

Christians in Al-Andalus

(8th-10th centuries)

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract:

The historiography of early Islamic Spain has become polarised between the Arabic narrative histories and the Latin sources. Although the Arabic sources have little directly to say about the situation of the conquered Christians, a willingness to engage with both Latin and Arabic texts opens up a wide range of material on such controversial topics as acculturation and conversion to Islam.

This thesis examines a number of texts written by or attributed to Christians living in Al-Andalus before the fall of the caliphate, early in the eleventh century. It begins with two eighth-century Latin chronicles and their wholly Christian response to the conquest and the period of civil wars which followed it. The reliability of Eulogius' testimony to the Cordoban martyr movement of the 850s is considered in the light of Alvarus' *Vita Eulogii* and other evidence. Tenth-century Cordoba is briefly described as a backdrop to the later sources. The passions of two Cordoban martyrs of this period show that hagiography allowed for different accounts of dissident Christians. The status of bishop Recemund as the author of the *Calendar of Cordoba* and the epitome of 'convivencia' is re-evaluated. The translation into Arabic of Orosius' *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans* is set in the context of other Christian texts in Arabic. The final chapter considers the episodes in Ibn al-QuTiya's *History of the Conquest of Al-Andalus* dealing with the Christian population, and especially with the Visigothic family from whom he may have been descended.

Whilst an attempt is made to draw this material together, the result is a series of Christian perspectives on the Islamic conquest, rather than a new narrative of cultural survival or assimilation.

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Preface

Writing this thesis has, of course, taken far longer than I could have imagined. In the last two years, when it has been 'nearly finished' it has been greatly improved and I have been reanimated by presenting sections of the work to different audiences. There are too many people to mention everyone individually, but I would like to thank in particular the medievalists of the School of History, University of Leeds, as well as Mayke de Jong, Rosamund McKitterick, Walter Pohl and their students of the Utrecht-Vienna-Leeds-Cambridge symposia, Jinty Nelson, Barbara Rosenwein and her colleague Zuhair Ghazzal, who rescued the last copy of the *'Urūsūs* from the publisher's basement in Beirut, the Historians of Medieval Iberia, particularly Roger Wright, and the organisers and participants in the 'Places of Power' conference of the European Science Foundation in Belaggio, September 1998.

I have been greatly assisted by the staff of the Brotherton library, the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid the former Escuela Española de Arqueología in Rome and its director Javier Arce, and by several patient language teachers, especially Shelley Abu-Shanab and Mónica Palmis. John Wreglesworth read the whole manuscript with exemplary care, corrected innumerable mistakes and raised enough questions for another thesis.

My debt to my supervisor Ian Wood goes back to the first few weeks of my time as an undergraduate in the School of History, where I was a refugee from the unwarranted certainty of medicine. Ian's approach to the great unknown of the early Middle Ages, based on imaginative reading of the way early medieval authors had recorded their world rather than on explanation of what actually happened, was a revelation. I am grateful to Ian for humouring my obsession with the history of Spain for almost a decade, and for providing me with so many opportunities to develop as a historian. He is not to blame if the end result is still so difficult to understand.

Finally, although he should perhaps have come first, I would like to thank Roger Collins for writing *Early Medieval Spain: Unity in Diversity 400-1000*, which I read during my first visit to Spain in 1983 and the rest, I hope, is history.

Abbreviations

- AASS:** *Acta Sanctorum quotquot tot orbe coluntur*, ed. Bollandus J. et al., (Antwerp and Brussels, 1634-).
- BL:** London, British Library manuscript.
- BN n.a.lat.:** Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouvelles acquisitions latines, manuscript.
- CCSL:** *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, (Turnhout, 1952-).
- CSCO:** *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, (Paris and Louvain, 1903 -).
- SS:** *Scriptores Syrii*, ed. Brooks E., Guidi I., and Chabot J-B, (6 vols., Paris, 1903-7).
- CSM:** *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, ed. Gil Fernandez J, (2 vols., Madrid, 1973).
- DHEE:** *Diccionario de Historia Ecclesiástica de España*, ed. Aldea Vaquero Q., Marin Martinez T., Vives Gatell J., (4 vols, Madrid, 1972-5).
- EI:** *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed. Gibb H.A.R. et al, (Leiden and London, 1960-).
- ES:** *España Sagrada*, ed. Florez E. et al. (Madrid, 1747-).
- MBN:** Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, manuscript.
- MGH:** *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*.
- AA:** *Auctores Antiquissimi*, (15 vols., Berlin, 1877-1919).
- PL:** *Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, ed. Migne J-P, (221 vols., Paris, 1841-64).
- Settimane:** *Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studi medioevo*, (Spoleto, 1954-).

Transliteration, placenames and dates

Apart from Muhammad, Arabic names are transliterated according to the system adopted in the *Cambridge History of Islam*, except that the limitations of the word-processing programme mean that ḥ appears as H, ṣ as S, ṭ as T and ṭh as Th. Placenames are given in their Spanish version except for Cordoba, Seville and others well-known in English. All dates are given with the equivalent Common Era [AD] dating.

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1. Introduction

'Although formerly Spain abounded plentifully in every liberal art and in each one those thirsting for the fountain of knowledge were devoting themselves everywhere to the study of letters, this study along with the arts vanished entirely when she was inundated by the forces of the barbarians. And so assailed by necessity both writers were wanting and the deeds of the Spanish perished in silence.'¹

This quotation, from the twelfth-century *Chronicle of Silos*, is a piece of anti-Muslim polemic, but it cannot be denied that there is a great gap in the narrative evidence for the Christians under Islamic rule. Kennedy's recent history of *Muslim Spain and Portugal* devoted just three pages to the Christian population of al-Andalus in the period between the conquest of 711 and the collapse of the Umayyad caliphate in the early years of the eleventh century.² Yet one hundred years ago, Simonet made the 'Mozarabs', as he called them, the subject of a large volume, of which a substantial part deals with the first three centuries after the conquest.³ Simonet wrote with the prolixity of the nineteenth century but he had plenty of material; although manuscripts are still reappearing, especially in North Africa, most of the evidence had already been discovered. Today, however, the question of what happened to the indigenous population of the Iberian peninsula after 711 is beset with methodological problems which have narrowed the field of research to two subjects - the Cordoban martyrs of the 850s, and conversion to Islam.

Simonet, who was first and foremost 'a Catholic, above being an Arabist, a professor, or

¹ *Historia Silense* ed. Pérez de Urbel J. and González Ruiz-Zorilla A., (Madrid, 1959), I, p.8, trans. Russell J.C., 'Chroniclers of Medieval Spain', *Hispanic Review*, (1938), III, p.226 from *España Sagrada*, XVII, p.270.

² Kennedy H., *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, (1996), pp.48 and 67-68.

³ Simonet F., *Historia de los Mozárabes de España*, (Madrid, 1897, repr. 1984). The use of the term 'Mozarab' [*musta'rib*/Arabicized] for Christians under Islamic rule is an anachronism in early Islamic Spain; it first appeared in eleventh-century texts and its use in discussions of early Islamic Spain prejudices one of the questions at issue: see e.g. Burman T.E., *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs, c. 1050-1200*, (Leiden, 1994), and *ibid.*, 'The Tathlīth al-wadāniya' and the Twelfth-Century Andalusian Christian Approach to Islam' in Tolan J. (ed.), *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays*, (New York and London, 1996), pp.109-130, at p.110, citing Hitchcock R., 'Quiénes fueron los verdaderos mozárabes' *Nueva revista de filología hispánica*, (1981), XXXI, 574-585. In this study I will refer to native population as 'the Christians of al-Andalus', making the distinction between those who remained Christian and the converts to Islam only where their religious affiliations are known. The use of 'Islamic' for the conquest, political institutions, etc. does not imply that all those involved were Muslims.

anything else'⁴ narrated, with considerable hyperbole, the story of embattled Christians under alien rule who kept the flame of Catholicism burning. Fifty years later, Cagigas' account of the same struggle took a more nationalist perspective on the Christians' struggle to maintain their identity.⁵ Both men were working with the same Grand Narrative, written with the hindsight that Reconquest would free Spain from the Muslim yoke. Similar preconceptions engendered the debate between Sánchez-Albornoz and Castro, as to whether Spain was 'really' a Catholic country and part of Europe, or inescapably set apart by her Islamic inheritance. Combatants on both sides saw the peninsula as unique, a mindset which Linehan argued is already recognizable in the writings of early medieval Spaniards.⁶ Since the fall of Franco, devolution of political power in Spain and European integration have robbed this debate of its relevance. Further, the concept of the Grand Narrative is losing its power. This alone would justify a reexamination of the evidence.

Yet the opposition between Christianity and Islam remains crucial to Spanish historiography and it has been given a new twist, which at first sight is purely academic and concerns the importance of Arabic for the study of Islamic Spain. Previous historians of Spain were not hindered by their lack of Arabic. Sánchez-Albornoz wrote many volumes on this period, and if a work was not already accessible in translation, he commissioned a student to translate it for him. Such dependence on translation is no longer acceptable, because the translators have been blamed for compounding the mistakes perpetrated by the editors of the manuscripts. A knowledge of Arabic is now the starting point for work on many aspects of the history of al-Andalus. However, this puts most modern scholars into one of two camps - the Arabists, whose attitude to their sources is sometimes very different from that of those trained primarily as historians, and those who are limited to the Latin sources. Further, the difficulty which Arabic presents to European scholars in comparison with the Latin and Germanic languages fosters the idea that the Arabic histories are alien to twentieth-century minds in a way that the Latin material is not. This may have more to do with present mistrust of Islam than with scholars' ability to draw conclusions from apparently unpromising material; after all, most historians of the early Middle Ages have learnt to work with hagiography. The divide between Islam and Christendom is longstanding and has been sharpened in recent years by acts of violence linked to Islamic fundamentalism. Although anti-Muslim polemic was written in the Middle East, and to a lesser extent in Spain, in the early medieval period, enmity between the two religions does not seem to have crystallized until after the millennium.⁷ Yet it has created a conceptual 'frontier' which makes the interpretation of

⁴ Manzanares del Cirre M., *Arabistas españoles del siglo XIX*, (Madrid, 1972), p.133.

⁵ Cagigas, I. de las, *Los mozárabes*, (Madrid, 1947).

⁶ Linehan P., *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, (Oxford, 1993), p.4.

⁷ Southern R., *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1962).

actual medieval frontiers, both ideological and geographical, very difficult.⁸

Some modern historians of this period have rejected Arabic historiography altogether.⁹ It is true that the Arabic sources for the first centuries after 711 are collections of stories which are sometimes clearly legendary. Little survives from before the fall of the caliphate, and much of the textbook history of al-Andalus comes from the collection of traditions assembled by the Moroccan historian al-Maqqarī in the seventeenth century.¹⁰ The value one attaches to such late works depends to a large extent on the credence one is prepared to give to their authors' claims to be no more than the transmitters of the exact words of their predecessors. The influential Eastern historian al-Tabarī (d.923), stated the principles of this type of Arabic historiography: 'knowledge concerning reports of the men of the past and current news about men of the present is not obtained by one who has not witnessed these men, or whose lifetime does not reach back to theirs; [knowledge is only obtained] by the statements of reporters and transmitters, not by rational deduction or intuitive reference'.¹¹ Often, historians copied out mutually-incompatible accounts of the same events without comment, and stories appear in different versions in works whose authors claim to be quoting the same authorities. There is no surviving charter evidence to validate the narrative. Al-Tabarī's statement is, however, rather disingenuous, for judicious editing was practised.¹² Writers of history were often companions of the rulers and could not afford to jeopardize their position by impartial scholarship. The title of a work - *The Brilliant Qualities of the Umayyads* - (which does not survive), said to have been written by Qasim ibn Asbagh, the supposed translator into Arabic of Orosius' *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*,¹³ gives the flavour of this writing. In this respect, the Arabic histories are not very different from contemporary Latin chronicles. Medieval Spaniards certainly seem to have thought so; Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (archbishop of Toledo 1207-1247) used Arabic as well as Latin

⁸ Manzano Moreno E., 'Christian-Muslim Frontier in Al-Andalus: Idea and Reality', in Agius D., and Hitchcock R., (eds.) *The Arab Influence in Medieval Europe*, (Reading, 1994), pp.83-99; for the changing meaning of frontiers in this period see Goetz H-W, 'Concepts of realm and frontiers from Late Antiquity to the early Middle Ages', in Proceedings of the Bischenberg Conference, European Science Foundation, (forthcoming); the conventional view is represented in maps such as that on p.9.

⁹ Collins' history of the conquest ran into problems because he took this position: Collins R., *The Arab Conquest of Spain, 710-797*, (Oxford, 1989), esp. at p.4.

¹⁰ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes sur l'histoire et la littérature des Arabes d'Espagne par al-Makkari*, ed. Dozy R., Dugat G., Krehl L. and Wright W., (2 vols., Leiden, 1855-61, repr. Amsterdam, 1967).

¹¹ Al-Tabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. De Goeje M.J., (Leiden, 1897-1901), pp.6-7, cited in Humphreys S., *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*, (1991), p.73-74.

¹² see, for example, Fierro M., 'La falsificación de la historia: al-Yasa' b. Hazm y su kitāb al-Mughrib', *Al-Qantara*, (1995), XVI, 1-37.

¹³ see chapter 7.

sources in his *Arabic Chronicle*.¹⁴ Recently, historians have begun to compare different versions of these texts and to rank them in order of credibility.¹⁵ The Arabic narratives are not an ideal place to research the history of the Christians of al-Andalus, as most of the historians make only passing references to individual Christians. Many Christians adopted Arabic names, and can be identified in the sources only if such a name is qualified by a title such as 'the bishop' or 'the count'. Yet valuable material is scattered through these texts which is worth closer examination.

Bereft of narrative histories apart from the eighth-century chronicles, the Latinists are left with the two subjects with which we started, the martyrs of Cordoba and the opposite side of this coin - the question of conversion. The material on the martyrs has been worked over many times, and used to illustrate the condition of the Christians in al-Andalus without placing the texts themselves in their ninth-century context. Not nearly so much attention was paid to the martyrs in the years after their deaths. Eulogius' writings on the martyrs are one of the clearest examples of the unrepresentative nature of the historical record of this period. With the exception of Eulogius and Leocritia, whose relics were translated to Oviedo, possibly by Dulcidius, who went to Cordoba in 883,¹⁶ and three martyrs celebrated at St-Germain in Paris,¹⁷ these saints had to wait until the sixteenth century to be rediscovered. Only the monks of St-Germain can be shown to have read any part of Eulogius' works. Alvarus' complaint that the Christians of al-Andalus were losing their Latin is well-known:

'Alas, the Christians do not know their own law, and the Latins pay no attention to their own tongue, so that in the whole community of Christ there cannot be found one man in a thousand who can send letters of greeting properly expressed to his fellow; and there are found crowds of people without number who can produce (?explain) learnedly Chaldaic parades of words....'¹⁸

¹⁴ Ferré E., 'Une source nouvelle pour l'histoire de l'Espagne musulmane, *Arabica*, (1967), XIV, 320-326; he thought that most of the Latin histories had been lost in the eighth century: Rodrigo de Toledo, *Historia de rebus Hispaniae*, in *Opera* ed. De Lorenzana F., (Madrid, 1793, repr. Valencia, 1968), Prologue 6, cited in Linehan, *History and the Historians*, p.353.

¹⁵ see for example Molina L., 'Un relato de la conquista de al-Andalus', *Al-Qantara*, (1998), XIX, 39-65; Manzano Moreno E., 'Oriental Topoi in Andalusian Historical Sources', *Arabica*, (1992), XXXIX, 42-58; Chalmeta P., *Invasión e Islamización: La sumisión de Hispania y la formación de Al-Andalus*, (Madrid, 1994), p. 36, who thinks that the sources for Tariq are legendary but that after that reliable chronicles were being written which later authors quoted.

¹⁶ AASS March, II, p.89; *Chronicle of Albelda* 47,10, Bonnaz, *Chroniques Asturiennes*, p.30.

¹⁷ Christys A., 'St-Germain des Prés, St. Vincent and the Martyrs of Cordoba', *Early Medieval Europe*, (1998), VII.2, 199-216.

¹⁸ Alvarus, *Indiculus luminosus*, 35, *CSM*, I, p.314; trans. Wasserstein, D.J., 'A Latin Lament of the prevalence of Arabic in Ninth-Century Islamic Cordoba', in Jones A. (ed.) *Arabia Felix: Luminosus Britannicus, Essays in Honour of A.F.L. Beeston on his Eightieth Birthday*, (Oxford, 1991), pp.1-11.

Too much has been made of this passage, which is an isolated comment, echoed only in the works of Alvarus himself and of his friend Eulogius. It is often argued that Christian culture could not survive the dominance of Islam,¹⁹ and the fate of the Christians is seen in stark terms as conversion or exile. Estimates for the number of Christian converts to Islam range from Epalza's conclusion that most had converted by the end of the eighth century,²⁰ to Reilly's argument that Christians may have made up thirty percent of the population of Spain in the eleventh century.²¹ Bulliet calculated that the number of conversions peaked c.913; half the Christians in al-Andalus had converted to Islam by the tenth century, and eighty percent by the eleventh.²² Working from the genealogies of the notables of al-Andalus, collected in biographical dictionaries, and assuming that all the subjects were Muslims by the time they were eligible for inclusion, but that some of them were of Christian origin, Bulliet dated the conversion of each family to the date of the first appearance of a name which looked Arabic. There are several problems with this approach. In order to be able to draw general conclusion from a sample, the data must be accurate, and the sample representative of the population in general and of adequate size. Bulliet's study fulfils none of these criteria. It is not always easy to distinguish between Arabic, Berber or even Visigothic names. Since the biographical dictionaries included only men active in public life,²³ Bulliet's approach is equivalent to making conclusions about the population of Britain in the twentieth century from a study of *Who's Who*. Bulliet was working with 154 genealogies from five sources, and nearly all of his subjects were active in Cordoba. Thus, estimates of the rate of conversion are pure guesswork. The subject of emigration will be discussed in chapter 5. Again, there are onomastic problems; men of Andalusí origin witnessed tenth-century Leonese charters, but it is not clear from their names whether they were Christians or converts to Islam.²⁴

This study will look at some aspects of these problems as they arise from a closer look at a

¹⁹ Barkai R., *Cristianos y musulmanes en la España medieval (El enemigo en el espejo)*, trans. from Hebrew by Bar-Kochba M. and Komay A., (Madrid, 1984).

²⁰ Epalza, M. de, 'Mozarabs: an Emblematic Christian Minority in Islamic Spain', in Jayyusi S. (ed.), *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, (Leiden, New York, Cologne, 1992), pp.149-175, at pp.160-161.

²¹ Reilly B., *The Contest of Christian and Muslim Spain, 1031-1157*, (Oxford, 1992), pp.17-21.

²² Bulliet R.W., *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 1979), p.116; *ibid*, 'Conversion to Islam and the emergence of a Muslim society in Iran', in Levtzion N.(ed.) *Conversion to Islam*, (New York and London, 1979), pp.30-51.

²³ Biographical dictionaries provide important evidence for the history of al-Andalus. Their entries are arranged in chronological order, or according to the place of origin, or the profession of their subjects: Young M.J.L., 'Arabic biographical writing' in *ibid.*, Latham J.D., and Sergeant R.B., (eds.) *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, Volume I, Religion, learning and science in the 'Abbasid period*, (Cambridge, 1990), pp.168-187.

²⁴ Aguilar V., 'Onomástica de origen árabe en el reino de León (Siglo X)', *Al-Qantara*, (1994), XV, 351-363; Mediano F.R., 'Acerca de la población arabizada del reino de León (Siglos X y XI)', *Al-Qantara*, (1994), XV, 465-472.

number of texts written by or attributed to Christians living in Spain up to the fall of the caliphate. It concentrates on the Latin sources, some of them familiar, others less well known, but it is extended by an examination of the translation of Latin sources into Arabic, and by looking at the work of a Muslim historian who wrote about Christians. It is arranged in chronological order, as far as this can be determined, but is not a narrative; fragments of narrative are used, but only to show how the history of Spain was being written up at a given moment. The Arabic sources are used wherever relevant. My hypothesis is that, although fraught with pitfalls, this material may be approached with the same apparatus of textual criticism as has been applied to the Latin sources. In order to evaluate a piece of evidence, it is important to know something about the manuscript from which it comes, and its textual transmission. What literary strategies were available to the author? How did the audience for this text affect the rhetoric employed by the author, where 'rhetoric ... is not an element of distortion that the historian's scalpel should neatly cut away from his evidence, but part of the reality in question; its content and influence have to be evaluated separately in each case'?²⁵ Sometimes the work involved seems out of all proportion to the result; as Sánchez-Albornoz remarked at the end of a paper of 101 pages in which he concluded that Rodrigo, the last Visigothic king, died in 711, but could not identify the site of his last battle: 'a miniscule fruit for a tree with so many branches'.²⁶ In other cases, it was a surprise to discover how much of the textbook history of al-Andalus owes to Simonet and to the Dutch Arabist Dozy,²⁷ and how vulnerable some of their conclusions are to criticism.

Each chapter deals with one text, or with a collection of related texts. Where, as in the chapters on the eighth-century chronicles, and the writings of Eulogius and Alvarus, these texts have been the subject of previous studies, I have not attempted to be exhaustive. In discussing the eighth-century chronicles, I have concentrated on the texts as witnesses to the Christian response to the Islamic conquest. Much attention has been paid to Eulogius without questioning the reliability of his testimony, which I will consider in the light of Alvarus' *Life of Eulogius* and other evidence. Tenth-century Cordoba is briefly described by comparing the Arabic sources with recent archaeological findings, as a backdrop to the later chapters. The following chapter discusses the passions of two Cordoban martyrs of the tenth century. The passion of Pelagius has recently

²⁵ Pohl W., 'Introduction: The Empire and the integration of barbarians', in *ibid.* (ed.) *Kingdoms of the Empire: The Integration of Barbarians in Late Antiquity*, (Leiden, New York, Cologne, 1997), pp.1-12, at p.6.

²⁶ Sánchez-Albornoz C., 'Dónde y cuándo murió Don Rodrigo, último Rey de los Godos?' *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, (1945), III, 5-105.

²⁷ see for example, Dozy R., *Histoire des musulmanes d'Espagne jusqu'à la conquête de l'Andalousie par les Almoravids (711-1110)*, ed. Lévi-Provençal E., (Leiden, 1932); *Recherches sur l'histoire et la littérature des arabes d'Espagne pendant le Moyen Age*, (2 vols., Leiden, 1881), I; Dozy R. and Pellat C., (ed. and trans.), *Le Calendrier de Cordoue*, (Leiden, 1961).

received some attention, but the neglect of Argentea is surprising, since the hagiographer had interesting views of the Umayyad capital and its Christian population. Recemund of Cordoba is usually cited as the epitome of integration of a Christian into Muslim society, a bishop who headed an Andalusí embassy to the court of Otto I and compiled a calendar for al-Hakam II. The evidence for Recemund, both in Latin and in Arabic, is a complex web of material from which more than one picture may be spun. Recemund, however, is just the kind of man to have been involved in the translation of Orosius into Arabic, one of a number of Christian texts translated at this period. Finally, valuable insight into Christian conversion and assimilation is found in the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* of Ibn al-Qutiya, a Muslim who described the Christians' role in the conquest and afterwards. All these texts were written under different circumstances and it is not surprising that they have different perspectives. Each is judged as far as possible on its own terms, without worrying that the pieces of evidence may be incommensurable with each other. The result is a series of snapshots, which deepen our understanding of the situation of the Christians in al-Andalus rather than providing a narrative, either of conversion or of resistance to Islam.

Most imperial histories are written by the conquerors, and the fate of the subjected peoples has to be read from their perspective, which is inevitably one of cultural superiority.²⁸ The Roman Empire was posited on the opposition between 'Romans' and the 'barbarians', which continues to dominate historiography of the Transformation of the Roman World. Charlemagne's justification of military expansion with the rhetoric of mission became a cliché of colonialism. Not all imperial attitudes to the subject peoples were identical, but in general, as the 'barbarians' were disparaged, so was their history. The Spaniards in the New World authenticated the historical memory of their subjects only in so far as this made the exaction of tribute easier, and the words of the vanquished can be heard only faintly, through the writings of the settlers and the vagaries of oral tradition.²⁹ The British in India rewrote history from spurious genealogies and both genuine and fabricated Mughal charters in an attempt to situate the British settlement in an unbroken Indian tradition of the payment of tribute to conquerors.³⁰ After independence, the Indian ruling class found it difficult to escape the colonialist formulation. It is very difficult in these examples to reconstruct the subject peoples' view of conquest. The historiography of the Islamic conquest of Spain is different, reflecting important differences between this and other conquests. There is no evidence for mission: this is perhaps explained by the fiscal status of the vanquished, who paid more tax than Muslims, but there may have been a genuine feeling that

²⁸ see for example Bitterli U., *Cultures in Conflict: Encounters between European and non-European Cultures, 1492-1800*, (Stanford, California, 1989).

²⁹ Wachtel N., *La vision des vaincus: les Indiens du Pérou devant la Conquête espagnole 1530-1570*, (Paris, 1971); in one of the plays about the conquest staged during Indian festivals, Cortés is defeated.

³⁰ Guha R., 'Dominance without hegemony and its historiography', in *ibid. Subaltern Studies IV: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, (Delhi, 1992), pp.210-215.

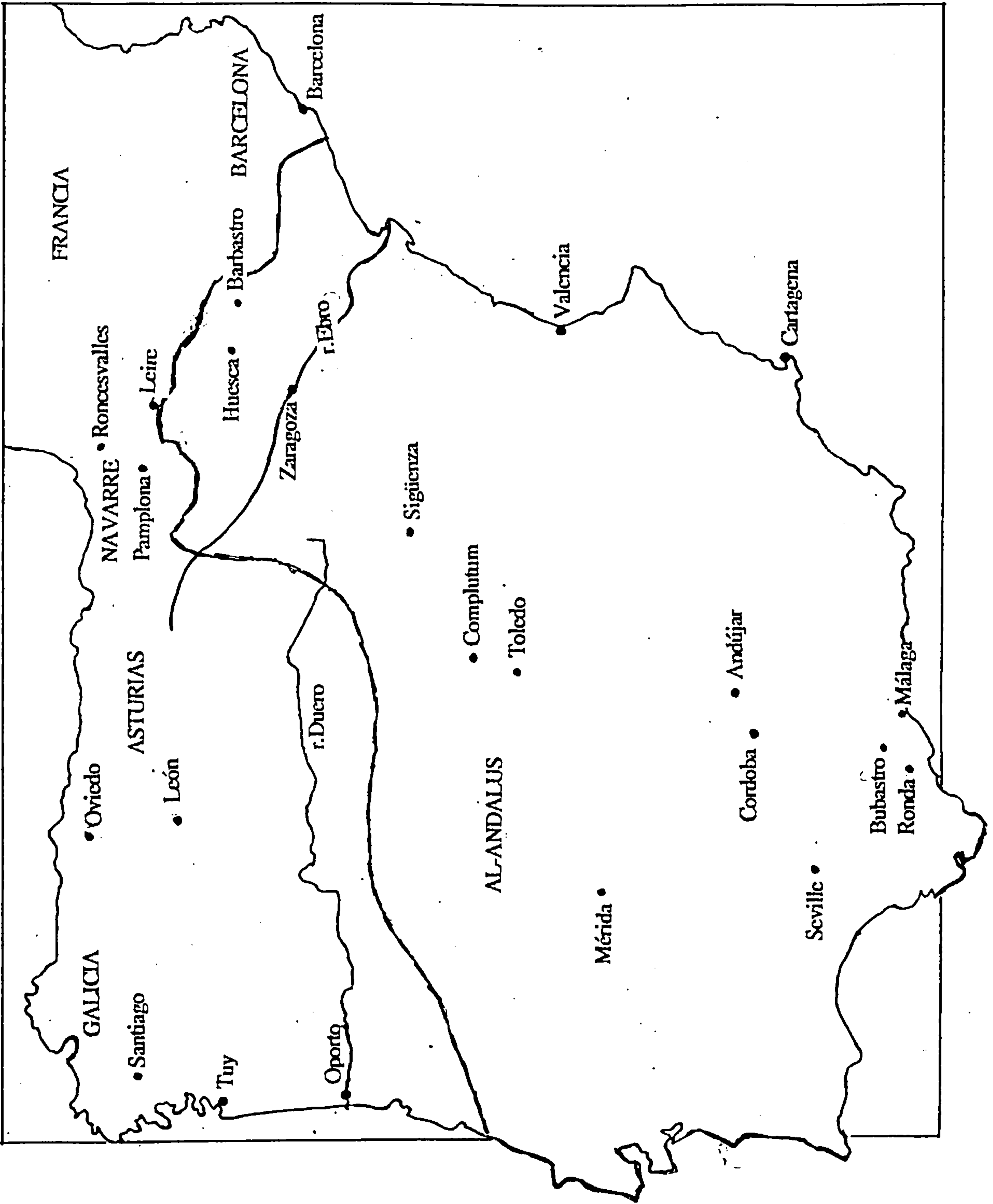
Christians and Jews should be respected as fellow monotheists. It may also have had something to do with the fact that, in al-Andalus, as in the Middle East, Islamic conquerors relied on native administrators,³¹ because the political institutions of the conquered peoples were more developed than those of their new masters. The cultural achievements of Visigothic Spain are reflected in their influence on the rest of Europe.³² The conquerors, on the other hand, were a mixture of Arabs and Berbers. Some of them were Muslims but others were adherents of the local religions of north Africa; there were probably Christians as well.³³ Such a group was not in a position to assert cultural superiority. The balance shifted with the adoption of Arabic for all official transactions, and the growth of Muslim scholarship. Later, as the conquerors were gradually expelled from the peninsula, texts written in Arabic were considered useless or heretical³⁴ and were destroyed, although some were translated into Latin. Although it distorted Spanish historiography, the Reconquest, by restoring the primacy of Latin, ensured that some at least of the Christian texts written in Spain in the Islamic period were preserved. This evidence gives a unique glimpse of the impact of conquest and cultural change from the perspective of the subject people.

³¹ Crone P. *Slaves on Horses*, (Cambridge, 1980), p.30.

³² Fontaine J. and Pellistrandi C., (eds.) *L'Europe Héritière de l'Espagne Wisigothique*, (Madrid, 1992).

³³ Manzano Moreno E., 'Arabes, beréberes e indígenas: al-Andalus en su primer período de formación', in Barceló M. and Toubert P. (eds.), *L'Incastellamento*, (Rome, 1998), pp.157-178.

³⁴ Ribera found the manuscript of an Arabic grammar in the University Library in Valencia glossed in Catalan by its owner, who noted: 'as it is written in Arabic, I have never found anyone who can read it. I am afraid it might be the Alcoran of Mahomet': Ribera y Tarragó J., 'Bibliófilos y bibliotecas en la España Musulmana', in *ibid.*, *Disertaciones y opúsculos*, (Madrid, 1928), I, pp.181-228, at p.228.



Christian and Muslim Spain c.890

(adapted from Brice, *A Historical Atlas of Islam*, p.37.)

2. News from the East in the eighth-century chronicles

'He [al-Samh] took possession of Gallia and Narbonense through the leader of the army Mazlema and harassed the leaders of the Franks with frequent battles. And assembling his forces, the aforementioned leader reached Toulouse, surrounding it with a siege and trying to overcome it with slings and other machines. But the Franks, informed of these events, gathered together under their commander Eudo. Thus gathered, they reached Toulouse. At Toulouse, the battle lines of both sides engaged in serious fighting. They killed Zema, [al-Samh] the leader of the Saracen army and some of his troops and they pursued the remaining part of the army in flight'.³⁵

Two Christian histories were written in Spain in the first fifty years after the conquest. They have been neglected until recently, when the longer of the two, usually known as the *Chronicle of 754*, or the *Mozarabic Chronicle*, has received some attention.³⁶ As the name implies, it seems to have been written in 754 or shortly after, and is thus much earlier than the first accounts of the conquest in Arabic. Collins based his history of the *Arab Conquest* on it, and demonstrated how valuable a source it is for this period. The *Chronicle of 754* gives an account of the 'ruin of Spain' but it begins with the accession of Heraclius, incorporates Byzantine history and the conquest of Syria by the Muslims, and uses Imperial regnal and Hegira dating as well as the Spanish Era. The second chronicle, edited by Mommsen under the title *Continuatio Byzantia-Arabica*³⁷ but now called the *Chronicle of 741*, is even more eastern in its focus. Apart from some early chapters on Spain, the *Chronicle of 741* is a brief summary of the reigns of the seventh- and early eighth-century Byzantine emperors and the Islamic conquests in the East. There is only one passage on Spain after 621 (quoted above) and this, somewhat confusingly, seems to have been copied from the *Chronicle of 754*. Previous commentators on the two chronicles have passed quickly over the *Chronicle of 741*, moving with obvious relief to the later chronicle. Collins dismissed the *Chronicle of 741* as 'a confused and confusing work that fails to integrate the elements of which it is composed in a workmanlike and satisfying way'.³⁸ If one is using the eighth-century chronicles to construct a narrative of events in Spain, this judgement is clearly

³⁵ *Chronicle of 741*, CSM, I, pp.7-14, 42.

³⁶ CSM, I, pp. 15-54; López Pereira J.E., (ed. and trans.) *Crónica Mozarabe de 754*, (Zaragoza, 1980); *ibid.*, *Estudio Crítico sobre la Crónica Mozárabe de 754*, (Zaragoza, 1980); Wolf K.B., *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, (Liverpool, 1990), pp.28-45 and 111-158.

³⁷ *MGH, AA* (Berlin, 1894), XI, pp.323-30.

³⁸ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, p.57.

valid. Yet there is scope for a more interesting interpretation of the way in which both the chroniclers use the news from the East, which rehabilitates this material as one aspect of the authors' response to events in Spain, and thus integral to the story which they were trying to tell.

Recent scholarship has opened the eighth-century chronicles to further study in a number of ways. The sections recounting Byzantine and Islamic history should be compared with accounts of the same events in Eastern texts. Unfortunately, the history of this period in the East is rather obscure.³⁹ To make matters even more difficult, few historians of Spain will be familiar with all the languages - Greek, Syriac and Arabic are the most common, but there are others - used by the authors of the texts whose subject matter overlaps with that of the Spanish chronicles. In the last few years, however, many of this material has been translated and put into context.⁴⁰ Secondly, use of chronicle material in general has recently become much more sophisticated. Chronicles used to have a poor reputation. They were thought to be the work of minor clerics copying mechanically from their equally ill-educated predecessors and then adding a few trifles of their own to bring the work up to date. The chronicles were mined for snippets of information, but otherwise disparaged. These days, chronicles are no longer simply marked out of ten for factual accuracy, and their sources listed. Comparison between two or more accounts of the same period makes it clear that chroniclers chose what to write about, and the way that events and their protagonists were emphasised or played down, according to their interpretations or polemical use of past and recent history.⁴¹ Chronicle-writing can be flexible, like any other historical genre, so that 'the style and form of each work, however short, is determined by the author's current literary strategy.'⁴² In retrospect, it is sometimes easier to decide what the chronicler was trying to say than what really happened; the nearest one can get to extracting historical fact from such a composition is to find a near contemporary with a different perspective on the same material.⁴³ The *Chronicle of 741* may seem 'confused and confusing,' but we assume that it did not look this way to its compiler. One approach to the eighth-century Spanish chronicles is to speculate about the contemporary meaning of these apparently disparate collections of material. Valuable work of this sort has been done on the fifth-century chronicles in Gaul. Here many of the chroniclers' models have not survived, making it more difficult to unravel the writers' purposes. Fortunately,

³⁹ Haldon J.F., *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, (Cambridge, 1990).

⁴⁰ See for example, Palmer A., *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, (Liverpool, 1993); Brock S., 'Syriac Sources for Seventh-Century History', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, (1976), II, 17-36; *ibid.*, 'North Mesopotamia in the Late Seventh Century: Book XV of John Bar Penkāye's *Rīs Melle*' in *ibid. Studies in Syriac Christianity*, (Aldershot, 1992), II, pp.51-75.

⁴¹ Muhlberger S., *The Fifth-century Chroniclers*, (Leeds, 1990), pp.2-4.

⁴² Wood I.N., 'Continuity or calamity? the constraints of literary models', in Drinkwater J. and Elton H. (eds.), *Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity*, (Cambridge, 1992), pp.9-18.

⁴³ Wood I.N., 'The End of Roman Britain: Continental Evidence and Parallels', in Lapidge M. and Dumville D. (eds.), *Gildas: New Approaches, Studies in Celtic History*, (1984), V, pp. 1-25.

in the case of the Spanish chronicles, it is possible to compare the texts with one of their common sources, and with each other, to get some idea of what the authors included and left out.

The authors of the eighth century inherited the Visigothic tradition of writing universal chronicles,⁴⁴ rooted in the work of Eusebius, whose *Chronicle* and *Ecclesiastical History* were known in Spain in Latin translation. Eusebius saw history as the co-extensive triumph of the Roman and Christian Empires. This idea was taken up by Orosius and Prudentius early in the fifth century, and Eusebius' influence pervaded historical writing even after the collapse of the empire in the West, along with a powerful but controversial apocalyptic strain. Augustine proposed the separation of the earthly and heavenly cities, denying the possibility that God's purpose might be accomplished on earth, but Western historians preferred to give the role previously played by Rome to the Empire's barbarian successors. In Spain it was not easy to envisage the barbarian kingdom as God's chosen instrument, since the persistence of the Arian heresy made the Visigothic kings suspect in the eyes of Catholic chroniclers. It was only with the conversion of Reccared to Catholicism that John of Biclar and Isidore were able to write convincing providential history in the peninsula. John of Biclar began to write his *Chronicle* while he was studying in Constantinople. His text is most clearly Byzantine in using imperial regnal dating, but he also included many episodes from Byzantine history. He did not, however, take a pro-Byzantine attitude to events in Spain, but reported the defeats suffered by the Byzantines at the hands of the Visigoths. In the next generation, Isidore's *History of the Goths* improved on this picture, ending with the triumph of the Gothic monarchy, the expulsion of the Byzantines from Spain, and Reccared as the new Constantine.

Both the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754* were written as continuations of John of Biclar and incorporated passages from Isidore's *History of the Goths*. The texts were preserved in similar circumstances. The surviving manuscripts of the *Chronicle of 741* come from four codices, one from the thirteenth century and three from the sixteenth, and were all copies of the same exemplar, now lost. The best description of this original manuscript is that of Juan Bautista Pérez (1537-97), a canon of Toledo and later bishop of Segorbe from 1591, who collected many Spanish medieval texts. He found the chronicle in a codex presented to the library of Philip II at El Escorial in 1578 by Jorge de Beteta y Cardañas, a nobleman from Soria; it was destroyed in the fire of 1691.⁴⁵ Pérez called the *Chronicle of 741* a 'continuation of John of Biclar by an

⁴⁴ Hillgarth J.N., 'Historiography in visigothic Spain', *La storiografia altomedievale, Settimane*, (1970), pp.261-311.

