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The Gods of the Hunt

Stereotypes, Risk and National Identity in a Spanish Enclave in North Africa

Brian Campbell

ABSTRACT

How do stereotypes – as rhetorical, homogenising claims about the Self and Other – survive despite their users having personal experiences that contradict them? This article addresses this question by examining why the Christian and Muslim inhabitants of the Spanish enclave of Ceuta insist the ‘*moro*’ is a cunning, hostile antagonist, even when their interactions with Moroccans tend to be profitable, and even as ethnographers of mainland Spain report widespread revisions of the Moorish migrant’s negative image and the country’s Islamic past. Building on the interpretative model of stereotypes developed by Herzfeld, Brown and Theodossopoulos, I argue that the ‘*moro*’ persists as an unequivocally malevolent character because it (1) is cultivated by a number of financially interested actors and (2) is central to the discursive strategies Ceutans use to respond to the political threats to their *españolidad* from both north and south.

KEYWORDS

blame, border, Ceuta, danger, Mediterranean, Morocco

Walking in Morocco

‘*Sebtawi?*’ the Moroccan man sitting beside me in one of the squares of Tétuan asked. ‘Yes,’ I replied in Spanish, lying the way my friends in Ceuta, a Spanish enclave forty kilometres to the north, had instructed me to. ‘Your friend’s necklace’, he continued in fluent Spanish, ‘belongs to my daughter. Give it back.’

He would have had an easier time getting me to surrender my arm. As my Ceutan friends had warned, our trip was nothing short of stressful. It was only April, but the Mediterranean sun had already found its strength, and was beating us down mercilessly. My travelling companion, an English friend who visited me in Ceuta (on the condition we explore Morocco), had injured himself a few days before, and had to go about on crutches. He now sweated, puffed and struggled through the crowded, narrow, hilly, cobbled streets of north Morocco’s



medinas. Local guides found us easy targets, and we were permanently pursued by a crowd of men intent on showing us the ‘best sites’ while promising (excellent) deals on carpets, jewellery, perfume and marijuana. My Ceutan acquaintances, concerned, were calling practically every few minutes: ‘Where are you?’ ‘What are you eating?’ ‘It cost how much?!’ ‘Hands on passports and wallets at all times!’ But I was also trying to study my map, torn after days of abuse, seeking the easiest routes for my suffering friend. I found that two hands were not enough to keep all my belongings under control. Two eyes were similarly insufficient to track everything happening around us. I was switching from English, to Spanish, to my limited *Dariya* – the Arabic dialect spoken in northern Morocco and by Ceuta’s Muslims – every two seconds; I was speaking the wrong language to the wrong people, and my patience was at its limit.

‘No,’ I said, ‘this necklace is ours.’ ‘Thief!’ came back his reply. ‘Liar!’ my companion spat back. The argument quickly escalated into a scuffle, and the man was on the ground, calling for the police and threatening us with prison. Onlookers looked on indifferently, but we hobbled away anyway, slightly alarmed.

Slightly alarmed became very alarmed, because the next time my friends called, I made the mistake of telling them what had happened. ‘Being called a thief in Morocco is a very serious accusation!’ Ana, a Spanish high-school teacher, screamed over the phone. ‘You should have never gone to Morocco alone! Get back to Ceuta, now!’

Panicked, I hailed a taxi and after a few minutes of haggling, we were on our way to the border. Ana called again. ‘Take this address. Got a pen? So, 12, Rue Ghomora-’

I cut her off, ‘Wait, what’s this!?’

‘Embassy in Rabat. In case they don’t let you cross the border. It’s the word of a “*moro*” against that of a foreigner! Look, Maria and I are going to cross the border to pick you up. Meet us by the mosque of Castillejos.’ Ceutans call Moroccan towns by their old colonial names.

We met the girls and started our drive back, brooding in silence. I was unsure whether to be angry at my companion for insisting on going to Morocco on crutches, at my Ceutan friends for driving me paranoid or at myself for losing my anthropological cool. Soon we reached the border. Ana confidently led us through the thick crowds of traders and towards the Moroccan checkpoint. As we stepped up to the guards, she handed us Moroccan emigration forms which, to my surprise, she had pre-filled for us. She tersely told us to sign them and not speak unless spoken to. A brief conversation in French with

the Moroccan gendarmes followed, and we entered the hundred-or-so meters of fortified fences that constitute no-man's-land. Ana then asked us for our passports, arranged them into a pile with hers on top, and nonchalantly approached the Spanish border guards. They took one glance at the top passport and waved us into Ceuta. We re-joined Maria, who had taken a different route reserved for vehicles, and breathed a sigh of relief as we drove home through familiar neighbourhoods. Only then did Ana speak at length, clearly annoyed: 'We told you not to go alone! There's nothing great about Morocco! It is a dangerous place! Unlike yourselves we have learnt to walk (*hemos aprendido a andar*) in Morocco since we were kids!'

Questioning Stereotypes

Our swashbuckling trip across Morocco gave me a tale I was encouraged to narrate on many occasions. My performance often yielded counter-stories from my Ceutan audiences about tense experiences they or their acquaintances claim to have had during some of their many visits across the border. These anecdotes insist that while Morocco is indeed alluring, it would be a serious mistake to treat it as the exotic, hospitable country tourists or mainland Spaniards usually think it is. The 'neighbouring country' is rather depicted as a dangerous space where disaster can strike unexpectedly, leaving visitors stranded amongst the '*moros*': jealous natives who will use any available resource (including law and bureaucracy) to harm Spaniards and their interests. As with the protagonist of Kafka's nightmarish 'The Trial', the '*moro*' emerges in Ceutan discourse as a figure who attacks their pockets, bodies and *españolidad* (Spanishness), imagining himself as an amalgamation of 'the God of Victory' and 'the God of Justice'. To Ceutans themselves, however, the '*moro*' is but the cruel 'God of the Hunt' (Kafka 2009: 105–106).

