of peaceful coexistence (in comparison with nearby manifestations of intolerance) achieved? Living in parallel worlds creates an ambiguous relationship with permission-based and recognition-based tolerance. Functioning in separate spheres can make it more likely for a particular community to feel grudgingly put-up-with and marginalized when tensions arise. Although some interlocutors stated that they liked the dynamic of parallel lives, if there is no positive contact between groups, the small frictions that are bound to arise in any space of everyday interaction (supermarket, sports center, etc.) can easily escalate. With the passage of time, the school system in Órgiva will probably be the focal point of increased contact between groups and a testing ground for the maintenance of parallel worlds or a transition to more hybridity. But, at present, it is the positive points of contact between the largely separate spheres that allow for community members to feel respected and offer a promising context for recognition-based tolerance.
There are specific alliances that create connections across the separate communities in Órgiva. The three main alliances that bridge otherwise disparate groups are: 1) migration memory, 2) women’s issues and feminist identities, and 3) Islam and the imposed label of moro. I use the term “migration memory” to refer to the migration-related experiences of orgiveños, many of whom have never lived outside of Órgiva or the Alpujarra. The term seeks to include the effects of migration on those who were mobile as well as on those who were immobile—that is, on the non-movers who stayed behind. Departures, especially when they are followed by regular return visits, have an important role in the lives and outlook of those who stayed. The mobilities paradigm promotes the study of the relationship of “mobilities to associated immobilities or moorings, including their ethical dimension; and it encompasses both the embodied practice of movement and the representations, ideologies and meanings attached to both movement and stillness” (Sheller, 1). When viewed through a mobility studies lens, the deeper layers and lasting resonances of population shifts in the Alpujarra region come to the fore and it becomes apparent that migration memory makes many orgiveños identify to some extent with economic migrants.

In spite of being a mountainous region that is difficult to access, the layers of population movement in the Alpujarra are deep. After being colonized by Iberians, Celts, Romans, and Visigoths, the Umayyad Caliphate arrived, bringing Imazighen and Arabs to the Alpujarra. But after a few centuries, the Arabo-Amazigh population underwent a radical shift. Pozo Felguera explains that in response to the second Rebellion of the Alpujarras (1568–71), starting in 1570 Castilian authorities sent approximately 64,200 moriscos to other parts of the peninsula. Meanwhile, between 1572 and 1595, the Christian authorities encouraged people from other parts of Andalucía, Castile, Galicia, and Extremadura to settle in the houses and lands left by the moriscos. This was followed by the expulsion decrees (1609–14) mandating the departure of the moriscos and more official efforts to resettle the area with Galicians and other Christians from the peninsula. Then, for almost 300 years, the Alpujarra had a very stable popula-
tion, until some intrepid inhabitants of the region became part of a wave of Spanish emigration at the turn of the 19th century, primarily to Hispano-America. These émigrés, mentioned by Brenan in *South from Granada*, mostly went to Argentina, Brazil, and Algeria.¹ Then the Spanish Civil War (1936–39) violently reduced the population of the Alpujarra, site of some of the last Republican holdouts, and of Órgiva in particular. Although the town itself was under Nationalist control, the front line between Nationalist and Republican forces ran just south of Órgiva. In addition to those who perished in the conflict, some Republicans went into exile in other parts of Europe and in Latin America, during and after the war.

In more recent memory, economic migration affected the population of the Alpujarra. In the 1950s, alongside an overall Spanish trend of movement from rural to urban areas, an emigration wave took people from the most economically depressed parts of Spain—the regions of Andalucía, Extremadura, and Galicia—to urban centers in other parts of the country that were experiencing economic growth: Madrid and (for Andalusians in particular) Barcelona. Additionally, the Franco government’s 1959 *Plan de Estabilización* (Stabilization Plan) authorized extranational emigration. This produced an exodus from Andalucía and the other depressed regions to other Western European countries (mainly France, Switzerland, and Germany) during the 1960s and early 1970s. As noted by Jiménez-Díaz, in the decade of the ’70s the Alpujarra in particular contributed to this exodus because of a local agricultural crisis (227). According to *Hablamos de Órgiva*, between 1950 and 2010, more than 2,000 people left Órgiva (“Los que se fueron y los que llegaron” 3). With changing economic circumstances on the individual and regional levels, some of these labor migrants returned after several years in Catalonia or elsewhere in Europe. For these reasons, in the second half of the 20th century, emigration became one of the defining characteristics of not only Andalusian, but specifically Alpujarran, culture.

If a given orgiveño did not emigrate (and return), he or she certainly has family members, neighbors, and friends who did emigrate. Some who left returned after several years, with children who had
been raised outside of Andalucía; though they sometimes spoke Spanish like any other orgiveño, those children would be known from then on by the place of the family’s emigration: el alemán, la catalana (the German guy, the Catalan girl), etc. Many of those who left settled outside the region permanently, but for decades came to visit their home village on a regular basis. In Órgiva, up until the early 2000s, busloads of local families who had emigrated to Barcelona would return to the town annually at two points in the year: for the Christmas holidays and for the celebration of El Cristo de la Expiración leading up to Holy Week. Up to three chartered buses full of émigré orgiveños would arrive in the town plaza and be greeted with great fanfare. Many of the same émigré families would return (trickling in by family unit) for the summer, when the population of the town would swell. With time, aside from a few return migrants, the generation that had been born in Barcelona became rooted there and no longer visited the town regularly. However, because of this experience of emigration with decades of regular visits, orgiveños above the age of 30, whether they left and returned, or stayed behind, are very aware of the dynamics of labor migration; it was a part of their familial and social lives.

