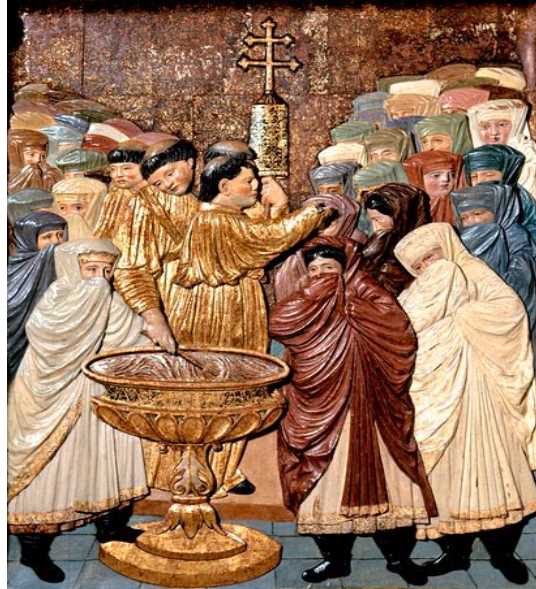


Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Friday, September 29 12:00-1:00 PM

GISB 3134

# Captivity and Resistance in *El Poema de Yusuf*



Bautismo de las moriscas, Felipe Bigarny, Capilla Real de Granada, c. 1521.

A presentation by Ali Mohammad Alsmadi

This presentation discusses themes of captivity and resistance in *El Poema de José* or *El Poema de Yuçuf*. *El Poema de Yuçuf* is considered one of the most important literary works of Aljamiado literature. The word Aljamiado is derived from the Arabic word *al-âgamīya* (meaning foreign or non-Arabic), a term in the sixteenth century meant Spanish or Romance texts came to be written in the Arabic alphabet. The poem was one of the first Aljamiado texts to be studied by literary historians, in large part because it was written in *cuaderna vía*, the learned poetic form that dominated Castilian poetry in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The poem exists in two manuscripts: a more Aragonese version of the poem found in “A” belongs to the late fourteenth or very early fifteenth century, and a more Castilianized text in “B” has been dated to the sixteenth century. This presentation discusses three angles: first, how decoloniality offers a valuable framework for providing a better understanding of this Aljamiado text and its role in resisting the imposed Catholic-Castilian hegemony. Second, I discuss the poem’s embodied use of Aljamiado language as a means of expressing the particularities of the Mudéjar and Moriscos’ identity. The term Mudéjares means Iberian Muslims who lived under Christian rule and retained their Islamic law and religion in exchange for their loyalty to the new ruler. These Mudéjares and their descendants became known as the Moriscos when they were forced to convert to Catholicism during the early decades of the sixteenth century. Finally, my analysis will focus on how the poem expresses themes of captivity and resistance, and how these themes reflect the Morisco condition.