These stories allow us to address a central problematic in the study of stereotypes. Namely, how do stereotypes survive when confronted with personal experiences that contradict them? Undeniably, the majority of interactions between my informants and Moroccans were generally uneventful – sometimes even profitable and enjoyable – affairs. But this never budged their conviction that Moroccans are dirty and backwards, particularly when it comes to gender. Moroccan men, Ceutans insist, sexually harass foreign women and force their own wives to wear scarves and participate in the gruelling petty-trad-

ing of the border. '*Moras*', on the other hand, are at once pitied and scorned for lacking the courage to stand up to the men, although the Spanish matrons who employ them as maids say that they share with their menfolk a special cunning which they use to cheat outsiders or each other.

Social scientists typically regard stereotypes as claims about cultural 'others' that are fundamentally uninformed and often ethnocentric and degrading. This paradigm, which traces its origin to Lippmann (1922), lies at the heart of many studies interested in gauging the 'truth content' of stereotypes (see Oakes and Reynolds 1997). Research also evaluates the extent to which emotions of fear, disgust or anger induced by stereotypes interfere with the calculation of risk (anything from deciding where to live, which job candidate to hire and how to distribute state welfare; Abramson 1975; Brown 2010). Since sociologists conclude that stereotypes give rise to prejudices that obstruct the development of modern multicultural societies and efficient market economies, they additionally study how they are formed and diffused in order to learn how to break them (Chaiken and Stan- gor 1987; Klein et al. 2003).

Edward Said's '*Orientalism*' (1987) offers an alternative approach, and sees stereotypes as important clues as to how colonial relations between the 'West' and the 'Rest' are inextricably linked to the production of knowledge about non-Western 'Others'. The orientalist gaze exaggerates the 'non-Western' world as exotic but irrational, spiritual though infantile, and therefore simultaneously untainted by modernity and in need of 'Western' guidance. Orientalised societies find themselves having to entertain these notions (Argyrou 2002; Fleming 2000; Rabinowitz 1993).

Pushing against the shortcomings of Lippmann (where individuals seem unable to think critically about stereotypes) and Said's blind spots (the subaltern can themselves create stereotypes and/or manipulate representations about them) is an anthropological interpretative approach. Following Barth's thesis on cultural boundaries (1969), this model examines stereotypes as strategic essentialisations crafted to establish us-and-them boundaries and legitimise all sorts of practices, including ones of domination (Jansen 2003; Theodossopolous 2003; Theodossopolous and Brown 2007). This framework is sensitive to the fact that as rhetorical gestures, these 'pragmatic essentialisations' can be rejected or even 'ironically' refashioned into counter-discourses (Chock 1987; Herzfeld 1982, 1992). For example, southern European communities are commonly stereotyped as passionate, friendly and warm, traits that are used

to both blame them for and excuse them from their recent financial crisis (e.g. Herzfeld 2005; Kirstoglou and Tsimouris 2016; Theodosopoulos 2013). This article follows this interpretative approach to stereotypes, and considers who invokes the '*moro*', why and the extent to which this performance is accepted. Moreover, an analysis of the '*moro*' as a technology of (self)inclusion and (self)exclusion, must take into account how the myths, images, symbols, categories, assumptions and 'cultural stuff' (Barth 1969) stereotypes draw from or push against are generally handed down historically.

Tracing the historical trajectory of the '*moro*' is a particularly interesting exercise, for the Spanish construction of the Moroccan 'Other' has long been central to the equally thorny problem of defining just what it means to be 'Spanish' (Marín 2015; Martín Corrales 2002). The '*moro*' emerges as a bloodthirsty antagonist – in clerical and stately texts, and in popular tales and ballads – in the final stages of the Reconquista. This form changes little over the next three centuries, as Barbary pirates repeatedly scourge Spain's shores (Hazbun 2015). In the nineteenth century, British and French travellers, compiling accounts of their journeys in the area into popular diaries, started complicating the figure of the '*moro*'. Their Moorish subject was chivalrous, humble, passionate and aesthetically sophisticated. Their gaze, however, wandered northward, and Spaniards found their own country, steeped in its Moorish past and struggling to keep up with European industrial development, itself becoming the target of the orientalist eye (Moreras 2015; Velasco de Castro 2014).

Reconciling this triple contradiction – the '*moro*' as irreconcilably noble and savage; Spain as simultaneously modern and not; Spain as both European and Moorish – would become the major task of Spanish historians like Castro (1971) and Sánchez-Albornoz (1975). It also presented a fount of opportunity for Spanish governments. In the 1900s the idea of a deep historical and cultural 'fraternity' with the Moor was amongst the arguments used to convince the Great Powers to allow a Spanish Protectorate in Northern Morocco (Dieste 2003; Tofino-Quezada 2003). During the Civil War, the nationalist faction again invoked fraternal, honourable '*moro*' to mobilise Moorish troops against the godless Republic. They also liberally diffused the image of the bloodthirsty '*moro*', a view enthusiastically adopted by Republican militias who cursed Franco as second Count Julian as they fled in terror (Friedlander 1964; Madraiga 2015; Sotomayor Blazquez 2005).

Contemporary Spain still engages with these contradictions, now exacerbated by the increased presence of Muslims in Spain (Suarez-

Navas 2005) and a financial crisis that demolished national post-transition narratives of progress and Europeanization (Sabaté 2016). Thus, Granada's Moorish past has become a tourist commodity. It is also central to Muslims' (converts and migrants) campaigns for recognition (Rogozen-Soltar 2012, 2017). Elsewhere, festivals commemorating victories over the Moors now function to integrate migrants, rehabilitate the image of the Moor and consolidate village solidarity (Harris 1994; Kottman 2011). In Barcelona and Ceuta, a discourse of *convivencia* coexists with constant interference in Muslim affairs (Moreras 2015).