This labor migration is not a Castilian or metropolitan Spanish story, rather it is primarily an Andalusian and Extremaduran story. In the particular case of Órgiva, it is a story that revolves around the encounter between rural, working-class, less educated individuals who come from a region long considered to be backward and primitive and an urban society considered to be more advanced. It is the story of an encounter between “barbarism” on the border with North Africa and “civilization” in cities (whether in Spain or elsewhere) that are considered fully European. And this encounter is echoed in interactions within Órgiva in which a metropolitan Spaniard looks down at an Alpujarran as a cateto or hillbilly. Orgiveños carry the cultural memory of active migrant ties from the 1960s thru the early 2000s in which the émigrés were at an economic and social disadvantage and in which broader, very mobile, hierarchical discourses were at work.

My conversations with the return migrant Mari Carmen, together with comments made by the small business-owner Enrique, shed light
on the dynamics of migration memory (memories of labor migration and return, or of contact with loved ones who were labor migrants). After being born in Órgiva, Mari Carmen was raised in Barcelona, where her Alpujarran parents, like so many others, had gone to work around 1960. Mari Carmen recalls growing up with a steady stream of house guests: friends and relatives from Órgiva who stayed with Mari Carmen’s family as they looked for work and their own lodging as part of their labor migration process. Although her father was a barely literate manual laborer and her mother was illiterate, Mari Carmen worked hard and had built a successful career in Barcelona. She jokingly acknowledged that it was not “nostalgia for my hometown [nostalgia por mi pueblo natal]” that had brought her back to Órgiva as an adult, but rather family circumstances. When I asked if she felt like more of an origiveña or a forastera—which community she felt more a part of—her response was to say that she has two best friends in the town, one from Órgiva and the other from Switzerland. From her vantage point straddling two communities, she described the townspeople as “supportive [solidario]” and “welcoming [acogedor],” but also noted that those orgiveños who have stayed in the town have limited “empathy,” in the sense that they have a hard time accepting those who have a different opinion or custom: they aren’t able to put themselves in the other’s shoes.

In conversations with Enrique, I saw the limits of empathy, the line at which tolerance began to fade, but it was a bit further out than one would expect for someone of his socioeconomic standing and political affiliations. Recall that Enrique is a successful small business-owner and part of the land-owning class in the town. In keeping with this, his politics are center-right to further right. He has never lived outside of Órgiva, but has first cousins that emigrated to Barcelona and neighbors that emigrated to Germany and returned. One evening, while sharing dinner with Enrique and a group of orgiveños, the conversation turned to politics and the recent national elections of April 2019, in which the ultra-conservative Vox party, whose political campaign called for a new Reconquista and a rejection of Islam, had won more than 10 percent of the votes and thus had secured the fifth largest
number of representatives in the Spanish Congress. It was one of various occasions in which I have heard Enrique complain about the arrival of undocumented immigrants on _pateras_ (simple vessels carrying Maghrebis and sub-Saharan Africans from the shores of North Africa). This evening, Enrique cited that these immigrants drain the Spanish economy and criticized center-left and left immigration policies that he saw as giving too much government assistance to immigrants. Then Enrique gestured with his hand toward a small business on the plaza run by a Moroccan who is commonly referred to by _or-giveños_ as “el moro de la plaza”—the Moor of the plaza. Drawing a distinction, Enrique said: “Here you have the Moor, who pays his taxes . . . God bless him! [¡Bendito sea!]” After making clear his approval of this fellow small business-owner’s presence by wishing him blessings, Enrique then continued with: “We’re also immigrants, all the people who left for Germany . . . .” This local narrative, along with Stewart’s references to Alpujarran emigration in his third memoir, _The Almond Blossom Appreciation Society_, demonstrates that migration memory creates an identification with economic migrants that can even take the form of feelings of solidarity toward the North African migrants in the town. Perhaps due to the temporally overlapping experiences of labor emigration, an influx of relatively affluent Northern Europeans, and labor immigration (North African immigrants), the _or-giveños_ have been more tolerant of the legal, working migrants from the Maghreb. Migration memory leads some _or-giveños_ to identify with the process of labor migration—though they may reject clandestine immigration.

Feminist identities, or at least a broader concern for women’s issues and a desire for sisterhood, create another bridge across communities in Órgiva. Through local women’s associations, the concern for women’s rights and the desire to support other women creates bonds between women from various communities in the town. On International Women’s Day in 1991, a group of local women with leftist political affiliations founded _la Asociación de Mujeres de Órgiva_ (the Women’s Association of Órgiva), now known as the _Asociación de Mujeres por la Igualdad_. The association’s current president stated that the main mission of the organization is “to establish real equal-
“parity” among genders and that this was accomplished through its major initiatives and the very act of people coming together to work on those initiatives.5

The association’s main initiative is its women’s shelter. Since 2000, the Asociación de Mujeres, with funding from the Junta de Andalucía, has run a women’s shelter whose official name is La Casa de Acogida para Mujeres con Graves Problemas Sociales y Económicos (The Shelter for Women with Serious Social and Economic Problems). This shelter provides a residence and support services for victims of domestic abuse and their children. An employee of the shelter explained that the women and children who reside in the facility, typically for several months, are transferred there from centers in other parts of Andalucía and often include Maghrebi immigrants (an average of one North African woman, with her children, per year).6 This adds to the more transient Maghrebi population, that is not reflected in the population data on the town.

