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## Review of Karoline P. Cook, *Forbidden Passage: Muslims and Moriscos in Colonial Spanish America*

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**Cook, Karoline P. *Forbidden Passages: Muslims and Moriscos in Colonial Spanish America* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. 261pp.**

Spanish law prevented — Moriscos Muslims who converted (often under duress) to Christianity after 1492 and their descendants — from immigrating to the New World. Though the Moriscos' formerly Jewish counterparts' travels in the Atlantic World are well-documented, historians had long assumed Moriscos did not manage the same feats of mobility and success. Karoline Cook's deeply researched and wonderfully written new book effectively destroys that mythology. Moriscos moved around the Spanish Atlantic as migrants, artisans, enslaved people, encomenderos, and soldiers. Her argument, however, is more than an effort to provide evidence that Moriscos existed in the New World. Cook pushes her evidence to show that Spanish Catholic fears of Moriscos in their midst were central to how religion, race, and status (*calidad*) operated in a colonial context. Cook shows that Moriscos themselves engaged with Spanish institutions — including the Inquisition — in ways that ultimately helped define what it meant to be Spanish in a multilingual, multiethnic, multiracial world. As Cook notes, “[a]s definitions of Spanishness became increasingly linked to exclusionary attitudes based on genealogy and religious identity, restrictions on overseas emigration also became more and more connected to emerging notions of ‘race’ — to individuals who could prove their lineages were of ‘pure’ old Christian ancestry.” (35)

Cook found her Moriscos in archives in Spain, Peru, and the United States, carefully searching for the quiet mentioning that indicates the presence of Moriscos or debates about Moriscos. Some of her evidence comes from the insults hurled in Inquisition cases and in other judicial documents: common slights included “Muslim dog” and “circumsized Muslim dog.” (97,99) Cook shows how Inquisitors increasingly reached into Moriscos' lives, examining their dietary habits (refusal to eat pork or an enthusiasm for couscous were signs of secret Islamic devotion) and preferred clothing when in the confines of home. Even private quasi-Islamic devotion threatened post-Reconquista Spain and its empire. As Cook notes, “[t]he Inquisition sought increasingly to penetrate the private spaces of interior piety in order to identify heresies that could be damaging to the body politic.” (85) Though Moriscos were forbidden from becoming doctors, in Spain and in the Spanish Atlantic Moriscos formed networks of healers and diviners who, as Cook notes, could “tap into forbidden knowledge as they exchanged remedies.” (117) The fascinating case of the healer/heretic Francisco Lopez de Aponte illustrates how complicated the interplay between theology, status, and healing was. Cook painstakingly reconstructs the Inquisition's case against López de Aponte, whose healing practices seemed to question both the divinity and virginity of Mary, a sign that López de Aponte might have been secretly Muslim. López de Aponte's life had taken him around the Mediterranean and into the Atlantic, where he lived in Havana and Mexico City, before he was executed in an auto-da-fé in Mexico City. López de Aponte's healing and fortune-telling activities led directly to accusations of heresy and being a secret Muslim, demonstrating the fine line between Catholicism and Muslim-inspired heresy that healers walked.

One of Cook's most interesting arguments shows how Spanish Christians used their stereotypes of Muslims and Moriscos to racially define the indigenous peoples of the Americas. Many Spanish commentators referred to Native people as "alárabes" [Arabs], citing Native people's nomadic lifestyles, hunting and slaughtering practices, clothing, and healing traditions that seemed similar to Arab practices. Spanish settlers also feared Native practices of enslavement, with one commentator noting that island Kalinago "have many Spaniards imprisoned as their captives whom they use as Muslims use Christians." (180) Spanish Christians mapped their fears of Muslims and Moriscos onto Native people, a move that allowed Spanish settlers to enslave Native people. As Cook argues, accusations of violence and uncivilized behavior, "as applied to Moriscos and some native communities in the Americas, could be used to define their status as subjugated bodies." (164) Spanish willingness to use similar arguments against Moriscos and Native people was critical to the racialization of both peoples in the Spanish Atlantic.

This thoughtful and informative monograph joins a small historiographical conversation about Muslims in the Atlantic World. Most of this prior work focuses on West and North African Muslims who came into the Atlantic as enslaved people: Sylviane Diouf's *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas* (1998), João José Reis's *Rebelião escrava no Brasil : a história do levante dos malês, 1835* (1985), and more recent work such as Rudolph Ware's *The walking Qur'an Islamic education, embodied knowledge, and history in West Africa* (2014) and Paul Lovejoy's *Jihad in West Africa during the Age of Revolutions* (2016), for example. Cook's excellent book reminds us that the history of Muslims and of Islam in the Atlantic World must include Iberian Moriscos. Her work provides a valuable guide to scholars as they continue to think about the implications of the Americas as long-standing Muslim spaces.

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