In light of this creativity, several questions emerge. Why is the '*moro*', an ambiguous character in Spain, unequivocally malevolent in Ceuta? What does this say about the way Ceutans present themselves and react to recurring challenges to their *españolidad*? These questions, opened by the interpretative model, will help us understand why stereotypes remain acceptable despite their very users undergoing experiences that contradict them.

This article is based on twenty months of fieldwork conducted in Ceuta between 2012 and 2017. The bulk of my material comes from close observation of how my Spanish informants talked about and interacted with Morocco and its inhabitants. This data is supplemented by my experience as a freelance journalist collaborating with several of Ceuta's newspapers. This privileged view allowed me to incorporate into my analysis the reproduction of the '*moro*' in the Ceutan press, which regularly published tales of misadventure in Morocco.

Moro Moruno

Overlooking the Straits of Gibraltar, Ceuta – along with Melilla far to the east, and a few other islets along Morocco's Mediterranean coastline – belongs to Spain. In 2016, the Spanish National Institute for Statistics placed Ceuta's population at 84,500. The Spanish state does not keep statistics about religious affiliation. Nonetheless, Ceuta's bureaucrats estimate that only 56 per cent of Ceuta's population are '*crístianos*', a term that refers to one's provenance from the Spanish mainland (and not religious belief). Many '*crístianos*', indeed, are not Ceutan-born. They are colloquially spoken of as '*de fuera*', outsiders who came to Ceuta for the generous bonuses and tax exemptions offered by Ceuta's public and military sectors, which – after the end of the golden age of bulk trading in the 1980s and the end of the military levy in 1992 – became Ceuta's only real industry, employing

roughly half of its active population (Observatorio de las Ocupaciones 2016; Villada Paredes 2009). Around 1–2 per cent are Jewish and Hindu, typically successful businessmen and wealthy landowners. In 2017, the Unión de Comunidades Islámicas de Ceuta claimed 36,000 (42%) are ‘*musulmanes ceutíes*’ (UCIDCE 2017). Some proudly trace their descent to military ancestors serving in the Civil War. The vast majority, however, arrived after Morocco’s independence (1956) or the nationalisation of Spain’s Muslims (1986).

My Muslim informants complained that their *españolidad* is constantly challenged. They lamented that, in daily conversation or on social media, they are called ‘*moros*’ or told to ‘go back to their country’, that police constantly stop them to ask for identification, and that they are bullied into participating in anti-Moroccan protests or nationalist rites such as the ‘Kissing of the Flag’. Most Muslims participate reluctantly because they do not think their nationality has to be proven and they reject the narrative suggesting their nationality was ‘given’, not ‘recognised’. Muslims are furthermore unable to compete effectively with other ethno-religious groups for positions in the public sector, or with the thousands of Moroccans selling their labour cheaply as labourers and servants. This underclass subsists on welfare, establishes clientistic ties in the hope of securing low-key jobs, uses Moroccan connections to supply small shops, works in the precariously miniscule private sector, joins the army (where promotion is difficult) or traffics drugs (no longer very lucrative but still very dangerous).

In 1995, much to the anger of the Kingdom of Morocco, which claims Ceuta as its own, the enclave was declared an Autonomous City by the central government in Madrid. Ideologically, this confirmed Ceuta as an inextricable part of Spain, on par with the country’s mainland territories. Practically, Ceuta’s town hall gained extensive self-governing powers, although matters of national interest (e.g. education and border-management) remain under control of a delegate appointed directly by Madrid (Gold 2000).

Morocco never relinquished its claim on Ceuta, but diplomatic relations have cooled down and the Delegate regularly reports successful meetings with Moroccan ‘friends’ over issues of trade, migration and terrorism (e.g. El Faro 2012b). Further down the bureaucratic ladder and closer to the ground, things are rather different. My Christian and Muslim Ceutan informants offered several explanations: Moroccans are by nature deceitful; Spanish colonialism has generated hateful resentment; Tétuan’s population has grown beyond what regional labour markets can support, creating bands of desperately unemployed

people. All agree it best, therefore, to assume that the ‘*moro*’ will try to prey upon Spaniards. Ceutan newspapers toil in vain to depict, say, Moroccan kids abandoned in Ceuta as poor souls who must be cared for, or *porteadoras* as hard women who brave the border, where death through exhaustion or stampeding is a possibility, to feed their children (El Faro 2017a). But to most of my informants these macabre spectacles prove that ‘*moros*’ will happily oppress even each other to death, and will use Spain’s commitment to human rights to turn Ceuta into ‘a nursery’ for their ‘ill-mannered children’. Occasionally, Spanish men take young Moroccan brides, but acquaintances insist the tie is one of *conveniencia*, not *convivencia*. Likewise, Christian women might (rarely) take a Moroccan lover, and though they boast about their incomparable passions, my other informants grimly state that ‘*moros* love to fuck us where it hurts’, and suspect these women are trying to spite their families. Undoubtedly, her reputation – and that of any Spanish future lovers – is strongly compromised. ‘If you sleep with the dog, you wake up with the fleas’, one civil servant bluntly remarked.

The ‘*moro*’ is therefore unambiguously a parasite and an outsider. Not even Ceutan Muslim associations have dared lend the term a positive connotation. They identify themselves as ‘*musulmanes*’, and it is with cries of ‘*racista*’ that they counter those who label them as ‘*moros*’, a gesture stemming from fear that Muslims’ claim to Spanish identity, along with their increasingly vociferous socio-political demands (which include financial help so that Muslims can adequately compete for jobs, the officialisation of *Dariya* the official adoption of Muslim feasts, halal food etc.) constitute but a ploy designed to suck Ceutan wealth in the short-term and compromise Ceuta’s Spanish character in the long run.