In the summer of 2016, I was invited to a party at the apartment of a Moroccan woman who was a former resident of the women’s shelter. After spending several months at the shelter, she had decided to stay in Órgiva. This survivor of spousal abuse was struggling to improve her financial situation, and a group of friends who were local women, including members of the Asociación de Mujeres who had met the Moroccan migrant through her stay at the shelter, decided to organize a gathering to support her. The group of orgiveñas as well as other friends whom they had invited, each chipped in to collect money for the migrant who had prepared a Moroccan meal to share with us. The gathering, which included orgiveñas, a few Britons, and a few Spaniards who had moved to Órgiva from elsewhere in Spain (with only one man among them), was jovial and welcoming. In addition to Maghrebi food, there was music and singing, including Spanish folk favorites and North African pop music. This grassroots fundraiser for a Moroccan migrant, organized by and for women, demonstrated not only a will to help and an interest in inter-cultural dialogue, but a respectful recognition of Maghrebi culture and of a shared social positioning as women.
As an organization, the Asociación de Mujeres por la Igualdad also parallels this level of inclusivity with regard to country of origin. According to the current president, orgiveñas make up approximately 60 percent of the association’s membership, with the remaining members coming from an array of different countries and parts of the world. These more recent arrivals in the town have been prominent in leadership positions within the association. Up until recently, the president of the association was from Colombia, and in November 2019 a new president, Rahma Sevilla Segovia, of North African Muslim origin, was elected. Sevilla Segovia, a native of Ceuta, noted that while she was a student at the University of Granada friends spoke highly to her about Órgiva and the Alpujarra, so a few years ago she decided to move there and soon afterwards she began volunteering at the women’s shelter. She observed that while she didn’t see the different groups in Órgiva “mix [entremezclarse],” and there may not be much day-to-day contact between them, she did see collaboration between the different communities that created “a high level of convivencia.” Sevilla Segovia then spontaneously gave the example of the convert community in Órgiva, pointing out that it has been particularly supportive of the association’s activities. For instance, on various occasions, they have provided employment for women who had been living at the shelter and decided to stay in Órgiva. Later in our conversation, she mentioned a woman from Morocco who had been a resident of the shelter in 2018 and after several months there had decided to stay in Órgiva. Now this Maghrebi woman had become a regular volunteer in the association’s activities. These examples of cross-community engagement make it clear that women’s interests and mutual support is a strong corridor for connections across the “parallel worlds” that exist alongside each other in Órgiva.

The third bridging identity in Órgiva is still “under construction” for those who (would) participate in it, although it certainly exists, in an ill-defined but historically rooted form, in the eyes of orgiveños. From the perspective of many of the townspeople, Muslimness binds together both the converts to Islam of European and Euro-American origin and the Muslim Maghrebi migrants. Although, as seen earlier,
the convert and Maghrebi communities are distinct in myriad ways and even the site of intra-Muslim tensions or ambivalence, the *orgiveños* often place them in the same category, conflating *marroquí* and *musulmán*. Rogozen-Soltar (2017) notes that in the city of Granada the term *moro* is mostly used to refer to Moroccans and other Muslim migrants, and not to converts (12). Something similar occurs in Órgiva. Although the ratio of converts to Maghrebs is almost inverted in Órgiva in comparison with Granada (where today there are many more Maghrebi migrants than converts), the term *moro* carries a strong racial connotation. Additionally, since nearly all the converts in Órgiva are aligned with Sufi Islam, the term “sufí” is often used by *orgiveños* to refer to the converts. Nonetheless, *orgiveños* sometimes use *moro* to refer to both groups, as the townspeople seem to be attempting to adjust their cultural schemas to the new reality around them.

One example of the conflation of the migrant and convert Muslim communities is that when I asked an *orgiveña* if there were any more businesses in Órgiva run by Moroccans, other than the ones I had just mentioned to her, it became clear that there was some confusion regarding terminology. In her response, my *orgiveña* interlocutor included businesses run by European converts to Islam and I had to emphasize the distinction between Moroccan and Muslim in order to get clearer information. Although neither of us used the term *moro* in this conversation, I believe that the cultural schema that produces the category *moro* was at work in our interchange. The schema of *moros* vs. *cristianos* inherited from the medieval and early modern periods and the Spanish colonial enterprise in North Africa, and reworked by political parties such as Vox, persists among at least some *orgiveños* in the form of a conceptualization of identity groups that is based solely on religion—even if the *cristianos* in question are not particularly observant. My interlocutor had an easier time grouping all Muslims together, than she did separating out the North Africans in the town. It could be argued, as Pérez-Reverte attempts to do, that the conceptual category of *moro*, while inaccurate for European converts, can be separated from its historical baggage and does not necessarily entail rejection of the so-called *moros*. However, even when not used
to directly express any form of rejection or intentionally invoke the hierarchical manner in which the term has historically been used, the term *moro* reinscribes religious boundaries, connects them with race or a biological essence, and in the process obscures both the diversity among practitioners of Islam and the many commonalities that traverse religious boundary lines.