⁴⁵ Andrés, G. de, 'Los codices visigóticos de Jorge de Beteta en la Biblioteca del Escorial', *Celtiberia*, (1976), LI, 101-107. Pérez' transcription (formerly MS G-1 of Segorbe cathedral) disappeared in the Spanish Civil War, but a microfilm survives. Another copy of the manuscript was made by Juan de Mariana in 1584, but he made many additions to the other items in the codex, so that his version of the *Chronicle of 741* is probably less trustworthy than Pérez'.

unknown author from the Gothic volume which is in San Lorenzo [El Escorial] with Eusebius and Victor I believe that it is by Isidore Pacensis', demonstrating that the habit of calling all unidentified authors of Spanish historical texts 'Isidore' persisted at least until the sixteenth century. He described the manuscript, as he often did, as 'extremely old' [*'antiquissimus'*], but was not able to date it, although five of the manuscripts donated by Beteta which survived the fire have all been dated to the ninth or tenth centuries. Apart from the Chronicle of 741, the codex contained the chronicles of Jerome (to 378), Prosper (to 455), Victor of Tunnona (to 567), John of Biclár (to 590), the *Chronicle* of Isidore (to 616), his *History of the Goths, Sueves and Vandals* (to 625), Julian of Toledo's *Against Wamba* (c.675), the *Laterculus regum visigothorum* (a list of the Visigothic kings to Witiza, written before Witiza's death in 710), the *Life of San Millán* (c.631) and the version of the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* known as the *ad Sebastianum*, which ends with the death of Ordoño II (850-66). This dates the whole collection no earlier than the late ninth century.

There were at least two apparently independent versions of the *Chronicle of 754*. One was copied into a thirteenth-century codex now in Madrid.⁴⁶ The other is incomplete and consists of six folios divided between Madrid and London.⁴⁷ They seem to be slightly earlier than the surviving manuscripts from Soria, and are written in a hand similar to those used in the eighty manuscripts of mid ninth-century Andalusian origin now in the Real Academia of Madrid.⁴⁸ The Madrid codex contains a large number of historiographical texts, from Eusebius to the chronicle of Ricardo Pictaviense continued to 1244. The list of texts composed before the eighth century is very similar to those accompanying the *Chronicle of 741* in the Soria codex, with the addition of a chronographical commentary by Quintus Julius Hilarianus, the *Gallic Chronicle* (to 511), a *Chronicle of Cartagena* (to 525), the *On the Birth and Death of the Fathers* of Isidore and his *On the Lives of Famous Men*, and works with the same title by Gennadius, Ildefonsus and Jerome. The *Chronicle of 754* was also copied into a codex from Alcobaça which disappeared sometime after 1622.⁴⁹ Vaseus, who described the Alcobaça codex in the introduction to his *Chronicles of Spain* of 1553, gives a list of contents which is very similar to the Madrid collection, and a fourteenth-century manuscript from Navarre, now in Paris,⁵⁰ contained almost the same selection of texts.

Thus both the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754* were copied into collections of

⁴⁶ *Biblioteca de la Universidad Complutense* 116-Z-46 (Villa-Amil catalogue no.134).

⁴⁷ *BM Egerton 1934, Biblioteca de la Academia de la Historia* 81.

⁴⁸ Díaz y Díaz M.C., 'La transmisión textual del Biclarense', *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensis*, (1962), XXXV, 57-78, at p.71.

⁴⁹ Cardelle de Hartmann C., 'The textual transmission of the Mozarabic chronicle of 754', *Early Medieval Europe*, (forthcoming); López, *Estudio Crítico*, p.8.

⁵⁰ *Library of the Arsenal* 982.

historiographical texts which gradually told the history of Spain, sometimes by the continuation of an earlier chronicle, but often by a process of accumulation of texts which seems to be more random. Both the eighth-century chronicles seem to have been written in al-Andalus, as we shall see, but they may have been read in northern Spain within a century of their composition. Thus, not only did the Visigothic historiographical tradition survive in al-Andalus, but the history written by Christian clerics under Islamic rule was considered sufficiently orthodox to be copied into the products of *scriptoria* in the Kingdom of the Asturias. For the *Chronicle of 741* it is possible to trace this process back to the date of its inclusion in the Soria codex, probably in the ninth century. The six loose folios of the *Chronicle of 754* show that this text was being copied at about the same time.

The vagaries of manuscript survival have left only one apparently complete version of each of the two chronicles. The interpretation of a sole surviving manuscript of a text is difficult because it is impossible to be sure that this text is the product of one author at one ascertainable date. The plain style of many chronicles means that later alterations more easily blend in with original material than is the case in other genres. The compilation of new versions of the past by linking one or more chronicles was very popular in the Middle Ages. We can see this process in action in the surviving manuscripts of the *Chronicle of Hydatius*, written by a bishop of Iria Flavia in Galicia in the middle of the fifth century.⁵¹ A ninth-century manuscript of this work has survived almost intact. Later copies from Spain belong to two separate traditions. An exemplar of the first tradition is preserved in a twelfth-century codex, and of the second in a collection copied in the sixteenth century. Both were interpolated with erroneous dates and material from other, unknown sources. Had the ninth-century version not survived, it would have been even more difficult to know what Hydatius actually wrote. Readers must also beware that in some cases, of which Hydatius' chronicle is a good example, editors, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries,⁵² sometimes preferred their own dating to what they found in the manuscripts. This makes the evaluation of the transcription of a single manuscript of a chronicle copied at least a century after the supposed date of composition very uncertain. My analysis of the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754* depends on the assumption that the surviving manuscripts represent coherent pieces of work dating from the middle of the eighth century.

The two authors were working with the same, or very similar sources, as we shall see. Since the use of this material in the *Chronicle of 754* may be described as the more straightforward of the two, I wish to begin by looking at this text in more detail before considering the very different synthesis which the author of the *Chronicle of 741* achieved.

⁵¹ Muhlberger, *The Fifth Century Chronicles*, pp. 200-203; Burgess R.W., *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana*, (Oxford, 1993).

⁵² Mommsen edited Hydatius' chronicle as well as the eighth-century chronicles.

The *Chronicle of 754*

The author of the *Chronicle of 754* seems to have known a continuation of John of Biclar's work, with an epilogue 'up to the present year which is [Era] 680' (642).⁵³ He used Isidore's *History of the Goths* extensively, and also knew Isidore's *Chronicle*, the *Etymologies*, a Christological treatise of Braulio of Zaragoza, Julian of Toledo's *Book on the Proving of the Sixth Age* and the Acts of the ecclesiastical councils of Toledo.⁵⁴ His extensive knowledge of his Visigothic literary heritage is evidence of continuity across the divide of 711, to which the survival of much of the pre-conquest framework of government also bears witness.⁵⁵ The author may have been writing in Toledo, because he seems to have known the city well, although López Pereira put forward a case for the south-east corner of the peninsula formerly held by the Byzantines.⁵⁶ He wrote at least one other historical work, an 'epitome' on the civil wars between the governors of Spain in the early 740s, which does not survive.⁵⁷ The *Chronicle of 754* begins with the accession of Heraclius in Era 649 [611: the accepted date is 610] and, like John of Biclar's *Chronicle*, it is structured by Byzantine imperial accessions. The author included material on the Byzantines and on the Islamic conquest of Syria and the caliphal succession. His main concern however, was not with the events as such, but with establishing a secure chronological framework. On this framework he hung a history of the Visigothic kings, using his Eastern material to turn the history of Spain into a universal chronicle. Apart from a few discrepancies, he was successful in tying in Byzantine imperial regnal years with Spanish Era dates, the regnal years of the caliphs, the years of the Hegira, and 'annus mundi' dating from the creation of the world in 5200 BC.⁵⁸ For much of the chronicle, the three histories of the Byzantine, Visigothic and Islamic empires run in parallel, with one chapter given to each in turn.⁵⁹ Where the writer was short of information he merely gave a list of dates: 'At this time, in the Eras 736, 737 and 738 [698,699 and 700], the first, second, and third years of his reign [Leontius], and the seventy-ninth, eightieth, and eighty-first years of the Arabs, 'Abd al-Malik completed the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth years of his rule.'⁶⁰ For the period after the Islamic conquest, the chronicler concentrated on the history of Spain alone. This section is more detailed, and this is what makes it such a valuable

⁵³ *Juan de Biclaro Obispo de Gerona, Su Vida y su obra: introducción, texto crítico y comentarios por J. Campos*, (Madrid, 1960), p.100.

⁵⁴ López Pereira, *Estudio crítico*, pp. 83-92.

⁵⁵ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, p.59; Díaz y Díaz, M.C., 'La historiografía hispana desde la invasión árabe hasta el año 100', *La storiografía altomedieval, Settimane*, (1970), 313-343; Vallvé Bermejo J., 'España en el siglo VIII: ejército y sociedad', *Al-Andalus*, (1978), XLIII, 51-112.

⁵⁶ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, pp.57-8; López, *Estudio crítico*, pp. 13-16, and 64.

⁵⁷ *Chronicle of 754*: 86 and 88, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chronicles*, pp.149 and 152.

⁵⁸ Or therabouts; the writer knew that the exact date was the subject of debate; *Chronicle of 754*: 77, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.156-158.

⁵⁹ e.g. *Chronicle of 754* 20-21-22, 24-25-26, 39-40-41, 42-43-44, 60-61-62.

⁶⁰ *Chronicle of 754* 43.

source.

The chronicler was biased towards church affairs. Much of this emphasis, together with its vocabulary, came from Isidore,⁶¹ the main concerns of whose *Chronicle* and *On the Lives of Famous Men* were the Arian and anti-Chalcedonian heresies. Thus the *Chronicle of 754* showed Isidore himself dealing with a heretical Syrian 'Acephalite' bishop at the Council of Seville,⁶² and mentioned one church council for each reign up to 711.⁶³ Its religious focus, in the context of an obsession with chronology, is the key to the chronicle. A sense of calamity caused by the fall of Spain, and the End of the World which it may portend,⁶⁴ is heightened by reports of famines, eclipses, and other natural disasters. The *Chronicle of 754* is an exemplary text, and reports on the defeats of the Byzantines by the Arabs served to reinforce the message that the Christians in Spain had brought disaster upon themselves. Heraclius' downfall was sealed even at the moment of his triumph over the Persians: 'When Chosroes' kingdom was finally destroyed and had surrendered to imperial dominion, the people did honour not to God, but to Heraclius, and he, accepting this with pride, returned to Constantinople'.⁶⁵ The chronicler drew a picture of Heraclius' hubris and his nemesis at the hands of the armies from Arabia, narrating the whole of Heraclius' reign to 631, before beginning his chronicle of the Visigothic kings, even though it forced him to backtrack, distorting the chronological framework of the chronicle, in order to resume the history of Spain. He showed how Spain flourished under a succession of Visigothic kings, starting with the pious and victorious Sisenand (612-621), until the kingdom was destroyed by the ambition of Roderic. The armies of the 'Arabs and Moors' confronted the Goths 'and in that battle the entire army of the Goths, which had come to him fraudulently and in rivalry out of ambition for the kingship, fled and he was slain. Thus Roderic wretchedly lost not only his rule but his homeland...,'⁶⁶ and Spain was ruined:

'Who can recount such perils? Who can enumerate such grievous disaster? Even if every limb were transformed into a tongue, it would be beyond human nature to express the ruin of Spain and its many and great evils. But let me summarize everything on one brief page. Leaving aside all of the innumerable disasters from the time of Adam up to the present which this cruel, unclean world has brought to countless regions and cities - that which, historically, the city of Troy sustained when it fell; that which Jerusalem suffered, as foretold by the eloquence of the prophets; that which Babylon bore, according to the eloquence of the scriptures; that which Rome went through, martyrially

⁶¹ López, *Estudio Crítico*, p.104.

⁶² *Chronicle of 754* 14.

⁶³ *Chronicle of 754* 18.

⁶⁴ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, p.63.

⁶⁵ *Chronicle of 754* 4, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.113.

⁶⁶ *Chronicle of 754* 43, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.131.

graced with the nobility of the apostles - all this and more Spain, once so delightful and now rendered so miserable, endured as much to its honour as to its disgrace.'⁶⁷

The chronicler's picture of Spain's tribulations may be exaggerated, but his view of history located her changed fortunes firmly within the Christian historiographical tradition.

The *Chronicle of 741*

At first reading, the *Chronicle of 741* does not address the same issues. The author did not concern himself with chronological exactitude, as we shall see. He said nothing about religious matters, nor about natural disasters or the conquest of Spain. The chronicle has four disparate components. The author probably knew John of Biclar's text in the version which had been extended to 602 with the addition of notices on the emperor Maurice and Gregory the Great,⁶⁸ but he began with the death of Reccared in 601. He listed some but not all of the succeeding Visigothic kings to Sisebut (612-21), dated according to the Spanish Era, with notices summarised from the *History of the Goths*, and then had no more to say about Spain apart from the account of al-Samh's attack on Toulouse a century later. The framework of the chronicle is a series of brief accounts of the reigns of the Byzantine emperors from Phocas (602-610) to Leo III (719-41); since the chronicler noted that Leo reigned for twenty-four years but did not name his successor, it has been assumed that he stopped writing in 741. Yet although the first imperial accessions listed in the chronicle are dated, the last date of any sort is the one given for the succession of Constantine, son of Heraclius in Era 678 [640: the accepted date is 641]. This author gave longer accounts of the conquest of Syria than the *Chronicle of 754*, and mentioned the reigns of most of the successors to Muhammad. He ended with Walid II (743-44), thus he could have been writing as late as 744.⁶⁹ Indeed, this may not be all that the chronicler wrote; there is no concluding paragraph on the age of the world, as there is in the *Chronicle of 754*, nor anything else to suggest that the chronicle as it survives is complete.

A detailed analysis of the text is required in order to speculate about the message hidden in this apparently odd collection of data. Although the chronicle functions as a continuation of John of Biclar, it was not written with the same concerns in mind. John of Biclar had focused on Reccared as the ruler responsible for the conversion of the Goths to religious orthodoxy. The king gained the throne without opposition,⁷⁰ founded churches and monasteries and restored

⁶⁷ *Chronicle of 754* 45, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.132-33.

⁶⁸ Díaz y Díaz, 'La transmisión textual'.

⁶⁹ but see below.

⁷⁰ *Juan de Biclaro* 80, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.75; the division into paragraphs is Wolf's.

ecclesiastical property.⁷¹ He summoned a council at Toledo in 590, and personally helped to destroy the Arian heresy.⁷² For John of Biclar, the failure of attacks on Reccared and his faith,⁷³ his divinely-aided triumphs against the Franks,⁷⁴ and the peace and harmony established in Spain by Reccared were reflected in events in the East, where 'the emperor of the Persians received the faith of Christ and established peace with the emperor Maurice'.⁷⁵ Taking many of his themes from John of Biclar, Isidore elaborated this view of Reccared, portraying him as an ideal emperor who was 'pious and outstanding in peace..... gloriously elevating the people by the victory of the faith. For in the beginning, Reccared adopted the Catholic faith, recalling all the peoples of the entire Gothic nation to the observance of the correct faith.'⁷⁶ Isidore described Reccared's vital role in a synod which confirmed the suppression of Arianism, and his generosity towards the church.⁷⁷ Of Reccared's victory over the Franks, Isidore wrote: 'No victory of the Goths in Spain was greater or even comparable. Many thousands of the enemy were laid low or captured and the remaining part of the army, beyond hope, turned in flight with the Goths following after them until they were cut down within the boundaries of their own kingdom.'⁷⁸

Any chronicler of Spain working from the models of John of Biclar and Isidore might be expected to have included these tales of Reccared's orthodoxy and piety, and the way God had rewarded him with victory in battle. Yet the *Chronicle of 741* dismissed the king in one sentence: 'Reccared died after reigning for fifteen years'.⁷⁹ This brevity is even stranger in the light of the chronicler's obvious reliance on the *History of the Goths* as his sole source for events in Spain up to 621. Compare, for example, Chapter 3 of the *Chronicle of 741* with the corresponding passage from Isidore:⁸⁰

Chronicle of 741 3: 'Era DCXLI Vuittericus regnum, quod a Liuvane tyrannice invaserat, sibi vendicat annis VII; nam quia operatus fuit, gladio periit. Mors quippe innocentis Liuvan filii Reccaredi inulta in illo non fuit; inter epulas enim prandii a suis

⁷¹ Juan de Biclaro 87; trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.76.

⁷² Juan de Biclaro 92, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.78.

⁷³ Juan de Biclaro 90 and 94, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.77 and 79.

⁷⁴ Juan de Biclaro 91, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.77.

⁷⁵ Juan de Biclaro 94, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.79; Maurice made a treaty with Chosroes II, which may have given rise to this story of his conversion; see Ostrogorsky G., *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. Hussey J., (New Brunswick, NJ, 1969), p.80.

⁷⁶ Isidore, *Historia Gothorum* 54, ed. Mommsen T., *MGH AA*, XI, pp.267-295, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.103-4.

⁷⁷ *Historia Gothorum* 53 and 55, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.104-5.

⁷⁸ *Historia Gothorum* 54, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.104.

⁷⁹ *Chronicle of 741* 1.

⁸⁰ The phrases which the chronicler copied from Isidore are underlined.

est interfectus'.⁸¹

Historia Gothorum 58: 'Aera DCXLI anno imperii Maurici XX extincto Liuvane Wittericus regnum, quod vivente illo invaserat, vindicat annis VII, vir quidem strenuus in armorum arte, sed tamen expers victoriae, namque adversus militem Romanorum proelium saepe molitus nihil satis gloriae prater quod milites quidam Sagontia per duces obtinuit. Hic in vita plurima inlicita fecit, in morte cuidam quia gladio operatus fuerat, gladio periit. Mors quippe innocentis inulta in illo non fuit: inter epulas enim prandii coniuratione quorundam est interfectus. Corpus eius viliter est exportatum atque sepultum.'⁸²

The chronicler did not include everything that Isidore said, but he adhered to most of the sense, and some of the exact phraseology of his model. For the later Visigothic kings, however, he was much more selective in his use of the *History of the Goths*. It is worth drawing out the comparison in detail, because it may shed some light on the way the chronicler used his other sources.

The *Chronicle of 741* used only the first half of Isidore's entry for Gundemar (610-612), without Byzantine imperial dating: 'Era 648: After Witteric, Gundemar was set in authority over the kingdom for two years.'⁸³ The *History of the Goths* continued: 'He devastated the Basques during one expedition and besieged the army of the Romans on another. He died a natural death in Toledo.'⁸⁴ The chronicler took the same approach in his entry on Sisebut (612-21), omitting Isidore's praise of Sisebut as a man of letters, his forced conversion of the Jews and his military victories, which are summarised in the first entry of the *Chronicle of 754* to mention a Visigothic king: 'He was famous for his military example and victories. Dispatching an army, he brought the rebellious Asturians under his dominion. Through his generals, he overcame the Ruccones, he had the good fortune to triumph twice over the Romans and to subject certain of their cities to himself in battle.'⁸⁵ Sisebut was succeeded by his son Reccared, a child who survived his father only very briefly; he was left out of the *Chronicle of 741*. Then came Suinthila (621-31) whose reign was the culmination of Isidore's story of the triumph of the Goths. Isidore lauded the 'most glorious' Suinthila for his victories against the Ruccones and Basques, but most

⁸¹ Witteric assumed the kingship to himself which he had usurped from Liuva and held it for seven years; because he lived by the sword he died by the sword. The death of the innocent Liuva, son of Reccared was not unavenged; he was killed by his men between the courses of a meal.

⁸² trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.105-6.

⁸³ *Chronicle of 741* 5.

⁸⁴ *Historia Gothorum* 59, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.106.

⁸⁵ *Historia Gothorum* 61, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.106-7; cf. *Chronicle of 754* 11.

important of all was Suinthila's final expulsion of the Byzantines from the peninsula:

'After he had ascended to the summit of royal dignity, he waged war and obtained the remaining cities which the Roman army held in Spain and, with amazing fortune, triumphed even more gloriously than had the other kings. He was the first to obtain the monarchy of the entire kingdom of Spain north of the straits which had not been achieved by any previous ruler.'⁸⁶

Once again, the *Chronicle of 754* echoed Isidore's report.⁸⁷ Yet the *Chronicle of 741* made no reference at all to Suinthila. Lacunae of this sort are often blamed on the chronicler's possession of a defective text, as though manuscripts became as moth-eaten within a few years of their writing as they and their successors have become in the intervening centuries. Yet it is more likely that the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* had access to a full text of the *History of the Goths* and chose not to include Suinthila in his list of Visigothic kings.

It may be argued that the chronicler understood Isidore's line on Gothic history and recognised it as inapplicable to his own times. Unfortunately, however, it is impossible to know which text of Isidore the chronicler was using. The question of what Isidore actually wrote is a difficult one, since so many different recensions of the *History of the Goths* survive. They divide into a 'short' version ending with the reign of Sisebut and a 'long' version to Suinthila.⁸⁸ If, as Collins argued, only the longer version should be attributed to Isidore, he was writing the 'final chapter of what [he] conceived of as a history of the rise of the Goths at the expense of Rome'.⁸⁹ The *History of the Goths* ends: 'Subdued, the Roman soldier serves the Goths, whom he sees being served by many peoples and by Spain itself.'⁹⁰ Since the Visigothic empire had itself been overthrown, the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741*, if he was using the 'long' version of the *History of the Goths*, may have thought it better to bury Visigothic glories in oblivion. Yet there was at least one alternative approach the chronicler could have taken - the strategy adopted by the compiler of the *Chronicle of 754*, who described the Visigothic triumphs, but went on to show the mighty cast from their throne as punishment for their sins. The writer of the *Chronicle of 741* followed a different line. Much of the material that he omitted to quote from Isidore dealt with the victories of the Visigoths over the Byzantines, beginning with Reccared. The chronicler took a consistent line through this section of the text, ending with the complete omission of Suinthila, the king most memorable for his victories against Rome. The place which Suinthila should have occupied in the

⁸⁶ *Historia Gothorum* 62, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.107.

⁸⁷ *Chronicle of 754* 13, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.115.

⁸⁸ Collins R., 'Isidore, Maximus and the *Historia Gothorum*', in Scharer A. and Scheibelreiter G.(eds.) *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, (Munich, 1994), pp.345-358.

⁸⁹ Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.13.

⁹⁰ *Historia Gothorum* 70, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.110.

text is taken by Byzantium's struggles against the Persians and the Islamic conquest of Syria. The chronicler seems to have avoided any disparagement of the Byzantine empire which might be implied by reference to Byzantine defeats in Spain. By making his text a continuation of John of Biclar, the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* was, like the writer of the *Chronicle of 754*, placing his story in a Visigothic context. Yet he was not using Byzantine history merely as a chronological peg on which to hang his story, nor as another example of the sinful receiving their just desserts. He was implying that the fate of Spain was to be tied to that of Byzantium, and that Spain no longer had any interest in the empire's defeat.

Eastern models for the eighth-century chronicles

It would be neat to be able to pursue the compiler's polemic in a similar way through the rest of the chronicle by analyzing his selective use of a text or texts on Byzantium and the Islamic conquest of Syria. Unfortunately, one is very far indeed from being able to do this, since no-one has so far discovered the immediate source of the Byzantine and Islamic material in the eighth-century Spanish chronicles. It is possible that links between Spain and Byzantium were maintained after the conquest, giving the Spaniards access to Byzantine histories written in Greek, and they may have been able to read them in the original language. However, there is little evidence that such ties survived in Spain in the eighth century, in contrast to the situation in Rome and Francia.⁹¹ Byzantine and Greek learning was dominant in Rome until the middle of the ninth century and works in Greek were translated into Latin. The authors of the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754* probably read at least one Greek text, or its Latin translation, since some expressions show signs of their Greek origin,⁹² but no Byzantine text from this period has been found in Spain. Nor can the Greek borrowings be attributed to any known Byzantine text extant in the East, simply because none survive which are earlier than the early ninth century. Analysis of the sources and gaps in one of these later histories - the *Short History* of Nikephorus (d.828)⁹³ - suggests either that such histories were never written, or that they never became well known. It is not likely that the eighth-century Spanish chroniclers were better supplied with texts on Byzantine history than their contemporaries in the East.

In spite of this, López and Collins postulated a number of different sources for the Eastern material in the *Chronicle of 754*. Collins thought there must have been both a Byzantine chronicle

⁹¹ McCormick M., 'Byzantium and the West 700-900, in McKitterick R. (ed.), *New Cambridge Medieval History, II c.700-c.900*, (Cambridge, 1995), pp.349-382, at p.349.

⁹² 'dissimulus' and 'exercitus qua' in *Chronicle of 754* 39 and 'exercitus qua' in *Chronicle of 754*: 85; López Pereira, *Estudio crítico*, p.111.

⁹³ *Nikephorus Patriarch of Constantinople Short History*, ed. and trans. Mango C., (Dumbarton Oaks, 1990).

source and a 'work on the rulers of the Arabs, that in structure modelled itself closely on Isidore's *Historia Gothorum*', which he labelled the *Historia Arabum*, supposedly written in the reign of Hishām by a Christian with a knowledge of Islam, and Syrian and Umayyad sympathies.⁹⁴ López suggested a similar text as the common source for the history of the caliphs in the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754*.⁹⁵ This obliged him to assume the persistence of good contacts between Spain and the East, such that the Spanish chroniclers obtained at least two Eastern texts and supplemented their knowledge with information from 'oral transmission'. López also postulated another Arabic work, available in a Latin translation, as the source for the entries in the *Chronicle of 754* dealing with events in Spain between 711 and 740, although he conceded that what the chronicler says is not typically Arabic in tone: 'Thus, based on an Arabic history, perhaps in a Latin version, on the utilization of a Syrian chronicle of the caliphal period in Damascus, the handling of local sources, and probably, correspondence, the author succeeded in offering us this informative version of the hispano-arabic period from 711-740.'⁹⁶ Modern historiography of Spain in the medieval period is full of such 'lost chronicles'; Sánchez-Albornoz was particularly good at discovering and naming such hypothetical links between texts otherwise difficult to connect. Yet, from the evidence of the two surviving chronicles alone, it is possible to simplify the argument a little.

The Eastern material used by the compilers of the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754* is closely related. The latter chronicle may have been dependent on the former, although López Pereira thought not.⁹⁷ His argument is two-fold. Firstly, the chronologies are slightly different; the *Chronicle of 741* places Yazid's attack on Constantinople in the reign of Constantine IV (668-85), whereas the *Chronicle of 754* correctly dates it to the reign of his father Constans (641-68).⁹⁸ We should not perhaps be too concerned about errors in chronology. A Syriac writer of the eighth century recognised the problem when compiling his own chronicle, and added these consoling remarks:

'If anyone who reads this is of a mind to despise it, he should reflect that, just as affairs and doings of various kinds do not occur in one place alone, so it is here also. If he has consulted a history which does not match this one, he should realise that not even the authors of former times agree with one another. It causes no injury to

⁹⁴ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, p.56.

⁹⁵ López Pereira, *Estudio crítico*, p.107.

⁹⁶ López Pereira, *Estudio crítico*, p.111.

⁹⁷ López, *Estudio Crítico*, pp.96-9.

⁹⁸ *Chronicle of 741* 27; *Chronicle of 754* 23, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.122.

the discerning and the god-fearing if a date is one or two years out either way.
⁹⁹

Dating events in the seventh century is a problem even for modern historians who are able to compare many different texts. Some of the 'mistakes' in the *Chronicle of 741*, however, may not be the result of the chronicler having read a different source from that used by the compiler of the second chronicle, but may reflect the earlier writer's manipulation of his material. Dates may have been altered for emphasis. For example, the date for the accession of Phocas (602-610) is given as Era 642 [604], but this entry was placed after the entry on Witteric (603-610), murdered after seizing the throne from Liuva. Perhaps the chronicler wanted to emphasise the bloody fate of all tyrants; Phocas' usurpation was punished when 'the Persians, leaving their own lands, were successful against the Romans. They subjected Syria, Arabia and Egypt, expelling the Romans', and Phocas himself was later murdered.¹⁰⁰ Other examples of deliberate manipulation of data will be considered later. López' second reason for thinking that the two chronicles are not closely related was the observation that there are a few passages in the *Chronicle of 754* which do not appear in the *Chronicle of 741*; the 754 chronicler lists the years reigned by Constantine, son of Heraclius and Constantine IV and notes the tribal origin of Abū Bakr. These differences in content, however, are minor in comparison with the great overlap in content and vocabulary between the two texts. The chroniclers seem to have made an attempt to adapt their material to Spanish form, most obviously by appending Spanish Era dating, albeit rather casually in the case of the *Chronicle of 741*, rather than, as Collins suggested, using an *Historia Arabum* modelled on the *History of the Goths*. It is likely that their source was in the form of a chronology, perhaps laid out in columns like the *Chronicle* of John of Edessa, since the author of the *Chronicle of 754* was able to date his material so comprehensively. A summary of the Eastern material in the *Chronicle of 741* and its relationship to that used in the *Chronicle of 754* appears as an appendix to this chapter. Here I want merely to give a few examples which indicate that, like the two chroniclers' use of the *History of the Goths*, the selection of the news from the East by the compilers of the two chronicles demonstrate two different approaches to similar or identical material.

The author of the *Chronicle of 741* began his narration of Byzantine history at the usurpation of Phocas, but this is followed by a passage which is almost identical to the opening of the *Chronicle of 754*, on Heraclius' rebellion against Phocas:

Chronicle of 741: 6: 'Era DCXLVIII Romanorum LVI Eraclius imperio coronatur, qui rebellionem adversus Focam ex Africa moliens ob Flaviae nobilissimae virginis illi apud

⁹⁹ *The Chronicle of Zuqnīn (AD 775)*, Chabot J-B. (ed.), *CSCO*, SS, CIV, col.133, p.147, trans. Palmer, *The Seventh Century*, p.54.

¹⁰⁰ *Chronicle of 741* 4.

Africam desponsatae atque iussu Focae principis de Libyae finibus Constantinopolim deportatae, tali causa praedictus princeps correptus, armatis atque adunatis totius occidentis viribus, navale proelium contra rem pulicam cum mille et amplius navibus peragit, Nicitamque magistrum militiae Romanorum adgregati terrestri exercitu ducem facit, tali sub pacto invicem definito, ut quiquis illorum primus Constantinopoli adventaret, illi totius administratio contraderetur imperii. Igitur Eraclius Africa degrediens ocius regiam urbem navigando pervenit. Quem aliquanto obsistentem bello adgressus est. Sicque Bizantii Focam captam Eraclio offerunt iugulandum'.¹⁰¹

Chronicle of 754: 1: 'Era DCXLVIII Romanorum LVII Eraclius imperio coronatur. Regnat annis XXX, peractis a principio mundi annis VDCCCXXXVIII. His ob amorem Flaviae nobilissime virginis, illi apud Africam ante sumpto imperio desponsatae et iussu Foce principis ex Libie finibus Constantinopolim deportate, rebellionem adversus Focam cum Nichita magistro militie moliens contra rem publicam consilio definito, Eraclius equoreo, Nichita terrestri exercitu adunato tali invicem definiunt pacto, ut quisquis eorum primus Constantinopolim adventaret, in loca coronatus digne frueretur imperio. Sed Eraclius ab Africa navali ascendens collegio ad regiam usque ocius pervenit navigando. Quem aliquantem obsistentem in bello Focam Bizantio captum flammigero ferunt gladio. Qui mox eum perspicit iugulatum, ilico imperio sublimatur.'

The two chroniclers continued to take the same line on Heraclius' Persian wars, often using identical words, although the *Chronicle of 741* did not narrate the dream in which Heraclius was warned 'that he would be ravaged mercilessly by rats from the desert'.¹⁰² Both dated the first 'Saracen' attack to the seventh year of Heraclius' reign, and made the same mistake in dating the Islamic invasions, perhaps the result of misreading VII instead of XII by their source. Both attributed the Saracens' success to guile rather than military prowess.¹⁰³ There is, however, hardly any overlap between the vocabularies of the two accounts of the first Saracen incursions. The author of the *Chronicle of 754* introduced disparaging references to Muhammad which are absent from the *Chronicle of 741*, a difference in emphasis between the two chronicles which

¹⁰¹ 'Era 649. The 56th emperor of the Romans, Heraclius was crowned, who rebelled against Focas in Africa for [the love of] Flavia, noblest of virgins to whom he was betrothed in Africa, and who was ordered by Focas to be deported from Libya to the territory of Constantinople; for this reason the *princeps* attacked with all the armed men from the west, launched a naval attack on the republic with more than a thousand ships, and made a pact with Nicetas, the magister militum of the Romans, who assembled a land army, that whoever arrived in Constantinople first would rule the empire. Heraclius, sailing from Africa, arrived first in the royal city. Which he attacked, soon overcoming any resistance. Thus the Byzantines presented Phocas to Heraclius with his throat cut.'

¹⁰² *Chronicle of 754* 4, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.113.

¹⁰³ *Chronicle of 741* 12; *Chronicle of 754* 7, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.113-4.

becomes clearer after reading the next chapter of the *Chronicle of 741*: 'Assembling a very large army, the Saracens invaded Syria, Arabia and Mesopotamia; they were ruled by Mahmet [Muhammad], scion of the most noble of their tribes, a most prudent man about whom many stories would be told'.¹⁰⁴ It is not surprising that this passage did not appear in the *Chronicle of 754*, since it was difficult to harmonise with the author's view that the invasion of Spain by the 'Saracens' was a disaster. Similarly, the *Chronicle of 754* omitted to mention the death of Muhammad, whilst the *Chronicle of 741* noted that, after his death, Muhammad was venerated as a prophet.¹⁰⁵

There are several other notable disparities between the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754*. Briefly, the two chronicles give different accounts of the accession of Constans, and the *Chronicle of 741* has passages on the reign of Marwān, ʿAbd al-Malik and Leo III, and on the victories of Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik in the west which the compiler of the *Chronicle of 754* omitted, or included only in a much briefer form.¹⁰⁶ The writer of the *Chronicle of 754* may have rearranged his material in an attempt to tidy up the chronology. The earlier chronicler was also guilty of juggling his material, as we shall see. Yet such divergence between the two chronicles is rare. In general, the two accounts are so similar that they appear to have been derived from the same source. What sort of a text might this have been?

Several Christian chronicles referring to the Islamic conquest of Syria survive from the seventh and early eighth centuries.¹⁰⁷ The earliest of these is a note written soon after the battle of Yarmuk (636) in a codex containing the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, now in a very fragmentary state.¹⁰⁸ Another is a chronicle composed by a pro-Chalcedonian 'Maronite' Christian in 660s; what remains of this text is in a nineteenth-century transcription, which begins with the wars between ʿAlī and Muʿāwīya (655-657).¹⁰⁹ In 692, James of Edessa compiled a continuation of Eusebius' *Chronicle*, concentrating on chronology; he laid it out in three columns according to Persian, Byzantine and Islamic chronology, with brief historical notices which, however, have become displaced in the surviving tenth- or eleventh-century copy.¹¹⁰ Syriac authors seem to have relied on local knowledge of the Islamic conquests rather than on texts

¹⁰⁴ *Chronicle of 741* 13.

¹⁰⁵ *Chronicle of 741* 17.

¹⁰⁶ Some of these points are discussed below.

¹⁰⁷ Brock, 'Syriac Sources'; some of these are translated in Palmer, *The Seventh Century*.

¹⁰⁸ *BL Add.* 14,461, ed. Brooks E.W., *Chronica Minora, CSCO (SS)*, II, p.75: trans. Palmer, *The Seventh Century*, pp.1-4.

¹⁰⁹ *BL Add.* 17,216, fol.12a, *Chronica Minora* II, pp. 43-74, trans. Palmer, *The Seventh Century*, pp.29-35.

¹¹⁰ *BL Add.* 14,685, f.23, pp.324-27, *Chronica Minora* III, pp.261-330; trans. Palmer, *The Seventh Century*, pp. 36-42.

written in Arabic, although Conrad¹¹¹ believed that the widespread use of Arabic vocabulary in Syriac and Greek chronicles from the ninth century and after, (which the writers did not fully understand) and their detailed narration of Muslim history, means that these events must have been written in Arabic in the mid seventh century. The first extant list of caliphs dates from after 705.¹¹² Another, similar text dating from 724,¹¹³ is the first text known to have been translated from an Arabic original, now lost. Later Arabic histories narrating the events of the seventh century are so much more elaborate than the Syriac sources that it is difficult to compare the two genres, and new methodologies must be developed before this can be done.¹¹⁴ Yet the survival of all these disparate texts shows that, as in Spain, political upheaval did not mean the end of historiography.

Thus, although the precise origin of the Eastern material used in the Spanish chronicles is uncertain, many of its elements can be shown to have originated in Syria during the seventh and early eighth centuries. The Syriac sources vary in content and emphasis because Syrian Christians took different attitudes to the Islamic invasions which had more to do with current Christian theological debates than actual events. The Syriac writers of the seventh century were aware that the Islamic 'kingdom' had displaced the Byzantine and Persian empires.¹¹⁵ Although they still used Eusebius' chronological framework to make sense of the past, most of them were forced to abandon the idea that the future of the world lay with the Byzantine Empire, the New Rome. In the early years of the conquests, the incomers were considered to be pagans; in 634, Sophronius of Jerusalem described them as 'beastly and barbarous filled with every diabolical savagery'.¹¹⁶ Yet they were not perceived as a religious threat until perhaps as late as the eleventh century.¹¹⁷ The Nestorian patriarch Isho'yahb (d.659) praised the new rulers for their tolerance of Christians, and other Nestorians welcomed the lifting of Byzantine Monophysite

¹¹¹ Conrad, L.I., 'Theophanes and the Arabic historical tradition: some indications of intercultural transmission', *Byzantinische Forschungen*, (1990), XV, pp.1-44.

¹¹² *BL Add.* 17,193, fol.17a, trans. Palmer, *The Seventh Century*, pp.43-44.

¹¹³ *BL Add.* 14,643, *Chronica Minora* II, p.155.

¹¹⁴ Kaegi W.E., *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests*, (Cambridge, 1992), p.21.

¹¹⁵ Brock S., 'Syriac Views of emergent Islam', in *ibid.* *Syriac Perspectives*, pp.1-19 repr. from Juynboll G.H.A.(ed.), *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society, Papers on Islamic History* IV, (Carbondale/ Edwardsville, Southern Illinois, 1982).

¹¹⁶ Usener H.(ed.) 'Weihnachtspredigt des Sophronios' in *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Neue Folge*, IV, (1886), 500-516, *PG* 87, cols 3201-11, cited in Constantelos D.J., 'The Moslem conquests of the Near East as revealed in the Greek sources of the seventh and eighth centuries', *Byzantion*, (1972), XLII, 325-57.

¹¹⁷ see for example the *Chronology* of Elias of Nisbis, cited in Wallace-Hadrill D., *Christian Antioch. A Study of Early Christian Thought in the Eastern Church*, (Cambridge, 1982) p.59; Lamoreaux J.C., 'Early Eastern Christian Responses to Islam', in Tolan J.V. (ed.), *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays*, (New York and London, 1996), pp.3-32.

persecution.¹¹⁸ It would be tedious and unprofitable to make a line-by-line comparison of all these texts with the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754*; they all demonstrate common features with the Spanish texts, but these similarities are outweighed by their differences. The extent of the problem can be illustrated by one of the chronicles mentioned above, the 'Maronite' chronicle.¹¹⁹ Its author concentrated on the few Byzantine victories worthy of mention, in order to encourage his readers in the hope that the empire might be restored. The compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* took a similar line, as we shall see. The 'Maronite' also discussed the wars between ʿAlī and Muʿāwīya which led to the first and most important schism of Islam, over the succession to Muhammad. The Spanish chroniclers, however, took a different line, which was common to most of the other Syriac and Arabic historians, omitting any reference to ʿAlī, and referring only in passing to the civil wars: 'Presently Moabia obtained the kingdom, ruling for twenty-five years. Although he fought civil wars for five years, in truth the Ishmaelites were obedient to him for twenty years and he brought his reign to a successful conclusion.'¹²⁰ This surprisingly favourable view of Muʿāwīya is almost identical to that expressed by John bar Penkaye, a Syriac chronicler of the late seventh century.¹²¹ However, these two sources differed on their attitude to Muʿawīya's son Yazīd, of whom John bar Penkaye reported: 'Yazdīn his son ruled after him. He did not walk in his father's ways, but instead was full of childish games and empty delights. Men's strength failed because of his empty-headed tyranny, and Satan wore down their progress by means of all sorts of tedious labours.'¹²² Even a brief comparison between the *Chronicle of 741*, the *Chronicle of 754* and their putative Eastern models makes it clear that it is impossible to identify any one model for the Spanish chronicles. There seems to have been an audience for Eastern history in Spain, and at least one chronicle from the East reached Spain in the eighth century.