Why engage with ‘*moros*’, then, if they are so disagreeable? Mainly, because it pays. Moroccan maids, labourers and construction workers settle for informal contracts and wages high by Moroccan standards and low by Spanish ones. Attempts by the state to normalise (and tax) this industry consistently fail, because Ceutans prefer to sack Moroccan labour than surrender control over their potentially dangerous workforce (Campbell in press).

The rewards for daring Ceuta’s Moroccan hinterland could also be substantial. On Saturday mornings many Ceutans go to the market town of Castillejos, right across the border, to purchase vegetables, bread and fuel for their cars. Many pursue their shopping expeditions into the town’s sprawling bazaar in search of deals on anything from gifts and home additions to electronics and washing powder.

Ceutans' attraction towards Morocco goes deeper still. As Tofino-Quesada (2003) has argued, the image of timelessly tranquil Morocco became widespread during the Protectorate's less turbulent years. Unsurprisingly, therefore, that informants raised there in the twilight of the Protectorate nostalgically return to (but never enter) their childhood houses or neighbourhoods, remarking how much Morocco has – or has not – changed. Moreover, Ceutans admit that Morocco has charms Ceuta lacks: the beautiful blue medina of Chefchaouen; delicious tagines and seafood at the eateries of Rio Martil; the joys of haggling in Tétuan's markets; impressive beaches and mountain trails for hiking, cycling and off-roading; lavish hotels, and many other little luxuries they can easily afford with their high wages. My informants captured whatever they found beautiful about Morocco by the term '*moruno*'. As an adjective, it referred to cultural products that could be alienated from the '*moros*' who produce them. Certainly, my informants explicitly commented that their enjoyment of '*moruno*' cuisine, jewellery or architecture did not mean they had to like '*moros*'. '*Moruno*' derives from '*moro*' but the two are not different sides of the same coin.

Kafkesque Morocco

Ceutans imagine Morocco as a place where misfortune can happen anywhere and anytime, leaving one at the mercy of a hostile population. Certainly, they disclaim, some situations are more dangerous than others. One should avoid frequenting the labyrinthine suburbs of Moroccan cities, following strangers or visiting during Ramadan when 'Muslims are edgy'. However, they insist, once a traveller has cleared the Spanish side of the border, one should expect the worst, even when with large groups of experienced Ceutans or in the well-trodden markets of Castillejos or Chefchaouen.

Early in my fieldwork, a Ceutan family reported its tragic story to El Faro. After a morning browsing Tétuan's markets, the family stopped for lunch in a café in Tétuan's main square. 'Suddenly', they got into an argument with the café owner. It turned into a fistfight in which a female member of the Ceutan family was knocked down, breaking her hip. Instead of helping out, Moroccan bystanders chased the Spaniards out into the street, threatening to call the police to prevent them from crossing the border. The family first sought assistance at the Spanish Consulate, some 400 meters away. But the bureaucrats on duty asked them to wait behind 'a long queue of Moroccans who wanted their visas

stamped'. When their turn finally came, they were told that nothing could be done regarding the threats they had received. Nor could they provide an ambulance. Eventually, they got hold of the hospital's number, and after a long bout of haggling in broken French, the family agreed to part with €300 to secure an ambulance to take them to the border, possibly in vain since they had no guarantee they would be let through. The Kafkesque nightmare was brought to an end by the Guardia Civil, who negotiated their re-entry into Spain and transferred the shocked family to hospital (El Faro 2012a).

Another article interviews Manolo, who, while shopping in Castillejos, was accused of theft and thrown into jail to await trial. It took Ceutan authorities a couple of days to locate him and another month to get him back. The article ends with Manolo burning his passport, solemnly swearing never to return to Morocco. The article makes reference to the case of a Ceutan man who red-handedly caught a Moroccan trying to steal his motorbike in Castillejos. When confronted, the Moroccan pulled out a knife and accused the Ceutan of stealing the bike weeks earlier. Bystanders rushed to help their compatriot, the police intervened, the bike was confiscated and the Ceutan imprisoned for a few days until Spanish authorities negotiated his release (El Faro 2012e).

Local newspapers are frequently approached by readers wanting to publish their dramatic stories to 'warn others' (e.g. Ceuta al dia 2006b, 2009b, 2012, 2014a, 2014b; El Faro 2015a, 2015b, 2016a, 2016b). Most tales, however, never go beyond mundane conversations in cafes or the workplace. They lament at how they or their friends were held by Moroccan border or traffic police, or called to appear before Moroccan courts for crimes that already tried in Ceuta. They complain that Moroccans watched impassively when Spaniards slipped on cobbled roads, were (accidentally) hit by cars or suffered heatstroke. Stories of visitors tricked by shop owners, taxi drivers and hotel owners, insulted in or chased away from public places, and, in the case of women, sexually intimidated and harassed, occur on a daily basis.

A number of strategies are therefore employed to enable Ceutans to 'walk in Morocco' as safely as possible. One tactic is never to visit Morocco in the first place. Above, Manolo invalidates his passport, denying Morocco the power to lure him in. Likewise, a small number of informants proudly stated they do not have a passport. Others, like Dani, a teacher in his thirties, say they have not crossed the border in years. 'What's the point?' Dani explained, 'I'm going to be all tense and afraid. Here I'm bored, but relaxed.'