The complexities surrounding the usage of the term *moro* and how it is employed to exclude and hierarchize can be appreciated in an anecdote recounted to me by the British convert Aya, whose children were born into Islam and are being raised in Órgiva. While we talked about the Muslim convert community in the town, Aya brought up the adolescents from the center for unaccompanied minor migrants. She told me that one day her pre-teen son was at the Órgiva poli, or sports center, when a group of *orgiveño* boys was recounting a recent incident in which “un moro,” referring to one of the Moroccan youths from the Center, had thrown a rock at so-and-so. Then some of the *orgiveño* youths turned to Aya’s son and asked “¿tú eres moro? [are you a Moor?]” Aware that he was or might be Muslim, the local youths were trying to determine if Aya’s son was indeed Muslim, and perhaps, also who exactly the term *moro* could or should include. Regardless of the intention of the question (whether informational or pursuing a definition of categories), at that moment through that question they were establishing boundaries between “us” (Christians) versus “them” (Muslims) that implied a superior positioning of the Christians.

The conflated label of *moro* creates strange bedfellows in Órgiva: a blond youth who is bilingual in English and Spanish and whose parents have university degrees may be grouped with a brown-skinned youth who is barely literate in Arabic, is starting to learn Spanish, and whose parents back in Morocco are poor, manual laborers—not to mention the fact that they may have very different understandings and practices of Islam. Historically, in Iberia the fluidity of religious conversion led to an emphasis on purported biological difference. As the Reconquista process advanced and Muslims converted to Christianity, in some cases by force and in some cases by choice to improve social status, Christian concern over being able to distin-
guish between “old Christians” and *conversos* or *moriscos* grew. The Iberian concept of *limpieza de sangre*, literally “cleanliness of blood” and meaning “blood purity,” viewed Jewish and Muslim lineage as a biological impurity that must be ferreted out and barred from positions of power such as religious and military orders and guilds. This form of discrimination took on legal dimensions when the first statute of *limpieza de sangre* appeared in 1449, which banned *conversos* and their descendants from most official positions, and continued to play an important role in both the Iberian Peninsula and the Americas into the 19th century. Walter Mignolo and Anouar Majid, among others, have argued that Reconquista Iberia and its concept of blood purity is the source of modern systems for codifying and rejecting difference: religious, racialized religious, and racialized difference in general.8

A fair amount has been written about the racialization or ethnici-
zation of converts to Islam.9 Rosón Lorente, in his work on converts and Maghrebis in the city of Granada, argues that “local Islam, its communities and representatives, end up being ‘ethnicized’ as symbols and markers of an alterity that is supposedly incommensurate with modernization and the ‘Europeanization’ of the culture of Anda-
lucía” (1). However, at least in the context of Órgiva, the recalibration of the term *moro* is intertwined with the process of formulating a new conception of “Muslim,” one that is separated from the concept of the Moor as racially other and civilizationally less advanced—that is, less modern and less European.

To whatever extent the converts in Órgiva are perceived or oper-
ate as an ethno-racial group, that ethno-racial marker would only last while they are wearing their distinctive clothing and head covering (hijab or kufi cap). If a convert were to choose to dress in unmarked clothing (any type of mainstream Spanish dress), the visual ethno-
racial marking would disappear. All that would remain, aside from practices such as abstention from alcohol and pork and observance of Ramadan, would be their (adopted) Muslim first names. For Maghrebi migrants, this is typically not the case. Although some Maghrebi im-
migrants and their children don’t have any physical traits associated in the Spanish imaginary with North Africa and by extension with
Islam, many do have such physical characteristics. For these people of Maghrebi origin, no matter what they wear, regardless of whether or not they have a notable accent in Spanish, and irrespective of whether or not they choose to go by a Christian first name, they will be interpreted by the majority culture as Maghrebi, Muslim, and Other. Thus, any ethnicization of European converts is very contingent in comparison with that of Maghrebi migrants, even when the migrant is not a practicing Muslim.

While the converts to Islam in Órgiva are marked by their clothing and head-covering, adopted names, and food-related practices, the names and food-related practices overlap with those of the Maghrebis in the town and the clothing and head-covering share some elements with, or at least are perceived as being related to, those of the Maghrebis. For centuries in Spain such attire, names, and food practices have been labeled as moro. Orgiveños, while grappling with the redefinition of the term moro, are attempting to understand how that which is marked, especially in the context of the borderland of Andalucía, as European and modern (whiteness and standard Spanish or being a native speaker of English) can intersect with that which has been marked as African and primitive (certain names, the attire associated with Muslims, and abstention from alcohol and pork). Additionally, most of the European converts are land-owning and of a middle to high socioeconomic background, in contrast with the image (and often reality) of the economically struggling Muslim migrant.

For these reasons, in Órgiva over time Islam may become decoupled from race. While the term moro may linger as an ethno-racial marker for North Africans, and the term “sufí” may become the way to refer specifically to white/European Muslims, in the process, the breadth of the concept of Muslim is in the midst of transformation. An important factor in this emerging dynamic is that the orgiveños are “less European” than most of the converts to Islam. Within the existing civilizational hierarchy, Alpujarran Spanish and monolingualism in Spanish do not carry the prestige of dialects that are seen as more correct—that is, those of Madrid, Barcelona, and other metropolitan centers outside of Andalucía—as well as bilingualism with
English. In other words, according to prevailing indexes of European-ness, the converts to Islam are more “European” and “modern” than the local “catetos” or country bumpkins. This situation may lead to a reformulation of the concepts of “European” and “Muslim” among orgiveños. That is, the delimiting of the concept of moro, may occur alongside a broadening of the concept of musulmán that entails an erasure of ethno-racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic markers previously tied to Islam.