Translation of the Syriac sources probably began quite early after their composition, although the only definite evidence for this is the apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius.¹²³ The Syriac writers were multilingual, knew Greek,¹²⁴ and may even have written in that language. By the 740s, chronicles mixing Byzantine and Islamic history had probably entered a common Byzantine-Syriac

¹¹⁸ Duval R., (ed.) *Ishoʿyahb Patriarchae III Liber Epistularum CSCO SS Syr X1*, p.97, and Fiey J.M., 'Ishoʿyaw le Grand', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, XXXVI, (1970), pp. 1-43, both cited in Brock, 'Syriac Perspectives', p.15.

¹¹⁹ *Chronica Minora II*, pp.43-74, trans. Palmer, *The Seventh Century*, pp.29-35.

¹²⁰ *Chronicle of 741* 24; see also *Chronicle of 754* 22, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.121-123.

¹²¹ John bar Penkaye, *Kitāb Rīs Melle IV*, 146, cited in Brock S., 'North Mesopotamia', p.61; see below.

¹²² John bar Penkaye, *Kitāb Rīs Melle IV*, 154, cited in Brock, 'North Mesopotamia' p.63.

¹²³ see below.

¹²⁴ Conrad, L.I., 'Theophanes and the Arabic historical tradition', p.32.

tradition.¹²⁵ Indeed, the history of the conquest of Syria could be written as far away as Francia, where Fredegar incorporated it into his *Chronicle* c.760.¹²⁶ Some twenty years later, a Melchite monk of Palestine translated into Greek a Monophysite Syriac chronicle ending in 746, written soon after that date by an otherwise unknown John, son of Samuel, as a continuation of another chronicle, now lost, which was composed between 724 and 31. This Greek translation was taken to Constantinople in 813 after the dissolution of the Syrian monasteries and made available to Theophanes, whose *Chronicle*¹²⁷ of c.813, together with the *Short History* of Nikephorus, is the one of most important witnesses to the gradual accumulation of Syriac texts by Byzantine chroniclers. Dubler analysed in detail the correspondence between the histories of Theophanes and Nikephorus and the *Chronicle of 741*;¹²⁸ they are fairly similar in content, but much less so in detail. Nöldeke postulated a Monophysite text written in Syria as the common source for the eighth-century Spanish and the ninth-century Byzantine chroniclers.¹²⁹ The *Chronicle* of Theophanes is probably based on a slightly earlier work by another Greek historian, George Synkellos.¹³⁰ It is much longer than the Spanish chronicles and includes many episodes on the reign of Heraclius and the rise of the Arabs which the Spanish compilers did not mention; there is no evidence that Theophanes was working from a text similar to that used by the *Chronicle of 741*. The analysis of these sources is further complicated by discrepancies between Theophanes and later Syriac texts, such as the eleventh-century *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian, suggesting that there were several different lines of transmission of historical data, both Greek and Syriac.¹³¹ Another, completely unrelated source which has common features with the Syriac and Byzantine tradition is the *Chronicle* of John of Nikiu, a Coptic bishop born at about the time of the Islamic invasions of Egypt, who wrote in Greek and whose work now survives in a seventeenth-century Ethiopic translation.¹³² All these authors were writing similar histories, trying to fit the events of their time into a chronological framework, and they may have been able to read each others' texts, some of them now lost. Thus, although no one source will serve as the antecedent for the Spanish chronicles, we can see the genre from which they are derived.

¹²⁵ Proudfoot A., 'The Sources of Theophanes for the Heraclian dynasty', *Byzantion*, (1974), XLIV, 367-439.

¹²⁶ Wallace-Hadrill J.M., (ed.) *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar with its Continuations*, (1960), pp.53-55 and 68-69.

¹²⁷ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. Boor C. de, 2 vols., (Leipzig, 1883), trans. Turtledove H., *The Chronicle of Theophanes: an English Translation of AM 6095-6305 (AD 602-813) with an introduction and notes*, (Philadelphia, 1982); Mango C. and Scott B., *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, (Oxford, 1997).

¹²⁸ Dubler C.E., 'Sobre la Crónica Árabe-Bizantina de 741', *Al-Andalus*, (1946), XI, 298-322.

¹²⁹ Nöldeke T., 'Epimetrum', *MGH AA XI*, p.367.

¹³⁰ Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, pp.lv-lxi.

¹³¹ Chabot J-B (ed.), *La chronique de Michel le Syrien*, (4 vols., Paris, 1899-1910, reprinted in 4 vols., Brussels, 1963), cited in Brooks E.W., 'The sources of Theophanes', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, (1906), XV, 578-587.

¹³² Charles J. (trans.), *The Chronicle of John, bishop of Nikiu*, (1916).

The author of the *Chronicle of 741* may not have followed his Eastern source to its end. He knew that Leo reigned for twenty-four years, but of his reign said only: 'The sixty-seventh emperor Leo, expert in the military arts, as the Saracens were hurrying to storm the royal city (Constantinople), received the royal sceptre for twenty-four years, with the acclamation of the senate.'¹³³ The chronicler implied that Leo raised the siege of 717, but he did not cite his other victories, including that at Akroinos in Western Anatolia. It is possible that he did not know of these, since the *Chronicle of 754* does not mention them either. Yet the later chronicler knew of at least one contemporary event, the victory gained by Hishām against the Byzantines in 723.¹³⁴ The compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* should have had this data if he was writing in 741. Similarly, he seems to have known more about the succession of the caliphs than he wished to mention. The chronicle ends with the accession of Walid (743-44) but in a brief entry which links him with his predecessor Hishām without saying anything about Hishām's long reign, which the *Chronicle of 754* treated at some length.¹³⁵ Either the *Chronicle of 741* was written no earlier than 743, or, as Collins proposed, the 'final entry, different in scale and character to the other notices on the Islamic rulers, was not an integral part of the sources from which the rest of the material was taken.'¹³⁶ Collins postulated that the first version of the chronicle, or its source, stopped in the reign of Hishām. However, in entries dated after 741, the *Chronicle of 754* continued to incorporate Eastern material which is very similar to what has gone before. It is unlikely that the later chronicler had two Eastern sources which were so similar that he was able to switch to the second when the first gave out, just at about the time when the author of the *Chronicle of 741* stopped writing. On the contrary, comparison between the two texts suggests that the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* was selecting from a source whose later entries the compiler of the *Chronicle of 754* continued to use. Unless the surviving manuscript is incomplete, it appears that the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* did not merely lay down his pen in the 740s, at his death. He may have been writing at a later date, but he stopped because he had come to the end of his story.

Thus the news from the East in the *Chronicle of 741* was carefully selected from a source which both the eighth-century chroniclers shared. Although it is not possible to know exactly what the writer took from this source, nor to be sure about his attitude to his material, comparison with the *Chronicle of 754* helps to strengthen some general impressions. The compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* chose from the material on Heraclius mainly his successes against the Persians, although it is odd that neither of the two chroniclers knew about, or chose to include, Heraclius' recapture of Jerusalem and the restoration of the True Cross. Referring to the Islamic campaigns

¹³³ *Chronicle of 741* 39.

¹³⁴ *Chronicle of 754* 62, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.140.

¹³⁵ *Chronicle of 754* 58-62 and 69, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.139-41 and 146-48.

¹³⁶ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, p.55.

in Syria, the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* mentioned Heraclius only in connection with measures taken to defend the empire, and seems to attribute the Byzantine defeats to Theodore's failure to take his brother Heraclius' advice not to campaign against the Saracens. This is a *topos* shared with several Eastern sources on the Islamic conquests, which avoided blaming Heraclius for Byzantine defeats even though his support of the Monophysites made him theologically suspect.¹³⁷ Subsequently, the Islamic armies are described as victorious, whereas the Byzantines suffered a series of usurpations; the chronicler had already expressed his disapproval of this road to the throne in his treatment of Phocas and Witteric. Not until the succession of Leo were the Byzantines able to hold back the Islamic armies, at the siege of Constantinople. Here the story ends, apparently with more which the chronicler could have said, but chose to leave out. There is one possible explanation for the chronicler's approach to Eastern history which links these Byzantine triumphs against the Saracens with a puzzling entry in the *Chronicle*, a passage which does not recount Byzantine or Islamic history but may shed some light on the use which the *Chronicle of 741* made of his news from the East.

The defeat of al-Samh at Toulouse

Any discussion of the *Chronicle of 741* must face the problems posed by the penultimate paragraph, on the expedition of the governor al-Samh (718-721) against Toulouse. It is placed anachronistically as the penultimate entry and returns to events in the peninsula, which the chronicler had ignored after the reign of Sisebut (612-621):

*Chronicle of 741: 42: Galliam quoque Narbonensum per ducem exercitus Mazlema nomine suam facit gentemque Francorum frequentibus bellis stimulat. Atque incongruenti virtute iam dictus dux exercitus Tolosam usque pervenit, eamque obsidione cingens fundis et diversis generum machinis expugnare conavit. Francorum gentes talio de nuntio certae apud ducem ipsius gentis Eudonem nomine congregatur. Sicque collecti Tolosam usque perveniunt. Apud Tolosam utraque exercitus acies graui dimicatione confligunt. Zema ducem exercitus Sarracenorum cum parte exercitus sui occidunt, reliquum exercitum per fugam lapsum sequuntur.*¹³⁸

Compare this with the *Chronicle of 754*:

'Tunc in Occidentis partibus multa illi preliando proveniunt prospera; atque per Zama

¹³⁷ Kaegi, *Byzantium*, pp.110-112; Haldon J.F., 'Constantine or Justinian? Crisis and identity in imperial propaganda in the seventh century', in Magdalino P. (ed.), *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium 4th - 13th Centuries*, (Aldershot, 1994), pp.96-107.

¹³⁸ translated at the beginning of the chapter.

nomine tres minus paululum annos in Spania ducatum habente ulteriorem vel citeriorem Iberiam proprio stilo ad vectigalia inferenda describit; preda et manu <bi> alia vel quidquid illud est, quod olim predauiliter indiuusum retentabat in Spania gens omnis Arabiae sorte sociis diuidendo partem ex omni re mobili et immobili fisco adsociat. Postremo Narbonensem Galliam suam facit gentemque Francorum frequentibus bellis stimulat et seditas Saracenorum in predictum Narbonensem oppidum ad presidia tuenda decenter conlocat. Atque inconcurrenti virtute iam dictus dux Tolosam usque preliando pervenit, eamque obsidione cingens fundis et diversis generum machinis expugnare conavit. Francorum gentes talio de nuntio certae apud ducem ipsius gentis Eudonem nomine congregantur. Ubi dum apud Tolosam utriusque exercitus acies graui dimicatione confligunt. Zema ducem exercitus Sarracenorum cum parte multitudinis congregata occidunt, reliquum exercitum per fuga elabsum secuntur. Quorum Abdorraman suscipit principatum uno per mense, donec a principalia iussa veniret Ambiza eorum rector...¹³⁹

It seems obvious that the passage on al-Samh's defeat in the *Chronicle of 741* was copied from the *Chronicle of 754*, which is supposed to be earlier. Collins did not accept that it could have been appended to the *Chronicle of 741* by its author:

'This is not only chronologically out of place but also quite at variance with the character of the rest of the work's contents. It would seem that, although the two authors wrote in ignorance of each other, their works were subsequently united in at least one strand of their manuscript transmission. In these circumstances it is quite conceivable that a subsequent reviser added the passage relating to the expedition of Al-Sāmh from the *Chronicle of 754* to that of *741*.'¹⁴⁰

This is possible, but the addition would have to have been made after 754 if the *Chronicle of 754* was composed or revised at that time. The entry, however, may not be quite so misplaced as Collins supposed. Further, there are other strange features of the insertion of the entry on al-Samh's defeat in the *Chronicle of 741*. Taken together, they show the chronicler linking the history of the Islamic conquests in the East and in Spain in a very pointed way.

The bald statement in the *Chronicle of 741* shows al-Samh retreating before the Christian forces at Toulouse. Yet the entry in the *Chronicle of 754* from which the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* could have taken his extract, if read as whole, does not give this impression. The invaders were not under threat of expulsion; on the contrary, they were stabilising their control of al-Andalus. The defeat at Toulouse did not hinder the peaceful succession of Muslim governors; the

¹³⁹ *Chronicle of 754* 57, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.137-8.

¹⁴⁰ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, p.54.

Chronicle of 754 reported that Eudo, the victor of Toulouse, was himself subsequently defeated.¹⁴¹ The compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* seems to have amended his source in a second way, by the introduction of Mazlema into the tale. Now, this might be explained as a slip on the copyist's part, writing Mazlema instead of Zema. It seems, however, to be a deliberate reference to Maslama ibn 'Abd al-Malik, the victor of several campaigns in the East. The *Chronicle of 754*¹⁴² mentioned the accession of Sulayman (715-17) and his brother Maslama's triumphs in Asia Minor and failed attack on Constantinople, although he dated these events inconsistently to Era 752 [714] and to the second reign of Justinian (705-711). The *Chronicle of 741* does not mention the siege of Constantinople, but the writer introduced an account of Maslama's defeat of Yazid ibn Muhallab 'in the Babylonian fields', which occurred during the reign of Sulayman's successor, Yazid II (720-724), another brother of Maslama, as the chronicler pointed out.¹⁴³ He went on to say that Maslama 'triumphed against 'Romania' in the West [*in occiduis denique partibus*, presumably Western Anatolia], through the leaders of the army'. Here, the chronicler was perhaps being deliberately vague about what he meant by 'the West' in order to prepare the reader for his next entry, the participation of Maslama in the defeat at Toulouse. The chronology is perfectly plausible, even if the involvement of Maslama is not. The *Chronicle of 754* dated the defeat at Toulouse to 719, but this may be a mistake; the chronicler also said that al-Samh had 'held power in Spain for a little less than three years', which puts the attack on Toulouse closer to 721. It is impossible to account for all Maslama's movements during this period, and the dating of those campaigns which were noted by the chroniclers is, of course, uncertain. Maslama besieged Constantinople in 716-7, and next appears as the governor of Iraq in narratives of the struggle for the succession to 'Umar I in 720.¹⁴⁴ Apart from the *Chronicle of 741*, there is no evidence that Maslama was active in Spain. By introducing Maslama into an account of the failed attack on Toulouse, the author of the *Chronicle of 741* may have been using Maslama, the famous Muslim general and brother to two kings, to draw attention to the parallel between the events before Toulouse and Constantinople. Both were Islamic defeats, and in this tightly-edited version of recent history, the chronicler seems to be claiming that the conquerors could be beaten, even one of the greatest among them. Taken in conjunction with the chronicler's overplaying of the successes of Heraclius and Leo in western Anatolia, the *Chronicle of 741* seems to be, not a straightforward chronology but a coded message. It may be that the writer was trying to do no more than encourage his fellow-Christians with the hope that, since the vulnerability of the conquerors had been demonstrated in Spain just as it had before Constantinople, the invaders might eventually be expelled. He may have been going further than this. Before putting forward an even more speculative hypothesis, it is necessary to make another excursus, returning to Byzantine and Syriac texts, but this time to look not at temporal history but at stories of the Last

¹⁴¹ *Chronicle of 754* 65, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.143.

¹⁴² *Chronicle of 754* 50, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.134.

¹⁴³ *Chronicle of 741* 41; the *Chronicle of 754* does not include this information.

¹⁴⁴ Kennedy H., *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, (1986), pp.106-108.

Days.

The Last Emperor and the defeat of Islam

The church's official line on the end of the world, that it was merely symbolic, failed to engage with popular concerns. Texts on the Apocalypse circulated widely, and were copied into more substantial works of history. They can be studied both for the development of the ideas on which they are based, and more generally as they influenced historiography itself. Although millenarianism was widespread, many of its features can be shown to have come from the Middle East.¹⁴⁵ Seeking to put the Islamic invasions into the context of universal history, Syriac authors incorporated the *Book of Daniel's* picture of the succession of world empires into the Eusebian model. Sybilline prophecies dating from before the Islamic conquests influenced the author of the text known as Pseudo-Methodius, which was probably written in Syriac in the mid-seventh century in Singana in Northern Mesopotamia.¹⁴⁶ It was translated into Greek sometime before 800, was widely disseminated and became the most influential apocalyptic text. Four Latin manuscripts survive from the seventh and eighth centuries. The author may have been influenced by Jewish Messianic hopes, and he also knew the legend that Alexander the Great would return in the Last Days, which was written down in Syriac in 629/30, shortly after Heraclius' victory over Persians.¹⁴⁷ Pseudo-Methodius' text also has much in common, in conception, if not in detail, with the *World Chronicle* (c.686) of John bar Penkaye from the monastery of Bezirkes Qardu, which is close to the area where Pseudo-Methodius' text may have been written.¹⁴⁸ Both authors saw the new conquerors as part of the divine plan, punishing the Byzantines for their religious deviations, a view that would later find widespread acceptance through the anti-Muslim polemic of Timothy, patriarch of Baghdad (d.823).¹⁴⁹ John bar Penkaye expressed this idea clearly:

¹⁴⁵ Alexander P.J., 'Medieval Apocalypses as Historical Sources', *American Historical Review*, (1968), LXXIII, pp.998-1000; *ibid.*, 'The Medieval Legend of the Last Roman Emperor and its Messianic Origin', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, (1978), XVI, pp.1-15; *ibid.*, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, (1985).

¹⁴⁶ Only one Syriac MS survives, the sixteenth-century Codex Vaticanus Syrius 58; Lolos A. (ed.), *Die Apokalypse des Ps.-Methodius*, (Meisenheim a. Glan, 1976), partial translation by Brock, in Palmer, *The Seventh Century*, pp.222-242; Reinink G., 'Pseudo-Methodius: a concept of history in response to the rise of Islam' in Cameron A. and Conrad L.I. (eds.), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East I, Problems in the Literary Source Material*, (Princeton, 1992), pp.149-188.

¹⁴⁷ Reinink G.J., 'Pseudo-Methodius und die legende vom Romische Endkaiser', Verbeke W., Verhelst D. and Welkenhuysen A. (eds.) *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, (Louvain, 1988), pp.82-111; see pp.108-9, and n.117.

¹⁴⁸ Reinink, 'Pseudo-Methodius'; Brock, 'North Mesopotamia'.

¹⁴⁹ Mingana A. (ed. and trans.), 'The Apology of Timothy the Patriarch before the Caliph al-Mahdi', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, (1928), XII, 137-226.

'When the kingdom of the Persians came to an end, in the days of their king Khosro, the kingdom of the children of Hagar at once gained control over more or less the whole world, for they took the whole kingdom of the Persians, overthrowing all their warriors who prided themselves in the arts of war.

We should not think of the advent [of the children of Hagar] as something ordinary, but as due to divine working. Before calling them, [God] had prepared them beforehand to hold Christians in honour; thus they also had a special commandment from God concerning our monastic situation, that they should hold it in honour. Now when these people came at God's command, and took over as it were both kingdoms, not without any war or battle, but in a menial fashion, such as when a brand is rescued out of the fire; not using weapons of war or human means, God put victory into their hands, in such a way that the words written concerning them might be fulfilled namely, 'One man chased a thousand and two men routed ten thousand' (Deuteronomy 32:30)Only a short period passed before the entire world was handed over to the ArabsOnly half the Byzantine empire was left to them.'¹⁵⁰

The Pseudo-Methodius placed pro-Byzantine propaganda in the centre of his tract. The author of the Alexander legend had warned his readers that the Persians could not save them. Pseudo-Methodius told his audience that their help lay with Byzantium. He listed the historic victories in which the Romans [Byzantines] had overcome various opponents, ending with the repulsion of the Avar seige of Constantinople in AD 626. Relying heavily on Psalm 68:31, the author predicted that a Byzantine emperor would hand over the empire to God in the Last Days after the destruction of his enemies. The Pseudo-Methodius was later abbreviated and interpolated into the *Visions of Daniel*, of which many very different versions survive. As the return of the Byzantine empire to its former glories came to look most unlikely, the authors of the *Visions of Daniel* abandoned Pseudo-Methodius' pro-Byzantine stance and concentrated on his descriptions of the Islamic invasions in apocalyptic terms and his predictions that the conquerors would be overthrown. In many of these texts, a Last Emperor suddenly appeared at a specific moment when oppression was at its height, but often he was not named. In other texts, only the prediction of a final victory over the enemy indicated the authors' debt to the apocalyptic tradition.¹⁵¹ Yet the search for a Byzantine Last Emperor continued. Some of the *Visions of Daniel* used the metaphor of a lion, and during the reigns of Leo III and his son Constantine V, oracles about victories of a lion's whelp circulated; Pseudo-Methodius' prophecy may have been transferred to Leo III.

The power of this idea was such that a version of the tradition of the Last Emperor passed into

¹⁵⁰ John bar Penkaye, *Kitāb Rīs Melle* XIV, 141, trans. Brock, 'North Mesopotamia', p.57.

¹⁵¹ quoted in Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, pp.152-3.

Arabic historiography.¹⁵² The following prophecy was attributed to Muhammad in the *Book of civil wars* of Nuʿaym ibn Hammād (d.843):

'It is in the hands of the fifth of the family of Heraclius (al-Hirāqi) that the wars (malāhim) will take place. Heraclius may rule, then after him his son Constans (Qusta) son of Heraclius; then his son Constantine (Qustantīn) son of Constans; then his son Justinian (Ustīniān) son of Constantine, then the kingship of the Romans moved from the family of the Heraclius to Leo (Liyūn) and his son after him. But the kingship will return to the fifth of the family, at whose hands the wars will take place.'¹⁵³

Several variants on this tradition are preserved in the same manuscript. Most of these include a very corrupt regnal list, in which the fifth of the family of Heraclius is named Tibūris. Only one list of emperors, possibly a late interpolation into the Syrian tradition, is more 'correct', naming the last two emperors as Leo and his son. The idea that the Last Emperor was called Tiberius is interesting. It is unlikely to have anything to do with the historical Tiberius, who was made regent with Justinian and murdered with him, while still a small child, in 711. In another tradition in the same manuscript, a man calling himself Tiberius appears to Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik during the 716-17 campaign against Constantinople; the author gave Maslama himself as his authority for this story. Tiberius was denounced as false by Abū Muslim al-Rūmi, a convert to Islam, who described the real Tiberius [according to al-Rūmi] as leading a huge Byzantine army into a last battle in which the Muslims eventually, with only a few soldiers remaining, defeated the Byzantines. This false Tiberius does not appear in other Arabic sources, but Theophanes included a related story:

'Annus Mundi 6229 [737]: In this year, Sulaymān, son of Hishām took many captives in Asia among them a certain native of Pergamen who claimed to be Tiberius, son of Justinian. In order to honour his own son and to frighten the emperors, Hishām dispatched this man to Jerusalem with the appropriate imperial honours, namely a guard of soldiers with banners and sceptres, and decreed that he should tour all of Syria with great pomp so that all should see him and be amazed.'¹⁵⁴

The significance of these stories about Tiberius is not clear, but his links with the siege of Constantinople may be significant; it fell at a chronological turning point, on the eve of the first century of the Hegira, which may have increased its resonance for both Muslims and Christians.¹⁵⁵ This may have given rise to many variants on the Last Emperor legends,

¹⁵² Cook M., 'The Heraclian dynasty in Muslim eschatology', *Al-Qantara*, (1992), XIII, 3-24.

¹⁵³ *BL Ar.* 9449, f.130b.

¹⁵⁴ ed. de Boor, 1.411.2, trans. Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, p.570.

¹⁵⁵ Palmer, *The Seventh Century*, p.xxvii.

including the one which was remembered in connection with Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, the man who failed to bring down the Byzantine Empire. The apocalyptic texts are even more difficult to interpret than the more orthodox sources for Byzantine and Islamic history analysed earlier. The picture is confused by garbled transmission, by the loss of intermediary texts, and by the concordance and discordance amongst the Arabic, Syriac and Byzantine sources. There is no evidence that any of these texts reached Spain. Nevertheless, the vocabulary of Apocalypse was one which early medieval Spanish authors were able to exploit.

Apocalyptic writing in Spain began with Hydatius, who may have been spurred on to produce his chronicle by his belief that the end of the world was due in 482.¹⁵⁶ Hydatius was concerned with signs and portents and the momentous events they portended. Isidore had inadvertently increased millenial tension by turning Augustine's six ages of history into real time,¹⁵⁷ although he emphasised the biblical injunctions against calculating the years remaining in his Sixth, and last, Age of the world.¹⁵⁸ Julian of Toledo attempted to bypass the Last Days by recalculating the end of sixth millenium to a date which had already passed unnoticed,¹⁵⁹ but this ruse did not put an end to millenial speculation in Spain. In the late eighth century, Beatus of Liebana in the Asturias composed a *Commentary on the Apocalypse* which was lavishly copied in the tenth century, and in 883, the Asturian author of the *Prophetic Chronicle* was to use Biblical calculations to predict that the Arabs would be expelled from the peninsula in the following year.¹⁶⁰ There is also some late evidence that the Islamic conquest of Spain featured in apocalyptic texts from outside the peninsula. One surviving, corrupt manuscript, called the 'Vision of Daniel concerning the Last Time and concerning the End of the World', probably written in Constantinople in 867 or 869, includes a fragment referring to the conquest of Spain and the advances of the conquerors into Aquitaine in the eighth century.¹⁶¹ The author of this text named Leo III as the Last Emperor. If the stories of the Last Emperor had reached Spain in the mid-eighth century, it is clear that they would have found a receptive audience.

Each of the eighth-century Spanish chroniclers wrote his own version of the Last Days as they were being acted out in the peninsula, suffering under Muslim rule. The author of the *Chronicle of 754* evoked the famines and signs in the sky characteristic of full-blown apocalypticism. Like John of Biclar before him, he ended his chronicle with a discussion of the age of the world,

¹⁵⁶ Burgess, *The Chronicle of Hydatius*, p.9.

¹⁵⁷ Landes R., 'Lest the Millenium be fulfilled: Apocalyptic Expectations and the Pattern of Western Chronography 100-800CE' in Verbeke, *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology*, pp.137-211.

¹⁵⁸ *MGH AA XI*, p.481.

¹⁵⁹ Julian of Toledo, *De sextae aetatis comprobatione*, *CCSL*, CXV, III, 10.

¹⁶⁰ ed. Bonnaz Y., *Chroniques Asturiennes (fin IX siècle)*, (Paris, 1987), pp.1-9.

¹⁶¹ Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, p.85.

which must be calculated in order to know 'the fullness of time'.¹⁶² The author of the *Chronicle of 741* did not write universal history in this sense. He did not describe Spain on the brink of the millenium, and he left few if any clues that his Eastern source might have had apocalyptic concerns. Yet it is possible that, like the author of the *Chronicle of 754*, he was using extracts from Eastern sources to tell a story about Spain which did fit into the Visigothic historiographical tradition. By painting a favourable portrait of Heraclius, by contrasting the usurpations of his successors with the expansion of the Islamic empire, and by showing Leo's defeat of Maslama before Constantinople, and Maslama's mysterious participation in the defeat of the conquerors at Toulouse, he was making a coded reference to the Last Emperor, and the Last Days in which the invaders would finally be overcome.

Appendix: Byzantine and Arabic history in the *Chronicle of 741*: a comparison with the *Chronicle of 754*.

Chronicle of 741 4: Phocas usurps the imperial throne; the Persians are successful in battle against him.

Chronicle of 741 6: Heraclius rebels against Phocas and makes a pact with Niketas that whoever arrived in Constantinople first will obtain the empire. The Byzantines deliver Phocas to Heraclius, who is crowned emperor.

This is very similar to the opening chapter of the *Chronicle of 754*.

Chronicle of 741 7: Heraclius reigns for 30 years

Chronicle of 741: 8: Niketas attacks the Persians in Egypt, Syria, Arabia, Judea and Mesopotamia.

The *Chronicle of 754* 2 has the same information in similar words, linked to the Persian attacks which the *Chronicle of 741* lists in chapter 10.

Chronicle of 741 10: Persian attacks on Byzantium. Khusdro's son defects to Heraclius.

Chronicle of 741 11: Heraclius' triumph against Khusdro and capture of Susa.[Cstesiphon]

This is recounted in more detail in the *Chronicle of 754*

Chronicle of 741 12: In the seventh year of Heraclius 617, the Saracens attack. Heraclius warns his brother not to fight them.

¹⁶² *Chronicle of 754* 77, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.156-158.

The *Chronicle of 754* first mentions the Saracens in the same year.

Chronicle of 741 13: The Islamic invasions.

Chronicle of 741 15. Heraclius assembles the Roman troops at Damascus.

This passage does not appear in the *Chronicle of 754*.

Chronicle of 741 16. The defeat of the Byzantines at the battle of Yarmuk. The conquerors establish their capital at Damascus.

This is similar to the *Chronicle of 754* 9.

Chronicle of 741 17: Muhammad dies, is honoured as prophet. The succession of Abu Bakr.

Chronicle of 741 18. The death of Heraclius.

This is not mentioned in the *Chronicle of 754*.

Chronicle of 741 19. The death of Abu Bakr and the succession of ʿUmar.

The *Chronicle of 754* 17 dates the accession of ʿUmar to 630.

Chronicle of 741 Era 678. Constantine rules for one year.

The *Chronicle of 754* 20 has 6 years.

Chronicle of 741 21: ʿUmar's triumphs in Egypt and his murder.

The *Chronicle of 754* 12 is similar on ʿUmar's victories but omits his murder.

Chronicle of 741 22: The accession of Constans.

Chronicle of 741 23: The accession of Uthmān.

This is similar to the *Chronicle of 754* 21.

Chronicle of 741 24: The accession of Muʿawīya and the victories of Abd-Allah in North Africa.

The *Chronicle of 754* 22 is almost identical.

Chronicle of 741 25: The murder of Constans.

Chronicle of 741 26: The succession of Constantine IV.

The *Chronicle of 754* 20 and 24 combines the information given in the *Chronicle of 741* 22, 25 and 26, and is less repetitive.

Chronicle of 741 27: Mu'awīya sends Yazīd to attack Constantinople but his seige fails.
The *Chronicle of 754 23* is almost identical.

Chronicle of 741 28: The pleasant character of Yazīd.
The *Chronicle of 754 25* is almost identical.

Chronicle of 741 29: The succession of Mu'awīya II.
The *Chronicle of 754 26* is almost identical.

Chronicle of 741 30: Justinian II reigns for 10 years, is deposed, returns for another 10 years.

The *Chronicle of 754 32* says only that 'Justinian ruled for ten years before being deposed, although chapter 40 mentions his restoration.

Chronicle of 741 31: Marwān's battles with 'Abd-Allah, and his treaty with Constantine.
The entry on these events in the *Chronicle of 754* is much shorter and the two texts have only one phrase in common.

Chronicle of 741 32: Leo deposes Justinian.

Chronicle of 741 33: Absimarus succeeds Leo, and reigns for eight years.
The *Chronicle of 754 38* gives the length of his reign as seven years.

Chronicle of 741 34: The reign of 'Abd al-Malik and the succession.
This does not appear in the *Chronicle of 754*.

Chronicle of 741 35: Justinian's restoration.

Chronicle of 741 36: The conquests and merits of Walīd.
The *Chronicle of 754 45* has half of this passage.

Chronicle of 741 37: The tyrants Philippicus, Anastasius, Artemius, Theodosius.
All these emperors are included by the *Chronicle of 754*.

Chronicle of 741 38: The accession of Sulaymān, Maslama ibn 'Abd al Malik's' campaigns and his failed siege of Constantinople .

Chronicle of 741 39: Leo III is acclaimed by the senate.
The *Chronicle of 754 58* is very similar to this, but has more about Leo.

Chronicle of 741 40: ʿUmar and Yazīd.

The *Chronicle of 754* 53 and 55 is very similar.

Chronicle of 741 41: The reign of Yazīd. Maslama defeats Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab and triumphs in the west.

The *Chronicle of 754* 56 is similar, but says nothing about events in the west.

Chronicle of 741 43: The death of Yazīd and his succession by Walid.

The *Chronicle of 754* 62 is very similar.

3. The martyrs of Eulogius of Cordoba

'The preservation of our church is no thanks to this infidel people, into whose hands Spain fell, for our sins, after the ruin of the Gothic kingdom - which for a long time, most fortunately, was strong in veneration of the Christian faith, flourished in the worthiness of the venerable priests and shone with the construction of wonderful basilicas - but for the sake of her Redeemer and for her sake, continually worthy to be defended by the company of the church, who said: 'As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters', and again: 'in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world''.¹⁶³

In this passage Eulogius of Cordoba seems to be taking up the story of the Andalusian Christians, suffering under Muslim rule, as the author of the *Chronicle of 754* had handed it on. In the interval of almost a century between the two authors, the only evidence for the Christians is that the Spanish Church defended Adoptionist views of the nature of Christ against the charge of heresy, attracting lengthy condemnation in Rome and at the Council of Frankfurt of 794. The dispute seems to have taken place mainly within a christological context.¹⁶⁴ If any of these Spanish clerics documented their responses to the conquest of 711, the texts have perished. Against this background of silence, the execution of forty-eight Christians between 850 and 859 for blasphemy against Islam, looks like the eruption of a volcano previously thought dormant. The Acts of the martyrs of Cordoba were recorded by Eulogius, who himself was martyred, emulating the saints whose passions he had written. This was not, however, an instance of a people long oppressed throwing off their chains. It is clear, even from Eulogius's own words, that the Cordoban martyrs were not typical Christians, and their sacrifices were not accepted by the Church hierarchy. Eulogius dedicated much of his writings to explaining how these martyrs, who had suffered little persecution and performed few miracles, and whose passions seemed so difficult to write according to the norms of martyr hagiography, were worthy of being remembered. Writing with this aim in view, he left a large but problematic volume of material through which it is difficult to glimpse the social milieu of his age. Despite these problems, many historians have focussed on the martyrs of Cordoba as the key to understanding the Christian

¹⁶³ Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum* I, 30, CSM, II, p.392.

¹⁶⁴ Cavadini, J.M., *The last Christology of the West. Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul 785-820*, (Philadelphia, 1993); but see McWilliam J.E., 'The context of Spanish Adoptionism: a review', in Gervers M., and Bikhazi R.J. (eds.), *Conversion and Continuity: Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands, Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*, (Toronto, 1990), pp.75-88.

response to the Islamic conquest of Spain. In this chapter, several aspects of the life and writings of Eulogius will be reconsidered in order to assess the importance of the martyrs in the history of al-Andalus.

The writings of Eulogius and his friend Alvarus of Cordoba and their circle make up the bulk of the evidence for the Christians of al-Andalus, and the texts which now form Gil's *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum* have been extensively studied. The resulting mountain of publications on the martyrs of Cordoba illustrate the danger of accepting a snapshot as representative of the whole. The period covered is less than ten years, yet historians assume that Eulogius's writings describe the situation of the Christians in al-Andalus during the whole of the Umayyad period. From here it has been a short step to their using this material to confirm their own views of the past.¹⁶⁵ Spanish historians to the mid-twentieth century emphasised religious oppression, to which Christians responded with a continuous tradition of heroic resistance to Islam. Some saw in the martyr movement the first stirrings of nationalism. Later writers on the martyr movement have been more resistant to the temptation to see the conflict as representing the feelings of all Christians, and have concentrated on the personal motives of the martyrs. What has not been emphasised, however, is that the story was written almost entirely by one man. Eulogius' circle shared his spiritual concerns - and deadly writing style - but apart from Alvarus, in his biography of Eulogius, did not comment on the martyrs.

In early medieval Spain, Eulogius' tomes seem to have remained unread. With the exception of Perfectus and Emila, who were listed in the *Calendar of Cordoba*, the martyrs were not commemorated in their homeland. Some of them were introduced into a martyrology compiled by Usuard of St-Germain in Paris,¹⁶⁶ but the survival of accounts of their passions depends on the single copy of Eulogius' writings thought to have been taken to Oviedo with Eulogius' relics. There the sixteenth-century bishop and Inquisitor General Pedro Ponce de León found it when he was searching for collections of saints' lives. Unfortunately, the manuscript does not survive; only the copy made by Ambrosio de Morales at about this time saved Eulogius's works from oblivion. Wolf acknowledged the problems raised by an uncorroborated source when he explored the difficulties Eulogius faced in writing conventional hagiography; this inclined him to believe Eulogius simply because his material appeared so intractable: 'We can trust Eulogius at least to identify the martyrs and to inform us of the circumstances surrounding their deaths.'¹⁶⁷ Coope's sociological approach to Christian-Muslim relations in Cordoba depended on an uncritical acceptance of Eulogius' account: 'Writing for neighbours and contemporaries, they were free to

¹⁶⁵ Wolf, K.B., *Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain*, (Cambridge, 1988), pp.38-47.

¹⁶⁶ Dubois J., *Le Martyrologe d'Usuard*, (Brussels, 1965); Christys, 'St-Germain'.

¹⁶⁷ Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.23.

exaggerate, embellish and reinterpret, but not to make up events out of whole cloth.¹⁶⁸ Perhaps the intransigence of opposition to the martyrs in Christian circles induced Eulogius to write so volubly in their defence, but it is not clear who his intended audience was. Before generalising from Eulogius' picture of Cordoba in the 850s to Christian society in al-Andalus as a whole, it is necessary to reach some conclusions on the value of Eulogius' testimony.

Eulogius is a particularly interesting witness to the past, not just because of his theme, but because we know as much if not more about the biographer than about his subjects. The two principal sources for Eulogius' life are Alvarus' *Life of Eulogius*¹⁶⁹ and the letter Eulogius wrote to bishop Wiliesindus of Pamplona on his return from a journey to Navarre.¹⁷⁰ Eulogius was not mentioned by contemporaries writing in Cordoba, and the only other source for his life is a brief reference to his meeting in Cordoba with Usuard of St-Germain.¹⁷¹ It is often thought that the conventions of early medieval prose bury the personality of the individual in a mass of *topoi*. It would be rash to conclude that Alvarus' biography gives us a psychological profile of the man, or that the visit to Navarre was one of the key events in his life. This would also be making the same mistake with the evidence for Eulogius as has been made with the martyrs in general, making a whole from these parts, perhaps surviving by chance from a larger collection of material, and subject to distortion of emphasis and perhaps of fact. Yet in his writings on the martyrs, Eulogius returned many times to themes which are present in the *Life* and in the letter to Wiliesindus. There is much to be gained from looking at his own life to see what influence this may have had on his writing.

The *Life of Eulogius*

Alvarus wrote his *Life of Eulogius* from the perspective of a lifelong friend and sympathiser:

'Setting out to write the passion of the blessed and most learned martyr Eulogius, I thought that before describing the glorious combat of his end, I should include an ordered narrative of his life. I am doing this, in the first place, so that the reader might know who and what he was, and then to demonstrate clearly that he deserved the palm of victory. Trusting in the help of Our Lord and Redeemer, at the beginning of this work I declare that I am not writing about doubtful matters that I have been told, but what I

¹⁶⁸ Coope J.A., *The Martyrs of Cordoba: Community and Family Conflict in an Age of Mass Conversion*, (Lincoln and London, 1995), p.xii.

¹⁶⁹ *Vita Eulogii*, CSM I, pp. 330-343, trans. Hagerty, M.J., *Los Cuervos de San Vicente*, (Madrid, 1978), pp.281-300.

¹⁷⁰ Eulogius, *Epistula tertia ad Wiliesindum*, CSM II, pp.497-503.