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A second tactic requires the careful presentation of self in front of Moroccans. When filling immigration forms, I was always advised, the purpose of the visit should be 'tourism'. Anything else raises suspicions, giving authorities incentive to scrutinise one's luggage and documents. My informants also insisted on presenting themselves as '*sebtawi*', Arabic for 'Ceutan'. A '*sebtawi*', according to my interlocutors, is a powerful figure in Moroccans' imagination who knows their tricks intimately. A '*sebtawi*' might discourage Moroccan guards from asking bribes or creating red tape. The roving individuals offering (scam) visa services at the border will not ply their trade on a '*sebtawi*'. Taxi drivers and merchants should expect their rhetoric about hard times and starving children to fall on deaf ears. A '*sebtawi*' knows what's worth what in Morocco.

Thirdly, one should rely on contacts and information from trustworthy sources. Snippets of knowledge are readily exchanged between Spanish friends: an excellent pastry shop tucked away in the back alleys of Castillejos, a restaurant with a hospitable owner, a little beach ignored even by locals where women can sunbathe without attracting unwanted attention. Contacts might additionally be provided by those rare Moroccan acquaintances – namely domestic workers – who, after many years of service, proved their reliability and worth. It is not unheard of for workers to invite their employer's family to their home for a few days (often to celebrate rituals such as *Eid el-Fitr*). More commonly, however, they introduce their employers to hoteliers or taxi drivers (almost always kin) willing to settle for fair prices without argument. Thus, the ensuing long drives through the winding mountain paths are occupied with the driver congratulating his passengers on finding him, 'for Moroccans are bad people who would surely cheat them'. Ceutan clients nod agreement, provide horrible tales of their own, and repeatedly promise their patronage. Exploration is therefore slow and almost always done upon the advice of trusted friends. Knowing how to enjoy oneself and stay out of trouble go hand in hand.

Fourthly, Ceutans try to minimise confrontation with locals. This normally requires a tactical sort of deference, particularly when dealing with agents of the law. I was often instructed to stay calm in front of bureaucrats, especially those who, as one teacher commented, 'understand Spanish, but will only speak French or Arabic'. Much like Ana in the introductory vignette, my informants swallowed their pride and tried to cultivate a basic control of French to prevent their encounters with officials from turning into potentially deadly games of charades.

Deference is without fail shown to the ultimate predators, the Moroccan traffic police. One day, I accompanied Pedro, a doctor, who was taking his mother to Tanger's airport. The plane was delayed, and amidst complaints that in Morocco nothing works, we left Tanger much later than planned in a sour mood; children had to be picked from school and I had an important interview scheduled. Yet Pedro would not push his car past a poor 40km/hour, slowing to 30km when approaching a traffic policeman and driving on only once the officer waved us angrily along and was thanked with a nod and a '*shukran*'.

'We're not risking it,' Pedro said eventually, sensing my discomfort. We made a tight curve that revealed a spike-strip guarded by two policemen. 'See!' he said as we ground to a halt, 'Checkpoints in blind spots! So they can catch you over-speeding! Moroccan police are not about prevention, but punishment!'

As I texted my acquaintance to postpone our interview, I asked, equally frightened, entertained and annoyed: 'What if *we* are stopped?' He flipped open one of the car's side pockets, and two heavy envelopes fell onto my lap. One contained all the documentation one could ever need to justify driving in Morocco. The other contained 6,000 Dirhams. '*Moros* like money,' Pedro smiled, 'we have plenty of it'.

Finally, Ceutans anticipate challenges to their *españolidad*, especially when playing the '*sebtawi*' card. Consider Sandra's story:

I visit my friend in Melilla often. My husband hates driving, so I do it myself ... One day we were stopped by a policeman who asked why my husband was not driving. What?! Can't women drive?! I just told him my husband was sick. He gave my husband a mocking look, then said I was driving too slowly. 'Oh, sorry, was I? I'm nervous! I rarely drive!' He let us go. I'll be like his stupid wife for ten minutes.

Rocío, a teacher, had a similar experience driving to Chefchaouen.

The policeman wanted to know whether my husband and I were married. He spent minutes looking at our passports – he clearly could not read them – then wanted to know why we're not Muslim! I bit my tongue and told him that we were working on it. He let us pass! Some want to see you lash out in anger, so they can detain you!

And Juan, a primary school teacher:

Last year I took a group of visiting friends to Arsila, and were stopped by a policeman. '*Sebtawin!* Moroccans with a red passport!' he exclaimed! I was becoming red in the face. But my girlfriend intervened, 'yes, until we get a green one'. He let us go. Our friends did not understand what happened.

Many of my informants report similar interrogations regarding improper dress (particularly by women in summer), the composition of groups (i.e. men and women travelling together), and food (especially alcohol found in car boots). The triumphal tone of these stories, however, suggests that the surrender of what they think defines them as Ceutan – their *españolidad* and that of their city, and the subscription to ‘modern’ values – is a controlled feint based on claimed knowledge of how Moroccans think Ceutans think. My informants let Moroccan officers believe they won the encounter, safe in the knowledge that they denied the ‘*moro*’ the opening to cause further harm.

Being Muslim and Spanish on the Other Side of the Border

The vast majority of the Ceutan Muslims families I have come to know during fieldwork maintain strong ties with kin and friends in Morocco, whom they visit often. Business partnerships and intermarriage, though suspiciously approached, are common, and Ceutan Muslims, like ‘*cristianos*’, enjoy Morocco’s cities and countryside. Despite this, Ceutan Muslims (particularly those with deep roots in Spain) claim to be especially vulnerable to the jealous ‘*moros*’, notably those recent arrivals from the south. Moroccans return the animosity. The informal workers and Moroccan migrants I interviewed think ‘*sebtawis*’ have been spoilt by welfare and the drug trade, and unable/unwilling to do honest work. These traitors to the Moroccan cause, they add, are so uncouth, they are effectively semi-lingual, unable to speak neither *Dariya* nor Spanish properly.