The policing of limpieza de sangre and racialization of religion that began in the medieval period was a response to Muslim conversion to Christianity in Christian-ruled territories. The regulation of who could be considered a “true” Christian served to limit the power of converts and, in the process, racialized religion. The case of European converts in Spain, however, represents a reverse conversion trajectory: one from Christianity to Islam and from the religion (or at least cultural affiliation) of the majority to that of what has become a minority. The conversion of Christians to Islam, again sometimes by force and sometimes by choice, was fairly common in the earlier periods of Muslim rule in Iberia. The Muslims of Iberian descent, or of mixed Arab, Amazigh, and Iberian origin, who lived in al-Andalus were known as muladies, from the Arabic muwalladun for “born and raised,” in the sense of “born and raised among Arabs, though not of Arab origin.” Although those converts were converting to the dominant religion, the situation of the muladies can help illuminate one aspect of the situation of the modern-day converts. The case of one muladí that left an extensive written record is that of Ibn García (died 1084). His full name was Abu ‘Amir Ahmad Ibn García al-Bashkunsi (the Basque). Born into a Christian Basque family, Ibn García was taken prisoner in his childhood and raised Muslim. Ibn García became an Arabic poet in the Taifa Kingdom of Denia (Dаниyya), a Muslim kingdom that existed on the Valencian coast discontinuously from 1010 to 1244. This convert-poet became a leading figure in the shuʿubiyya movement of al-Andalus through a letter that he wrote in courtly Arabic. From the Arabic for “peoples,” through the shuʿubiyya movement, the non-Arab peoples of Islam rejected
the privileged position of Arabs within the Muslim community and sought equal power and status. Ibn García is the Andalusi proponent of the *shuʿubiyya* movement, which first arose among Persian Muslims in the 9th and 10th centuries. In his letter, Ibn García asserts the superiority of non-Arab Muslims. However, as indicated by Monroe (1970b, 14), Ibn García glorifies non-Arab Muslims by using all the techniques of Arabic high literary style, including rhetorical ornamentation and allusions to the Arabic literary canon. Thus, Ibn García presented a rejection of Arab dominance while demonstrating integration into Arab culture and high literature, and one could argue that it is precisely because he was able to demonstrate mastery of Arabic—as a literary language and also as the language of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad—that he was able to express his protest safely and effectively.

What about the Ahmad Garcías and Muhammad Smiths of Órgiva? Today’s converts in Iberia are not *muladíes* (reared among Arabs): they live in a larger Christian-dominant society that looks upon them as oddballs and sometimes even as cult-like or potential invaders or terrorists (as witnessed by the *Diario Vice* episode). As a result, they are drawn to Órgiva, where their sheer number normalizes them. They are also not *muladíes* in the sense that, for the most part, they are not fluent in Arabic. While struggles regarding the relationship between Islam and the different cultures and languages with which it has been intertwined are ongoing, Arabic maintains an unparalleled status as the language of Islam. Converts and non-Arabic literate Muslims negotiate some type of access to Arabic in order to further their practice of the faith. For these reasons, to be viewed as (peaceful) Muslims, and not members of a heterodox cult-like offshoot of Islam, and also to access the sacred texts of their faith, they need the acceptance and input of “native-born,” Arabic-speaking Muslims. On the one hand, the *shuʿubiyya* movements and their echoes in later periods demonstrate the ethnic and linguistic tensions inherent within the Muslim umma, or religious community, and the North African migrants themselves may identify more as Amazigh than Arab. But, on the other hand, the two groups sometimes brought together under
the label *moro* know that they are viewed as one from the outside and find that living side by side has mutual rewards.

In Rogozen-Soltar’s 2017 work on the city of Granada, she found that both Maghrebi migrants and European converts emphasized the differences within the Muslim community: “Muslims in Granada consistently answered my questions about their relationships with non-Muslims by broaching the issue of differences within the Muslim community. This was especially the case when Muslims discussed their efforts to represent Islam positively in Spain” (158; emphasis in the original). Rogozen-Soltar argues “that Muslims in Granada experience their efforts to represent Islam to wider Spanish publics as hinging on their ability to manage tensions within the city’s diverse Muslim population” (159). Rogozen-Soltar discusses the pressure to represent Muslims placed upon Muslims in the West (2017, 159–61) and notes that the Muslim migrants in Granada express concern that the converts’ strict practice of Islam will be associated with extremism, or that a more relaxed practice also gives the wrong impression to non-Muslims (178). The two groups’ efforts to “disassociate from one another” (159) included converts making arguments about the need to distinguish between true Islam and the cultural traditions of Morocco and migrants accusing converts “of exclusionary social practices and religious inauthenticity.” In both cases, they worried about “the other’s potential contribution to public perceptions of Muslim extremism” (159).

In Órgiva, although some Maghrebi migrants clearly disassociated themselves from the converts, neither group expressed concern with the other being perceived as extremists. The vast majority of the converts in the town practice Sufi Islam, a form of Islam associated with peacefulness and the pursuit of mystical experiences—not violent politics. For this reason, the converts are experienced by the Muslim migrants, rather than as a threat to the image of Muslims, as a boon to the image of Muslims. With regard to the Sufis’ attitudes, they ascribed differences in religious practice and the interpretation of scripture either to cultural factors or other Muslims’ lack of knowledge and openness. However, they were very welcoming of any who may wish
to join them at the dargah or at the Kutubia center. Given the particular circumstances in Órgiva, the tensions seen between (and among) migrants and converts in Granada regarding representation, minority politics, and the definition of Muslim identity itself (Rogozen-Soltar 2017, 174–87) are not palpable in the Alpujarran town. Muslims in Órgiva, in spite of their occasional judgments regarding each other’s religious practices, benefit from each other and from being grouped together as Muslims by orgiveños.