¹⁷¹ Aimoin, *De translatione SS. martyrum Georgii monachi, Aurelei et Nathaliae ex urbe Corduba Parisios*, PL 115, col.945.

myself have seen and felt. Through the grace of God we were united from the first flowering of youth with the single tie of sweetness, of affection, and of love of the Scriptures. We lived, if not in the same station in life, guided by the yoke of all subjects with equal attachment. He, adorned with the priestly office and carried on the wings of virtue, flew higher than I, stained by the filth of luxury and concupiscence, who still walk the earth. Thus I have set myself to narrate events, not uncertain and learned from the lips of others, but things done in my presence and which I have known.¹⁷²

Alvarus described Eulogius as a man of noble lineage, 'of a Cordoban senatorial family'.¹⁷³ His parents dedicated him at an early age to the church of St Zoilus in Cordoba, where he soon became noted for his scholarship and piety, 'becoming the master of his teachers'. He met his biographer Alvarus when both were students of the abbot Speraindeo. The two pupils were united by their delight in theological disputation. Eulogius became first a deacon and then a priest. To the fame of his scholarship he added the virtues of austerity, which were appreciated by both monks and clergy. In spite of this, for reasons which are not clear, he was a victim of bishop Reccafred, who attacked the Church 'like a violent whirlwind',¹⁷⁴ throwing Eulogius into prison, together with his bishop and other priests. Here 'he paid more attention to his prayers and reading than to his chains.' He wrote the *Martyr Document* to inspire his fellow captives Flora and Maria on their path to martyrdom, and other books and letters in defence of the martyrs, at the same time making himself master of Latin metre 'which, until this moment, was unknown by the Spanish scholars and which he explained to us after his release.'¹⁷⁵ Alvarus' then described in detail how Eulogius repaid bishop Reccafred for his actions against the Church. Eulogius had suggested to an unnamed deacon that he read before the bishop and assembled ecclesiastics a letter of Epiphanius of Salamis (367-404), a Jewish farmer who converted to Christianity and became a scourge of heretics.¹⁷⁶ Epiphanius had allied himself with Jerome against John of Jerusalem in a dispute over the doctrines of Origen, and in his letter he defended the right of two priests of Jerusalem to refuse to say mass, apparently - although Alvarus is not very clear at this point - in protest over the stance taken by their bishop.

'Eulogius understood this with great happiness and recognized the opportunity that God had given him. He sighed deeply from the depths of his heart as if he had received a great wound. Looking first of all at me, he turned to the bishop and said: 'If the lamps and pillars of the Church acted in this way, what should we do who are afflicted by the weight of sin? Therefore understand, my lord, that it is not lawful for me to say mass.'

¹⁷² *Vita Eulogii* 1, CSM I, p.330.

¹⁷³ *Vita Eulogii* 2, CSM I, p.331.

¹⁷⁴ *Vita Eulogii* 4, CSM I, p.332.

¹⁷⁵ *Vita Eulogii* 4, CSM I, p.333.

¹⁷⁶ Frend W., *The Rise of Christianity*, (1984), p.742.

And remaining of the same mind he kept to this decision during the time of Reccafred.' ¹⁷⁷

Alvarus followed this long treatment of the letter episode with another passage on the sanctity and learning of his friend, even more hyperbolic than what had gone before. For Alvarus, Eulogius combined in one person the virtues of the fathers of the church: 'He was a combination of the sobriety of Jerome, the modesty of Augustine, the mildness of Ambrose and the patience of Gregory when he corrected errors, when he supported the weak and instructed the elders and when he suffered persecution.'¹⁷⁸ At this point in his narrative, Alvarus introduced Eulogius' journey to Navarre, although Eulogius must have made the journey before Reccafred's actions against him, since he wrote the letter of thanks to his hosts in the north from prison - unless he suffered more than one episode of imprisonment. Alvarus also mentioned briefly that Eulogius had been elected to the see of Toledo, but had failed to take up the appointment. He devoted the second part of the *Life* to a long description of Eulogius' passion. The saint protected a Muslim girl named Leocritia, who, inspired by her aunt Liliosa, had converted to Christianity, and instructed her in the faith. At first, Leocritia was a secret Christian, but she then felt compelled to state her beliefs openly, provoking the wrath of her parents. When Leocritia escaped from their custody and went into hiding with the Christians, her parents appealed to an unnamed judge, who tried to have her arrested. When the soldiers discovered Leocritia, Eulogius was with her. Both were brought before the judge, condemned to death, and executed. In a long closing passage, Alvarus asked his beloved friend to intercede for him in heaven.

In view of Alvarus' insistence that he was a sympathetic witness to the life of Eulogius, it is striking that he described his friend's life not with conventional hagiographical flourishes, but as a series of false starts and disappointments. Eulogius was not a model student: 'not content with the instruction of his own teachers, he sought out others whose fame had reached him. In order not to offend his teachers he went out whenever he could'.¹⁷⁹ The two friends' youthful efforts at exegesis of the Scriptures had to be destroyed 'lest they pass to posterity' perhaps because they were unorthodox; the word used is '*inadibilia*' [unapproachable]. Eulogius appeared unsettled in his career; he oscillated between the ascetic life of the monasteries and the pedagogic life of the cities. He 'frequently scurried off to the sacred flocks of the monasteries, but lest he be thought to disdain his own office, he always went back to his clerical duties, in which he would persist for some time ... only to return to his monastery.'¹⁸⁰ This echo of Gregory the Great may be the only example of a *topos* in Alvarus' account of Eulogius' life leading up to his passion. Otherwise, the vacillations seem a genuine reflection of a troubled man; in spite of 'such great virtues, he went sadly and anxiously along the life's way'. Attempting to atone for the sins of his

¹⁷⁷ *Vita Eulogii* 7, CSM I, p.334.

¹⁷⁸ *Vita Eulogii* 8, CSM I, p.335.

¹⁷⁹ *Vita Eulogii* 2, CSM I, p.332.

¹⁸⁰ *Vita Eulogii* 3, CSM I, p.332, trans. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.71.

youth, he planned a pilgrimage to Rome, but was restrained from departing by his fellows. Eulogius seems at first to have resisted being swept up by the Cordoban martyr movement. Although he encouraged Flora and Maria to remain steadfast in the face of Muslim hostility, he made it clear that he had no wish to follow the two saints. On the contrary, he implored them to work a miracle for him and obtain his release from prison. In spite of this, Alvarus exempted Eulogius from the accusation of weakness in resisting the persecutions which afflicted other Cordoban Christians: 'When he came to know all those who were advancing towards their deaths, encouraging all, venerating and interring their bodies, he was so inflamed by the fire of martyrdom that he seemed to be the inspirer of the martyrdoms in those days.'¹⁸¹ Perhaps Alvarus protested too much. Apart from his writings, Eulogius' only contribution to the early phase of martyr activity was his protest against Reccafred. Moreover, this action was censured by Eulogius' own bishop, presumably the man with whom he had been imprisoned, and who ought to have been sympathetic to Eulogius' stand; the bishop threatened the rebellious priest with excommunication if he continued in his refusal to say mass.¹⁸² Eulogius may indeed have been excommunicated, at least temporarily, since Alvarus reported that 'although they had ordained him priest, he dispensed with this marvellous usage, in spite of which he did not wish to resume the state which he had left.' It seems an unpromising start for a saint.

One of the most puzzling episodes in the *Life of Eulogius* is the journey to Navarre. This episode has been much discussed, without scholars being able to reach any agreement about Eulogius' real purpose, although there is a consensus that it should be dated 848-9; Eulogius was back in Cordoba and writing about it in November 851, in the letter to bishop Wiliesindus of Pamplona. An aspect of the visit to Navarre which may be emphasised is the difference between Alvarus' and Eulogius' versions of it. According to the *Life*, Eulogius' purpose when he went North was spiritual: 'He was not satisfied with visits to the monasteries of his own land. Thanks to his brothers who at this time were undertaking a journey to the land of the Franks, he set off and, arriving at Pamplona, stopped in the monastery of San Zacharias.'¹⁸³ This reference to Eulogius' brothers might mean no more than Eulogius took advantage of their protection on the route north. Eulogius' letter to Wiliesindus has a different and much more circumstantial account; we must remember that the letter was written for public consumption and that Alvarus certainly read it.¹⁸⁴ Eulogius said that he set off in search of two of his brothers, whom 'the cruel fortune of the century had uprooted from their native soil ... to lead them almost to the frontiers of Gaul, in exile with king Louis of Bavaria.'¹⁸⁵ Heading for Catalonia, Eulogius was forced to turn back because of state of war in the region between count William of Barcelona and Charles the Bald.

¹⁸¹ *Vita Eulogii* 5, CSM I, p.333.

¹⁸² *Vita Eulogii* 7, CSM I, p.334.

¹⁸³ *Vita Eulogi* 9, CSM I, p.335.

¹⁸⁴ *Vita Eulogii* 9, CSM I, p.335.

¹⁸⁵ *Epistula tertia*, CSM II, p.497.

Eulogius attempted to cross the Pyrenees at Roncesvalles, but again he failed to reach Francia, this time because of hostilities involving a rebel called Sancho Sánchez. So he resigned himself to a visit to Pamplona.

Yet the impression of an unfortunate man wandering in the foothills of the Pyrenees which Eulogius gave must be false. It is possible that he even had a map.¹⁸⁶ Eulogius may have owned the surviving copy of the *Itinerarium provinciarum Anto[ni]ni Augusti*, based on a third-century original, which carries the postscript EULOGI MEMENTOTE PECATORI. It was added to a codex which Ambrosio de Morales saw in Oviedo in 1572, and could have been taken there with Eulogius' relics.¹⁸⁷ The itinerary lists the principal roads with branches and links, the 'mansiones' along them, and the distances between the places named. In his letter to Wiliesindus, Eulogius named the abbots who had been hospitable to him in Navarre; their monasteries have been located, some with more confidence than others, by assuming that Eulogius visited the monasteries in the order in which he listed them, and by a logical route. The monasteries clustered in a small area of the foothills of the Pyrenees between the Pic d'Orty and Pic du Midi d'Ossau.¹⁸⁸ Eulogius said that he went directly from Pamplona to Leire, where Fortinus was the abbot. Eulogius is the sole source for the monastery of San Salvador de Leire in the ninth century. The first surviving charters date from early in the following century, when it was the principal monastery of the diocese of Pamplona. The bishop of Pamplona sheltered there after the attacks on Navarre by 'Abd ar-Rahmān III in 924, and after the reconquest of the Rioja Leire became the seat and pantheon of the kings of Pamplona.¹⁸⁹ It is likely that when Eulogius visited the monastery, Leire was already a centre of influence. Pamplona was linked to Leire by a major route which followed the lower course of the Irati into the valley of the river Aragón. He next visited abbot Scemenus at Igal, which might, therefore, have been situated in the valley of the next tributary of the Aragón, the Salazar. By the same argument, Urdaspal, where Dadilanis was abbot, might have been in the next valley, the Roncal; Madoz sited it near the present village of Burgui, on the grounds that, according to the cartulary of Leire, this village was attached to Urdaspal. By the eleventh century, some or all of the monasteries in the valleys of the Roncal and the Urdaspal were dependent on Leire.¹⁹⁰ In the next valley of the Ansó lay the monastery of San Martín de Cillas. After 858 it may have been attached to San Juan de la Peña,

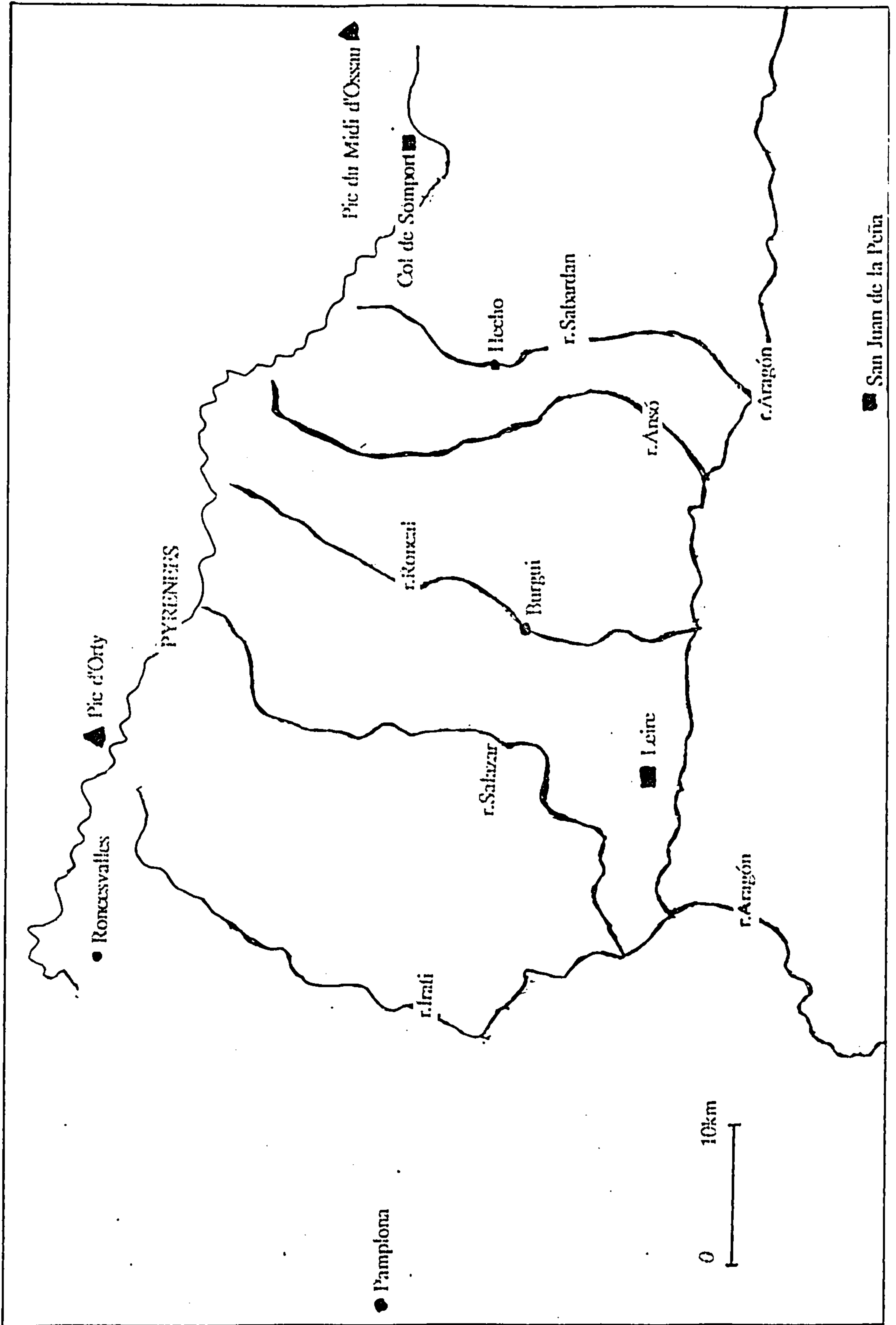
¹⁸⁶ Menendez Pidal G., *Los Caminos en la Historia de España*, (Madrid, 1992), p.56.

¹⁸⁷ Andrés, G. de, 'Los códices visigóticos de la catedral de Oviedo', *Cuadernos Bibliográficos*, (1974), XXXI, 5-29.

¹⁸⁸ Lambert E., 'Le voyage de Saint Euloge dans les Pyrenees en 848', *Estudios dedicados a Menéndez Pidal*, (Madrid, 1953), IV, 557-67; Madoz J. 'El Viaje de San Eulogio a Navarra y la Cronología en el epistolario de Alvaro de Córdoba', *Príncipe de Viana*, (1945), XX, 415-423; see map p.48.

¹⁸⁹ Bishko C.J., 'Salvus of Albelda and Frontier Monasticism in Tenth-Century Navarre', *Speculum*, (1948), XXIII, 559-590.

¹⁹⁰ Orlandis J., *La iglesia en la España visigótica y medieval*, (Pamplona, 1976), p.362.



Eulogius' itinerary in Navarre
 (according to Madoz, 'El viaje de San Eulogio')

although the charter which gives this information is suspect.¹⁹¹ San Juan de la Peña itself, on the main route to the north from Zaragoza via the Col de Somport, is perhaps an odd omission from Eulogius' itinerary, although it did not become famous until the early eleventh century. At this date, the abbot of San Juan de la Peña was Atilo; this is near enough to the name Athilius which Eulogius gave to the abbot of Cillas to give rise to the suspicion that they were the same person. Serasa has been the most difficult monastery on Eulogius' itinerary to identify. Its abbot was Odarius, so this may be the monastery of St. Zacharias which Eulogius mentioned in his letter as being ruled by abbot Odarius: 'a man of supreme sanctity and eminent science'. It was obviously an important establishment, which Eulogius said had more than a hundred monks; Alvarus said one hundred and fifty.¹⁹² Eulogius' description of its situation is very imprecise, but if he visited the other monasteries in the order listed in the letter to Wiliesindus, it makes sense to have St. Zacharias in the next valley towards the east, that of the river Sabardan, where lies Hecho, site of the monastery of San Pedro de Silesa. This was certainly an important monastery from the tenth century, and may be Eulogius' Serasa. From here Eulogius returned to Zaragoza, and his route back to Cordoba took him via Sigüenza/Segontia, Complutum and Toledo. The itinerary gives the impression of an intensive tour of this small area of interlinked monasteries, rather than an improvised alternative to a foiled visit to Francia.

Alvarus did not record the problems which had beset Eulogius on his journey north, nor did he give details of his itinerary in Navarre, referring the interested reader to Eulogius' letter to Wiliesindus. The significance of the journey for Alvarus lay in the number of books Eulogius saw: 'hidden away and almost unknown to many'. Eulogius brought back copies of several works, including Augustine's *City of God*, Virgil, Horace and Aldhelm. The Cordoban church's need of these famous texts has been taken as an indication of the cultural poverty of Cordoba at this date. However, if Alvarus was implying that many important works were unknown in the capital this is unlikely to be true. A compilation made by Alvarus himself¹⁹³ contains amongst other texts the works of Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel and three homilies of Bede. Further, the prose and poetic styles of Eulogius and his contemporaries reflect a knowledge of Carolingian models in advance of the Christian north of Spain.¹⁹⁴ As I shall argue below, Eulogius' acquisition of a *Life of Muhammad* may have been of more significance for his circle of Cordoban Christians than any number of works of the Fathers of the Church. Yet Alvarus implied that Eulogius got what he went for; his journey was commended as being of great benefit to Eulogius and to the Church in general.

¹⁹¹ Lambert 'Le voyage', citing Gomez Moreno M., *Iglesias Mozárabes*, (Madrid, 1919), p.31, who calls the monastery San Martín de Ciella.

¹⁹² *Vita Eulogii* 9, CSM I, p.335.

¹⁹³ *Real Academia de la Historia de Madrid*, 80.

¹⁹⁴ Fontaine J., 'Mozarabie Hispanique et monde Carolingien: les échanges culturels entre la France et l'Espagne du VIII^e au X^e siècle', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, (1983), XIII, 17-46, n.69.

The biographer was, however, skating over another setback experienced by Eulogius which may be connected with the journey to Navarre. Alvarus said that Eulogius had been elected unanimously to succeed Wistremus as bishop of Toledo, 'but Divine Providence, which had reserved for him martyrdom, put obstacles in his way.'¹⁹⁵ However, added Alvarus, if Toledo could not have Eulogius, then the post would be left open. This may indeed have happened, for there is no record of Toledo having a bishop for a further two centuries.¹⁹⁶ Speculation on this episode has been extensive, complicated by the absence of firm agreement on the date of Eulogius' election, although the year 852 has met with the most approval. There is no indication of the reason why Eulogius was chosen, nor why he failed to take up the appointment. Toledo was usually in rebellion against Cordoba, and this may have prevented Eulogius from travelling to the city. There may, however, be some connection between Eulogius' relations with Toledo and the discrepancy of purpose which Eulogius and Alvarus report for the journey to Navarre. Perhaps Eulogius was canvassing for support against his opponents in Cordoba. Fontaine developed the episode of the two brothers in exile; perhaps they were conspiring against Cordoba, and Eulogius went north on their behalf.¹⁹⁷ Epalza argued an ecclesiastical reason: Eulogius may have been forced to go North to be consecrated bishop in Pamplona because there were not enough bishops in Cordoba favourably disposed to him.¹⁹⁸ There is not enough evidence to substantiate either of these hypotheses. Alvarus, making light of the disappointment, said that 'although intrigue denied him the episcopal rank, it could not deny him the honour of the order', which he gained through martyrdom; as Alvarus added pointedly: 'All saints are bishops, but not all bishops are saints.'

When Eulogius eventually gained his martyr's crown, it was perhaps not entirely what he had intended: 'a judgement not expected, but at the same time caused by his free choice.'¹⁹⁹ Eulogius seemed up to this point to have been in hiding from the Muslim authorities:

'Learning of the deplorable plan [to persecute the Christians] we fled, we departed, we wandered, we hid and having changed our clothes we made our way in timid flight through the nocturnal silence. We were frightened by falling leaves, we frequently changed our place of residence, we searched for safer places, and we constantly trembled, fearing death by the sword perhaps we fled martyrdom not because we feared death, which comes when it will, but because we were unworthy for martyrdom,

¹⁹⁵ *Vita Eulogii* 10, CSM I, p.340.

¹⁹⁶ Viguera Molins M.J. and Rubiera M.J., 'Los cristianos toledanos bajo dominación musulmana', *Simposio Toledo Hispanoárabe*, (Toledo, 1986), 129-133.

¹⁹⁷ Fontaine, 'Mozarabie Hispanique', p.29, n.33.

¹⁹⁸ Epalza M. de, 'Falta de obispos y conversión al Islam de los cristianos de Al-Andalus', *Al-Qantara*, (1994), XV, 385-400.

¹⁹⁹ *Vita Eulogii* 11, CSM, I, p.336.

which is given to some but not to all. Those who have been and are being martyred were predestined from the very beginning.²⁰⁰

Eulogius did finally face up to the logic of his writings, although even in the account of his passion there are prevarications which are at odds with the way Eulogius himself wrote up the passions of the other martyrs. According to the *Life*, Eulogius did not seem to believe that he had transgressed against Islam in teaching Leocritia. He tried to turn away the 'odious fury, savage aspect and impatience' of the judge with a soft answer; 'My lord, we are obliged to preach and it is part of our faith to extend the light of the faith to those who ask it, and not deny it to anyone who hastens along the holy paths of life.'²⁰¹ It was only when the judge ordered Eulogius' death that the saint spoke out boldly against Islam for the first time. It is doubtful whether this scene should be read as plausible, rather than a recreation of similar episodes in the Acts of the Roman martyrs.²⁰² Indeed, the idea that blasphemy against Islam was punishable by death may be questioned. Although the Qur'ān ruled against it, the vocabulary of blasphemy could take on different meanings at different times and places;²⁰³ without the corroboration of Arabic sources for this period, we have only Alvarus' word that Eulogius faced certain death. From this point on, Alvarus seems to be coasting through some of the hagiographical formulae; the elaboration of this section of the *Life of Eulogius* may owe more to the need to give the same weight to the *Passion* as to the *Life*, than to historical accuracy. Eulogius was whipped, and offered blandishments. One of the emir's advisers, moved by the fame of Eulogius' scholarship, promised to obtain his release if he would modify his ardour just a little; the judge would allow him to continue to practise his faith unobtrusively. But, all hesitation now gone, one might almost say miraculously, Eulogius ordered the judge to sharpen his sword. A dove hovered above Eulogius' corpse, which the Muslims' best efforts could not destroy, and it was saved for burial at San Zoilus.

In spite of this ending, the *Life of Eulogius* leaves the reader with the impression of a saint whose route to martyrdom was not the conventional one of a miraculous birth and childhood, and a life of sanctity, but a series of vacillations and accidents of fortune. Eulogius' many volumes of writings on the martyrs of Cordoba should be read in the light of the reservations about the orthodoxy of his life evoked by reading his *Life*. Previous commentators have recognised that our knowledge of the martyrs depends almost entirely on what Eulogius chose to say about them, and that this material bears the imprint of his character: 'Because it is, practically speaking, only through the writings of Eulogius that we know anything about the martyrs, it is absolutely essential that we understand the nature of this medium before we attempt to comprehend what

²⁰⁰ *Memoriale sanctorum* 2, 14, CSM II, p.433, trans. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.57.

²⁰¹ *Memoriale sanctorum* 2, 15, CSM II, p.339.

²⁰² Musurillo H., *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, (Oxford, 1972).

²⁰³ Netton I.R., *Text and Trauma: An East-West Primer*, (Richmond, Surrey, 1996), p.5.

drove the Cordoban martyrs to their deaths.'²⁰⁴ They have explained their difficulties in understanding Eulogius' line on the martyrs - saints without miracles facing persecution as much from the Church as from the Muslim authorities - as being a result of the efforts he was making to defend the martyrs against the Cordoban Church hierarchy. This argument would also explain why his writings went unread, and the martyrs of Cordoba uncommemorated. The difficulty, however, may lie with Eulogius himself. Whatever the circumstances of the martyrs' protest, the way in which Eulogius wrote it up may have been so unorthodox as to make his works unreadable to his own and subsequent generations. It would be a mammoth task to re-examine the three volumes of the *Memoriale sanctorum* and the *Liber apologeticus martyrum* from this angle, and one would still be working largely in the vacuum created by Eulogius' monopoly of the evidence. There are, however, two aspects of Eulogius' writing which can be interpreted in the light of material from other sources. They both relate to the journey to Navarre: the *Life of Muhammad* which Eulogius found at Leire and copied into the *Liber apologeticus martyrum*,²⁰⁵ and the cult of Nunilo and Alodia, celebrated at Leire, the only saints to be included in the *Memoriale sanctorum*²⁰⁶ who were not martyred in Cordoba. The *Life of Muhammad* and the evidence for Nunilo and Alodia cast new light on the way Eulogius used his material, and on the veracity of his testimony.

The Life of Muhammad

The *Life of Muhammad* may have been written during the early years of the Arab occupation of Spain, since it named the Islamic capital as Damascus rather than Baghdad, established in 762. In this, and other details, it is closely related to the *Chronicle of 741*, thus it may^{have} been copied in the mid eighth century. The text is either Spanish in origin, or was given a local flavour by its introduction:

'In that time Bishop Isidore of Seville excelled in the Catholic doctrine, and Sisebut held the throne in Toledo. The church of the blessed Euphrasius was built over his tomb in the town of Ildai (Andújar, near Cordoba). Furthermore in Toledo the church of the blessed Leocadia was enlarged with a high roof of wonderful workmanship by order of the aforementioned king.'²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ Wolf, *The Martyrs*, p.47; Daniel N., *The Arabs and Medieval Europe* (1975, 2nd edition 1979), pp.23-30.

²⁰⁵ Eulogius, *Liber apologeticus martyrum*, 16, CSM, II, pp.483-486; Roda version with translation by Wolf K.B., 'The Earliest Latin Lives of Muhammad', in Gervers and Bikhazi, *Conversion and Continuity*, pp.96-99; see below for Eulogius' use of this text.

²⁰⁶ *Memoriale sanctorum* 2, 7, CSM, II, pp.406-8.

²⁰⁷ *Liber apologeticus martyrum* 16, CSM, II p.483.

Eulogius gave the impression that he had rescued the text from obscurity. In his introduction to the work he noted:

'when I found myself in the past in the town of Pamplona and detained at the monastery of Leire, leafing through all the manuscripts there, incompletely known, which were worthy of reading, I suddenly discovered part of a certain work containing this anonymous little history concerning the impious prophet.'²⁰⁸

Perhaps Eulogius had never read anything similar in Cordoba. However, it seems that at least one version of the *Life of Muhammad* was being read in al-Andalus, as well as in the North.

The *Life of Muhammad*, in a version similar to that copied by Eulogius, was preserved in four manuscripts in addition to the *Apologetic Book of the Martyrs*.²⁰⁹ The earliest of these are the Albelda Codex²¹⁰ of 975 and the Codex Emilianense or Vigilano of 992²¹¹ from San Millán de la Cogolla, which is almost an exact copy of the Albelda version. The so-called Codex of Roda dates from the eleventh century,²¹² and the fourth manuscript is a late twelfth-century copy of it, probably from Castile. Comparison with the first two surviving manuscripts shows that the Roda text represents a different line of transmission, even though the second half of the codex was copied at San Millán de la Cogolla. In the Roda Codex, a collection of texts of both Navarrese and Oviedan origin, the *Life of Muhammad* was transcribed between the Asturian Prophetic Chronicle of 883 and other texts dating from before the tenth century. The 'corrections' which Morales made to Eulogius' text make it impossible to draw conclusions from the orthography of the published version, but the close links between all the other manuscripts and the Christian realms make a Navarrese origin for Eulogius' acquisition credible. Thus the text was almost certainly known fairly widely, at least in the Christian north.

Díaz believed that these manuscripts originated in al-Andalus and were taken to the Kingdom of the Asturias in the ninth century.²¹³ There is one piece of corroborating evidence for this hypothesis. A very brief *Life of Muhammad* appears as the penultimate paragraph of one of the letters of Alvarus conserved in a manuscript in the Cathedral Archive of Cordoba which also contains his poetry.²¹⁴ The letter was sent to Alvarus by bishop John of Seville; Alvarus' reply

²⁰⁸ *Liber apologeticus martyrum* 15, CSM, II, p.483.

²⁰⁹ Díaz y Díaz M.C., 'Los textos antimahometanos más antiguos en codices españoles', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age*, (1970), XLV, 149-168.

²¹⁰ Escorial d.I.2.

²¹¹ Escorial d.I.1.

²¹² *Biblioteca de la Real Academia de Madrid* 78.

²¹³ Díaz y Díaz, 'Los textos', p.155.

²¹⁴ *Epistola Ioannis spalensis Albaro directa*, CSM 1, pp.197-201.

does not survive. The manuscript has not survived intact, and the letter of John of Seville is incomplete. Most of the letter is a theological discussion with no direct anti-Muslim polemical content, although John cited 'the most abominable Saracens who deny the resurrection' in support of his argument. The first editor dated all the letters in the manuscript between 849-851, on the dubious grounds that after the beginning of the martyr movement there was no time for theological discussion;²¹⁵ there is no reason to accept this date. The manuscript itself is much later, and is written in a single hand, that of 'Sisuertus presbiter', who noted his name three times in a semi-cryptic cursive script which Díaz thought Leonese, perhaps dating from the early eleventh century.²¹⁶ The letter from John of Seville is problematic because the manuscript seems to have been copied in the wrong order, and it cannot be reconstituted. John of Seville said of his *Life of Muhammad*, 'We send you this *adnotatio* on the heretic Mammet [Muhammad] at the end of this letter'. This sentence is immediately followed by a grammatical discussion relating to the *Synonyma Ciceronis*. Then comes the *Life of Muhammad*. It appears inadvertently to have been sandwiched between the grammatical excursus and a request to Alvarus to send him a treatise on Latin metre composed or edited by Eulogius, (perhaps the one he was writing while in prison).²¹⁷ After the text of the *Life*, several lines were subsequently erased, perhaps because a later reader recognised that the manuscript was now in a complete muddle. The *Life* appears to have been despatched in response to a previous request;²¹⁸ the phrase: 'Direximus vobis illam adnotationem,²¹⁹ implies that the writer is referring to a subject which the correspondents have already discussed. Perhaps John and Alvarus were already engaged in a project recommended later by Eulogius in the *Apologetic Book of the Martyrs*, that the learned should collect polemical material against Islam.²²⁰ The *Life of Muhammad* which Eulogius acquired in Leire was written into the *Apologetic Book of the Martyrs* in or before 857; John may not have had access to Eulogius' text when he sent his own version, but it is equally possible that Alvarus wished to see if it was the same as the *Life of Muhammad* from Leire.

Interesting comparisons can be made between the two accounts of Muhammad. In both texts Muhammad's career lasts ten years, and there are similar details about his marriages. Both mention Muhammad's promise that he would be resurrected after three days, a parody of the resurrection of Christ; according to the polemic, Muhammad's body was devoured by dogs. John of Seville's version, however, includes two details which are missing from Eulogius': Muhammad was shown occupying the mind of a camel, and after his death his supporters claimed miracles

²¹⁵ Madoz J., *Epistolario de Alvaro de Córdoba*, (Madrid, 1947), pp.170-1, cited in *ibid.*, 'El viaje'.

²¹⁶ Díaz y Díaz, 'Los textos', p.151.

²¹⁷ *Vita Eulogii* 4, *CSM* I, p.333.

²¹⁸ Madoz J., 'El viaje', p. 420.

²¹⁹ *Epistola Ioannis* 8, *CSM*, I, p.200.

²²⁰ *Liber apologeticus martyrum*, 20, *CSM*, II, p.487.

for him. There is no reference to Andújar or Toledo in the shorter text, which could mean that this version is earlier or has a different geographical origin, although again it must be Spanish, since, like the *Leire Life* this text dates Muhammad's career to the time of Isidore and Sisebut. The most likely explanation is that both were versions of a scurrilous *Life of Muhammad* circulating in al-Andalus.

A third indication of the dissemination in Spain of polemical writing against the prophet of Islam is another polemical biography of Muhammad. The Roda codex, which contains one of the manuscripts of the *Life of Muhammad*, also contains the only surviving copy of a text with the curious title *Tultusceptra de libro domni Metobii*.²²¹ This may be a much later work, and seems to have no direct connection with the *Life of Muhammad*. It was written on the blank verso of the folio concluding the Chronicle of Alfonso III, in a Visigothic script which appears to come from the Rioja, perhaps between 1030 and 1060.²²² The text is full of incongruencies and lacunae, and seems to have been copied from a hand which the scribe did not know well, although the reproduction of Arabic phrases is accurate, showing good knowledge of both the language and religion of Islam, with an awareness that the Muslims rejected Christianity as being a corruption of the message of Jesus. The *Tultusceptra* seems to be a version of the legend about a monk who corrupted a naive boy, sometimes identified as Muhammad, with an adulterated version of Christian dogma. This story was well-known in the East in several variants, the monk being called Sergius, Bahira or Nestorius. The legend may have been adapted for a Spanish audience by the use of the name of Osius for the bearer of the corrupt message, possibly a reminder of the bishop Osius of Cordoba who was still notorious in Spain for his apostasy at Sirmium in 357. The text itself is of little interest, but its existence, together with the two versions of the *Life* point to a tradition of polemic in the Iberian peninsula. This tradition denies Eulogius the 'suddenness' of his discovery at Leire.

The *Life of Muhammad* and the *Tultusceptra de libro domni Metobii* show that Spanish polemic against the prophet was influenced by that of the East, although perhaps not directly copied from it. Certainly, there seems to have been no tradition of polemical writing against Islam in the West at this time, except in Spain.²²³ In the East, however, the tradition was already nearly a century old by the 850s. One of the martyrs of Cordoba came from the monastery of St. Sabas outside Jerusalem associated with one of the earliest polemicists against Islam, John of Damascus (c.652-c.750).²²⁴ John of Damascus treated Islam as a deviation from orthodox Christianity rather than

²²¹ Wolf, 'The Earliest Latin Lives', pp.99-100.

²²² Díaz y Díaz, 'Los textos', p.161.

²²³ Kedar B.Z., *Crusade and Mission: European Attitudes towards the Muslims*, (Princeton, 1984); Ducellier A., *Le Miroir de l'Islam: Musulmans et Chrétiens d'Orient au Moyen Age (VII^e - XII^e siècles)*, (Paris, 1971).

²²⁴ Sahas D.J., *John of Damascus on Islam: the "Heresy of the Ishmaelites"*, (Leiden, 1972).

as a new religion, adding a final section on Islam to his *On Heresies*, entitled 'On the heresy of the Ishmaelites'.²²⁵ John described Islam as 'a deceptive superstition of the Ishmaelites' and 'forerunner of the AntiChrist'. Muhammad, 'having conversed supposedly with an Arian monk, devised his own heresy'. The use of the term *Christianorum conventiculus* in the *Life of Muhammad* is a clear indication that in Spain too Islam was portrayed as a Christian heresy. Further, the *Life of Muhammad*, for all the crudeness of its polemic, reveals an extensive knowledge of Islam and contains many echoes of the Qur'ān.²²⁶ Both the *Life of Muhammad* and John of Seville's letter date Muhammad's birth too late; their source for this date is not known, although it may be held in common with Eastern Christian writers, since John of Damascus also has Muhammad born during reign of Heraclius (610-41), without being more precise.

One Eastern anti-Muslim polemical text which might have influenced the martyr movement was the *Passion* of Peter of Capitolias in Transjordan, which survives in a version written in Georgian.²²⁷ The story of Peter mixes hagiographical *topoi* with historical details. Peter was a married priest who, concerned for his own salvation, divested himself of some of the temptations of the world by sending his wife and children away to monasteries. This regime did not prove austere enough, and Peter became obsessed with the idea of martyrdom, courting death by blaspheming against Islam. He appeared before the district commander, who ordered that Peter's sanity be established, since blasphemy was to be tolerated if the perpetrator was judged insane. Both the judge and the caliph, named as Walīd (705-715), tried to persuade him not to persist in his error, but without success, and Peter was executed. There are obvious parallels between Eulogius' accounts of the passions of the martyrs of Cordoba and the way in which Peter insisted on martyrdom in spite of contrary arguments from the Muslim authorities, although these parallels may be derived from common Late Antique models rather than demonstrating that Eulogius knew the *Passion* of Peter.²²⁸ Eastern polemical writings in the form of dialogues between individual Muslims and Christians, such as those between the Patriarch Timothy I of Baghdad (775-85) and the caliph al-Mahdi were copied into later manuscripts from al-Andalus.²²⁹ The Spanish church may also have had access to the influential writings of Thābit Abū Qurrah (740-820).²³⁰ There is no concrete evidence for the existence of any of these Eastern polemical texts in the West, but

²²⁵ John of Damascus, *Liber de Haeresibus*, 101, PG, XCIV, cols.764-73, cited by Sahas, *John of Damascus*.

²²⁶ Millet-Gerard D., *Chrétiens mozarabes et culture islamique dans l'Espagne des VIII^e-IX^e siècles*, (Paris, 1984), pp.125-37.

²²⁷ ed. Kekelidze C., *Kristianikij Vostok* (1917), V, 1-69, summarised by Peeters P., 'La Passion de Saint Pierre de Capitolias', *Analecta Bollandiana*, (1939), LVII, 67-74.

²²⁸ see also below, the passion of Nunilo and Alodia.

²²⁹ see chapter 7.

²³⁰ Moorhead J., 'The Earliest Christian Theological Response to Islam', *Religion*, XI, (1981), 265-274.

it is likely that the *Life of Muhammad* and the *Tultusceptru de libro domni Metobii* are the survivors from a dossier of polemical writings against Islam, some of them imported into Spain, on which Eulogius and his circle would have been able to draw.²³¹

In fact, Eulogius and Alvarus's writings are full of echoes of Eastern ideas about the relationship between Christianity and Islam, and some of these ideas were already being debated in the previous generation.²³² Both men were pupils of Speraindeo; Eulogius said that he was the author of a work of polemic against Islam, but it does not survive.²³³ There is some similarity between the arguments which Eulogius quoted from his teacher and a contemporary work describing a Muslim-Christian disputation allegedly held in Jerusalem in c.800, where the Christian viewpoint was represented by Abraham of Tiberias.²³⁴ Both echoed the teachings of John of Damascus in describing Islam as a heretical sect. In the *Apologetic Book of the Martyrs*, Eulogius set out to warn his fellow-Christians against the seductions of Islam:

[With regard to] 'the catholic, whoever he is, who wishes to instruct himself in the folly of the error of Mahomet, of the delirium of his preaching, of the precepts of his new kind of impiety, it is clear that during his enquiry he should turn away from the followers of this sect; for believing themselves in possession of a sacred trust they are not content to preach the dogma of their prophet amongst themselves, but proclaim it to whoever wishes to hear. For they find many things in the works of certain of our writers, who armed with the zealous ardour of God, are inflamed, with their prudent pen, against this shameless charlatan. We ourselves, in our work entitled *Memorial of the Saints* will stigmatise, refute and criticise in part the errors of this sect.'²³⁵

In fact, there are relatively few passages in the *Memorial of the Saints* which treat directly with the confrontation with Islam. Eulogius fails to convince the reader that the Christians of Cordoba were facing persecution, and his work reads as a justification of the martyrs in the face of Christian criticism. Alvarus was much more strident in his anti-Muslim polemic. In the *Indiculus luminosus*, based on the apocalyptic writings of the *Book of Daniel*, he portrayed Muhammad as the AntiChrist.²³⁶ Alvarus' diatribes against Islam were more virulent even than much of the

²³¹ Franke F.R., 'Die freiwilligen martyreren von Cordova und das Verhältniß des Mozarabes zum Islam', *Spanische Forschungen des Görresgesellschaft*, XIII, (1953), 1-170.