Tensions are certainly high. One autumn day, I joined a group of fifteen Muslims on a hike across the hills south of Chefchaouen. Moroccans stared as our group thundered by, chatting loudly so as all could hear their deliberate mixing of Spanish and *Dariya*. Eventually, we passed by a group of young men. ‘*Sebtawin*’, one said. Spittle darted from his mouth and exploded inches from Khalila, the middle-aged woman who organised the trip. Bilal, her 20-year-old son, flinging his satchel to the ground, turned to meet the smirking offender. But his father restrained him. ‘Do I need to remind you who you are? Do you take insult from Moroccans?’ We walked away, but made sure we took a different route back to our bus.

Muslims seemed to be the protagonists of the most dramatic stories the press reported. For example, Anuar went to Morocco to buy drugs

he could traffic back to Ceuta. He was caught by Moroccan policemen, tried as a Moroccan citizen and sentenced to three years in a prison in Meknes. One night his family received a call informing them that Anuar had been beaten in his cell. Prison guards had stormed the cells looking for mobile phones. They found none, but still they ‘[stomped] on Anuar’s neck, legs and arms until he was practically unconscious, all the while throwing cold water at him. Then, they tied him upside down and beat him until he was almost dead’. Anuar’s mother immediately went to Meknes, but the prison guards insisted they were holding no one by that name, despite her visiting her son four times since his incarceration. Desperate, she appealed to the Spanish Consulate for help. The consulate concluded that they could not do anything unless directed by a higher judiciary institution. Ceutan authorities were also unable to relocate the youth. His family had to wait, ‘fearing daily for his life,’ until he completed his sentence in December 2012 (El Faro 2012f).

The harassment of Ceutan Muslims is regularly reported in local newspapers (e.g. Ceuta al dia 2006a, 2009a; El Faro 2014). As with ‘*cristianos*’, Muslim informants claim that Moroccan hostility has to be factored into their most quotidian interactions. Volunteers at food banks run by Muslim organisations bitterly handed out their scarce resources to ‘*moros*’ resident in Ceuta, who they suspect will sell them in Morocco. Muslim acquaintances also regularly grumbled about ‘*moros* taking over the outlying neighbourhoods’, who ‘come for welfare, but don’t integrate, scaring the Christians, who cannot tell us apart’. Leaders of Muslim associations – who look to Morocco for religious guidance – constantly have to convince both ‘the *moros*’ and their fellow Ceutans that, regardless of what Moroccan authorities say, they are ‘not brothers in exile’ and defer to the ‘Commander of the Faithful’ (the Moroccan king) only in matters of faith. Behind closed doors they swear ‘the *moro*’ just wants to make their life difficult.

Anxieties skyrocket when marriage is on the agenda. My fieldnotes are filled with the kin of love-struck Ceutans interrogating their contacts to divine whether ‘the *moro*’ is really only after ‘Spanish papers’. Family members insist upon an extended courtship to sieve out less determined pretenders. I only saw one marriage called off, but worries persist that the Spanish documents marking the couple’s marital status would be declared invalid, opening them to charges of adultery/fornication (زنا). Moroccan unpredictability, some concluded, is a ploy to induce Ceutans to set aside Spanish rites, marry the Moroccan way and voluntarily surrender their *españolidad* in a rational attempt to manage risk.

Like Children!

Threats to *españolidad* from Morocco are to be expected. Infinitely more disturbing are those perceived coming from mainland Spain. The first post-transition socialist governments actively toyed with the possibility of selling the enclaves, and it was recently discovered that the King himself was initially partial to the idea (Ceuta al dia 2017). Leftist parties are still construed to have this agenda (El Pueblo 2017). Moreover, diplomats horrify Ceutans when, pressured by their Moroccan counterparts, they ambiguously state Ceuta's future is a matter of dialogue (El Faro 2012c, 2013). Mainland newscasters sometimes slip into talking of Ceuta as if it lay outside of Spain, while pundits wonder why Spain is slashing health and education budgets when the enclaves could be sold to recoup losses (and now, before Morocco realises they are worthless) (El Faro 2012d).

Ceutans encountered fuzzy logic about Ceuta's Spanishness practically daily. Doubt is expressed regarding the waves of researchers, NGO activists and journalists, who simplistically portray Ceuta as either a fascist, bloody outpost of fortress Europe or an absurd and unsustainable Spanish possession. They also grumble about those '*de fuera*' who repeatedly complain the enclave is boring, dirty and full of closed-minded people. Many outsiders, indeed, see their stay in Ceuta as a profitable (but hopefully) temporary step in their life, and grasp every opportunity to escape to the mainland. They take with them, obviously, the money earned in Ceuta. Friends and family willing to pay the exorbitantly expensive ferry fare was always a cause for jubilation, but their tendency to see Ceuta as merely a springboard to Morocco was less amusing. Just as annoying was the typical placement of Ceuta in Moroccan travel guides, companies that do not deliver to Ceuta 'because it's not Spain', and visitors who, when catching a glimpse of the mainland across the sea, exclaim, 'Look, Spain!'

The Ceutan response is predictably clear. Whether via newspaper articles or press conferences, in social media or informal conversation, they remind transgressors that Ceuta is neither a '*presidio*' (prison-fort) nor just a bridge to Morocco. Rather, they passionately argue, it is a place, rich in history, beaches, bars, fusion restaurants, everything one needs for a meaningful life! Morocco is exciting, true, but is also dangerous and definitely sub-par to Ceuta, which already has all the '*moruno*' stuff they seek!