With regard to the Sufi converts, their “image problem” is compounded by issues of authenticity. Some outside the community view them as cult-like, a fringe form of Islam. Moreover, based on my interactions with community members, some Sufi converts experienced their lack of Arabic language skills as an impediment to legitimacy and/or spiritual practice that they wished to overcome. Here, the Maghrebis have cultural and especially linguistic knowledge to offer. For instance, Zakiyya, the mother of Karim who was accused of not playing with Christians, prepared North African food for the Sufis. More importantly, as mentioned earlier, the Kutubia group hired Moroccan women to contribute to the converts’ spiritual journey with the migrants’ Arabic language skills. These Moroccan migrants led Quranic recitation sessions and taught a Quran memorization class. In addition to the ways in which this contributes to the converts’ spiritual life, the cultural and linguistic content, and the very interaction with “native” Muslims—that is, Muslims from Arabic-speaking, Muslim-majority countries—give the converts greater legitimacy as Muslims outside of the sphere of Sufis.

With regard to the Maghrebi migrants, their concerns are rooted in their precarious position as non-citizens and an undesirable visibility as moros. In other words, they are navigating a larger Spanish and European environment in which Maghrebi migrants are a hot-button topic associated with economic concerns and a threat to conservative visions of nationhood. In such an environment, their position as non-citizens (whether documented or undocumented immigrants) makes it difficult to assert their voices and needs. When the migrants are sought out for their linguistic and religious knowledge and contribute
to the European converts’ spiritual growth, this is a great enhancement to the migrant’s self-image. Bahrami mentions a Moroccan woman in the Albaicín of the 1990s (when there were still relatively few migrants in Granada) who “admitted that she enjoyed her special role in the Albaicín as a Moroccan and a Muslim by birth. This gave her a degree of self-respect she had not experienced in other European circles” (128). Similarly, Muslim migrants in Órgiva referred to situations in which they were called upon to share their knowledge of sacred texts in Arabic with Muslim converts and recounted such interactions with pride. Even when there were differences of interpretation (zahir versus batin) the migrants felt certain of their knowledge and this enhanced their sense of self.

For the Maghrebi migrants (as well as for the converts), the presence of the large number of converts in Órgiva also makes it easy to be a practicing Muslim without standing out in a negative way. It is easy to find halal food in local supermarkets and there is awareness of Ramadan and Muslim holidays in the public school system and elsewhere. As discussed earlier, some of the Maghrebi women wear a hijab (whether in a stricter or more relaxed style) and Fatima in particular mentioned feeling safer doing so in Órgiva than in the next town over. One of the men, Mustafa, mentioned that he liked to wear his djellaba on Fridays and, as opposed to the hateful stares that he experienced in other parts of Andalucía, he felt that such attire was not only accepted but celebrated in Órgiva. Thus, the presence of the convert community allows the migrants to follow North African and Muslim practices from food to fasting to clothing with a level of normalcy or accepted visibility that the North African migrants enjoy.

Furthermore, as European and Spanish citizens, the converts are well positioned to promote Muslim interests and the migrants stand to benefit from this. For instance, around 2011, the local Naqshbandi Sufi group requested of the municipal government that a section of Órgiva’s cemetery be designated as a Muslim cemetery where the specifications of Muslim burial rites (graves perpendicular to the direction of the Qibla in Mecca, the deceased laid in the grave without a coffin and facing Mecca, etc.) would be followed. The request was
fulfilled with no evident objections. Whether or not the Maghrebis wish to be buried among Sufis, the political agency that the converts were able to exercise can be useful to the migrants in a practical, material sense and also created a positive recognition of Islam in the town.

Given the fact that there was no preexisting Maghrebi community network in Órgiva when the current migrants arrived and that it is still a small and somewhat loose community, the convert community’s presence is even more important to the migrants. The Sufi community’s presence gives the migrants opportunities for boosting self-esteem and opportunities for recognition—that is, for the valuing of difference and cultural knowledge, rather than its stigmatization or disregard. In other words, the presence of the converts creates an environment in which the Maghrebis are appreciated for who they are (for their knowledge of Arabic and the Quran, for non-Western clothing, etc.) and are not pressured to assimilate. Additionally, in the redefinition of Muslimness that is in progress in Órgiva, the converts are establishing a conception of Islam that is not associated with a racial or economic threat. This is in stark contrast with the situation of Maghrebis and Muslims in other parts of Spain, including towns only a short drive away. The sense of well-being—the feeling that Órgiva’s migrants reported of being a big family in one big house—to which the presence of the converts contributes is strong enough for the migrants to tolerate the low-level discrimination—the remnants of moros vs. cristianos mindsets—and discomfort with Sufism that they encounter in Órgiva.