²³² Waltz J., 'The significance of the voluntary martyrs of ninth-century Cordoba', *Muslim World*, LX, (1970), 143-159, 226-36.

²³³ *Memoriale sanctorum* I, 7, CSM II, p.375.

²³⁴ Vollers K., trans. 'Das Religionsgespräch von Jerusalem (um 800 D) aus dem Arabischen übersetzt', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, XXIX, (1908), 63, cited in Francke, *Die freiwilligen Märtyrer*, pp.50-8.

²³⁵ *Liber apologeticus martyrum* 16, CSM, II p.487.

²³⁶ Alvarus, *Indiculus luminosus* 32, CSM I, p.311.

Eastern polemic:

'They are swollen in pride, haughty with swollen hearts, languid in the enjoyment of carnal acts, gourmands in eating, usurpers in the seizing of things and greedy in the pillage of the poor, grasping without any feelings, liars without shame, false without discrimination, impudent with no modesty of mind, cruel without mercy, usurping without justice, without honour or truth, knowing neither benignant affection nor the feeling for godliness, following modes and fads, foppish, sly, crafty, and besmirched with the dregs of all evils, not moderately so but mainly so, deriding humility as madness, spurning chastity as something dirty, detracting virginity as rust or mildew, trading upon the virtues of the soul and the vice of the body, showing their own morals in their dress and actions'.²³⁷

It is difficult to believe that these words were written for immediate reading, unless Alvarus too was seeking death, and there is no evidence that this was so. Yet it is clear that the polemical line followed by Alvarus and Eulogius had too much in common with the Eastern Christian approach to Islam to be a completely independent development.

It has been argued that the martyr movement was a reflection of contemporary Christian-Muslim relations in the Abbāsid caliphate. It was a time when Muslims were beginning to resent the extent of Christian involvement in their administration and professions, and the blurring of the distinctions between Muslims and *dhimmis*, the Christians and Jews under Islamic rule.²³⁸ The caliph al-Mutawwakil (847-861), who imposed strict orthodoxy on his Muslim subjects, reintroduced the rules governing the behaviour of Christians attributed to 'Umar I (717-20).²³⁹ They were to dress in distinctive yellow clothing and wooden images were to be hung outside their houses to differentiate them from those of Muslims. Recently-constructed churches were to be demolished. The Christian response to these restrictions was the propagation of polemic against Islam, designed to be read by fellow-Christians, to put some distance between the two religions. It is likely that the same concerns about Christian-Muslim relationships existed in Spain; this may be the reason for Alvarus' complaints against the Christians for being seduced by Arabic culture into losing their command of Latin.²⁴⁰ Eulogius' diatribe against the persecutions of the emir Muhammad (852-886), also recalls the legislation of 'Umar, which may have been reimposed on the Christians in response to the disturbances caused by the first martyrdoms:

²³⁷ Alvarus, *Indiculus luminosus* 31, *CSM*, I, pp.310-11, trans. Waltz, 'The significance of the voluntary martyrs'.

²³⁸ Lapiedra Gutierrez E., 'Los mártires de Córdoba y la política antichristiana contemporanea en Oriente', *Al-Qantara*, (1994), XV, 453-462.

²³⁹ Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, pp.9-10.

²⁴⁰ *Indiculus luminosus* 35, *CSM* 1, p. 314.

'At that moment, as the cruel conspiracy of the prince against God's flock redoubled in violence and overwhelmed the Christians everywhere, and thus not all, in a general ruin, had thrown themselves into their religion, as was believed, he gave the order to demolish the recently-constructed churches and to throw down all the new ornaments which shone in the ancient basilicas, and which a maldroit art had added to them in the times of the Arabs. The satrap of darkness having seized this occasion, even the pinnacles of the temples which had been erected in a time of peace by the enthusiasm and industry of our fathers were pulled down, whose foundation went back almost three hundred years.'²⁴¹

There is, however, little independent evidence for the destruction of churches, although the discrepancies between the monasteries and churches which were mentioned in the *Calendar of Cordoba*²⁴² and those mentioned by Eulogius suggests that some may have disappeared as a result of punishment of the Cordoban church in the ninth century.²⁴³ The idea that the martyr movement in al-Andalus was a response to tension between Muslims and their subjects throughout the Islamic world is plausible. Despite all this, there is no evidence that events in Spain and in the East were connected. Neither Eulogius nor Alvarus referred to the sufferings fellow-Christians in the East. Furthermore, the dates do not fit. Al-Mutawwakil promulgated his first decree against the *dhimmi*s in 850, but persecution of the Christians in Baghdad did not start until two years later, by which time the outbreak of voluntary martyrdoms in Cordoba was well under way.

Whatever the exact relationship between polemical writing and its application to the current political situation in the East and in Spain, it is clear that Eulogius gained a good grounding in anti-Muslim polemic and a view of the heresy of Islam, whilst still a young man, before his journey to Navarre. He did not have to wait for the 'discovery' of the *Life of Muhammad* at Leire. Eulogius' reference to this text, if not deliberately misleading, has been misinterpreted by modern scholars. The text was not unknown but may have been underused, possibly because of the dangers associated with blaspheming against Islam. Christians in al-Andalus were aware that this carried risk of death; this was made clear in an explanatory detail which was added to a version of the passions of George, Aurelius and Nathalie carried to Francia.²⁴⁴ Perfectus, martyred in 850 and the first martyr to be included in the *Memorial of the Saints*, was reported by Eulogius to have accused Muhammad of adultery with Zaynab.²⁴⁵ Why, in spite of this risk,

²⁴¹ *Memoriale sanctorum* III, 3, CSM 2, p.441.

²⁴² see chapter 6.

²⁴³ Pérez F., 'Cordoue', in Baudrillart A., Meyer A. de, Cauwenbergh E. Van, (eds.) *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de la Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, (Paris, 1956), XIII, pp.838-871.

²⁴⁴ 'The Saracens think that only those who leave their sect and turn to the Christian faith, and those who utter blasphemies against their Legislator, deserve death'; Jiménez Pedrajas R., 'San Eulogio de Córdoba, autor de la pasión francesa de los mártires mozárabes cordobeses Jorge, Aurelio y Natalia', *Anthologica Annua*, XVII, (1970), 465-583, at p.494.

²⁴⁵ *Memoriale sanctorum* II, 1, CSM II, pp.375-6.

did Eulogius decide to make use of the *Life of Muhammad*? It is possible that, on finding the *Life* in the library in Leire, and perhaps in discussion with his colleagues in Navarre, Eulogius was struck by the text's potential value in a new context. Thus, what came 'suddenly' to Eulogius, was the idea of using the text not against Muhammad, which was obvious, but in defence of his version of the Christian life.

Tensions between Christians and Muslims must have been rising before Eulogius departed on his journey to the North, either as the cause of the wave of martyrdoms, or as a response to them, because the first deaths had occurred by the time he returned. There have been many differing opinions on the degree of Eulogius' responsibility for encouraging the martyrs. One fact is not in dispute. His chief response to the crisis was to write, and one reason for his polemic against Islam was to answer the criticism of the martyrs from more orthodox circles. For, said Eulogius, 'those who assert that these soldiers [martyrs] of our own day were killed by men who worship God and have a law, are distinguished by no prudencebecause if such a cult or law is said to be valid, indeed the strength of our Christian religion must necessarily be impaired.'²⁴⁶

Nunilo and Alodia

Eulogius may have found a second source of inspiration in Leire. Two martyred sisters, Nunilo and Alodia are discussed by some but not all modern historians of the Cordoban martyr movement. The basis for this inclusion is the brief account of their passion in the second book of the *Memorial of the Saints*.²⁴⁷ In this volume, Eulogius wrote biographies of varying lengths of twenty-nine martyrs which, according to his preface, complemented what he had written in the first book and were laid out in chapters for the purpose of meditation.²⁴⁸ However, Nunilo and Alodia almost certainly perished in Northern Spain, and their cult was celebrated at San Salvador de Leire. Apart from the *Memorial of the Saints* and the *Martyrology* of Usuard of St. Germain, whose entries on the Cordoban martyrs are derived from Usuard's acquaintance with Eulogius or his works,²⁴⁹ the preservation of the memory of these two saints followed quite a different course to that of the other martyrs whom Eulogius describes, who are not remembered outside his works. They were commemorated in a *Passion* included in a passionary from the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña, near Burgos.²⁵⁰ All the surviving Latin liturgical calendars from the

²⁴⁶ *Liber apologeticus martyrum* 17, CSM II, p.486, trans. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.87.

²⁴⁷ *Memoriale sanctorum* II, 7, CSM II, pp.406-8.

²⁴⁸ *Memoriale sanctorum* II, *praef.*, CSM II, p.397.

²⁴⁹ see n.4 above.

²⁵⁰ Gil edited the *Passio* from the two Cardeña manuscripts MBN 822 and Escorial b.1.4, and later versions in the *Breviary of Leire* and the *Breviary of Toledo*: Gil J., 'En Torno a las Santas Nunilón y Alodia', *Revista de la Universidad de Madrid*, (1970), XIX, 74, pp.113-122; see also the edition of MBN 822 in *AASS* Oct. IX, pp.626-647; the *Passionary of Cardeña* is

peninsula included them except for the *Calendar of Cordoba*.²⁵¹ There is also an account of the translation of their relics to Leire,²⁵² and the saints are mentioned in donations to that monastery and to other foundations in the North.²⁵³ The connection between the cult at Leire and Eulogius is, however, difficult to establish. Firstly, neither Eulogius nor Alvarus said that Eulogius learned about these two saints when he was in Leire. Secondly, discrepancies in dating between the different sources on the two martyrs make the relationship between Eulogius' journey to Navarre and the date of the martyrdom impossible to pin down. The problems of these data have been considered before,²⁵⁴ but it is worth trying to solve them because, if Eulogius learned about Nunilo and Alodia from the monks at Leire, his inclusion of the two saints in the *Memorial of the Saints* raises interesting questions which suggest a reinterpretation of his writings on the martyr movement as a whole.

There are many similarities between Eulogius' account of the saints and the *Passion*, but Eulogius' version is much shorter, contains less circumstantial detail and differs in significant respects. Eulogius described Nunilo and Alodia as daughters of Muslim father and a Christian mother. When their father died, their mother married a second Muslim who did not allow them to practise the Christian faith, to which they had been devoted since infancy. Their stepfather had them brought before the prefect (*praefecto urbis*), who tried to get them to apostasize by tempting them with riches and threatening torture and death by the sword. The sisters made a speech of defiance, a convention of the passions written to commemorate the victims of the third-century persecutions. Failing to move the sisters, the prefect handed them over to Muslim women relatives who tried to get them to accept Islam. Nine days later, still obstinate in their beliefs, they were decapitated in the public square. Their bodies were taken under guard to a place deemed so obscure and buried so deep that the Christians would not be able to profit from the acquisition of the saints. But, by signs and miracles which Eulogius did not record, their worth became known both to the Christians and to the infidels.

The discrepancies between the Cardena *Passion* and Eulogius' account suggest that Eulogius was deliberately altering his version, that his information was not good, or that the Cardena *Passion* is a later elaboration. According to this text, the two girls were brought up as Christians after their Muslim father abandoned them, and it is only after their mother died that their Muslim relatives tried to get them to recant their Christianity. This text is much more explanatory than

discussed in detail in chapter 5.

²⁵¹ Fabrega Grau A., *Pasionario Hispánico*, (2 vols., *Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra, Serie Litúrgica*, VI, Barcelona and Madrid, 1953-55), I, p.242.

²⁵² *Translatio Nunilo et Alodia ad monasterium Legerense*; *AASS*, Oct IX, (Paris and Rome 1869), pp.645-646.

²⁵³ Gil, 'En torno a las Santas', pp.123-135.

²⁵⁴ see below.

Eulogius felt he needed to be; the sect of their father was described not as a faith but as a great deception, and this was elaborated in a paragraph of polemic. This is a brief summary of a line commonly taken against Islam in the west, that the Saracens had been polytheists until Muhammad, in about 600 AD, was deluded by Lucifer in the guise of the Angel Gabriel into believing that he was the greatest of all the prophets; whilst recognising Jesus as a prophet, Muhammad denied that he was the son of God. The *Passion* continued; a member of the sisters' family denounced them before Ghalaf, the proconsul 'which in the Chaldean tongue is called Amir'. Here the girls made their speech of defiance, but the proconsul answered them gently, urging them to convert; when they refused, he took pity on their age and returned them to their family. They were next denounced before 'king' Zumahel, whom the king of Spain had sent to Huesca as his deputy; the status of this person is further explained. The king sent them away, this time not to their home but to another Muslim household, where they resisted blandishments for several days. For a third time they were denounced, this time before a former *presbyter* who had apostasized to Islam. He too did not want to condemn them to destruction, and when they refused to abjure their faith, told them to go to live with the Christians in the mountains. This lenient treatment of the sisters recalls Walid's reluctance to make a martyr of Peter of Capitolias. Finally, Nunilo was executed, but even at this late stage her younger sister was urged to change her mind, but refused. The bodies were exposed to be eaten by scavengers, but they remained untouched; their legs were tied together and they were thrown into a ditch, where they remained under the protection of two vultures. At last, a Christian was allowed to wrap them in linen and bury them. The most significant differences between this version and the *Memorial of the Saints*, are in this final section; in the *Passion* the saints' bodies are maltreated, but eventually rescued for a Christian burial, not condemned to perpetual obscurity. And this was the account which gained currency in the North; a shorter version found its way into the Acts of the cathedral of Huesca.²⁵⁵

Eulogius, like so many of the later writers on the martyrs of Cordoba, omitted to point out that in fact Nunilo and Alodia had no connection at all with that city. Eulogius merely said vaguely that the events occurred 'in urbe Bosca ad oppidum Barbitanum', but further geographical information in the *Passion* firmly links the martyrs with Navarre.²⁵⁶ The Cardena text begins:

'passio beatissimarum virginum Nunilonis atque Alodia martires Xpi que passe sunt in civitate oschense sub preside Zumahel ..contigit in regione Spanie Sarracenorum [rex] Abderrahaman precepit..... Accidit autem in territorio berbetano iuxta antiquissimum

²⁵⁵ Durán Gudiol A., *De La Marca Superior de al-Andalus al reino de Aragón*, (Huesca, 1975). cited by Viguera M.J., *Aragón Musulmana*, (Zaragoza, 1981) p.67.

²⁵⁶ López C.M., 'Problemas históricos en torno a las Santas Nunila y Alodia', *Príncipe de Viana*, (1964), XXIV, 155-163.

There are several possible interpretations for 'Bosca'/'civitate oschense' including Huesca, near Granada, in the Muslim heartlands. However, this identification does not explain the other toponyms. López, who devoted much effort to clearing up the origins of Nunilo and Alodia, adopted the thesis that the saints were born in Adahuesca ['Aboscha'], shut up in the castle of Alquézar ['Castro Vigeti'], both places being in the region of Barbastro ['territorio Berbetano'] and that they were martyred at Huesca ['Osca']. All these places lie in a small area northeast of Zaragoza. This identification has met with general support. There are other indications that the passion may have occurred in this part of Spain, where the population were much less Arabicized than in Cordoba. The ruler of 'Osca'/Huesca was described as ignorant of the language of the Christians of the zone and the saints had to talk to him via an interpreter ['*per internuntium*']; this is not a feature of the passions in the *Memorial of the Saints*, where Eulogius noted of several martyrs that they knew Arabic. The *Passion* also described the Christian citizens of Huesca as coming to the execution and being able to take the body for burial, in contrast to Eulogius' repeated insistence that the bodies of the martyrs of Cordoba survived only by a series of miracles.

The translation of the bodies of Nunilo and Alodia to Leire, and the preservation of an account of this event, strengthens the link between this cult and the north. Only one version of the *Translation* survives.²⁵⁸ This was edited by Pellicer de Salas, in 1668, who said that he copied the text 'from an ancient codex' (he judged it to be some six hundred years old) of the Acts of saints from all parts of Spain and elsewhere which he saw in the library of Juan Lucus Cortés in Seville. According to Pellicer de Salas, this codex originally came from San Pedro de Cardena, where Ambrosio de Morales, Eulogius' editor, had seen it. This may not be true, since another, later, transcription of the same text seems to have been copied from the *Breviary of Leire*.²⁵⁹ The *Translation* is also clearly a northern Spanish production, although it does not seem to have been written to complement the *Passion*, and indeed, what the *Translation* says about the disposal of the bodies is much closer to Eulogius' account than to Cardena's.

'The tyrantfirst threw their bodies to the wild birds, to deny them the honour of a Christian burial, and so that their memory would be erased from the earth, he threw them into a deep pit, which he filled with a great pile of stones so that they would lie

²⁵⁷ Gil, 'En torno a las Santas', p.113.

²⁵⁸ Pellicer de Salas J. (ed.), *Las actas originales latinas de la translación de los sagrados cuerpos de las santas vírgines y mártires Nunilo et Alodia el monasterio de San Salvador de Leire*, (Madrid, 1668), pp.142-144, cited by Gil, 'En torno a las Santas'.

²⁵⁹ Gil, 'En torno a las Santas', p.134.

there in oblivion for ever'²⁶⁰

The attempt at obscurity was unsuccessful, since twenty-nine years later queen Oneca, prompted by the fame of the saints' names 'throughout the length and breadth of Spain', inquired where their remains had been buried. At the same time, the monks of San Salvador de Leire put forward their claim to the bodies, somewhat implausibly based on the donations of land and goods which the monastery claimed to have received in the past from the sisters' family. The most worthy abbot Fortún, 'a relative of the queen', continued to pray and press his claims to the saints. The rest of the account of the translation contains many of the *topoi* of the genre. These features prompted Gil to believe that it was composed at the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth, because of similarities with such texts as the *Translation* of Isidore (1063). However, it has much in common with ninth-century texts written in Francia, which used as a model Einhard's *Translation of Marcellinus and Peter*.²⁶¹ As so often in these texts, the discoverer of the relics was a shadowy figure - a certain man called Auriatus - who was roused to go to Huesca, where, 'with divine help' he found the bodies 'hidden in a deep pit', from which he moved them to an unnamed place before he returned to give first notice of the discovery to abbot Fortún at Leire. The abbot or the queen sent him back to Huesca with companions and gifts to conduct the difficult business of obtaining the relics, a difficulty perhaps inserted in obedience to convention, but left unclear. The relics were placed in danger of misidentification, another feature of the genre, when one of Auriatus' companions 'of the tribe of the blessed virgins' expressed doubts about them; Auriatus promised that these doubts would be overcome and took him to the place where he had hidden the martyrs' bodies. The men prayed by the light of the stars, then dug up the relics, which were authenticated by their sweet smell. They took the relics back to Leire, where they were received with great rejoicing by the abbot in the company of the king Enneco (Iñigo) and bishop Wiliesindus, together with many churchmen and other faithful. Iñigo and Wiliesindus were credited with the translation of the relics to Leire in other sources, as we shall see. Apart from these two authentic figures, there seems little doubt that the account of the discovery is a pious fraud written to authenticate the Leire relics.

Examination of a number of documents from Leire, almost all of them probably falsified, gives some clues to the possible date of composition of the *Translation*.²⁶² The first relevant document is a charter recording a royal donation to Leire and to the saints Nunilo and Alodia by Iñigo and bishop Gulgesindo (Wiliesindus),²⁶³ of 18 April 842. The second describes a donation by Iñigo's son García and bishop Eximio to Leire dated 21 October 880, and the third, with the same date

²⁶⁰ *Translatio Nunilo et Alodia*, p.465.

²⁶¹ *Translatio SS Marcellini et Petri*, MGH SS XV, pp.239-264; Geary P., *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages*, (Princeton, 1978), p.148.

²⁶² Gil, 'En Torno a las Santas', pp.126-134.

²⁶³ presumably the recipient of Eulogius' *Epistula ad Wiliesindum*.

as the second, is a compilation of the first two, giving much more precise details on the extent of the bequests, the lay and episcopal witnesses to the charter, and the dire punishment which would descend on anyone who contravened the terms of the donation. A fourth charter, of 21 March 901, which may be genuine, notes a donation by García's son Fortún, but it is the charter of 21 March 918 of Sánchez, son of García, which may be a clue to the forgeries. Comparison of these documents with a contemporary collection, equally suspect, from San Juan de la Peña shows that there are two matters at issue.²⁶⁴ The charters, as might be expected, reveal disagreements between the two foundations concerning the ownership of some of the land apparently donated to Leire, and it seems that Leire was making a retrospective claim to land originally granted to San Juan de la Peña. Further, discrepancies between the royal names listed in the charters and the genealogy contained in the Codex of Roda²⁶⁵ suggests that deliberate obscurantism has been used, probably in the Leire documents, in describing the royal succession in Navarre. The most likely explanation for this is the usurpation of Navarre by Sancho Garcés I (905-25). He seems deliberately to have confused his lineage in order to link himself with the dynasty of Iñigo Arista which may have held Navarre for nearly a century before this. The authors of the Leire charters also claimed for him a connection with the Jiménez dynasty, whom the charters from San Juan de la Peña claimed as the legitimate line, by changing Iñigo Arista to Iñigo Jiménez; the attempt at deception was successful in one sense, in that subsequent historians have had great difficulty in unravelling the prosopographical tangle thus created.²⁶⁶ To confuse matters even further, one tradition maintained that the last king of the line of Iñigo Arista, called Fortún Garcés, became a monk at Leire. Through the charters and the writing or rewriting of the translation of Nunilo and Alodia, Sancho Garcés I was bolstering his claim to legitimacy by claiming links with the early patrons of the cult at Leire. The monastery was, in its turn putting in a claim for pre-eminence, successful as it appears, since subsequent kings of Pamplona were buried at Leire.

Sancho Garcés I furthered this policy by monastic dedications to Nunilo and Alodia in the lands which he captured from the Muslims in the Rioja. The first such foundation was a convent dedicated to the two martyrs near Nájera, which Sancho captured in 925.²⁶⁷ The region was already known for its female anchorites, who lived in caves; the sites of some of these are known, such as 'El Moro' and 'Las Siete Cuevas' in Nájera. The nuns for Sancho's new foundation may have come from Leire, where the monks of San Salvador were linked with the nuns of San Cristóbal. The first document associated with the monastery of Nunilo and Alodia

²⁶⁴ Barrau-Dihigo L., *Revue Hispanique*, XV, (1906), pp.620-622, cited by Gil, 'En torno a las Santas', p.124.

²⁶⁵ Lacarra J.(ed.), *Textos navarros del código de Roda*, (Zaragoza, 1945), cited by Gil, 'En torno a las Santas', p.123.

²⁶⁶ Collins R., *The Basques*, (1986), pp.163-5.

²⁶⁷ Moral T., 'El monasterio riojano de las santas mártires Nunilo y Alodia', *Príncipe de Viana*, (1975), XXXVI, 435-445.

is dated 976, when the *presbyter*, Enico Garseani, finished copying a 'little book derived from the rule of St. Benedict';²⁶⁸ this is an early example of the use of the Benedictine rule in the Iberian Peninsula, and the first new Spanish rule known to have been drawn up since the seventh century. It may have been composed by the abbot Salvus of Albelda (d.962).²⁶⁹ Devotion to Nunilo and Alodia was well established in the Rioja, and was adopted at Los Hornajos, between Castroviejo and Bezares, a few kilometres south-east of Nájera, as late as the fifteenth century. The association of Nunilo and Alodia with Leire continued. In 1682 the monastery was granted the right to celebrate the date of the translation, 18 April, with the minor rite: 'on which day their bodies were translated, in the time of the Saracens, to this monastery.'²⁷⁰ Nor was the association between the martyrs and Huesca forgotten. After Pedro I of Aragón took Huesca, in 1096, he gave one of the city's mosques to San Salvador de Leire, thus emphasising the link between the site of their passion and their final resting-place.²⁷¹ A church was erected in the plaza where they were executed. The well here was believed to be where their corpses were buried and in the outskirts of the town is a place called Las Horcas where they were said to have been exposed to be devoured by animals. The references to the saints over a long periods of time still clearly linked them with northern Spain, and with the politics of Navarre.

Thus it is clear that Eulogius included Nunilo and Alodia with his other martyrs, even though they acted on the very fringes of the Muslim realms, and were almost certainly not affected by, and indeed, may not have known anything at all about the persecutions which Eulogius claimed were afflicting the Christians in Cordoba. When and where did Eulogius hear about the martyrs of Huesca? The answer depends on dating the martyrdom and the translation of the relics to Leire, which, to put it mildly, cannot be done with certainty.

Previous commentators on the martyrdom of Nunilo and Alodia have assumed that it was inspired by events in Cordoba, and the year of their martyrdom is usually quoted as 851, because this seems to be the date given by Eulogius. In fact he specified the day, the eleventh Kalends of November (22 October), and indicated the year simply 'as above' [*'aera qua supra'*]. The date of the death of the first martyr whose passion Eulogius recounted in the second book of the *Memorial of the Saints* was given both an Incarnation and a Spanish Era date, and the second martyr Isaac's death was dated '*aera*' 889 (851). Of the remaining martyrs of Book II, in only two instances is the year given in full, the others appearing as '*aera qua supra*'. In the case of Nunilo and Alodia (chapter seven of the second book of the *Memorial of the Saints*) the nearest

²⁶⁸ *Real Academia de Madrid Aemilianensis* 62.

²⁶⁹ Linaje Conde A., *Una regla monástica del siglo X: El Libellus a Regula Sancti Benedicti substractus*, (Salamanca, 1973), cited in Bishko C.J., 'Salvus of Albelda and Frontier Monasticism in Tenth-Century Navarre', *Speculum*, (1948), XXIII, 559-590.

²⁷⁰ López, 'Problemas históricos', p.164.

²⁷¹ Moret J., *Anales del reino de Navarra*, (Pamplona, 1890), VI, 3, 8, cited by Lopez, 'Problemas históricos', p.164.

date mentioned before this is the death of Isaac, recounted in the second chapter. It may, however, be worth noting that Morales' transcription of the *Memorial of the Saints* uses the spelling 'aera' rather than 'era' for Spanish Era dating, which was already an archaic spelling in the ninth century.²⁷² Eulogius' writing abounds in archaic expressions, and this may simply be another example. Alternatively, Eulogius may be using 'aera' in its Isidorean sense to mean 'an era or epoch from which time is reckoned'.²⁷³ Where the days of the week are mentioned, they are consistent with the martyrdoms having occurred in 851, but often they are omitted. It would be easy to make too much of this point, since only the day on which the saint's feast was to be celebrated was important, and the year of his or her death had no significance. But, when Eulogius used the expression 'aera qua supra' for many of the other martyrs included in Books II and III of the *Memorial of the Saints*, and in the letter to Wiliesindus he may not have meant that all the deaths took place in the same year. He may also have been deliberately vague, as we shall see.

Yet the date 851 seems at first glance to be confirmed by the text of the *Passion*, although this can be questioned.²⁷⁴ It begins: 'Factum est igitur in anno incarnationis Domini DCCC quinquagesimo primo'. López argued that this may be referring to a note by the scribe; 'This work was undertaken in 851 AD', since to continue the sentence 'it occurred in the region of Hispania of the Saracens 'Abd al-RaHman ordered ...' ('contigit in regione Spanie Sarracenorum Abderrahaman precepit') makes little grammatical sense. Thus the date does not unequivocally relate to this passage. It is also possible that the copyist confused Era and Incarnation dating, since it is not clear how widespread was the use of either Spanish Era or Incarnation dating in the North in the ninth and tenth centuries.²⁷⁵ Attempts to date the martyrdom are further thwarted by discrepancies between the date and day of the week given in the sources. All have 21 October except Eulogius, who has 22 October. This may be a simple move by Eulogius to avoid the feast of St. Ursula on 21 October; in fact in the *Breviary of Leire*, it is St. Ursula and her sisters who have been moved. Eulogius did not give the day of the week, although he had done so for all the previous martyrs in the second book of the *Memorial of the Saints*. The *Passionary of Cardena* says that the passion occurred on a Thursday. This rules out 851, unless, as Gil does, one 'corrects' *quinta feria* to *quarta*.²⁷⁶ The date 851 makes some sense in conjunction with the *Translation*, which says that the relics were taken to Leire twenty-nine years after the passion, and begins 'Therefore in the year 880'. However, further investigation reveals that the dating in the *Translation* is completely scrambled. The opening sentence reads 'Therefore in the year 880, after the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, in the part of Spain ruled by

²⁷² Vives, 'Era Hispanica', in *DHEE* II, pp.800-1.

²⁷³ Lewis C.T. and Short C., *A Latin Dictionary*, (Oxford, 1966).

²⁷⁴ López, 'Problemas históricos', p.397.

²⁷⁵ Vives, 'Era Hispanica'.

²⁷⁶ Gil, 'En Torno a las Santas', p.110.

Abderrahamen ...' and goes on to refer to the persecutions of this monarch and to date the deaths of Nunilo and Alodia in connection with these events. This seems to mean that it is the martyrdom itself which is being dated 880, and not 880 AD, but 880 years after the Resurrection, that is, sometime after 911. This date can be made to fit with the emir's being 'Abd al-RaHmān III (912-929), but surely 'Abd al-RaHmān II (822-852) is meant. The reference to post-Ascension dating sounds like an acknowledgement that thirty-odd years have gone astray somehow, without the author's being clear where; the whole sentence looks like a clumsy attempt to square an original Era date with an Incarnation date which some later hand preferred. The finger of suspicion points towards Pellicer de Salas, who said he favoured 880 AD, although he did not admit to having altered the date on copying the manuscript. The reason he gave for preferring this date was his disbelief in the existence of Iñigo Arista, one of the people said to have been present at the translation of the saints' relics to Leire. Pellicer recognised the discrepancies between the names of the kings mentioned in documents from Leire, although it is not clear whether he was referring to the charters discussed above; he blamed the loss of original records from Leire, and invented another Iñigo, grandson of the first, which he felt provided a satisfactory solution to the problem. Gil believed the confusion was caused by reading the false charter of 842, which described Iñigo Arista and bishop Wiliesindus as making their donation shortly after the saints' relics arrived in Leire.²⁷⁷ Now, however spurious the charter, the reasons for its production do not rule against a tradition that the translation occurred when Iñigo was king and Wiliesindus bishop of Pamplona. These citations are surely the reason to credit an earlier date; this was a Leire text, and although it was easy to muddle the dates, it would have been much less so to introduce people thirty years too late. The *Translation* clearly places the events in the time of abbot Fortún, when Wilesindus was the bishop of Pamplona and king Iñigo and queen Oneca reigned. The dates for this period are most uncertain, mostly depending on the eleventh-century historian Ibn Hayyān, who gave the date of Iñigo Arista's death as 851-2.²⁷⁸ Wiliesindus was the bishop whom Eulogius visited in c.848/9, so it is unlikely that he was still alive in 880. If there is any credence in the clues to dating offered by the *Translation*, it is in favour of Era 880 (842), rather than AD 880 as the date of the translation, with the martyrdom perhaps in 813. This seems to be confirmed by the *Breviary of Leire*, which gives XIV Kalends May, Era 880 as the date of the translation, albeit in a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century manuscript; the *Breviary* also preserved the tradition that the sisters perished twenty-nine years earlier.²⁷⁹

An earlier date for the passion than 851 is also partly supported by evidence from within the

²⁷⁷ Gil, 'En Torno a las Santas', p.127.

²⁷⁸ Lévi-Provençal E. and García Gallo A. (trans.) 'Textos inéditos del *Muqtabis* de Ibn Hayyan sobre los orígenes del reino de Pamplona', *Al-Andalus*, XIX, (1954), 295-315.

²⁷⁹ *Archivo General de Navarra*, Breviario de Leire, fol. 95 v. lines 5-6; López C.M., 'Más sobre la problemática en torno a las Santas Nunilo y Alodia', *Príncipe de Viana*, XXVIII, (1970), 101-132.

Passion. The emir of Huesca who sentenced Nunilo and Alodia to death was named as Zumael; however, the ruler of Huesca from c.850 was Mūsa ibn Mūsa of the Banū Qasi. Some historians have got round this by equating Zumael with Mūsa's son Isma'īl, who, after Mūsa's death in 862, took 'Barbitāniya' as his personal fief, and who, it is argued, already ruled in this region and acted for his father in dealing with Nunilo and Alodia. However, the emir of the *Passion* could equally well be a predecessor of Mūsa. Unfortunately, the rulers of Huesca in the first half of the ninth century are unknown, although it seems from frequent references to 'Barbitāniya' in the Arabic sources that the area between Huesca and Lérida remained under Muslim control for the whole of the Umayyad period.²⁸⁰ During the reign of 'Abd al-RaHmān II the governors of Huesca could have been Cordoban appointees, which is what the *Passion* says of Zumael. The same may not be true of Mūsa, whose independence and wide sphere of influence led to his being known as 'the third king of Spain'. The shifting alliances of Mūsa ibn Mūsa illustrate the difficulty in coming to any conclusions about Muslim-Christian relations in Huesca at this period. In 839 he sent his son Fortún to Cordoba as proof of his good intentions towards 'Abd al-RaHmān II, but by 842 he was in rebellion against Cordoba in alliance with Iñigo Arista. He transferred his loyalty back to Cordoba at the beginning of Muhammad's reign and in 854 was in the Muslim army attacking Christian rebels in Toledo. This change of political orientation may have affected Mūsa's attitude towards the Christian communities in Huesca and the other centres of population under his jurisdiction, but there is no evidence that it did so, and no grounds for supposing that he followed Muhammad in persecuting the Christians. Thus there is no evidence to suggest that the 850's might have witnessed a confrontation between Christians and Islam in Huesca similar to that in Cordoba; the fact that Muslims did not settle in this area to the extent that they did further south would make it unlikely at any date. The second Muslim ruler named by the *Passion*, Ghalaf, the proconsul before whom the sisters were first denounced, is not very helpful in narrowing down the date of the deaths of Nunilo and Alodia. The geographer al-'Udrī (d. 1085) from Almería attributed to Jalaf ibn Rashīd an implausibly long reign of 70 years, from 802, over two castles of Barbitāniya, Barbastro and Alquezar (the 'Castro Vigeti' where Nunilo and Alodia were incarcerated). According to the same source, in c.813 he tried to extend his rule to Huesca.²⁸¹ If there is anything at all to be deduced from the relationship between Huesca and Cordoba and the naming of Jalaf, it is in favour of an earlier rather than a later date for the martyrdom.

Thus most of the references to the dates of the passion and translation of Nunilo and Alodia, although all open to varying interpretation, support 842 for the latter, and perhaps 813 for the passion, (although the tradition that the translation occurred twenty-nine years after the passion

²⁸⁰ Manzano Moreno E., *La Frontera de Al-Andalus en la Epoca de los Omeyas*, (Madrid, 1991), p.93.

²⁸¹ Viguera, *Aragón Musulmana*, p.67; Granja F. de la, 'La Marca Superior en la Obra de al-'Udrī', *Estudios de Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón*, VIII, (1966), 67-68.

could have been introduced to account for the discrepancy between 851 and Era 880). Yet most modern historians have preferred Eulogius' date of 851 for the martyrdom simply because neither Eulogius nor Alvarus mentioned Nunilo and Alodia in connection with the journey to Navarre. Even those writers who favoured an early date for the martyrdom have been forced to postulate that the saints perished before Eulogius' visit to Leire, but that the relics were not translated until after this date; the exact dates selected vary, but the sleight-of-hand is the same. Now, it is most unlikely that Eulogius did not hear about the two martyrs during his journey to the north, even if their bodies were not yet at Leire. Thus it seems odd that he did not refer to them in his letter to Wiliesindus of Pamplona, either with reference to his trip, or - if the deaths did occur in October 851 - in his list of martyrs brought up to the date of writing the letter (15 Nov 851), by which date Eulogius was in prison in Cordoba. This date is substantiated by Eulogius' remark that he was entrusting the letter to Galindo, who went to Cordoba in 844, but must have returned to Navarre in or before 851/2 at the death of his father Iñigo Arista.²⁸² Eulogius' ignorance has been blamed on the poor communications in Spain at this date. Eulogius said that he heard about Nunilo and Alodia from Venerio of Complutum, whom he visited on his way home from Navarre, although he used the expression '*referente Venerio*' which could also mean that Venerio had sent him a letter about it. Eulogius spent five days in Complutum, then he said that he returned to Toledo, where he spent 'many days' with Wistremirus.²⁸³ Thus it is just possible that in the twenty-four days which are supposed to separate the dates of the martyrdom and the writing of the letter to Wiliesindus, Eulogius was on his way back from Navarre, heard about the new martyrs, but chose not to mention them in his letter. This might explain why Eulogius' version of the hiding of the saints' bodies is much nearer to the account in the *Leire Translation* than to the *Passion*, which is less obviously linked with that monastery. On the other hand, an earlier date for the martyrdom suits the facts just as well. This does not seem a matter that can ever be resolved, but it must be very likely that when Eulogius returned to Cordoba the martyrs Nunilo and Alodia were already dead, perhaps long dead, and that he had heard of their passion, and possibly of their translation to Leire. Like the acquisition of the *Life of Muhammad*, or the idea which it gave him of promoting polemic, the *Passion* of Nunilo and Alodia looks like something that Eulogius brought back from the North.

Eulogius' knowledge of the two martyred sisters may have had one immediate effect on the events in Cordoba. The chapter devoted to Nunilo and Alodia in the *Memorial of the Saints* is immediately followed by a long chapter on the passions of Flora and Maria. Eulogius claimed that he had encouraged these two martyrs by writing the *Martyr Document* for them. This was a treatise based on those composed by bishops at the time of the Roman persecutions to encourage the potential martyrs to continue with their protests. Eulogius, according to his *Life*, 'tenaciously

²⁸² Sánchez-Albornoz C., 'La Epístola de S. Eulogio y el Muqtabis de Ibn Hayyan', *Príncipe de Viana*, LXX-LXXI, (1958), 265-6.