Visitors' frustrating inability to see the danger posed by Morocco renders them very susceptible to harm. Therefore, Ceutans strongly

discourage travellers. For example, Dave, a British acquaintance who wanted to go on a bicycle trip to Rabat, had to endure weeks of dire warnings from his Ceutan acquaintances: ‘the *moros*’ would steal his bike, make him sleep in abysmal conditions, or refuse to help him when in trouble. Unlike Dave, most travellers cannot be disheartened, so my informants insisted they be accompanied by someone who knows how to ‘walk’ there.

Neither a local nor a complete outsider, I found travelling with mixed groups stressful and entertaining in equal parts. I absorbed Ceutans’ relentless attempts to stop their companions from behaving too much like regular tourists, aiming obnoxiously huge cameras at veiled women preparing tagines or washing clothes by hand by the springs, or trying to get (deliberately) lost in medinas, where – God forbid – they might trespass into people’s homes looking for authentic encounters. My Ceutan informants often also sought to control the group’s official documents, and ensured they were the ones haggling with shopkeepers, talking with the authorities or bailing out friends who annoyed someone they tried to photograph. And in those precious few moments when exhausted Ceutan guides were not herding or admonishing their troop, they might turn upon the anthropologist and exasperatedly mutter that ‘they don’t know how to walk in Morocco’. Their mainland guests, by contrast, when out of earshot of their hosts, sometimes asked the anthropologist to explain this behaviour they found at best incredibly stifling (*agobiante*) and at worst outright paranoid or racist.

Conclusions

What does the Ceutan case tell us about the resilience of stereotypes, particularly in the face of personal experiences that contradict them? The social sciences have already proposed a number of explanations. Cognitive sociologists argue that stereotypes are the unavoidable result of necessary neurological processes that simplify/categorise the world around us, but this view ignores the moral-ideological aspects of stereotypes (see Brubaker 2004). Other scholars suggest that stereotypes survive through cultural misunderstanding (Dye and Keel 2011; Hagendoorn 1993; Loizos 2007). The iconic example is of the Irishman who picks a fight in an English pub, flies into rage and threatens to assault his opponent. But bystanders – not being Irish – fail to decipher the performance as an appeal for intervention. The desperate

Irishman has no option but to actually fight, affirming the stereotype of ‘hot-headed Paddy’ (MacDonald 1993). Ceutans would be stunned by this Irishman’s inability for critical thought, and claim that *their* understanding of ‘the *moro*’ is based on reflection of how they think they think. Daniel Rabinowitz has additionally implied that stereotypes and personal experience are different phenomena with little bearing on each other. Israelis, he observes, suspend their views of Palestinians when forming trust-based relations with them. These experiences have no impact on Palestinian stereotypes, particularly when discussed with fellow Israeli Jews (Rabinowitz 1992). Again, Ceutans insist that their views of the ‘*moro*’ are informed by direct experience, and that the suspension of these views can only lead to tears.

I offer two conclusions. The simplest observes that aside from being useful in drawing boundaries between Moroccans, Ceutans and mainland Spaniards, the stereotype of the ‘*moro*’ functions to flag Moroccans as sources of specific kinds of danger, making interactions with them a question of risk. At this stage, a pedestrian understanding of risk-taking as an action with a chance of succeeding or failing will suffice. Within this framework, the ‘*moro*’ as an indicator of danger is reproduced regardless of the outcome of the trip. Disaster, obviously, confirms the danger they pose. But uneventful journeys merely mean that travellers have either been lucky or have managed risk successfully. Moreover, minor incidents – women stared at, taxi drivers changing their fare midway through a journey – are taken to confirm the existence of more terrible dangers lurking beneath the surface. Therefore, stereotypes of Moroccans survive and are reproduced both as markers of danger and as a set of expectations against which risk can be assessed and navigated. Just as danger and risk affirm each other, so do stereotypes and personal experiences of Moroccans.

Deeper analysis into the consistently negative view of Moroccans (particularly when compared to the multiple ways Spaniards approach the Moor) requires us to pursue the idea of ‘risk’. In contrast to economists and psychologists, who utilise highly controlled laboratory experiments involving risk-taking as window on (individual) rational-cognitive processes (e.g. Brunette et al. 2015; Dohmen et al. 2011), sociologists examine how risk is collectively constructed and politicised. Here, the defining work is by Niklas Luhmann (1991) and Ulrich Beck (1986), who argue that recent technological advancements have created new environmental (e.g. global warming) and social (e.g. nuclear energy) dangers that cannot be individually or locally managed. Thus the rise of ‘Risk-Societies’, organised around the identification and

calculation of risk, itself a problem given postmodern doubts over scientific objectivity. These anxieties have created new political movements united not by class or ethnicity but by shared concerns about the future.

Anthropology contests the idea that the politicisation of risk is an inherently Western, modern phenomenon (Cashdan 1990; Douglas and Wildavsky 1982). Anthropologists have rather shown that the way danger is represented is closely bound to how societies structure themselves, culturally and politically (Douglas 1966, 1992). They, therefore, want to know why some dangers become objects of concern while others remain hidden, overlooked or ignored (e.g. Rosa 1998; Wildavsky and Dake 1990); how danger is represented, communicated and dealt with (e.g. Ferreira 2001; Zinn 2008); who can authoritatively speak about hazards, who is to blame when things go wrong, and how the latter redistribute guilt (Alaszewski 2015). In other words, discourses about risk point to, are backed up by and only make sense in relation to a shared understanding of the world, its cultural boundaries and the sociopolitical relations that proceed from them (Boholm 2003; Dale 1992; Lupton 1999).