In sum, for the Maghrebi immigrants and the European converts and Sufis in Órgiva, there are mutual benefits to living side by side. Both groups conceive of themselves as distinct communities, but they are grouped together by orgiveños under the label moro, or the emerging, more heterogeneous conception of musulmán (Muslim). The mutual benefits that each group offers the other in material matters related to the observance of their faith, in their self-image, and in their public image as Muslims in Europe, creates a high degree of inter-minority tolerance among them. Thus, in spite of the persistence of some moros vs. cristianos thinking and a widespread lack of iden-
tification between the migrants and the Sufis, in Órgiva, Islam and concerns regarding external perceptions of Muslims create a bridge—albeit a (still) shaky one—between the convert community and the North African migrants.

At one point, I asked the Moroccan migrant Malika about the term *moro* and, true to her spunky attitude, she acknowledged that sometimes she heard people use it to mean “Muslim,” but said that that was just due to “ignorance [jahil].” She said that it didn’t bother her because people who used *moro* that way didn’t know enough to distinguish between Muslims in general and North Africans. With time and greater interaction between Muslim converts and others in Órgiva through the school system, this ignorance may be replaced by awareness of the similarities and differences between the Muslims of European origin and residents of Maghrebi origin, who may or may not be practicing Muslims.

Interestingly, what may aid the town in transitioning toward a more nuanced understanding of identities is also one of the factors contributing to identification among converts to Islam and Maghrebi migrants, as well as beyond. Even if the Sufi converts and the Muslim migrants don’t find points of contact in their conceptions and practices of Islam, if nothing else, they share an interest in a life that is guided by a faith-based outlook and spiritual concerns. This also loosely connects both the Sufi converts and the Muslim migrants to the broader interest in spirituality shared—or at least understood—by many in Órgiva. There is a synergy between the recently decreased religiosity of *orgiveños* and the high interest in spirituality on the part of many newcomers. On the one hand, the majority of *orgiveños* age 55 and under are not regular churchgoers; for them, religion is a cultural practice that (at most) takes the form of participation in the celebration of the *Cristo de la Expiración* and the *cofradías* of the Holy Week processions. Yet, they are typically the first generation in their families to have this more secular, less religiously fervent outlook, since (depending on their age) their own parents or grandparents were not just “observant” (mass on Sundays, adherence to Lent, etc.), but “fervent”: they participated in prayer groups that circulated a small statue of the
Virgin Mary from house to house and practiced mortification of the flesh by wearing cilices (coarse hairshirts or, more typically, spiked metal chains worn around the thigh). Given this close familiarity with religious worldviews, the orgiveños who do not identify as practicing Catholics still understand and (to varying degrees) respect the role of visible religious practices as a source of cultural identity and a question of faith, but, at the same time, they are not concerned with proselytizing or maintaining strict Catholic codes of conduct. On the other hand, many of Órgiva’s newer residents—specifically the alternatives and the Muslims, whether of European or Maghrebi origin—are in agreement in their view of Órgiva as a haven for spirituality.

In particular, the converts to Islam and Muslim migrants stated that spirituality was a defining and positive characteristic of Órgiva. In a conversation at Café Baraka, Yasir, who has resided in Órgiva for about 15 years and is a convert to Islam affiliated with the Naqshbandi group, noted that there are no tensions between the different communities in the town; having lived in other parts of Spain and Europe as well as the Americas, he described Órgiva as “One of the places that I’ve seen in the world with less prejudices.” Yasir said that although in the town “There’s everything, in the positive and the negative sense,” what draws people to Órgiva is “the search, the spiritual element [la búsqueda, lo espiritual].” Similarly, in a separate conversation at the dargah, Rachida, a convert from another part of Andalucía who had been living in Órgiva for about 2½ years, said that she likes the town “because it has people from various religions. What its people have in common is their spiritual search [su búsqueda espiritual].” The Moroccan migrant Fatima made a similar statement when I asked her why she felt that Órgiva was different from other places in Spain where she had lived. She said that Órgiva had “ruh al-qadasa [a spirit of sacredness].” Although the convert and Maghrebi Muslims are (thus far) clearly separate communities, this view of the sacred and the spiritual as the binding and distinctive character of Órgiva unites these two groups as well as others following different spiritual paths in Órgiva.
The three cross-cut alliances present in Órgiva—migration memory, women’s issues, and Muslimness as well as a broader concern with spirituality—come about because of the acknowledgment of common strands in identity narratives and, in the process create recognition, the element needed for more egalitarian forms of tolerance. These transversal alliances demonstrate healthy tolerance in the sense that horizontal recognition of the Other’s worth is present alongside the vertical process of putting up with practices or presences that are deemed undesirable. Boundaries and bridges are both central components of Órgivan coexistence: maintaining distinct cultural identities instead of imposing or seeking assimilation, but also having intersections between communities that facilitate and enhance recognition as equals. In this way, the same practices that build and maintain group identities also bolster inter-group tolerance. Yet, these bridging alliances also counteract exclusionary essentialisms by acknowledging and augmenting points of contact in established identity narratives.

Those who cross bridges between groups are examples of the “dual identity model” which posits that:

the combination of subgroup and superordinate identities is most promising for developing harmonious intergroup relations in plural societies. Dual identities would reduce subgroup identity threat, and the shared superordinate identity would stimulate positive attitudes and cooperation with other subgroups [. . .] Out-group members will be evaluated more positively when they are seen as part of a shared superordinate category through processes that involve pro in-group bias [. . .] This is especially likely when the superordinate category is represented as a dual identity that affirms subgroup distinctiveness in the context of common belonging [. . .] (Verkuyten and Yogeeswaran 84).