²⁸³ *Epistola tertia*, CSM, II, p.500.

fortified the virgins for martyrdom and taught them, by means of letters and words, to disdain death',²⁸⁴ (although it seems rather unlikely that two women, one of them brought up as a Muslim, would have been sufficiently educated to understand Eulogius' convoluted Latin). All three were together in prison when Eulogius wrote to Wiliesindus on 15 November, and the women perished nine days later. The parallels between Flora's passion and that of Nunilo and Alodia in Eulogius' accounts of them are striking. Flora was again the daughter of a Christian mother and a Muslim father, brought up as a Christian after her father died, and eventually denounced to the authorities by her brother:

'Then her brother, finding out, endeavoured, using in turn blows and threats and sweet words, to make her renounce her stand. But as he saw that his efforts were leading nowhere, that on the contrary it was wasted effort, he dragged her before the judge saying: 'See, O judge, my sister, the last child which my mother brought into the world: until now she has always shown her obedience to the cult proper to our faith and bent herself scrupulously to the legal observances; but see how the Christians have urged her, by their repeated instigations, to deny our prophet and abjure our rite, and they have seduced her by some tricks of interferers, so far as to make her believe that Christ is God.' Therupon, the judge interrogated her to ascertain whether her brother's declaration was true. Straightaway she repudiated her impious brother and affirmed that she had never, in any way, practised the Mahomedan cult, and she added: 'I have known Christ from my earliest infancy, I have been instructed by his example, and I have already promised a long time ago to consecrate my virginity to his nuptial chamber.' As soon as this so sainted young girl pronounced these words, the judge was seized by an access of rage without measure, he thought only of making a martyr of her; and having enjoined his two guards to seize her by the arms, he ordered them to lay her down and began to stirke her brutally on the head with a heavy rod and continued with a whip for such a long time that, the skin being pulled off with the hair, one could see that appearance of the bare skin of the nape of her neck. The young virgin martyr only remained true to her faith. Then the judge returned her half dead to her impious brother, ordered him to revive her and to take care of her, to instruct her in the letter of the faith, and only to bring her back if she was not converted.'²⁸⁵

Flora also had a sister, although Eulogius did not name her, who proved sympathetic but did not pay the price of martyrdom, but Flora did have a companion, Maria, propelled towards martyrdom by the death of her brother Walabonsus in June. Both responded willingly to Eulogius' exhortations to join their "brothers" Perfectus, Isaac, Sanctius, Petrus, Walabonsus, Sabinianus,

²⁸⁴ *Vita Eulogii* II, 4, *CSM* I, pp.332-3, trans. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.66.

²⁸⁵ *Memoriale sanctorum* II, 8, *CSM* II, p.411.

Wistremundus, Habentius, Ierimias, Sisenandus, Paulus and Theodomirus - all the martyrs commemorated in the *Memorial of the Saints* up to the death of Flora and Maria with the exception of Nunilo and Alodia:

'[They] have opened the door to the kingdom for you, preparing a worthy end for your journey, and saying: 'Come, most holy sisters, and enter the chamber of your spouse whom you have pleased thus far in that you fear not to die on his behalf.'²⁸⁶

If Eulogius already knew about the passions of Nunilo and Alodia and was using their example to encourage Flora and Maria, he was certainly not emphasising that fact. Even if there is a kernel of truth in the Acts of these female martyrs - and this is cannot be established - the parallels between the two passions seem the result of the writing of them rather than in similarities between the actual events.

Eulogius seems to have finished the second book of the *Memorial of the Saints* in 853 or 854, by which time, Wolf argued,²⁸⁷ he had additional information, and it has been assumed that it was this which allowed him to insert the passion of Nunilo and Alodia in the correct chronological order. Yet Eulogius seems to have thought a note of explanation necessary, as though he needed some justification for adding to the list of saints whose passions he had recorded in the first two books of the *Memorial of the Saints*. He started the section on Nunilo and Alodia, by saying that:

'I had thought at this point that I was at the end of the second book, at the end of the saints running to this contest, nor did I think that anyone else was about to be taken to prison after so many crises of our church and such fierce struggles. Truly, because divine presage, hitherto thus disposed, increased by the profession of such people the number of such saints, therefore presently, inflaming many hearts with the manifold ardour of their predecessors, it propelled them to that contest, and to the same vow and greatness, inspiring other men, women and children, and armed them to the exercise of their contest. Whose names, ages and deeds of war are set out in their place and time. First therefore, the victories of the saints are laboriously written down, by reckoning and progress of the months, in the order of their acts, brought together just as the deeds in other regions will have been visible. But because there is one confession which crowned both [i.e. either the saints in Cordoba plus the saints in other regions, or Nunilo and Alodia] and because it was this same time which sent both to heaven through beastly impiety, I think it not absurd, being capable of writing down the squadrons of the saints that were joined to them the assembly of those elected together,

²⁸⁶ *Documentum martyriale* 23, CSM II, p.473, trans. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.71.

²⁸⁷ Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.57.

so that those of equal magnificence of praise might be raised by us on earth who are recorded in one codex in heaven

Therefore, reported by the saintly man and venerable father Venerio, bishop of Complutum, we learned' ²⁸⁸

Eulogius does not say that the movement was confined to Cordoba; it is not he but modern historians who have obscured Nunilo and Alodia's distant origins. This also makes some sense of the anomaly which Wolf has pointed out, that although Eulogius described himself as being caught up in the martyr movement and meeting some of the participants, some passions are described in detail, others merely mentioned; the chapter devoted to Sanctius, a Christian captive, perhaps a slave, from Albi in Francia, is a single sentence long. Eulogius' ignorance could be attributable to some of these martyrs being outsiders with whom he did not become acquainted. Yet some of these brief passions may just have been the listing of names of Christians who died in Cordoba in a variety of circumstances about which Eulogius could not afford to be too clear, rather than as seekers after martyrdom.

Rereading the passions in the light of the discussion of the date of the deaths of Nunilo and Alodia, and the imprecision with which Eulogius dated the Cordoban martyrs, leads to the further idea that Eulogius was collecting not only martyrs from other parts of Spain, but also saints who died before the 850s. A desire to add to his collection of saints may explain odd features of another passion which Eulogius added to Book II of the *Memorial of the Saints*, that of Aurea, who was denounced to the Muslim authorities as an apostate after having lived quietly for thirty years in the monastery of Cuteclara. Her Muslim family were supposedly unaware of this defection; when they found out, they came all the way from Seville to denounce her. This has been taken to represent a sudden increase in tension between the two communities causing crises in families of mixed religious affinities.²⁸⁹ The passage may be open to another interpretation. According to Eulogius, Aurea was the sister of Joannes and Adulphus, two martyrs of the 820s whose passion had been commemorated in a work, now lost, by Eulogius' teacher Speraindeo.²⁹⁰ Nevertheless, Eulogius described Aurea, somewhat implausibly as still being a young virgin at the time of her death. Eulogius may have wanted to include Joannes and Adulphus in his martyrology, but they were too well known; their feast is listed in the *Calendar of Cordoba*.²⁹¹ They could not contribute to Eulogius' picture of a crisis confined to the 850s. Aurea, on the other hand, was unknown; it is possible that she is Eulogius' invention. By linking the bona fide saints with the martyr Aurea he legitimised her passion and the movement he was

²⁸⁸ *Memoriale sanctorum* II, 7, CSM II, p.406.

²⁸⁹ Coope, *The Martyrs*, p.17.

²⁹⁰ *Memoriale sanctorum* II, 8, CSM, II, p.412.

²⁹¹ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.143.

trying to defend.

Eulogius' passions become increasingly suspect the more one looks at them. It is little wonder that he had to write such lengthy apologetics for his martyrs. Wolf analysed in detail Eulogius' attempts to defend his subjects against the failure of their lives to live up to the stereotypical virtues of the martyrs of the third-century persecutions. Martyr acts based on the Roman model continued to be copied and written until the eleventh century, but Eulogius could not make his subjects fit into this mould. He devoted long passages of his works to explaining the absence of any miracles worked by his saints or their relics. As we have seen, he used anti-Muslim polemic to justify the martyrs' actions against the charge that such protests were unjustified because the Muslims were monotheists. He exaggerated the extent of the Christians' suffering, but was forced to concede the absence of real persecution: 'No violence compelled them to deny their faith or forced them away from the practice of the holy and pious religion, but giving themselves over to destruction of their own free will and on account of their pride - which is the beginning of all sin - they killed themselves and brought about the parricide of their own souls'.²⁹² Significantly, Eulogius began the *Memorial of the Saints* with this disclaimer almost before a martyr has been mentioned, and he returned to the same theme in the *Apologetic Book of the Martyrs*, which may have been his last work before his own execution.

If the martyr movement in Cordoba had ever had popular support, this disappeared after so many Christians had been imprisoned, leaving Eulogius as their sole chronicler. But not all the martyrs of Eulogius were voluntary martyrs in Cordoba in the 850's. Eulogius spread his net to include saints from a wide geographical area, and perhaps over a long period of time, who died in a variety of circumstances, although only in the case of Nunilo and Alodia do enough independent details survive to expose this process. Eulogius may have been assembling the great and the not so good to bolster the witness of an unknown number of Cordoban saints whose sacrifices had not been accepted by the leaders of the church. He may have been motivated by a pious horror that these men and women would otherwise be forgotten. Indeed, the danger was very real, since without the chance survival of Eulogius' manuscript, and the translation of the relics of George, Aurelius and Natalia to Paris, they would have been. There may also have been more immediate needs. There are so many indications of Eulogius' unorthodoxy in the *Life of Eulogius* that it may be thought that that Eulogius was writing partly to justify himself against the attacks of his ecclesiastical superiors. Further, he was firing a volley of saints as a counterblast to the accommodation which the Christians of Cordoba had made with their infidel rulers.

The question of Eulogius' audience is, however, problematical. Eulogius had a willing ear from his friend Alvarus. Eulogius wrote to him:

²⁹² *Memoriale sanctorum* 18, CSM, II, p.382, trans. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.97.

'This work [the *Memorial of the Saints*] was almost finished when an insane decision on the part of the authorities landed me in prison I thought that it would end up dispersed all over the place. But having been preserved at that time by the Lord, now, with his help, amidst the anxieties of prison life, it has not only been completed but delivered to you, whom the Lord chose to see it before anyone else'²⁹³

Alvarus spent several years under excommunication after unexpectedly recovering from a serious illness during which he had received the final sacrament of penance, which gave him an ambiguous status in the eyes of the Church; his attempts to have this judgement revoked led him into a bitter dispute with the bishop Saul,²⁹⁴ so he would not have been in a position to ensure a wider audience for Eulogius' writings. Besides, there are several aspects of Eulogius' output which make it unlikely that the works were intended to be read immediately. As we have seen, the anti-Muslim polemic was too dangerous. Only an audience of people who did not know Cordoba could have accepted Eulogius' additions of Christians who had died under the hands of the Muslim authorities, either inside or outside Cordoba, in the 850s and earlier. That his work was not widely circulated is clear from the fact that he described the locations of the monasteries around Cordoba, which a local audience would have already known. It is not easy to find a contemporary context in which the works of Eulogius could have been read.

Eulogius was inspired by his wanderings in Navarre to write about martyrdom. Some deaths had already occurred in Cordoba, but Eulogius was not satisfied with these. In order to make his collection of saints more inspiring, he borrowed Nunilo and Alodia from his hosts in Leire, and perhaps invented or reworked material from other sources. His contemporaries did not read his works; perhaps they were intended for later generations. Modern historians, however, have been willing victims of Eulogius' strategems. They have argued over the significance of various gnats, but have swallowed the camel whole. Eulogius made the martyr movement seem much bigger than it was and distorted our picture of Christian-Muslim relations in the ninth century. If we cannot trust his account of the martyrs of Cordoba, how much less should we accept it as representative of the Christians of al-Andalus as a whole.

²⁹³ *Epistula Eulogii ad Albarum Cordubensem*, CSM, II, p.364, trans. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs*, p.55.

²⁹⁴ *Item Epistola Albari Romano Medico directa*, CSM I, p.211-214.

4. Cordoba in the tenth century.

There is no surviving description of Cordoba at the time of Eulogius. Remembering Cordoba a century later, the Arabic histories and the accounts of travellers to al-Andalus, portrayed it as one of the wonders of the world.²⁹⁵ Ibn Hawqal, who visited Spain in 948, wrote:

There is nothing to equal it in the whole of the Maghreb [North Africa and al-Andalus], or even in Upper Mesopotamia, Syria or Egypt, for the number of its inhabitants, its extent, the vast area taken up by markets, its cleanliness, the architecture of the mosques or the great number of baths and caravanserais. Several travellers from this city who have visited Baghdad, say that it is the size of one of the quarters of that city..... Cordoba is not perhaps equal to half the size of Baghdad, but is not far off being so. It is a city with a stone wall, with handsome districts and vast squares. The ruler of this city has reigned over it for many years, and his palace is within the city walls.²⁹⁶

The history of al-Andalus to the fall of the caliphate is to a large extent the history of Cordoba, and of that city's greatest glory. Cordoba was first mentioned at the time of the second Punic War. Captured by the Romans in 152 BC, it became the capital of the whole of Hispania Ulterior, and later of the province of Baetica. The city was an important Visigothic centre from 571, when Leovigild took Cordoba from the Byzantines and established a bishopric, but the city was overshadowed by Toledo until after the Islamic conquest. Several other cities in al-Andalus, such as Seville, had similar Roman and Visigothic histories, and must have continued to flourish after 711, because they soon became the centres of the taifa kingdoms which emerged from the break-up of al-Andalus. Yet they are rarely mentioned in the Arabic narrative histories, which are propaganda for the Umayyad dynasty. The conquerors seem to have made Cordoba their capital during the period of brief governorships which followed the conquest, perhaps as early as 717, although the Arabic sources disagree about which governor took this initiative. An alternative view, that of the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, written in the 880s, implies that it was many years before they were able to consolidate their hold on the city.²⁹⁷ In fact, the settlement of Cordoba rather than the Visigothic capital Toledo was an indication that the invaders were not confident of their ability to control the whole of the former Visigothic realm; Cordoba and Toledo were in conflict throughout the Islamic period. In the Arabic sources, however, Cordoba was without

²⁹⁵ see for e.g. the collection of traditions made by al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, pp.297-362.

²⁹⁶ Ibn Hawqal, *Sūrat al-Ard*, ed. Kramers J.H., (Leiden, 1939), trans. Romani Suay M.J., *Configuración del Mundo (fragmentos alusivos al Magreb y España)*, *Textos Medievales*, XXVI, (Valencia, 1971), pp.63-4.

²⁹⁷ *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, 8, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.164.

equal in the peninsula. Although these histories tell of campaigns against the Christian north and against dissidents within Muslim Spain, they focus on life in the capital, on royal appointments and building programmes, and are often little more than court annals. Cordoba reached the height of its splendour in the middle of the tenth century. In 929, 'Abd al-RaHmān III (912-961) felt sufficiently confident of his position to cast off the nominal allegiance which previous Umayyad emirs had offered to the Abbāsids in Baghdad. He ordered a proclamation to be made in the great mosque in Cordoba that he should henceforward be given the title of caliph, thus asserting spiritual as well as temporal power over his subjects. Some ten years later he began to build his palace of Madīnat al-Zahrā' outside the city. If the sources accurately reflect Cordoba's importance as the centre of Islamic power, it is easy to see how the city might have become the place of martyrdom for Christians, set 'in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation',²⁹⁸ as Eulogius had put it.

The rulers of al-Andalus appear to have concentrated their building programmes almost entirely on Cordoba and its immediate environs. Above all, the rulers were celebrated by their eulogists for their involvement in the construction of the mosque, which, for modern visitors, epitomises the splendour of Umayyad Spain. One of the longest accounts of the construction of the mosque comes from the work of Ibn Idhārī.²⁹⁹ He was writing in the thirteenth century but claimed to be quoting from earlier authorities, particularly the tenth-century historian al-Rāzī, whose work does not survive. Ibn Idhārī's history of al-Andalus is often quoted, probably because of the seductive amount of detail he included, which is sometimes far more than seems to have existed in the sources from whom he claimed to have been quoting. Ibn Idhārī said that the mosque was founded in 785-6 by 'Abd al-RaHmān I. 'Abd al-RaHmān II added a further eight bays in 836. His successors carried out further improvements to the mosque and its courtyard.³⁰⁰ Muhammad was said to have added a *maqṣūra*, the special enclosure reserved for the ruler, and restored the west door. Al-Mundir built a treasury and 'Abd al-RaHmān III the first minaret. The only patron whose contribution can be identified with certainty is al-Hakam II, responsible for a further extension to the mosque which is commemorated in an inscription around the *qibla*, the niche indicating the direction of Mecca. Ibn Idhārī's descriptions of the mosque have not, so far as I am aware, been examined in conjunction with other accounts of the building. Such a study has been carried out for the various descriptions of the palace of Madīnat al-Zahrā', and shows that they do not concur, and that they became more fantastic with each retelling. The descriptions of the mosque in Cordoba were elaborated with details from descriptions of the mosque in Damascus. The actual building which remains is undoubtedly impressive, and it seems that each

²⁹⁸ *Memoriale sanctorum*, I, 30, CSM, II, p.392.

²⁹⁹ Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, II, 244seq.; the account in al-Maqqarī, who said he was quoting Ibn Idhārī, is even longer, I, p.368seq..

³⁰⁰ Dodds J.D. (ed.) *Al-Andalus: the Art of Islamic Spain*, (New York, 1992), pp.11-25 and 163-4.

Umayyad ruler had to be associated with it, in the work of the eulogists, if not in reality.

The ceremonial function of the mosque was closely linked with that of the palace, to which it was joined by a passageway. In the mosque, messages from the ruler were read out, announcing victories, denouncing the unorthodox, praying for rain or good fortune. When a ruler died, the notables of al-Andalus, and it seems, a considerable number of the inhabitants of the city, went to the mosque to swear allegiance to his successor. A late copy of court annals attributed to al-Rāzi's son ʿIsa described the oath of allegiance to ʿAbd al-RaHmān III, naming the important people who were there and adding: 'This ceremony took all week'.³⁰¹ It was during Friday prayers in the mosque that the citizens of Cordoba would have heard for the first time that they were no longer dependents of Baghdad. The size of the building was related to its function, not in the simplistic way often assumed - that the area of the mosque divided by that of a prayer mat equals the male population of Cordoba - but as a reflection of its importance as a ceremonial centre. The palace served as the main venue for the reception of embassies, (although the mosque also doubled in this function), and it was here that feasts were celebrated. ʿAbd al-RaHmān III and his son were both interred in the palace cemetery. This pattern, of a mosque joined to a palace, was repeated in the building at Madīnat al-Zahrā'.³⁰² The splendour of court ceremonial at Madīnat al-Zahrā' was described in the *Life* of John of Gorze, who went to Cordoba as an ambassador in the 950s.³⁰³ It was clearly in these two spaces, mosque and palace, that the power of the caliphate was embodied.

It is not known how much of Cordoba, in addition to the mosque and palace, the Umayyads developed as the concrete expression of their dominance, nor, indeed, how big the city was. The Arabic sources are deceptively precise about size, but frustratingly vague about topography. Cordoba has been estimated to have as many as a million inhabitants, and is depicted in a modern historical atlas as being many times bigger than contemporary cities in the rest of Europe.³⁰⁴ This is the result of taking literally Ibn Hawqal's statement that Cordoba was nearly half the size of Baghdad, which begs another question; the figure of four million inhabitants often quoted for Baghdad seems to be derived from the Arabic sources' hyperbole. A similar process was at work in the histories of al-Andalus. Ibn al-Khātib, in the fourteenth century, said that tenth-century Cordoba was surrounded by a ditch and a wall of some twenty-two kilometres long. This implies

³⁰¹ *Una crónica anónima de ʿAbd al-RaHmān al-NaSīr*, trans. García Gómez E. and Lévi-Provençal E., (Madrid, 1959), p.93; Barceló has more details on the ceremonial in Cordoba and at Madīnat-al-Zahrā': Barceló M., 'El Califa patente: el ceremonial omeya de Cordoba o la escenificación del poder' in Pastor R., Kieniewicz I, García de Enterría E. y otros (eds.), *Estructuras y formas del poder en la historia*, (Salamanca, 1991), pp.51-71.

³⁰² Mazzoli-Guintard C., 'Remarques sur le fonctionnement d'une capitale a double polarité: Madīnat al-Zahrā'-Cordue', *Al-Qantara*, (1997), XVII, 43-64.

³⁰³ see chapter 6.

³⁰⁴ *Times Atlas of World History*, 3rd edn. (1989), pp.108-9.

a city of approximately 5,000 hectares, about eight times the area of the present city, although it does not of course mean that the whole area was inhabited. The loss of Cordoba's splendour - Ibn Idhārī claimed that there were three hundred baths and three thousand mosques,³⁰⁵ but only three minarets remain - is blamed on the civil wars which followed the collapse of the caliphate. Cordoba seems to have melted away like the cities of fable.³⁰⁶

Archaeologists have tried very hard to find the city of the written sources, but succeeding generations are gradually, and with great regret, reducing Cordoba to more modest proportions.³⁰⁷ In the nineteenth century, the remains of Roman aqueducts well outside the city were thought to be the Umayyad walls, rather as many Roman structures in Spain have been reclassified in folk memory as 'Moorish'. Ibn Hawqal claimed to have walked round the city walls in an hour. This describes a city of about the size of medieval York, and is probably much nearer the mark. Traces of a wall running alongside the waterway now known as the Arroyo del Moro may date to the ninth and tenth centuries,³⁰⁸ although their construction is very similar to walls built several centuries later after the Christian Reconquest. If these walls marked the outer limit of the city in the caliphal period, they enclose an area of only some seven or eight hectares to the west of the palace. The palace and mosque, together with the markets established along the Roman *Cardo Maximus*, occupied some 2.5 hectares. The Umayyad capital was based on the Roman city, although it was a little larger because it was extended towards the river.³⁰⁹

Two arches in the western wall seem to mark the place where it was crossed by an aqueduct. 'Abd al-Raḥman II was said to have brought water to the outskirts of the city sometime after 756, 'Abd al-Raḥman III to have extended the aqueduct two centuries later, and his successor al-Hakam II to have brought water to the mosque. This is plausible, but conflicts with statements by other authors. The elevated water channel supplying the palace which Alvarus mentioned in the *Life of Eulogius*,³¹⁰ could be the one commissioned by 'Abd al-Raḥmān II,³¹¹ although al-Maqqarī recorded that, during al-Mughit's attacks on Cordoba in 711, 400 men took refuge in a church, and were able to last out for three months because they had fresh water from a pipe

³⁰⁵ Ibn 'Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, II, p.247.

³⁰⁶ A recent discussion of this problem talked of 'the enigma of the lost Cordoba of the caliphate': Pavón Maldonado B., 'Entre la historia y la arqueología. El enigma de la Córdoba califal desaparecida', *Al-Qantara*, (1988), IX, 169-198 and 403-426.

³⁰⁷ See maps p.80, which are adapted from of Lévi-Provençal, *L'Espagne Musulmane au X^e siècle*, pp.206 and 227 without the 'extensions to east and west' and 'northern suburbs', for which there is little archaeological evidence.

³⁰⁸ Pavón, 'Entre la historia', p.189.

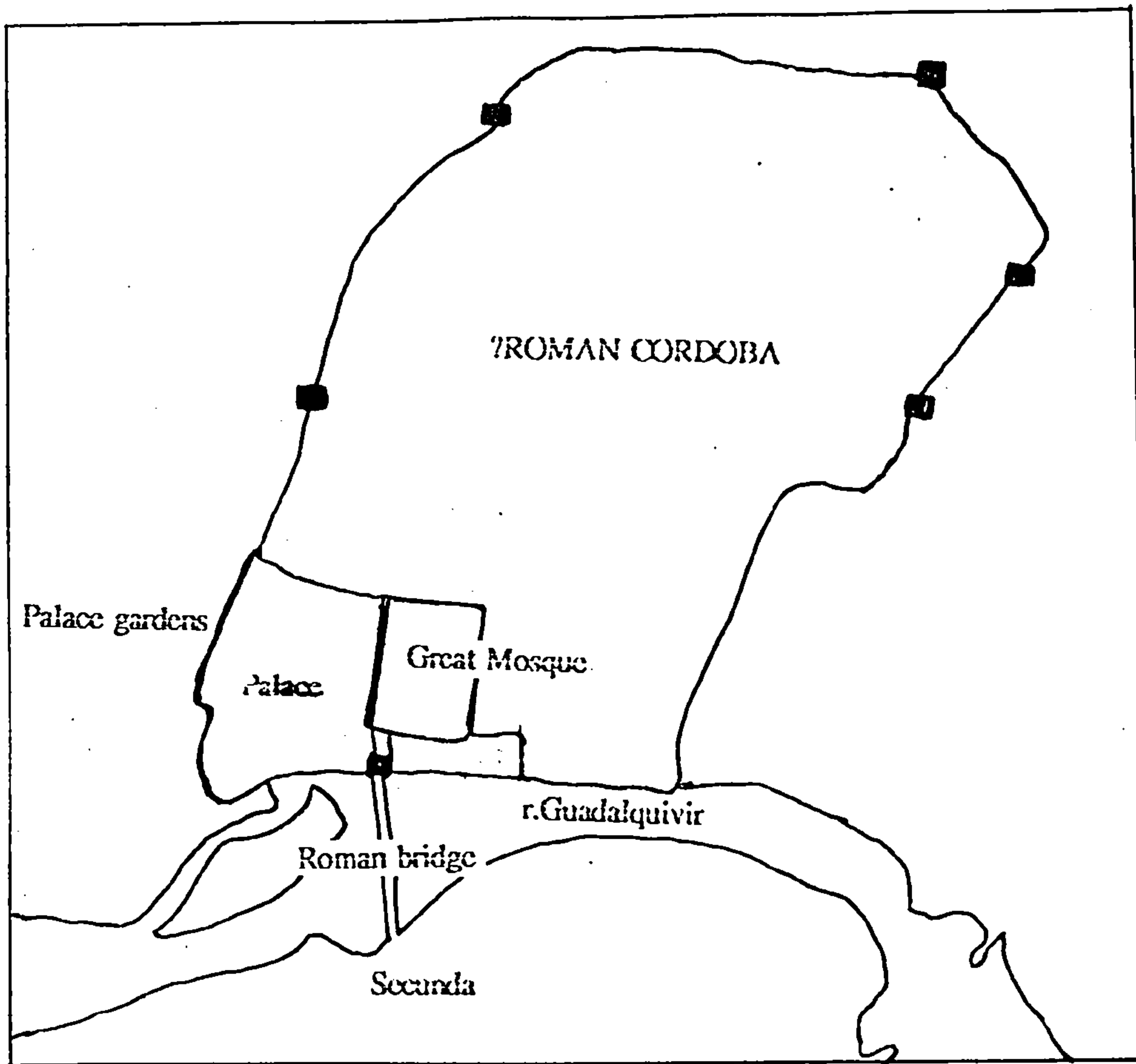
³⁰⁹ Scales P., 'Cordoba under the Umayyads: a Syrian garden city?', *Urbanism in Medieval Europe*, ed. Roe G. de and Verhaege F., (Zellik, 1997), I, pp.175-82.

³¹⁰ Alvarus, *Vita Eulogii*, 15, *CSM*, I, p.341.

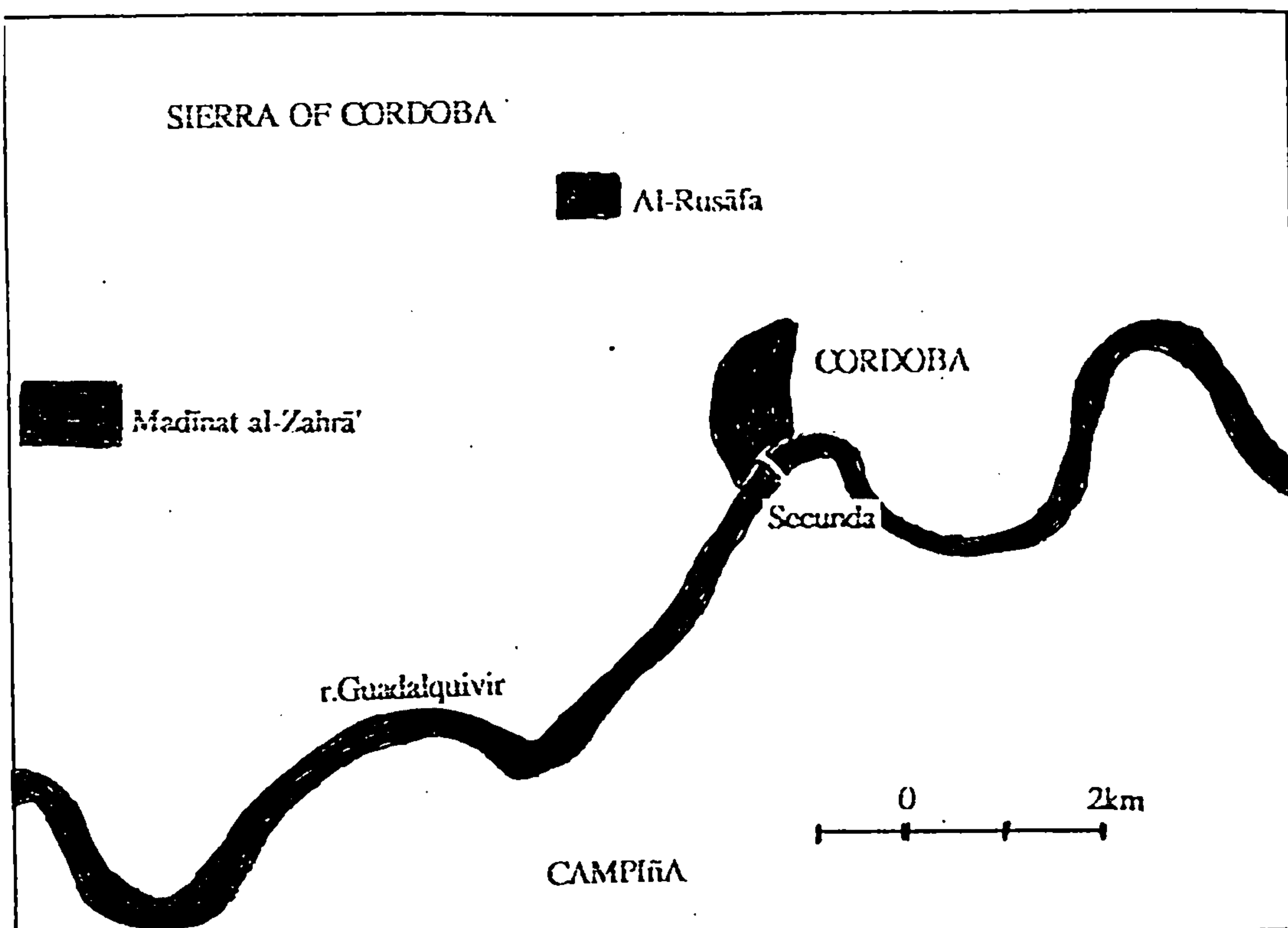
³¹¹ Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, II, p.93.

Cordoba in the tenth century

(adapted from Lévi-Provençal, *L'Espagne Musulmane au X^e siècle*, pp.206 and 227).



■ ? site of gate mentioned in Arabic histories



which ran from springs situated in the foothills of the Sierra.³¹² One should not pick and choose between those sources which are just credible and those that clearly are not. The Umayyads probably repaired Roman aqueducts, and perhaps rebuilt new ones, just as the popes were doing in Rome at the same period, but since these aqueducts do not survive, it is impossible to say whether the Arabic sources are describing Roman structures, Muslim repair or completely new works. Just as in Ibn Idhārī's description of the mosque, so in descriptions of Cordoba's other public building works these enterprises became associated with the rulers of Cordoba, starting from one of the first governors, al-Samh (718-721), who was said to have restored the Roman walls and the bridge over the Guadalquivir.³¹³

In order to vindicate Cordoba as a great metropolis it is necessary to include what are always referred to as its 'suburbs'. Ibn Bashkuwāl, in a passage quoted by al-Maqqarī, listed twenty-one such suburbs,³¹⁴ and some of them are mentioned in the *Calendar of Cordoba*. The recent archaeology of Cordoba has been marred by rapid redevelopment; little time was allowed for excavation and large areas of important Roman and Islamic remains have been destroyed.³¹⁵ The full extent of Umayyad Cordoba will probably never be known. Traces of street patterns, however, have been identified outside the walled city, although only one of these, al-Rusāfa, can be identified with a suburb named by Ibn Bashkuwāl. The rest of the city's hinterland was a rural landscape of gardens and orchards, dotted with the palaces of the nobility. Indeed, one of the suburbs, Secunda, on the other side of the Guadalquivir from the Great mosque, which later became known by antonomasia as 'el Arrabal', is elsewhere referred to as a village.³¹⁶ Ibn Hawqal's picture of Cordoba should be quoted in context, when it is clear that he too was describing a compact city surrounded by larger area mainly given over to agriculture, where the nobility had their country palaces:

The ruler of this city, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muhammad, founded, to the west of Cordoba, a city which he called Zahrā', on the flank of a rocky mountain with flat summit, called Batlash; he brought markets there and had baths, caravanserais, palaces and parks built. He invited the people to live there and ordered that the following proclamation should be issued throughout Spain: 'Whoever wished to build a house, choosing a spot next to the sovereign, will receive 400 dirhams.' A flood of people rushed to build; the buildings crowded together and the popularity of this city was such

³¹² Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, II, pp.6-8.

³¹³ Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, II, p.25.

³¹⁴ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, pp.302-3.

³¹⁵ Scales, 'Cordoba under the Umayyads', pp.177-178.

³¹⁶ Ibn Hayyān, *Al-Muqtabis fī balād al-Andalus (al-Hakam II) (Al-Muqtabis VII)*, ed. Al-Hajji A.A., (Beirut, 1965), García Gómez E., *Anales Palatinos del Califa de Córdoba al-Hakam II*, (Madrid, 1967), 211; García Gómez, 'Notas sobre la topografía cordobesa en los << Anales de Al-Hakam II >> por ʿIsa Rāzī', *Al-Andalus*, (1965), XXX, 319-379, at p.352.

that the houses formed a continuous line between Cordoba and Zahrā'.³¹⁷

Even if it is taken at face value, this description of ribbon development does not imply that the area between Cordoba and Madīnat al-Zahrā' was urbanised in the commonly accepted sense. Ibn Hawqal went on to describe several cities in al-Andalus, many of them, like Cordoba, well-populated and having walls, but all were 'surrounded by a vast rural area' where the wealth of the city was cultivated.³¹⁸ Discussing Damascus, Lapidus argued that large villages in the agricultural hinterland of a city might be considered part of the metropolitan conglomeration.³¹⁹ It is not clear that this argument can be applied to Cordoba in the tenth century. Although the mosque may have been grander than anything in al-Andalus, the city itself was almost certainly little larger than several other former Roman cities in Spain. Mérida, for example, with its spectacular Roman buildings, many of which still survive, and the Alcazaba by the river, must have been equally impressive. Yet Mérida and other cities were rarely mentioned by the Arabic authors, and their history in the early Islamic period remains obscure. Cordoba attracted ambassadors and merchants and other visitors hopeful of making their fortune not because of its size, nor the splendour of its buildings, but because it was the seat of power. As we shall see in the next chapter, this may also have continued to make the city a magnet for Christians aspiring to martyrdom, who sought their fortune in heaven.

³¹⁷ Ibn Hawqal, *Configuración del Mundo*, p.64.

³¹⁸ Ibn Hawqal, *Configuración del Mundo*, p.69.

³¹⁹ Lapidus I.M., *Muslim cities in the Later Middle Ages*, (Harvard, 1967), p.79.

5. Two More Martyrs of Cordoba

'In the western part of the world there glowed an ornament bright,
 A city famous in lore, proud of its new might at war
 It throve under the reign of colonists from Spain.
 Cordoba was its name; wealthy it was, and of fame;
 Well known for its pleasures and for its splendid treasures.
 Held, too, in great esteem, for the seven-forked stream
 Of learning. Also in the fore for its great triumphs at war.
 Once this famous town to Christ in faith was bound
 And gave its sons to God, cleansed in the baptismal font
 But suddenly a martial force changed the well-established course
 And laws of holy faith, by spreading through the state
 Errors of false dogma, harming the faithful folk.
 For the faithless tribe of unrestrained Saracens
 Fell upon the stout people of the town...'³²⁰

Andalusian Christians may have continued to seek martyrdom, although there was now no Eulogius to commemorate them. With the exception of a tenth-century pilgrim who travelled to Rome, Constantinople and Jerusalem and perished in prison whilst tracing the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt, having refused to renounce his faith,³²¹ all these martyrs were associated with Cordoba. Previous commentators have dismissed them as no more than a footnote to the Cordoban martyrs of the 850s, assuming that their protests were a response to the earlier deaths. No direct links can be demonstrated. Aimoin of St-Germain, the author of an account of the translation of the relics of three of the ninth-century martyrs - George, Aurelius and Nathalia - to Paris, noted that Mancio, the envoy sent by Charles the Bald to investigate these martyrs, witnessed the executions of two sisters.³²² After this, no martyrs were recorded for a century and a half, when the impulse to martyrdom reemerged as a series of individual gestures, for which the evidence is sparse and difficult to interpret. Details of the later martyrs must be gathered from a variety of sources, both Latin and Arabic.

³²⁰ *Passio S. Pelagii, Hrotswithae Opera* ed. P. Winterfeld, *MGH SS Rer. Ger.* (Berlin, 1902), 34:53, trans. Wilson K., *Hrotswit of Gandersheim: a florilegium of her works*, (Cambridge, 1998), pp.29-40, at p.29.

³²¹ He was said to be the governor of an island near Cadiz: *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*; Delehaye H., *Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, pp.318-319; Fita F., 'San Dunula, procer y mártir mozárabe del siglo X', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, (1909), LV, 433-442.

³²² Aimoin, *De translatione SS. Martyrum Georgii monachi, Aurelei et Nathaliae*, col.948 .

Sometime during the reign of Abdullah (888-912), a woman called Dhabha denied the divinity of Allah, and called Muhammad a false prophet.³²³ Dhabha appeared before the judge AHmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ziyād al-Lakhmī (d.924),³²⁴ who decreed that she should be burned at the stake. This brief reference to Dhabha comes from a legal text comprising a collection of judgements compiled some fifty years later; it is not clear whether Dhabha suffered the prescribed punishment, or whether this is just a textbook example. A few years later, another Cordoban judge, Aslam ibn ʿAbd al-Azīz, had to deal with a would-be martyr. Perhaps this was not a common occurrence; al-Khushāni, in his biography of the judge, explained that 'the nonsense or ignorance of the Christians led them to attribute great merit to this action of offering themselves to death', for which there was no justification in Scripture.³²⁵ This Christian did not achieve his goal. Aslam ibn ʿAbd al-Azīz had him flogged to prove that the body which the Christian had described as mere semblance would suffer the pain of execution in an all too real way; the purpose of the anecdote was to illustrate the judge's sagacity. Apart from these two instances, Christian martyrdom did not attract the attention of Muslim authors. In his history of *Los mozárabes*, Cagigas named three martyrs from the 920s: Eugenia, Abu Nasr and Maria,³²⁶ gathering together meagre fragments of evidence. Ambrosio de Morales found a badly-damaged stone in the Marmolejos district of Cordoba, which seems to have been inscribed with the date 26 March Era 961 [923] and acrostic hexameters reading 'Eugenia martyr'.³²⁷ Abu Nasr was a rebel against the Umayyads who was crucified at the gates of Cordoba.³²⁸ Writing three centuries after the event, Ibn Idhārī did not say that Abu Nasr was a Christian, but Simonet thought he was 'probably a Christian', no doubt because of the mode of execution. Cagigas did not cite his sources and I have been unable to discover Maria. Morales also seems to be source of the story of another martyr, a certain Domingo Sarracino who was captured with other Christians at the battle of Simancas and taken to Cordoba, where he was imprisoned, refused to abjure his faith, and died in 980. His wife followed him to Cordoba, where she died in 982, according to a stone which Morales saw in the wall of a house next to the church of Acisclo and Victoria.³²⁹ The inscription, even in Morales' own transcription, does not substantiate his story. Morales, Simonet and Cagigas were all stretching the evidence as far as it would go to prove their belief that the Christians of al-Andalus continued to oppose the idea of peaceful co-existence with

³²³ Lévi-Provençal E., *Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane*, 3 vols., 2nd edn., (Paris, 1950), I, pp.230-232.