Scholarly literature suggests that Spaniards revive the image of the fraternal, honourable, peaceful Moor when they need Moroccan help (e.g. during the Civil War) or docility (e.g. Protectorate), when there is money to be made (e.g. Granada) or where governments seek to control ethnic tensions (e.g. Barcelona). This suggests that the '*moro*' is so unambiguously negative in Ceuta because beyond the world of high-government (which desperately needs Moroccan cooperation to ensure the border keeps out undesirables while letting commerce through; see Ferrer-Gallardo 2007) '*moros*' are not directly needed for the financial wellbeing of Ceuta's civil servants and military personnel. In effect, while the protests of the successful populist movement 'Ceuta Insegura', mostly composed of Ceutan civil servants, gives much attention to sub-Saharan migrants, whose spectacular assaults on the border fence Ceutans associate with a sense of urban insecurity, the chief source of concern remains the '*moro*'. The movement therefore routinely begs the state to see the '*moro*' for what he truly is: a deceitful shapeshifter who is – unlike the sub-Saharan migrant whose presence reinforces Ceuta's utility to Spain – a threat to Ceuta's very *españolidad* (El Faro 2017b).

The literature on risk allows us to elaborate this position, and propose that the '*moro*' perseveres because this hostile figure lies at the core of a specific world view, complete with its cultural categories and

implied power relations that enables Ceutans to respond to the threats they detect coming from all sides. The malevolent '*moro*' is neither the outcome of blind prejudice (Lippmann's view) nor simply the product of neocolonial relationships between Ceutans and Moroccans (the Saidian view). Instead, the historically received figure of the *moro* is edited and cultivated by multiple interested actors operating in an uncertain political context that hems and isolates Ceutans in general and local Muslims in particular.

For example, we saw Moroccan taxi drivers and domestic servants entertaining Ceutans' notions of the '*moro*', fuelling the idea that disaster must be mitigated by carefully relying on trustworthy contacts. This should not surprise us, for they use this risk framework to get Spaniards to hire their services while disheartening them from indiscriminately switching to their competitors. Self-stereotyping becomes a tool for maintaining Spanish patronage and differentiating Moroccan labour.

Ceutan Muslims' claim to *españolidad* also makes use of Moroccans as malignant antagonists. Their tragic narratives, as well as their eager participation in the anti-Moroccan (possibly anti-Muslim) 'Ceuta Insegura', explicitly seeks to impress upon fellow Ceutan compatriots that they are part of the same community of risk and anxiety, and that the sociocultural boundary between Muslim Ceutans and Moroccans, so constantly challenged and doubted both by both Moroccans and Spaniards, is actually a real one sustained by the threat of extreme violence. Worries about the suppression of their Spanishness are also expressed by the way these narratives distribute blame. They explicitly suggest that Ceuta's Muslims are especially vulnerable because – despite the rhetoric of *convivencia* that insists that all of Ceuta's ethno-religious groups are equally Spanish – the city's authorities seem to make very little effort to bail Muslims out of trouble, leaving them trapped between two powerful groups that brew in tandem a deadly concoction of structural and physical violence.

Yet, the dangerous Moroccan is primarily used by Christian Ceutans who constantly fear that their city's *españolidad* is in danger. As described, Ceutans generally feel slighted by friends who act as if Ceuta's main merit is its proximity to Morocco, by '*de fuera*' who see Ceuta as basically Moroccan or as just a big money bag, by newscasters who mistake Ceuta's identity, and by outsiders dismissing the enclave as a *presidio* full of soldiers and trapped migrants. To my informants, these little statements reflected a widespread ambiguity about Ceuta that could have significant political and economic effects in the future.

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Occasionally, yet very rarely, my informants embraced this semi-exoticness. Two aged interlocutors, for example, enjoyed telling stories about their childhood in Larache to their sons-in-law. Similarly, the Ceuta's charismatic president routinely complains that Ceuta is forgotten and marginalised by Madrid, or boasts that it is an unprecedented multicultural experiment. This rhetoric has been successful in siphoning considerable funding for public services or other projects that sustain Ceuta's many cultural and religious associations. Nevertheless, my informants' ubiquitous tactic was to resist, not play along with, a moral geography that condemns Ceuta to being in cultural limbo. This, of course, was done by trying to impose their risk framework on outsiders. Morocco becomes barbaric, not exotic; treacherous, not hospitable. This framework also reconfigures Ceuta as a safe haven, a place in the anthropological sense: a space where one can create meaningful lives, relationships and identities, valuable in itself rather than simply for the places it leads to and from.

This risk-imaginary additionally rearranges the relationship between Ceutans and outsiders. Ceutans stop being the closed-minded inhabitants of a border-fort but emerge as risk experts. Enjoyment of Morocco's pleasures will therefore depend on the vast anecdotal knowledge of these marcher-lords. In adopting Ceutan leadership, the visitor is discursively infantilised as the holder of orientalist fantasies. Unable to see or navigate danger, visitors' self-presentation and communication with the world must be strictly supervised. Moroccan stereotypes are, in other words, essential in inverting the hierarchy between Ceutan and Spaniard. It enables Ceutans to construct a world where knowledge is power.

But all of this, of course, first requires outsiders to accept the Ceutan risk-imaginary and the stereotypes that lie at its heart. Ceutan Muslims and Moroccans might accept this risk framework because the world it engenders furthers their political and economic interests. My informants, however, had no sure way of imposing this ontology on outsiders. All they had going for them was relentless dedication to their city, insistence that their views were based on the rational deduction of personal experience, and the muted respect guests show hosts. As the opening vignette shows, at least one foreigner succumbed to the risk-imaginary. Other outsiders were hardier. So, in hindsight, perhaps it is a silent tribute to the drunk Irishman in an English pub that when Ceutans perform their spectacle of anxiety, responsibility, knowledge and risk, the visitor-guest reads the role he is meant to play out, and wonder whether in their zealous attempts to emphasise their *españolili*

dad, they actually come around as a bit paranoid, likely a bit racist, definitely a bit *presidio*.

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