The cross-community bridges in Órgiva create dual identities that link the separate social spheres and enhance recognition, thus allowing for the circulation of power and a more sustainable intergroup tolerance.
Significantly, loss and the estrangement that it entails is part of each of the three cross-community bridges. Outside of the uses of the term “tolerance” in immunology (e.g., in the context of autoimmune disease) and financial investments (e.g., with regard to risk tolerance and loss tolerance), tolerance is not often connected to loss. Yet in many, if not most, cases, toleration requires not only self-restraint, but the endurance of a loss of familiarity, a loss of the givens that are central to one’s narrative of identity. Williams is one of the few scholars who notes the role of loss in toleration. He points out that when we ask someone to be tolerant:

They will indeed have to lose something, their desire to suppress or drive out the rival belief; but they will also keep something, their commitment to their own beliefs, which is what gave them that desire in the first place. There is a tension here between one’s own commitments, and the acceptance that other people may have other, perhaps quite distasteful commitments: the tension that is typical of toleration, and which makes it so difficult (Williams, 19–20).

Barbara Henry connects this loss with the original, literal meaning of tolerance: “the relative capacity to withstand an unfavourable (external) factor” without being changed (78). The fear that sometimes makes tolerating so difficult is the fear of loss of self: “the (not necessarily well-founded) fear of losing oneself, of becoming blurred and blended into the surrounding environment as a result of excessive receptiveness (alias tolerance) to external unfavorable factors,” that is, external cultural and religious groups (101–2).

Through the sense of loss created by defamiliarization and the destabilization of one’s identity narrative that can seem to threaten one’s very self, the process of toleration makes one feel strange. Thus, estrangement is part and parcel of toleration, as well as of migration, as the migrant minors’ graffiti reminds us: al-ghurba sa’iba. Accepting difference includes the discomfort of accepting the presence of people and practices that make one feel un-home-liness, a sense of estrangement from home—however constructed that feeling of wholeness and
belonging referred to as “home” may be. For this reason, in expanding upon Appiah’s 2006 formulation of cosmopolitanism, the historian Thomas Bender adds the experience of unfamiliarity that leads to self-reflection. Bender observes that “New experience for the cosmopolitan is moderately unsettling. Such an unsettling stimulates inquiry into the novelty or difference. But—and this is the main point—it also prompts introspection by the cosmopolitan. The cosmopolitan is open to the unease of forming a new understanding of both one’s self and of the world when invited by the confrontation of difference” (117). When Bender states that “Tolerance is a considerable virtue, but if it is cosmopolitanism, it is cosmopolitanism-lite, as it does not demand self-reflexivity” (119), he is referring to a permission-based tolerance that remains superficial because it doesn’t consider and question power dynamics and how to access—recognize—a common human bond. “The experience that makes a cosmopolitan,” and, I would add, a participant in recognition-based toleration, “is at once a partial understanding of the other and an enriching partial reunderstanding of one’s self” (121). The discomfort of estrangement is integral to self-reflection and the rewriting of one’s identity and the concomitant opening-up of the possibility of recognition.

Each of the three cross-community alliances in Órgiva has estrangement as one of its constitutive elements. In migration memory, first- or second-hand experiences of economic difficulty, separation, and longing promote respect for the earnest livelihood motives of migrants. With regard to Órgiva’s women’s groups, estrangement from cultures dominated by patriarchal (Catholic or Muslim) systems is the driving force behind organizing as women. As for the more tentative bridge between convert and migrant Muslims, although there is a conflation and historical baggage with which the two groups are uneasy, the conflation and lingering past themselves point to how both groups are alienated in a predominately secular, Christianity-based culture. Additionally, these two groups experience a parallel (though distinct) estrangement process through religious conversion and migration. Estrangement leads one to view the world and oneself from a different angle, from outside the frameworks that create a sense of
normalcy. This, in turn, opens the door to awareness of identities as myths or cultural narratives.

Indeed, Henry proposes that the fear of dissolution of one’s self-perception can best be mitigated by “cultivating [...] a sense of wonder at one’s own collective imagination and that of other cultures” (102). That is, an attitude toward the foundational cultural myths that create group identities which both appreciates the myths as elaborate and beautiful, and acknowledges that they are constructions, is a safer route than sanctifying the myths or pretending that they no longer operate in society. Carlos, the orgiveño who spoke about being looked down on as a hillbilly (un cateto), pointed out that in Órgiva no one can feel strange because everyone is a stranger. Like Qasim, the convert featured in España a ras de cielo (among other television series) and Suniya, the convert featured in Radio Gaga, explain, in Órgiva they have found comfort in the company of other “weirdos.” Whether it is the result of an existential or spiritual search or a migration journey, the residents of Órgiva are connected by their multiple types of strangeness. While the company of other “strangers” can create a new kind of belonging, the experience of strangeness is integral to tolerance. Strangeness can support connections, even across distinct communities, because it creates an askance perspective that brings to light unexpected points of contact in identity narratives. Moreover, strangeness, through its outsider viewpoint, encourages an awareness of identity narratives as wondrous constructions. Feeling strange, being aware of one’s alienation, enables the tolerating of strangers, because both self and other are understood as the products of fantastical tales. The transversal alliances in Órgiva point to common threads in identity narratives and the ideologies that produce them. In the process, they make community members more aware of the constructedness of group boundaries and the types of differences that are rejected. This awareness gives community members an active role in evaluating what they are tolerating and what gifts (other acts of toleration) they receive in exchange.