³²⁴ Ibn al-FaraDī, *Tarīkh ʿulamā Al-Andalus* ed. F. Codera and J. Ribera, (Madrid, 1891-92), *Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana*, 10 vols., 7-8, no.81.

³²⁵ Al-Khushānī, *Historia de los jueces de Córdoba por Aljoxant*, ed. and trans. Ribera J., (Madrid, 1914), p.231.

³²⁶ Cagigas, *Los Mozárabes*, p.325.

³²⁷ Hübner A., *Inscriptiones Hispaniae christianae*, (Berlin, 1871), no. 220; Simonet F., *Historia de los Mozárabes*, p.391.

³²⁸ Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, II, pp.201-203.

³²⁹ Morales A. de, *Crónica general*, XVII, chap. IV; Hübner, *Inscriptiones Hispaniae christianae*, no.226; Simonet, *Historia de los mozárabes*, p.626.

Islam. Since the evidence is exiguous, it is difficult to discuss these martyrs further.

There are, however, two tenth-century Cordoban martyrs who were much better documented. Their passions survive in manuscripts which may date to within a hundred years of the events they portray, making them in fact the most contemporaneous manuscripts we have for early Islamic Spain. The *Passion of Pelagius*, tells of a boy of thirteen who, in 926, preferred death rather than surrender his virginity to 'Abd al-RaHman III.³³⁰ The cult of Pelagius was adopted almost immediately by the Christians of northern Spain, which is in marked contrast to their neglect of the ninth-century martyrs. Far away in Gandersheim, Hrotswit wrote a poem about Pelagius. Five years after Pelagius' death, Argentea and her companion Vulfuras attained their crowns of martyrdom in Cordoba, having travelled to the capital for that purpose.³³¹ Both passions, in spite of the hagiographical formulae which they employ, are about Cordoba in a way that Eulogius' *Memorial of the saints* is not. It is fascinating to compare their accounts of Christians in the capital with each other, and with the archaeology and descriptions in the Arabic sources of the 'real' Cordoba.

Neither the *Passion of Pelagius* nor the *Passion of Argentea* referred to the size of the city, its walls or the Great mosque, and although the young Pelagius was taken to the caliph's palace, his hagiographer did not describe the building. The relationship between the real Cordoba and the two martyrs, or their hagiographers, must be deduced from a careful reading of the texts. In attempting such a reading, it is difficult to avoid becoming sucked into the mire of assumptions and generalisations about the relationship between Christians and Muslims and between the Christian North and al-Andalus in the tenth century, which have coloured previous interpretations of the two texts. Not all these assumptions can be overcome, but some of them will be questioned in the course of the analysis of the *Passion of Pelagius* and the *Passion of Argentea* which follows. First, however, it is necessary to discuss the way in which the two texts were preserved.

The Spanish Passionary

The earliest copies of the *Passion of Pelagius* survive in manuscripts from a small area south of

³³⁰ Rodríguez Fernández C., *La Pasión de San Pelayo*, edición crítica con traducción y comentarios, (Santiago de Compostela, 1991); trans. Bowman J.A., 'Raguel, *The Martyrdom of St. Pelagius*, in Head T. (ed.) *Medieval Hagiography, an Anthology*, New York, (in press); Díaz y Díaz M.C., 'La Pasión de S. Pelayo y su difusión', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, (1969), VI, 97-116.

³³¹ *Vita vel Passio beatissime virginis Argenteae et comitum eius martyrum*, ed. Fabrega Grau A., *Pasionario Hispánico*, 2 vols., *Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra, Serie Litúrgica*, VI, (Madrid and Barcelona, 1953-55), II, pp.382-387.

Burgos.³³² All but one were discovered in the monasteries of Silos and Cardeña. Santo Domingo de Silos was probably a Visigothic foundation, but it is documented only from the period of its refoundation by Fernán González, named in the first extant charter from Silos, dated 954.³³³ A rich collection of early medieval manuscripts survives from this monastery, but not all of them originated there; Silos did not achieve prominence until the death of Domingo Manso in 1041, when Silos became the focus of his cult, and the repository for other monastic archives. San Pedro de Cardeña may have been founded in the ninth century; the first extant charter is dated 899.³³⁴ All but one of the codices containing the *Passion of Pelagius* are passionaries, collections of *Passions* and a few *Lives* of confessors, which were usually arranged in calendar order. They were read aloud during the celebration of the saint's feast day, beginning with the feast of Acisclus of 17 November. The Silos and Cardeña passionaries have several common features. Each saint is introduced by a lemma giving his name, the place where he was executed, the name of the judge who condemned him to death, and the date, and the doxologies of the passions follow a standard pattern, usually affirming the Trinity. Yet, although these collections may have been assembled about the same time and not far from each other, they are not identical; in particular, not all the passionaries from Silos and Cardeña have the *Passion of Pelagius*. These differences help to date the manuscripts. Before embarking on an analysis of the manuscripts, however, it must be pointed out that they have been ranked in different chronological orders by recent authorities. Fabrega, who completed an edition of the *Spanish Passionary* based on two manuscripts from Cardeña, ranked the manuscripts according to the number of saints they contain, arguing that their scribes had access to most or all of the earlier collections and gradually accumulated more passions. Díaz disagreed with this approach,³³⁵ the dates which Díaz assigned to the manuscripts depend to a large extent on his expert opinion of the script. The following brief introduction to the different versions of the passionaries illustrates some of the problems of working from printed editions, which reflect the opinions of their editors.

Two manuscripts of the Cardeña passionary survive. The earlier of the two³³⁶ remained in Cardeña until 1864, when it went to the British Museum. This passionary may represent the earliest version, the passions known in the Burgos area at the end of the ninth century, because, with 55 passions spread over 53 days, there are fewer saints than in the other passionaries. The *Passion of Pelagius* was not included, although the manuscript seems to have been copied in the mid-tenth century, after the saint's death.³³⁷ A marginal note names the scribe as the priest

³³² See map p.87.

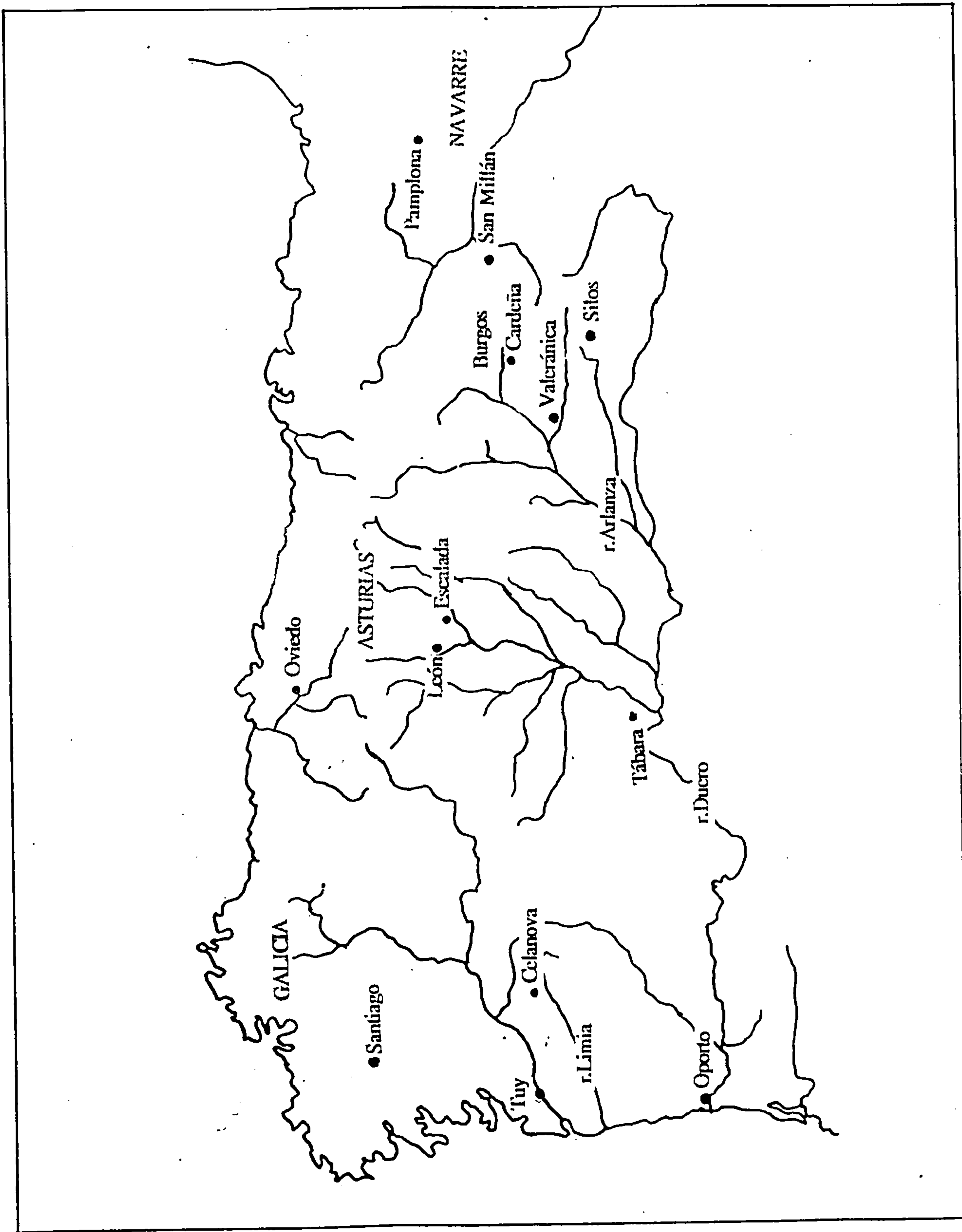
³³³ Vivancos Gómez M.C., *Documentación del monasterio de Santo Domingo de Silos (954-1254)*, (Burgos, 1988).

³³⁴ Columbás G.M., in *DHEE*, III, pp.1541-2, citing *Becerro Gótico de San Pedro de Cardeña*, ed. Serrano S., (Valladolid, 1910).

³³⁵ Díaz, 'La Pasión'.

³³⁶ *BM Add.*, 25.6000; Fabrega, *Pasionario* p.27ff.

³³⁷ Díaz, 'La Pasión', p.103.



Northwest Spain in the tenth century

(adapted from Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus*, frontispiece).

Endura.³³⁸ This may be the same Endura who copied Cassiodorus' *Commentary on the Psalms* in 949 and Isidore's *Etymologies* in 954³³⁹ and witnessed charters of donations to Cardena in 950, 966 and 969.³⁴⁰ Of the manuscript's 269 folia, numbers 3-259 are in the same hand.

Towards the end of the codex, after the 'Explicit' ('Here ends the first part of the passionary'), and written in another hand, is an appendix. It consists of the sole surviving copy of the *Passion of Argentea*, the passions of Cyriacus and Paula, two African martyrs of the fourth century, and the *Invention of Zoilus*, a Cordoban martyr from the same period. Many versions of the passion of Cyriacus and Paula (sometimes Paul) exist, but the Cardena passion is very similar to a hymn in a tenth-century manuscript from Toledo,³⁴¹ which suggests that this version was widely disseminated throughout Spain. Zoilus' cult was also well-known, and continued to be celebrated in Cordoba.³⁴² Thus, although the additions might be Cordoban in origin, and the palaeography is said to be characteristic of manuscripts written in al-Andalus,³⁴³ these texts could have come to Cardena from elsewhere in the peninsula.

The so-called *Passionary of Valdeavellano*, discovered at Silos, is also dated to the tenth century. This manuscript does not include the *Passion of Pelagius* even though it was offered to the monastery of Valdeavellano, which was dedicated to Pelagius, in 992, according to a dedication interpolated into a blank space in the passion of Christina in large coloured capitals;³⁴⁴ the manuscript may, however, have been copied some time before this. The provenance of the collection is not known, nor is the date when it went to Silos. The manuscript was subsequently divided into two parts, one of which went to Paris³⁴⁵ and the other to Madrid.³⁴⁶ It is incomplete, missing about twelve folia at the beginning and perhaps eight or ten at the end, with several lacunae. Further, the copyist complained that he was working from an incomplete exemplar; he noted in two places 'perexi' and in another two places 'perexi nihil dubites'. The whole manuscript is copied in the same beautiful Visigothic hand except for the section between

³³⁸ f.258v.

³³⁹ *Madrid Academia de la Historia, Caradignense* 76; Gaiffier B. de, 'Les notices hispaniques dans le martyrologe d'Usuard', *Analecta Bollandiana*, (1937), LV, pp.271-272..

³⁴⁰ Fabrega, *Pasionario*, p. 28, no ref. given.

³⁴¹ *MBN* 1005

³⁴² Gaiffier B. de, 'L'inventio et Translatio de S. Zoilo de Cordoue', *Analecta Bollandiana*, (1938), LVI, p.369.

³⁴³ Guerreiro R., 'Le rayonnement de l'hagiographie hispanique en Gaule pendant le haut Moyen Âge: circulation et diffusion des Passions hispaniques', in Fontaine and Pellistrandi, *L'Europe*, p.138; the question of the Cordoban origins of the *Vita Argenteae* will be discussed below.

³⁴⁴ f.225: 'Offert citi famulo Dei, liber iste ad sancti Pelagii et ad sanctuario qui ibidem sunt in Baldem de Abellano in era MXXX Duans Abba'.

³⁴⁵ *BN* n.a.l. 2180.

³⁴⁶ *MBN* 494, ff.23-59; Fabrega, *Pasionario* p.33; Díaz y Díaz M.C., *Codices visigóticos de la monarquía leonesa*, (León, 1983), pp.424-425.

folio 130 and the first half column of folio 133. Later hands made marginal corrections and additions. The manuscript is stained and the pages are uneven, indicating that it was in regular use for liturgical reading or private study. So far as one can deduce from its lacunae, this manuscript includes the majority of the passions of the first *Passionary of Cardeña*, but adds another ten. There are other, less important differences between the two passionaries. The Cardeña manuscript celebrates the feast of Sebastian on 21 January, as in the Roman martyrology; Valdeavellano has 20 January. Thus no direct dependence between the two manuscripts can be demonstrated.

Perhaps the earliest manuscript of the *Passion of Pelagius*, which Díaz dated to the beginning of the eleventh century, is an incomplete passionary contained in a miscellaneous codex now in Madrid³⁴⁷ which was put together much later.³⁴⁸ The passions included in this fragment suggest that the collection as a whole was larger than that of Valdeavellano. The *Passion of Pelagius*, alone in this passionary, carries marginal indications of its division into seven lessons for liturgical reading. There is nothing in this manuscript linking it to Silos or to any other monastery, although Díaz had no doubt that it came from the Burgos area. The collection known as the *Passionary of Silos*, which is now in the Bibliothèque National in Paris, may have been compiled about the same time.³⁴⁹ It may be the work of a single scribe John, whose name appears on folio 48; he could be the 'Ioannes presbyter' who copied another Silos codex.³⁵⁰ The saints included in this passionary are very similar to those included in three calendars, also from Silos.³⁵¹ The *Passionary of Silos* is almost identical to the first *Passionary of Cardeña*, except that the Silos collection does not include the *Passion of Castissima*.³⁵² Another Silos manuscript³⁵³ contains the *Passion of Pelagius* copied in the liturgical context of the office and mass for the feast of Pelagius. This codex consists of a number of texts relevant to female monasticism, including the *Life* of the Frankish saint Seculina of Troclara, the Rule of Leander of Seville and works on virginity by Jerome. Most of the manuscript may have been written by one Vuilfurus, who signed folio 47v., but the hand of the passion is different, and the text appears as a separate section of the codex from which it was clearly meant to be detached and used. There is no indication when the *Passion of Pelagius* was added to the codex.

Fabrega considered the latest version of the passionary to be the second *Passionary of Cardeña*,

³⁴⁷ MBN 822, ff.29-59.

³⁴⁸ Díaz, 'La Pasión', p.97.

³⁴⁹ BN n.a.l. 2179.

³⁵⁰ *Silos Biblioteca Monasteria* 1; Díaz, 'La Pasión', p. 99.

³⁵¹ *Silos Biblioteca Monasteria* 3, (dated 1052), BN n.a.l. 2.171, (dated 1067) and 2.169, (dated 1072).

³⁵² Díaz, 'La Pasión', p.99.

³⁵³ BN n.a.l. 239 ff. 68v.-83.

which seems to have been compiled as a complement to the first, since it contains all the passions which are in the *Passionary of Silos* but were not included in the first Cardeña manuscript, 56 passions in all. Nine passions contained in the second *Passionary of Cardeña*, including that of Nunilo and Alodia, are not found in the Silos collection. These passions were added in no particular order, suggesting a gradual and random accumulation of texts as they became known. Perhaps, under different circumstances, the acquisition of so much new material would have prompted a recopying of the whole collection, liturgically arranged. Fabrega dated this second collection to the end of the eleventh century. However, Díaz pointed out that the passions in the second collection were numbered to follow on from the first *Passionary of Cardeña*, before the appendix was added.³⁵⁴ Thus the two manuscripts may be nearly contemporary, although Díaz rejected the indication given on folio 30 of an *annus praesens* of Era 1020 i.e. 982, arguing that the script of the manuscript makes it later, and that the marginal note must have been copied as part of an earlier manuscript.

The passionaries from the Burgos area, and the copies of the *Passion of Pelagius* and the *Passion of Argentea* which they contain may tentatively be listed in the following order:

Passionary of Cardeña I: BM Add.25600

Passionary of Valdeavellano: Madrid BN 494 and Paris n.a.l. 2180

Madrid BN 822 - [includes the *Passion of Pelagius*]

Passionary of Silos: Paris BN n.a.l. 2179 - [includes the *Passion of Pelagius*]

Passionary of Cardeña II: Escorial b-1-4 - [includes the *Passion of Pelagius*]

appendix to BM Add.25600 - [includes the *Passion of Argentea*]

The manuscripts, however, can be dated with no more certainty than to say that they were probably compiled before the suppression of the Spanish liturgy in 1080,³⁵⁵ after which time only the passions of saints whose cults were based in each monastery may have been preserved. The *Passion of Pelagius* continued to be copied. Rodríguez, a pupil of Díaz, who was responsible for the most recent edition, used a copy from Tuy which he date to the thirteenth century, arguing on linguistic grounds that this text was closest to the original, although the differences between this text and those of the Silos and Cardeña passionaries are not substantial.³⁵⁶ Rodríguez also saw a copy of the *Passion of Pelagius* from Oporto,³⁵⁷ dating from the same period.

³⁵⁴ Díaz, 'La Pasión', p.102.

³⁵⁵ The name 'mozarabic' was given to the Spanish liturgy when it was restored by Cardinal Cisneros at the end of the fifteenth century: Pinell J.M., 'Liturgia Hispánica', *DHEE III*, pp.1310-1320; Vogel C., *The Medieval Liturgy: An Introduction to the Sources*, (Washington, 1986), pp.277-280.

³⁵⁶ *Tuy Archivo Catedralicio*, f.182ss; Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, pp.22-24.

³⁵⁷ *Oporto, Biblioteca Pública Municipal*, codex XX, f.75ss.

Fabrega made his edition of the two manuscripts from Cardeña as though the other passionaries were mere variants. Historians refer to the resulting work as the Spanish Passionary, producing an oversimplified view of the dissemination of hagiographical texts in Spain. In addition to the codices already mentioned, some eighty manuscripts and fragments survive, and there must have been many more, judging from the number of times the terms *Passionum*, *Liber Passiones* and *Passionarium* appear in library catalogues.³⁵⁸ Many of the manuscripts come from Catalonia, especially from Vich and Montserrat. The different permutations of saints in these manuscripts suggests a tradition that was in constant evolution until the suppression of the Spanish liturgy. It is worth sketching the development of the Spanish passionaries in order to see how the manuscripts from around Burgos fit into the picture.

The nucleus of the Spanish passionaries, almost two thirds of the total, is formed by the saints whose martyr acts Prudentius reworked in verse for his *Peristephanon*.³⁵⁹ Prudentius' work was of course widely known throughout the Christian world, and all but five of the martyrs he celebrated entered Spanish collections sooner or later. Some of the fourth- and fifth-century texts of passions based on Prudentius continued to be copied until the eleventh century, although the passion of Eulalia of Mérida seems to have been lost to the tradition which fed Cardeña and Silos, since the text which they incorporate is in a later, less classical Latin. The late sixth or early seventh century saw the development of a composite Spanish martyr text, to which the memories of several martyrs were adapted. It was based on the itinerary of Dacian, whose persecution of Spanish Christians started, in literary terms at least, in the fourth-century passion of Vincent, martyred in Valencia in c.304. Dacian was held responsible for the deaths of Felix in Gerona, Cucufat and Eulalia in Barcelona, Leocadia in Toledo, Vincent, Sabina and Cristeta in Avila and the Innumerable Martyrs of Zaragoza, all of whose passions share a common model which may be derived from the fifth-century passion of Saturninus of Toulouse. The martyrs of Avila were created from this model; their passion reproduces that of Leocadia almost verbatim and seems to be a complete fantasy. Martyr acts may first have been collected together for liturgical reading in the seventh century, when the second canon of the Fourth Council of Toledo, held in 633, established uniformity of the liturgy.³⁶⁰ Promotion of the liturgy encouraged the restoration of cults and the writing and rewriting of passions, some of which were included in the works of Valerius of Bierzo. Later in the seventh century, Julian of Toledo may have established a uniform

³⁵⁸ Guerreiro, 'Le rayonnement de l'hagiographie', pp. 137-157.

³⁵⁹ Prudentius, *Peristephanon*, in *Carmina*, ed. Cunningham M.P. *CCSL*, 126, (Turnhout, 1966), trans. H.H. Thompson, Loeb Classical Library, (1961); Fabrega, *Pasionario*, p.248; Roberts M., *Poetry and the cult of the Martyrs: the Liber Peristephanon of Prudentius*, (Ann Arbor, 1996).

³⁶⁰ Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Florence, 1759 seq., vol 10, cols.622-623, cited by Guerreiro, 'Le rayonnement'.

passionary, although no exemplar survives.³⁶¹ Spanish texts travelled to Francia with Visigothic exiles in the eighth century, and the saints they commemorated were included in the anonymous *Martyrology of Lyon*, written before 806; an eighth-century manuscript has sixteen notices on Spanish saints,³⁶² and the Spanish texts were copied throughout Septimania and Aquitaine.

Several passions may have been written or introduced into Spain after the Islamic conquest,³⁶³ although identifying such texts rests on questionable assumptions. The first is the idea that linguistic analysis of a text will yield its approximate date. The further the text's grammar has travelled down the road from classical to colloquial forms, it is argued, the later it is likely to be. This may be true to a limited extent, but the decline into vulgar Latin was not a linear process, which makes the dating of individual texts difficult. Secondly, there is an assumption that if a passion had not been copied north of the Alps at a given date, it had not yet been composed; since the author of the *Martyrology of Lyon* did not list the feast of Asciscus and Victoria, nor that of Facundo and Primitivo, it is argued that their passions must be ninth-century or later.³⁶⁴ Yet he did not include Eulalia of Barcelona either, nor Vincent, Sabina and Cristeta of Avila, which his Spanish informants would almost certainly have known. The compilers of martyrologies were almost certainly being selective about which saints to add to their canon, and the presence or absence of a particular saint in such texts cannot be used as proof of the date of the dissemination of his or her cult. Thirdly, Fabrega identified phrases in several of the passions which he thought indicated that they had been written after 711.³⁶⁵ The epilogue to the passion of Emeterius and Celedonius refers to a wandering 'getulus', which Fabrega interprets as a reference to the armies of the Islamic conquest. The word is obscure. The 'Gaetuli' were of North African origin, but although the Asturian chroniclers used it as a synonym for Saracen, the author of the passion could have meant Vandals rather than Arabs or Berbers. The penultimate passage of the passion of the three Cordoban saints Faustus, Januarius and Marcialis begins 'vos, clarissime, nolite credere', a speech which Fabrega interprets as being addressed to the beleaguered Christians of al-Andalus. It is, however, clearly addressed to the three martyrs. Thus there is no clear evidence to show how the passionaries in Spain developed after the eighth century.

³⁶¹ Díaz y Díaz M.C., 'Passionaires, légendiers et compilations hagiographiques dans le haut Moyen Âge espagnol', in *ibid. Hagiographie, Cultures et Sociétés IV^e-XII^e siècles*, (Paris, 1981), pp.49-59.

³⁶² BN n.a.l. 3879; Dubois J. and Renaud G., *Edition pratique des martyrologes de Bede, de l'anonyme lyonnais et de Florus*, (Paris, 1976); Quentin D., *Les martyrologes historiques*, (Paris, 1908), p.130.

³⁶³ Valcárcel dated five passions to the eighth century: Valcárcel Martínez V., *Hagiografía hispanolatina visigótica y medieval (S. VII-XII)*, *Actas I Congreso Nacional de Latin Medieval*, (León 1-4 diciembre de 1993), 191-210; Fabrega Grau has located fifteen to the same period: Fabrega, *Pasionario* p.265.

³⁶⁴ Fabrega, *Pasionario*, p.289.

³⁶⁵ Fabrega, *Pasionario*, pp.120, 159.

The general similarities between the Silos and Cardeña manuscripts, and the absence of contemporary sources with which to compare them, create the impression that they mark the penultimate stage of evolution of a unified Spanish passionary. This impression is misleading. That the dissemination of the cult of the saints was not uniform throughout Spain is suggested by the transmission of other liturgical texts, such as collections of prayers and hymns. These texts are difficult to date, but the earliest seems to be an collection of prayers known as the *Oracional of Tarragona*,³⁶⁶ which had left Spain for Italy by the early eighth century. It includes prayers dedicated to saints not mentioned elsewhere in Spain, such as Cecilia, Hippolitus and Ciprian, but omits the Innumerable Martyrs of Zaragoza, Eulalia of Barcelona and others. The author of a prayer to Eugenia appears ignorant of the details of her passion as it appears in the passionaries from northern Spain. The *Oracional of Silos*, which may date from the ninth century, includes many of the saints mentioned in the Tarragona collection but not in the Silos passionary, but omits many saints whose passions were well-known in the peninsula.³⁶⁷ There seem to have been two traditions of the transmission of liturgical texts in Spain, one in the North - attested by manuscripts from Tarragona, Carcassonne, San Juan de la Peña, San Millán de la Cogolla, Silos, Cardeña and León - and one in the South, although manuscripts originating from Toledo show that the two traditions overlapped in the former Visigothic capital.³⁶⁸ The earlier the cult of a saint in Spain, indicated by surviving inscriptions, the more likely are the details of his passion to be common knowledge. Comparison between the two manuscripts which preserve the majority of the hymns copied or composed in Spain before the twelfth century, one from Silos, the other from Toledo,³⁶⁹ shows that hymns continued to be added after 711, but the resulting collections are very different. Some eight or ten hymns were introduced from outside Spain, such as the *Ave maris stella* found in the ninth-century St-Gall manuscript, and the hymn to Bartholomew whose acrostic names the author as Leo of Amalfi, but only three of these were included in the Toledo manuscript. There are other differences between the Silos and Toledo traditions. The hymn to Nunilo and Alodia copied into the Silos manuscript, which cannot be earlier than the ninth century, is not found in the Toledo collection.³⁷⁰ A hymn to Eugenia, which survives in another manuscript from Silos and one from San Millán de la Cogolla,³⁷¹ is quite different from that in the Toledo manuscript. Since the number of surviving liturgical manuscripts from Spain is so small, it is difficult to draw definite conclusions about the dissemination of their contents through

³⁶⁶ Vives J. and Claveras J. (eds.), *Oracional Visigótico*, (Barcelona, 1946), cited by Fabrega.

³⁶⁷ Fabrega, *Pasionario*, Appendix, pp.287-289 compared the content of the Cardeña passionary with the *Oracional of Tarragona*, the *Oracional of Silos*, the *Sacramentary of Toledo*, the *Sacramentary of Silos*, and the *Antiphonary of León*.

³⁶⁸ Akeley T.C., *Christian Initiation in Spain c.300-1100*, (1967), p.103.

³⁶⁹ Silos: BM Add.34509; Toledo 35.1: *Brevario de Lorenzana*, PL, LXXXVI, in Pérez de Urbel J, 'Origen de los hymnos mozárabes', *Bulletin Hispanique*, (1926), XXVIII, 5-21, 113-139, 209-245, 305-320.

³⁷⁰ Pérez, 'Origen de los hymnos', p.231.

³⁷¹ Férotin, M., *Le Liber Mozarabicus Sacramentorum*, (Paris, 1912), cols.810 and 897.

the peninsula, but it is likely that in Spain, as elsewhere, the traditions were many and various. Thus, the surviving codices are not representative of the tradition as a whole. The differences between the Silos and Cardena collections might be explained by different circumstances of composition, their similarities by their geographical proximity. The fact that the *Passion of Pelagius* may have been copied in Silos before it reached Cardena, and that the *Passion of Argentea* was not copied into any extant Silos text and was a late addition to the *Passionary of Cardena*, has marginal utility for determining the provenance of the two passions, or for dating their composition, and does not rule out the possibility that there were other copies, or even variant version of these passions in other places. Any clues to the origin and significance of these texts must be sought in the texts themselves, and in the places where we know that they were read.

The Passion of Pelagius

The author of the *Passio sanctii Pelagii* described the prelude to Pelagius' martyrdom as a time when 'the most savage trials affected the Christians' and 'their enemies from Hispania moved against Galicia'.³⁷² The Christian army was defeated; some were put to flight, others were carried off to imprisonment in Cordoba. One of these unlucky captives was a bishop named Ermogius. Exhausted by the privations of imprisonment, he asked that his nephew Pelagius, then aged ten, might be sent as hostage in his place. Pelagius is said to have rejoiced at the opportunity to escape from the many temptations of life as a free man. In prison, he became famous for his piety; 'he was chaste, sober, peaceful, prudent, attentive to prayer, assiduous in reading, not forgetting the precepts of the Lord, promoter of improving conversation, taking no part in evil, not easily disposed to levity. Refuting all heresy, displaying the beauty of his body as much as that of his soul, he prepared himself for the double crown of virginity and martyrdom'.³⁷³

After three and a half years of imprisonment, news of Pelagius' beauty came to the ears of the king [rex], who asked that Pelagius be brought to him. The king offered Pelagius a number of inducements to renounce his faith:

'The king spoke to him immediately: 'Boy, I will raise you up to the honours of a high office, if you are willing to deny Christ and say that our prophet is true. Don't you see how great and how many are my realms? Moreover, I shall give you a great deal of gold and silver, fine clothing and costly baubles. You will also take whichever of these young knights you should choose to serve you according to your tastes. I will give you

³⁷² Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, p.34, trans. Bowman.

³⁷³ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, pp. 46 and 48.

companions to live with, horses to ride, and luxuries to savour. Then, I will release from prison whomever you choose. If you wish, I will bring members of your family here and confer great honours upon them.'³⁷⁴

Pelagius scorned all these temptations. The next passage must also be quoted, as it has become the focus of recent interpretations of the passion:

'Then, when the king tried to caress him playfully, holy Pelagius said, 'Get back, you dog! Do you think that I am effeminate like yourselves?' Pelagius ripped off the robes in which he had been dressed and made himself like a bold athlete in the arena, choosing to die honourably for Christ rather than to live shamefully with the devil and to be defiled by his vices. The king, thinking that he could persuade him, instructed his attendants to seduce him with pandering speeches, so that he might apostatize and submit to his royal vanities. But Pelagius, with the help of God, stood strong and remained undaunted, professing only Christ and saying that he would always obey his commands alone.'³⁷⁵

The king became angry. He ordered that Pelagius be strung up in pincers. When he saw that the boy remained steadfast, he ordered further tortures. Pelagius called on God as he was cut limb from limb. At last he expired, and his body was thrown into the river so that the faithful Christians would not be able to find and bury him, but it was eventually recovered. His head was buried in the cemetery of St. Ciprian, his body in that of St. Genesis. The text ends: 'The most holy Pelagius, at roughly the age of thirteen and a half years, suffered martyrdom in the city of Cordoba, as it is said, during the reign of Abd al-RaHman, certainly on a Sunday, at the tenth hour, the twenty-sixth of June, in the Era 964 [926]...' ³⁷⁶ The historical veracity of the *Passion* will be discussed below, together with the importance of the cult of Pelagius in the tenth century.

The second *Passionary of Cardena*, in a gloss of the epigraph to the *Passion of Pelagius*, names the author as the priest Raguel. Although the Escorial manuscript is unlikely to be the earliest, as we have seen, Díaz argued that this marginal gloss - *Raguel presbiter doctor fuit huius passionis cordobensis* - was, like the date of 982, copied from an earlier manuscript. Since this is the only place where Raguel is mentioned, Díaz' hypothesis cannot be confirmed or refuted. The phrase has been interpreted as meaning that Raguel was the author of the *Passion* and came from Cordoba. There is no evidence within the text that it was written by a native of Cordoba, and the gloss is ambiguous, firstly because Raguel could have been either the author or the

³⁷⁴ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, pp.64-65, trans. Bowman.

³⁷⁵ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, pp.67, 69 and 71, trans. Bowman.

³⁷⁶ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, p.82, trans. Bowman; all the manuscripts have Era 964 except Paris BN n.a.l. 2179, which has 963, perhaps the result of a scribe's omission of a I.

copyist of the *Passion*, and *cordobensis* could refer either to Raguel, or to the place where the martyr died.³⁷⁷ Although this ambiguity was pointed out by Flórez in the eighteenth century,³⁷⁸ subsequent commentators on the passion have maintained that Raguel was a Christian or a convert to Christianity from Cordoba, and that the *Passion of Pelagius* was written either in that city, or perhaps in the North, whence Raguel had fled from Muslim persecution. Since the *Passio* said that the relics were buried in Cordoba, Raguel must have been writing before 967, when, as we shall see, the relics of Pelagius were translated to León.

Modern historians have made ^{the} figure of Raguel the repository of a number of mutually-incompatible assumptions about the Christians of al-Andalus. In order for either Raguel or his text to have originated in Cordoba, there must have been Christians in the capital capable of composing such a work. Yet it is often stated that by the tenth century, Latin learning was confined to the north of the peninsula.³⁷⁹ Already in the ninth century, several of the Cordoban martyrs knew Arabic; Isaac held the post of secretary in the Muslim administration.³⁸⁰ A century later, it is argued, the Christians of al-Andalus spoke Romance and Arabic, but wrote only in Arabic. In spite of Alvarus' complaints that no-one could any longer write good Latin, Eulogius and his circle have themselves been held partly responsible for the loss of Latin; their style was so convoluted that everyone else supposedly abandoned the writing of Latin in despair.³⁸¹ When Cixila went from Toledo to found the monastery of Cosmas and Damian in Abellar, near León, in 905, he took with him a number of Latin texts by Visigothic authors, listed in his donation to the monastery dated 927.³⁸² This has been taken to mean that they were no longer of any use in the South. It is far from clear, however, that this was the case. The bishop Recemund of Elvira, active in the middle of the tenth century, is remembered both as the translator of the Arabic version of the *Calendar of Cordoba* into Latin, and as the dedicatee of a Latin history, as we shall see in the next chapter. The language of the *Passion of Pelagius* demonstrates an adequate command of hagiographical formulae and could hardly have been written where Latin was in terminal decline. Furthermore, a cleric with little or no Latin would have been of no use to a new patron in the North. Discussions of Raguel's supposed refugee status by previous historians can only be characterised as illogical. Either Raguel was not a Cordoban, or, as seems more likely, the *Passion of Pelagius* could have been composed either

³⁷⁷ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, p.17.

³⁷⁸ Flórez E., *España Sagrada*, XXIII, (Madrid, 1799), p.111.

³⁷⁹ Wasserstein, 'A Latin Lament', p.13.

³⁸⁰ *exceptor publicae*; Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum*, II, 2, CSM, II, p.402.

³⁸¹ Wright R., 'La muerte del ladino escrito en Al-Andalus', *Euphrosyne*, XXII, (1994), (Homenaje a Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz), citing Banniard M., *Viva Voce: communication écrite et communication orale du IV^e au IX^e siècle en Occident Latin, Collection des études augustiniennes, Série Moyen-âges et Temps modernes*, XXV, (Paris, 1992), p.472.

³⁸² *Tumbo de León*, ff.384-386, ed. Gomez-Moreno M., *Iglesias Mozárabes*, (Madrid, 1919), pp.347-348, cited by Díaz y Díaz M.C., *Códices Visigóticos*, pp.163-164.

north or south of the supposed linguistic divide.

Cultural differences between the North and the South of the Iberian peninsula in the early medieval period have been recognised with greatest certainty by those historians so convinced of the existence of a profound religious and political divide between the two that any apparent borrowing of Islamic styles in the North can only be explained as the effect of Christian emigration from al-Andalus. The striking differences between the architecture of the church of San Salvador de Valdediós of 893 and San Miguel de la Escalada, dedicated in 913, have led to the first being called 'Asturian', the second 'Mozarab', the result of new techniques coming North with Cordoban monks. The developments in art and architecture during this period were not, however, polarised in this simplistic way. Although some aspects of the construction of the church at Escalada may have been influenced by Islamic techniques, the church might also be seen a return to a Visigothic style, its closest parallel being the San Juan de los Baños, originally built by Recceswinth (649-672).³⁸³ The architecture was southern Spanish only in the sense that the Christians of al-Andalus may have kept Visigothic traditions alive while styles in the North had evolved. The church of Santa María de Melque, near Toledo, built in the eighth or ninth century is evidence for this Visigothic continuity in al-Andalus, although built in a different, much more massive style than San Miguel de Escalada.³⁸⁴ Some changes in architecture in the North may have been introduced by emigrants from al-Andalus. Historians confused the picture by maintaining two contradictory ideas - that churchmen in the South were ignorant of Latin culture, but that once they emigrated to the Christian North they achieved prominence in monastic building. The most satisfactory way to resolve this contradiction is to increase the permeability of the religious and cultural frontier between al-Andalus and the Kingdoms of Asturias and León. It is likely that educated men throughout the Peninsula were in contact and exchanged ideas.

The pictorial reform which the frontier monasteries witnessed may also have been inspired by immigrants from al-Andalus. Rarely, however, does it show a specifically anti-Muslim content; when the *Book of Daniel* was added to copies of the *Beatus Apocalypse*, Muhammad was not added to the list of AntiChrists.³⁸⁵ Christian artists sometimes used Islamic motifs, such as the rider who appears twice in the *Girona Beatus* of 975, probably produced at Tábara, south of León.³⁸⁶ The artist may have employed the figure of the rider to represent Herod, the persecutor of Christians. Such borrowings are rare, and confined to a small area. They may be part of an

³⁸³ Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology*, pp.50-52, citing Bango Torviso I., 'El neovisigotismo artístico de los siglos IX y X: la restauración de ciudades y templos', *Revista de Ideas Estéticas*, (1979), CXLVIII, at p.321.

³⁸⁴ Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology*, p.62.

³⁸⁵ Williams J., *The Illustrated Beatus: A Corpus of Illustrations of the Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 5 vols., (1994), I, *Introduction*, p.132.

³⁸⁶ Werckmeister G.K., 'The Islamic rider in the Beatus of Girona', *Gesta*, (1997), XXXVI/2, 101-106.

artistic vocabulary which Christian emigrants to the North shared with Muslim in al-Andalus. A comparable lack of discrimination between Christian and Muslim cultural signifiers is detectable in the continuing use of Arabic names by Christians in northern Spain; the signatories of charters from León, dating from the early eleventh century continued to give their sons Arabic names.³⁸⁷ There is little evidence to support the idea that emigration to the North was as a response to Muslim persecution.

There were two periods during which Christians seem to have left al-Andalus in significant numbers. The first was the late eighth century, when the principal destination of the emigrants was Francia. The *Hispani* who settled Septimania and the Spanish marches were presented as the victims of persecution; a privilege granted to them refers to 'the iniquitous oppression and most cruel yoke which the Saracens, so hostile to the Christians, have imposed upon them'; the Spaniards have 'abandoned their own lands which belong to them by hereditary right, have fled from Spain and have been taken to Septimania to live there'.³⁸⁸ Yet a document of 812 names only 42 *Hispani*, some of whom may have been native to the area, and two of these men were using Arabic names - Zoleiman and Zate.³⁸⁹ The best known emigrant to Francia is Theodulf of Orleans, who is supposed to have come from Zaragoza; his call to Charlemagne to take up again the fight against Cordoba, seems to encapsulate the plight of the exile.³⁹⁰ Theodulf, like his contemporaries Benedict of Aniane and Agobard of Lyon, were prominent in Carolingian religious reform and monastic expansion. Both churchmen and the colonists may have been attracted by Carolingian vitality rather than propelled by religious persecution. Elsewhere in Europe, only the occasional find of a Visigothic manuscript which may have left Spain after 711 testifies to those whom Pérez de Urbel, in a detailed study of medieval Spanish monasticism, called 'refugee monks from Spain'.³⁹¹

The Kingdoms of the Asturias and later León may, like Charlemagne's court, have attracted emigrants from Islamic Spain. During the reign of Fruela (757-767), the monastery at Samos was restored by monks from the South, and bishop Odoario, said to have been exiled to Africa, returned to Lugo, where he repaired the walls and reorganised the diocese.³⁹² When Ordoño

³⁸⁷ Mediano, 'Acerca de la población arabizada', p.468.

³⁸⁸ 1 Jan. 815: *MGH Capit.* I, p.261; Woolf P., 'L'Aquitaine et ses marges', in *Karl der Grosse, Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, (1965), I, pp.269-309.

³⁸⁹ *MGH Capit.* I, p.169; Collins, R.J.H., 'Charles the Bald and Wifred the Hairy', Gibson M. and Nelson J. (eds.) *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, (Oxford, 1981), pp.169-187, at pp.178-181.

³⁹⁰ *MGH Poet. lat.*, I, p.484; Riché P., 'Les réfugiés wisigoths dans le monde carolingien', Fontaine and Pellistrandi, *L'Europe*, pp.177-184.

³⁹¹ Pérez de Urbel J., *Los monjes españoles en la edad media*, (Madrid, 1934), pp.254-255.

³⁹² Pérez, *Los monjes españoles*, p.278; this story, however, comes from a series of forged charters which have Odoario leaving Spain after 711 and returning after the victories of Alfonso I, some 100 years later: Isla Frez A., *La sociedad gallega en la Alta Edad Media*,

I (850-866) restored León, Astorga, Tuy and Amaya, 'he filled them partly with people from his own kingdom and partly with those coming up out of Spain'.³⁹³ The majority of emigrants to the North recorded in the sources made the journey in the tenth century. In addition to Cixila, abbot of the monastery of Cosmas and Damian in Abellar, monks from the South founded or refounded the monasteries of San Cebrián de Mazote, Valladolid,³⁹⁴ San Martín de Castañeda,³⁹⁵ and San Miguel de la Escalada.³⁹⁶ Alfonso III invited Sebastian, bishop of Ercávica to become bishop of Orense.³⁹⁷ The dedication inscription at Escalada reads: 'This place, of old dedicated in honour of the archangel Michael and built with a little building, after falling into pieces, lay long in ruin until Abbot Alfonso, coming with his brethren from Cordoba, his fatherland, built up the ruined house in the time of the powerful and serene prince Alfonso..'³⁹⁸ There does not seem to have been any increase in religious tension in al-Andalus at this date, and there is little suggestion that these men were fleeing from persecution.

Thus the key to Christian emigration from al-Andalus may be the expansion south of the kingdom of Asturias and León at the end of the ninth and throughout the tenth century. Emigrants from the South were involved in the great wave of monastic settlement of this period. Alfonso III was portrayed as moving back into the 'no-man's land' which Alfonso I had created in the eighth century between al-Andalus and the beleaguered Christians of the North. This 'cordon sanitaire' was, for Sánchez-Albornoz and his disciples, the key to Spain's development,³⁹⁹ a parapet from behind which the Christians fought 'battles with [the Saracens] day and night', as the author of the *Chronicle of Albelda* put it.⁴⁰⁰ Here the Reconquest began. Yet the apparent emptiness of the Duero region may be partly an artefact produced by the absence of charters from before the late ninth century. The continuity of placenames from Roman times through to the present day argues against their abandonment. It is likely that monasteries such as San Millán continued to exist from the Visigothic period, although they were not in a position to attract wealthy donors who desired their gifts to be commemorated in charters. Although very few excavations have been

(Madrid, 1992), pp.54-61.

³⁹³ *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, 25, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.175.

³⁹⁴ Moral, T. 'San Cebrián de Mazote', *DHEE*, p.1640.

³⁹⁵ Yañez D., 'San Martín de Castañeda', *DHEE*, p.1648.

³⁹⁶ García Lobo V., 'San Miguel de Escalada', *DHEE*, pp.1651-1652.

³⁹⁷ Gómez-Moreno, *Iglesias Mozárabes*, (Madrid, 1911), p.107, cited by Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology*.

³⁹⁸ Gómez-Moreno, *Iglesias Mozárabes*, p.141; Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology*, p.50.

³⁹⁹ Pastor R., 'El feudalismo en la obra de Sánchez-Albornoz y las interpretaciones actuales', *Atti dei Convegni Lincei* 113, (Rome, 1995), 19-30, at p.25.

⁴⁰⁰ ed. Gómez Moreno M., 'Las primeras crónicas de la Reconquista, el ciclo de Alfonso III', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, C, (1932), p.601; for a recent extreme statement of this view see Moxó y Ortiz de Villajos, S. de, *Repoblación y Sociedad en la España Cristiana Medieval*, (Madrid, 1979); Manzano, 'Christian-Muslim Frontier', pp.83-99, gives a much more balanced interpretation.

carried out, there is so far no good evidence for depopulation and repopulation of the Duero,⁴⁰¹ except perhaps for a small area which has been investigated around the river Limia.⁴⁰² The vocabulary of 'repopulation', of places being described as 'desertus et incultus' in charters from the North-west of the peninsula, underlines a policy of staking a claim to the region. Alfonso III granted landholding rights to men prepared to take control of the Duero in his name. In turn, these men granted land to monasteries. The majority of foundation or refoundation charters from these monasteries do not mention any men from al-Andalus, and their signatories may have been Asturians. It is likely that those clerics who came North to join them would have been attracted by the carrot of newly-endowed monasteries rather than driven by the stick of persecution. They were almost certainly educated men, capable of participating in the cultural life of the Christian kingdoms, including the writing of hagiography. Thus there are no clear grounds for deciding whether the *Passion of Pelagius* was written in Cordoba or in an Asturian monastery.

The cult of Pelagius

Unlike the martyrs of the 850s, it seems that Pelagius was honoured in his own country. The Latin version of the *Calendar of Cordoba*, for June 26, notes that 'This is the feast of Pelagius, and his tomb is in the church of Tarsil'.⁴⁰³ There is no known dedication of a church to Pelagius at Tarsil, which lies in the Campiña, the countryside around Cordoba, but there was a basilica dedicated to Genesius, where Pelagius' body was said to have been buried, and this may be the church to which the *Calendar* refers. The *Calendar of Cordoba* is in general fairly well-informed about Cordoban saints, but as we shall see in the next chapter, the surviving Latin version may not have been compiled in Cordoba, and cannot be relied upon as testifying to the strength of any cult associated with that city. It is interesting, however, that the *Calendar* refers four times to the church of St. Cyprien, without mentioning that Pelagius' head was buried there. In spite of this Cordoban connection, details within the *Passion of Pelagius* and the subsequent development of the cult of Pelagius, link the text very firmly with the North, where, as we have seen, the *Passion of Pelagius* was copied several times during the eleventh century. The

⁴⁰¹ e.g. excavations at Castellar (Villajimena) in S. of province of Palencia: García Guinea, González Echegaray y Madriga de la Campa, 'Memoria de las excavaciones arqueológicas efectuadas en el Castellar, término municipal de Villajimena (Palencia),' *Publicaciones de la Institución Tello Téllez de Meñeses*, (1963), XXIII, 129-158; García de Cortázar J.A., *El dominio del monasterio de San Millán de la Cogolla (Siglos X a XIII)*, (Salamanca, 1969), p.101, cited in Barbero A. and Vigil M., *La Formación del Feudalismo en la Península Ibérica*, (Barcelona, 1978).

⁴⁰² López Quiroga J. and Rodríguez Lovelle M., 'Una aproximación arqueológica al problema historiográfico de la <<Despoblación y Repoblación en el valle del Duero>> s.VIII-XI (Transformaciones observadas a través de necrópolis/vestigios culturales y su vinculación con el poblamiento en el sureste de Galicia', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* XXI,(1984), pp.3-10.

⁴⁰³ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.103.

popularity of the text reflects the widespread promulgation of Pelagius' cult within northern Spain.

Although the origin of the *Passion of Pelagius* is obscure, the text should be read through Northern Christian eyes, and, probably in the context of an increased interest in female spirituality at this time. As we have seen, one of the codices containing the *Passion of Pelagius* is a collection which may have been put together for a community of nuns who celebrated the cult of Pelagius. Many of the new monastic foundations were for women. Leodegundia copied a collection of texts including the Rules of Benedict, Isidore, Leander and Fructuosus, letters from Jerome and the *Lives* of Constantina and Melania c.912.⁴⁰⁴ Another manuscript, containing the *Lives* of seven female saints,⁴⁰⁵ was copied by a scribe named John in 954. The *Lives* of Helia and Egeria were probably written in Spain, the others in the east. The *Life* of Helia, which is probably fictional, draws on Jerome's writings on virginity, and has scenes reminiscent of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*,⁴⁰⁶ a very popular text which circulated in Spain from the fourth century, and was copied into the *Passionary of Silos* and the second *Passionary of Cardena*. Thecla, inspired by Paul's preaching on virginity, broke off her engagement and followed him.⁴⁰⁷ After several miraculous escapes from persecution, Thecla retired to Seleucia, where, according to one version of the *Acts*, 'some of the well-born women, having learned about the virgin Thecla, went to her and learned the miracles of God. and many of them bade farewell to the world, and lived an ascetic life with her...'⁴⁰⁸ Like Thecla, Helia was brought before a judge when she refused to marry. Constantina, the daughter of Constantine, adopted virginity in order to escape her father's plan that she should marry Gallicanus, and converted Gallicanus himself to Christianity. Melania and Egeria both earned the freedom to travel by their vows of virginity; Valerius' of Bierzo's version of Egeria's travels, which were copied into the Escorial text, made her into an ascetic figure. Pelagia and Castissima dressed as men and entered male monasteries. The Escorial collection also includes Ildefonsus' *On the virginity of Mary*, Jerome's *Against Jovian* and *Against Helvidius* and Braulio's *Life of San Millán*, added in a different hand, which strengthen the collection of as a manual of female spirituality, focused on virginity.

It was Pelagius' virginity which made his story so popular with women. The fact that he was a male rather than a female victim of sexual temptation should not be overemphasised. The *Passion of Pelagius* carefully specified, in three places, that Pelagius was thirteen and a half years old at the time of his martyrdom. Readers would have recognised that Pelagius was on the brink of

⁴⁰⁴ Escorial a.I.13; Guillermo Antolín P., *Un Codex Regularum del siglo IX*, (Madrid, 1908), p.5, cited in Díaz, *Códices Visigóticos*, pp.89-114.

⁴⁰⁵ Escorial a.II.9; *Paris Bibliothèque Nationale* nouv. acq. lat. is an eleventh-century copy; Salisbury J.E., *Church Fathers, Independent Virgins*, (1991).

⁴⁰⁶ Elliot J.K., *The Apocryphal New Testament*, (Oxford, 1993), pp.364-372.

⁴⁰⁷ Pelagius 'had read Paul as his constant master of doctrine': Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, ll.39-40, pp.48-49, trans. Bowman.

⁴⁰⁸ Elliot, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p.373.

puberty, defined by Isidore as the end of the fourteenth year.⁴⁰⁹ When, in response to the king's advances, Pelagius stripped off the fine clothes in which the courtiers have dressed him he (or rather his hagiographer) was employing a *topos* - Pelagius was taking off the clothes which represented falsehood, in preparation for the contest leading to a martyr's crown, rather than 'playing with same-sex desire' as Jordan put it.⁴¹⁰ Jordan analysed the *Passion of Pelagius* in terms of the development of the theology of homosexuality,⁴¹¹ arguing that it is impossible 'to disentangle the retellings of the *Passion of Pelagius* from the ambivalent relations of Iberian Christianity to the same-sex love it is thought was preached and practised by Islam'. This reading has as much to do with modern anti-Muslim polemic as with early medieval writings. The sexual imagery used by authors of hagiography and other writings on virginity is difficult for modern readers to understand, as is the correspondence between Christian clerics, and similar problems affect our reading of Arabic poetry.⁴¹² It is not clear what the overheated language of this idealisation of same-sex relationships had to do with actual sexual activity. Visigothic law codes had legislated against homosexual practices,⁴¹³ as had authorities as disparate as the Theodosian Code and Irish penitentials. Anti-Muslim polemic, although it accused Muslims in general, and especially Muhammad, of sexual licence, did not specify homosexuality. The *Passion of Pelagius* itself is remarkably free of anti-Muslim polemic. If the text is on the sin of Sodom, it is in the wider sense used by writers such as Hincmar of Rheims,⁴¹⁴ where sexual perversions of all kinds go hand in hand with extravagance and pride in power. As Jerome had explained, 'the Sodomitic sin is pride, bloatedness, abundance of all things, leisure and delicacies'.⁴¹⁵ Pelagius resisted the material temptations offered by the king as well as his sexual advances: 'Enriched both by his virginity and by the crown of his suffering, he bore a double victory against the enemy - scorning riches, and not giving way to vices'.⁴¹⁶ We will see Argentea achieving a similar victory.

⁴⁰⁹ *Isidorii Hispalensis Episcopi, Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*, ed. Lindsay W.M., (2 vols, Oxford, 1911), II, XI, *De Aetatibus Hominum*, 11.

⁴¹⁰ Jordan M.J., *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology*, (Chicago and London, 1997), p.16.

⁴¹¹ Jordan, *The Invention*, pp. 10-28.

⁴¹² but see Boswell J., *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality. Gay People in Western Europe from the beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth century*, (1980), e.g. at pp.194-197.

⁴¹³ punished by excommunication, III,5,7; men who committed sodomy placed under care of bishop and their wives allowed to remarry, II,5,4; King P.D., *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*, (Cambridge, 1972), pp.127, 157 and 235.

⁴¹⁴ Hincmar, *De divortio Lotharii et Tetbergae, Interrogatio XII, PL, CXXV*, cols.692.

⁴¹⁵ Jerome, *Commentaria in Hiezechielem* 5.16.48-51, ed. Glorie F., *CCSL*, vols 75-75A, (Turnhout, 1964); although Gregory the Great, in the *Moralia in Job* which was widely known in Spain, concentrated on the sins of the flesh: *Moralia in Job*, 14.19.23, ed. Adriaen M., *CCSL*, vols.143-143B, (Turnhout, 1979-85).

⁴¹⁶ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, II.52-53, pp.52-53, trans. Bowman.

It was in this context that the *Passio* of Pelagius was retold in verse by Hrotsvit, a canoness in the Ottonian imperial abbey of Gandersheim who finished her last work before 973.⁴¹⁷ The most complete, and also the earliest collection of her works, in the eleventh-century Emmeram-Munich Codex,⁴¹⁸ is made up of eight legends in verse, six plays, two epics, and a short poem. Hrotsvit's concerns were the glorification of her ecclesiastical and royal patrons, and of the church in general. The story of Pelagius appears with those of two other virgin saints - Mary, and Agnes, who, having refused to marry a pagan, was shut up in a brothel but remained uncorrupted until her martyrdom. In the prologue to the legends, Hrotsvit declared:

'I found the material I have used in this book in various ancient works by authors of reputation, with the exception of the story of the martyrdom of St. Pelagius, which has been here told in verse. The details of this were supplied to me by an inhabitant of the town where the saint was put to death. This truthful stranger assured me that he had not only seen Pelagius, whom he described as the most beautiful of men, face to face, but had been a witness to his end'.⁴¹⁹

Hrotsvit's informant could be Recemund of Cordoba, who, as we shall see in the next chapter visited the Ottonian court in the late 950s. Yet Hrotsvit's account, which is melodramatic even for the genre of hagiography, differs in many details from the *Passion of Pelagius*, and shows very little knowledge of Islam.⁴²⁰ After the fall of Spain to the pagan king, Hrotsvit explained, one condition alone was made for peace, 'that no dweller of the aforesaid city should presume to blaspheme the golden idol's name, whom this prince adored, or else, it was so willed, this man was promptly to be killed'.⁴²¹ Peace ensued, although there were some martyrs, until the accession of 'Abd al-RaHmān, a degenerate and harsh persecutor of the Christians. Pelagius, the only son of a duke captured during the emir's campaign against Galicia, languished in Cordoba because his father could not raise the money to ransom him. When the king tried to embrace the beautiful youth, Pelagius struck him on the face, drawing blood. Enraged, the king catapulted Pelagius' body over the city walls, but he remained miraculously unharmed until his head was cut off. The body was retrieved from the river by fishermen, who received a huge reward for their prize. Pelagius' relics performed so many miracles that his head was to submitted to an ordeal by fire in order to prove that the boy saint was indeed responsible for them. These details

⁴¹⁷ Wilson, *Hrotsvit of Gandersheim*, p.2; *ibid.*, 'Hrotswith [sic] of Gandersheim', in *ibid.* (ed.) *Medieval Women Writers*, (Manchester 1984), pp.30-63; Haight A.L. (ed.) *Hrotswitha of Gandersheim: her life, times and works and a comprehensive bibliography*, (New York, 1965).

⁴¹⁸ cIm 14485 1-150.

⁴¹⁹ *Hrotswitha Opera* 3, 52-62.

⁴²⁰ *Passio S. Pelagii*, 34:53; Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, p.10.

⁴²¹ Hrotsvit, *Pelagius*, ll.56-59, trans. Wilson, p.30.

owed more to contemporary mores in northern Europe⁴²² than to Hrotsvit's informant. It is also possible that the story of Pelagius had already acquired a variety of legendary embellishments during the half century after his death.

It may have been on the initiative of a woman that the relics of Pelagius were translated to the North. Several claims to Pelagius' relics were being made at about the same time, however, and assessing their merits depends on the interpretation of chronicle and charter evidence which has still to be adequately evaluated. The *Chronicle of Sampiro* says that in 960, Sancho the Fat and his sister Elvira, daughter of Ramiro II and regent for her young nephew Ramiro III (967-984), tried to obtain the relics of Pelagius for León,⁴²³ through an embassy to Cordoba led by bishop Velasco. The relics arrived in León in 967. Pelayo of Oviedo introduced an embellished version of the *Chronicle of Sampiro* into a work called the *Chronicle from the beginning of the world to 1170 AD*, where it seems to be attributed to bishop Sampiro of Astorga (fl.c.1035-40).⁴²⁴ Another Sampiro was a royal notary in León in the late tenth or early eleventh century. Given Pelayo's notoriety as a forger, the version of the *Chronicle of Sampiro* extant in the anonymous *Historia Silense*, whose earliest copy dates from the fifteenth century, seems to be the more reliable, although, where the *Historia Silense* overlaps with the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, the details do not always concur. Elvira was the abbess of the San Salvador in León, built by her father Ramiro II.⁴²⁵ In 995, the relics of Pelagius may have been moved to Oviedo because of the threat to León of attack by al-ManSūr,⁴²⁶ and housed in the church of John the Baptist, to which was attached a convent ruled by Elvira's sister Teresa. When, in 1063, Fernando I and Sancha dedicated a new church to Isidore on the site, they donated a new reliquary for John the Baptist and Pelagius, which is still in the church treasury.⁴²⁷ The competing claims of León and Oviedo to the relics of Pelagius may, however, have more to do with political rivalry within northern Spain than with the actual fate of Pelagius' bones. The promotion of the cult of Pelagius as a native of Galicia can be compared with the cult of six Anglo-Saxon saints, all young kings or princes, whose status as 'innocent martyrs' was used to bolster the royal ministers where they

⁴²² Bartlett R., *Trial by Fire and Water*, (Oxford, 1986), p.22; see e.g. *Historia translationis S. Helenae ad coenobium Altevallense*, *AASS*, August, III, p.602, cited by Geary, *Furta Sacra*, pp.63-64.

⁴²³ *Chronicle of Sampiro*, ed. Gómez-Moreno M., *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, C, (1932) pp.337-8; *Historia Silense*, 28, p.171; Pérez de Urbel J., *Sampiro, su crónica y la monarquía leonesa en el siglo X*, (Madrid, 1952); the same story appears in Lucas of Tuy, *Chronicon mundi*, IV, (Frankfurt, 1610), p.85.

⁴²⁴ Pelayo of Oviedo, *Crónica*, ed. Sanchez Alonso, (Madrid, 1924); extracts from the chronicle were also copied in the twelfth-century *Cronica Najerense*, ed. Ubieta Arteta A., (Valencia, 1966); Wreglesworth J., *The Chronicle of Alfonso III and its significance for the historiography of the Asturian kingdom 718-910 AD*, unpublished PhD thesis, Leeds 1995, pp.106-21.

⁴²⁵ *Historia Silense*, 24, p.168.

⁴²⁶ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, p.16 and n.12.

⁴²⁷ Lasko P. *Ars Sacra 800-1200*, (Harmondsworth, 1972), p.158.

were buried.⁴²⁸ As in the *Passion of Pelagius*, the English hagiographers emphasised the saints' physical and mental purity. It is difficult to pursue this comparison since, unfortunately, the *Chronicle of Sampiro* is the main narrative source for the late tenth century in Northern Spain, and the details of Pelagius' translation cannot be verified. The *Chronicle* records that, towards the end of Ramiro III's reign, a revolt in Galicia elevated a rival king Vermudo II, the son of Ordoño II by a second marriage.⁴²⁹ The author of the *Chronicle of Sampiro* took a fairly neutral line on the revolt, recording that Ramiro and Vermudo met in battle without settling their claims, and that Ramiro died shortly afterwards. The chronicler did, however, place the passage on Sancho's quest for the relics of Pelagius immediately after mentioning an earlier revolt in Galicia, and before recounting Sancho's attempt to subdue Galicia, which suggests that he saw the acquisition of the relics as part of León's claim to hegemony over Galicia. Later, Bishop Pelayo of Oviedo expanded the whole episode of the revolt and blamed the success of al-ManSūr's campaigns against the North on the sins of Vermudo. This, like all Pelayo's additions to his sources, was pure propaganda for Oviedo. Ramiro III's mother Teresa had been abbess of the monastery in Oviedo which claimed Pelagius' relics; the same monastery had sheltered Velasquita, Vermudo's first wife, whom he had repudiated. Even worse, perhaps, in bishop Pelayo's eyes was the fact that Vermudo had driven an earlier bishop of Oviedo from his see.⁴³⁰ Vermudo's claim to legitimacy, at least in the eyes of later historians, seems to have been based on his enforcement of Visigothic ecclesiastical and secular laws; Ramiro's may have been based at least partly on the association between his family and the relics of Pelagius. It should also be noted that at least one other monastery was making a claim to Pelagius' relics which may antedate that of León and Oviedo. San Pedro de Valeránica was founded c.930 near the river Arlanza. The prologue of a codex of Smaragdus copied by Florencio, active at Valeránica between 940 and 965, lists Pelagius among the saints whose relics were preserved in the monastery.⁴³¹ It is clear that many royal and noble foundations were anxious to celebrate the cult of this saint.

Attempts made to locate the origin of the cult of Pelagius more precisely are given apparent credence by the *Passion of Pelagius* itself. Although the 'king' who tempted and then executed Pelagius was not named as °Abd al-RaHmān III within the *Passio*, the date appended to the text is precise, and the framework of the story of Pelagius could lie in actual events of the nine twenties, and seems at first sight to be firmly located in Northwest Spain. Yet the details of this picture may all be questioned. As we have seen, the *Passion of Pelagius* said that Pelagius was sent into captivity in exchange for his uncle, captured during a Cordoban campaign against the

⁴²⁸ Hayward P.A., 'The Idea of Innocent Martyrdom in Late Tenth- and Eleventh-century English Hagiology', *Studies in Church History*, (1993), XXX, 81-92.

⁴²⁹ *Historia Silense*, 29, p.171; Collins R., *Early Medieval Spain: Unity in Diversity 400-1000*, (1983), p.242.

⁴³⁰ *Historia Silense*, introduction, p.34.

⁴³¹ *Cordoba Biblioteca Catedral I*; Díaz, *Códices Visigóticos*, p.515.

North. This is taken to be the first successful campaign which ‘Abd al-RaHmān III led against the North, in 920.⁴³² According to Ibn Hayyān, ‘Abd al-RaHmān captured San Esteban de Gormaz and other towns in the Upper Duero before defeating the combined Leonese and Basque armies at Valdejunquera, between Pamplona and Estella. Ibn Hayyān’s chronology is not always reliable. Only parts of his work survive, and the authors who claimed to be quoting him give conflicting accounts of it.⁴³³ A date of 920, however, fits reasonably well with the chronology of the passion, if we allow that Ermogius might have spent a couple of years in prison before arranging to be exchanged for Pelagius. The *Chronicle of Sampiro* mentioned two bishops, Ermogius and Dulcidius, captured in the same campaign,⁴³⁴ but since the compiler followed this immediately with the martyrdom of Pelagius, this passage may not be independent of the *Passio*. The next campaign against the North mentioned in the Arabic sources is the campaign of 923 or 924 during which Pamplona was sacked.⁴³⁵ Both these campaigns were directed against the Northeast. The term ‘Gallecia’, which is usually translated as ‘Galicia’, is used rather ambiguously in the *Passion of Pelagius*. The hagiographer added to the phrase, ‘their enemies from Hispania moved against Galicia’ the note that ‘if Galicia were entirely overthrown, these outsiders would have wielded power over the faithful’.⁴³⁶ Christian writers in the North used the term ‘Hispania’ for al-Andalus, but confined ‘Gallecia’ for roughly the area now known as Galicia, but writers in Arabic called the whole of the Christian North ‘Jilliqīya’,⁴³⁷ and this seems to be what the hagiographer had in mind. This weakens the links between the *Passio* and the Northwest, and points to an Andalusian origin for the text.

The hagiographer concluded the *Passio* with a prayer to the saint, that he should ‘defend and cherish without rest the church which you see honours you with prayers and offerings, so that it will have you, raised in Galicia but glorified through martyr’s blood in Cordoba as an advocate before God.’ This could be a reference either to one of the churches in Cordoba where Pelagius was buried or to his native Galicia. It was in Galicia, in the narrowest geographical sense of this term, that the strongest claim to Pelagius was made. In the copies of the *Passion of Pelagius* which seem to be the earliest, Ermogius’ see is not named, nor is it in the *Silos Liber*

⁴³² Ibn Hayyān, *Al-Muqtabis V*, ed. P. Chalmeta, F. Corriente and M. Sobh, (Madrid, 1979), pp.103-10; trans. M. Viguera and F. Corriente, Zaragoza, 1981, pp.126-33; Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, p.89.

⁴³³ Chalmeta Gendrón, P., ‘Historiographia medieval hispana: arábica’, *Al-Andalus*, XXXVII, (1972), 353-404.

⁴³⁴ *Historia Silense*, 18, p.163.

⁴³⁵ Ibn Hayyān, *Al-Muqtabis*, 121-7; trans. pp. 146-51.

⁴³⁶ *ut totius Hispaniae hostes contra Galleciam mouerentur ut si fieri posset funditus subversa fideles omnes dominati possideret extera*; Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, ll.11-12, pp.34-37, trans. Bowman.

⁴³⁷ Díaz , ‘La Pasión’, pp.108-9.

sacramentorum of the eleventh century.⁴³⁸ The version of the office for Pelagius inserted into Vuilfurus' codex of texts for nuns⁴³⁹ gives Ermogius' see as Tuy. As we have seen, the provenance of this text is unknown. Further, the manuscript seems to have been retouched at a later date in order to mention Tuy.⁴⁴⁰ It is possible that Pelagius was not a native of Tuy, but that Tuy began to assert its claim to Pelagius at about the time when the cult of this saint was being promoted in León and Oviedo. The diocese of Tuy was under threat of dissolution during the second half of the tenth century, perhaps because of Norman attacks.⁴⁴¹ A charter dated 1000 was signed by a certain Viliulfo, bishop of Tuy; perhaps he was the Viulfurus whose name appears on the codex containing the *Passion of Pelagius* altered to mention Tuy.⁴⁴² In 1024, however, Alfonso V united Tuy with Santiago de Compostella, handing over what remained of Tuy's lands, and the see was not refounded until 1071. It is not clear when the clergy of Tuy began to assert their claim to Pelagius. A mass in the saint's honour was edited by Prudencio de Sandoval, bishop of Tuy (1608-1612) and of Pamplona (1612-1620), in a work on Tuy and its bishops.⁴⁴³ The attribution of the mass to 'a mozarab of about the year 930' may be Prudencio's. He noted that there were still three churches dedicated to Pelagius in Galicia. The mass takes a standard form and ends with a very brief account of Pelagius' passion. The church of Tuy claimed Pelagius as 'their martyr',⁴⁴⁴ saying that he had been born in the western part of Galicia where his family held lands, but they do not seem to have possessed his relics, saying only that 'Tuy received this our patron, your martyr who suffered in his body in Cordoba..';⁴⁴⁵ that is, they received him as their patron but may not have received his body. In fact, Tuy may not have received relics of Pelagius until the millennial celebrations of his death, in 1925.⁴⁴⁶ There are now more than 40 parishes in Galicia which preserve the memory of Pelagius, but many of these may be fairly modern.⁴⁴⁷ If Pelagius had once been the patron saint of the city of Tuy, he stopped being so some time after 1251, when the Dominican missionary Pedro

⁴³⁸ *BM Add. 30845*; Ferotin, *Le 'liber mozarabicus sacramentorum' et les manuscrits mozarabes*, (Paris, 1912).

⁴³⁹ *BN n.a.l. 239*.

⁴⁴⁰ Díaz, 'La Pasión', p.108.

⁴⁴¹ Isla, *La sociedad gallega*, pp.100-103.

⁴⁴² see above.

⁴⁴³ *Missa S. Pelagii Martyris a mozarabicus circa annum DCCCCXXX composita*, *PL 85, Liturgia Mozarabica - Missale Mixtum et Brevarium Gothicum*, cols. 1041-1050; Goni, J. 'Pelayo' in *DHEE*, pp.2174-2179, citing Prudencio de Sandoval, *Antigüedad de la cibdad y Iglesia de Tuy y de los obispos que se save que avido en ella*, (Braga, 1610).

⁴⁴⁴ *PL 85*, col.1046.

⁴⁴⁵ *hunc nostrum patronum martyrum tuum, corpore passum Cordubae, Tuda suscepit..*, *PL 85*, col.1047.

⁴⁴⁶ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, p.16, n.12.

⁴⁴⁷ Rodríguez, *La Pasion*, p.16, n.13.

González Telmo was adopted; at least Tuy had Telmo's relics.⁴⁴⁸ Pelagius was most closely associated with the monastery of Alveos, which preserved the tradition that Pelagius had been born there.⁴⁴⁹ This association was linked to a tradition that Ermogius had retired to a monastery, which he founded in honour of Pelagius, overcome by the fate of his nephew. A letter from an Ermogius 'confessor' from Celanova, dated 951, links this Ermogius with the monastery of Cabrugia Rivolimia, but the latter foundation was dedicated to St. Christopher. Thus it is not clear how this Ermogius is related to the bishop of the *Passion of Pelagius*.

There are tantalising snippets of information about the episcopate of Galicia which seem to tie in with the story of Pelagius. The tenth- and early eleventh-century bishops came from the nobility, and seem to have passed on their office from uncle to nephew. A charter dated 976 which may have been drawn up early in the eleventh century, from San Miguel in Lemos named the donor as the brother of bishop Vimara of Tuy, nephew of Ermogius, who himself was the nephew of bishop Nausto.⁴⁵⁰ Some of these bishops became involved in the struggles between Ramiro III and Vermudo II. One of the exiles at Celanova was a bishop named Pelagius expelled from the see of Iria by Vermudo in 985.⁴⁵¹ Since so many of these details are found in forged charters, it is difficult to evaluate them. The saint and his uncle may indeed have been natives of Tuy, and perhaps Pelagius had been destined to succeed his uncle as bishop. Yet it is equally possible that the diocese of Tuy based their claim to the cult of Pelagius on their reading of the *Passio*, and the coincidence between the name of one of their former bishops and the Ermogius of the *Passion of Pelagius*.

Although the details are so confused, it is clear that the cult of Pelagius was, in several ways, an aspect of the struggle towards self-definition for the Christian North. The dominance of historiography by the Kingdoms of the Asturias and then of León, and the rhetoric of Reconquest with its requirement for Christian unity in the face of the Islamic enemy, obscured the continuing struggles between Galicia and León, of which the competing claims to the cult of Pelagius were an aspect. Pelagius may also have been revered as representing the struggle between the Christian kingdoms and al-Andalus. There is a contemporary aspect to the story which, although the *Passio* does not use the language of anti-Muslim polemic, draws its significance from the fact that Pelagius suffered martyrdom in Cordoba. Pelagius' value to León and Oviedo, and the competing claims of Tuy, may represent his value to Northern factions in the face of the military might of al-Andalus, and his spiritual achievements were used by the North to support resistance to Islam which was both religious and political. Pelagius' hagiographer may have been presenting him as

⁴⁴⁸ Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, p.17, n.13; for the further history of the see of Tuy, Ramos, M., 'Tuy-Vigo' in *DHEE*, IV, pp.2598-2602.

⁴⁴⁹ commemorated by a plaque erected in Alveos in 1925; Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, p.13, n.4.

⁴⁵⁰ *Tumbo Nuevo de Lugo* f.41r-42r, cited by Isla, *Las sociedades gallega*, p.80.

⁴⁵¹ Isla, *Las sociedades gallega*, pp.90-91.

the saviour of his people when he wrote: 'For the nation which he left, he possessed the paradise he desired'.⁴⁵² Further, the story of Pelagius might have appealed to educated men of Galicia and León because he reminded them of another Pelagius who rescued the Christians of Northern Spain from Muslim oppression - the hero of Covadonga. Some of the details of the *Passion of Pelagius* recalled the story of the first Pelagius/Pelayo as they had read it in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*,⁴⁵³ probably composed in the 880s. The Pelayo of the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* was also sent to Cordoba, as an envoy or, in another version, as a hostage, by Munnuza, a companion of Tāriq ibn Ziyād, the conqueror of al-Andalus, so that Munnuza could marry Pelayo's sister. The writer makes it clear that this was more significant than just a personal affront to Pelayo: 'When Pelayo returned, he by no means consented to it. Since he had already been thinking about the salvation of the church, he hastened to bring this about.' Tariq's soldiers were sent to apprehend Pelayo and take him back to Cordoba, but Pelayo escaped to the mountains, where he was exposed to worldly temptations similar to those offered to the other Pelagius. Oppa, the bishop of Toledo and son of king Witiza, the penultimate Visigothic king of Spain taunted him: 'If', said Oppa, 'when the entire army of the Goths was assembled, it was unable to sustain the attack of the Ishmaelites, how much better will you be able to defend yourself on this mountain top? To me it seems difficult. Rather, heed my warning and recall your soul from this decision, so that you may take advantage of many good things and enjoy the partnership of the Chaldeans.'⁴⁵⁴ Pelagius replied with the analogy of the mustard seed, and from this unpromising beginning eventually achieved the famous victory over the Muslims which became the legendary origin of the Reconquest.

The Passion of Argentea

The *Passion of Argentea* may also be a window on Northern Christians' view of Cordoba. As only one copy of the *Passion of Argentea* survives, and there is no evidence for Argentea's cult, the interpretation of the story of Argentea must focus on the text itself. Argentea was, so the *Passio* tells us, the daughter of a king named Samuel and a queen named Columba of the city of Bibistrense, who rejected the trappings of royalty and dedicated herself to chastity. When her mother died, she refused her father's request to carry out the duties of a royal consort, and immured herself in a secure chamber below the palace enclosure. Even this privation failed to satisfy her aspirations and, hearing of a monk who was looking for martyrdom, she wrote to him asking for his advice about following this way to perfection. He advised patience, until the right

⁴⁵² *pro patria quam reliquit, possidet paradisum quem obtauit*; Rodríguez, *La Pasión*, 1.128, pp.80-81.

⁴⁵³ *Chronique d'Alphonse III*, ed. Bonnaz, *Chroniques Asturiennes*, pp.38-42; trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.164-168.

⁴⁵⁴ trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.166.

opportunity presented itself. This seemed to come with the overthrow of the city, when Argentea and several of her fellow-citizens made their way to Cordoba. Argentea spent several years in Cordoba, apparently practising her vocation of chastity undisturbed. Then, the *Passio* records, a Frank named Vulfura was summoned in a dream to come to Cordoba to help her achieve her goal of martyrdom. Vulfura was immediately arrested and thrown into prison, where Argentea visited him assiduously. During one of these visits, she was recognised as Samuel's daughter: 'she found herself surrounded on all sides by pagans, and she heard, having been asked harmful questions: 'Are you not, O woman, the daughter of Samuel their prince?'.... Therefore the blessed Argentea, wishing to be a participant in the hoped-for passion, rejoiced, intrepidly declared that she was not only the daughter of the aforementioned father, but truly a guardian of the catholic faith..'⁴⁵⁵ Both Argentea and Vulfura were brought before an unnamed judge, questioned, tortured, and put to death. Argentea was buried in Cordoba, but the fate of Vulfura's relics was unknown even to the hagiographer.

The circumstantial details of the *Passion of Argentea* have been drawn together into a narrative which places Argentea not only in the geographical heart of power, but in the centre of the Christian-Muslim conflict of the tenth century. As we have seen, Argentea left her native city following its overthrow. Dozy, the indefatigable maker of connections between bits and pieces of evidence, identified this city, which the *Passio* names as Bibistrense, with a place which the Arabic sources called Bobastro.⁴⁵⁶ I cannot corroborate this assumption, whose main function is to tie Argentea in with Ibn HafSūn, who led a long-running rebellion against Cordoba. Bobastro, which is given many different but related names in the Arabic sources, was his stronghold. He may have apostatized from Islam to the Christian faith of his ancestors as part of his protest, although this is not certain, as we shall see. Simonet, in his usual fashion, stretched this association, saying that Argentea was 'carried to Cordoba with her brother HafS and the other citizens of Bobastro,' as though they were being taken into some Babylonian captivity. (In fact, the passion says that 'cum fratribus ceterisque concivibus Cordobensum urbem petivit' which implies that she went willingly to Cordoba, accompanied by some of her fellow-citizens, among them perhaps monks rather than her biological brothers.) Add to this mixture an extra-textual reference to the Cordoban martyrs of the 850s and the result is a neat representation of religious conflict in Spain, coming to a climax with Argentea's death, at the heart of Islamic power.

The linking of Argentea and Ibn HafSun may have deterred those historians who have written so copiously on the ninth-century martyrs from examining the *Passion of Argentea* by placing it in the wrong historiographical camp, linked with the Arabic sources which Latin historians consider, perhaps wrongly, to be even more impenetrable than their own. Ibn HafSun illustrates the

⁴⁵⁵ *Vita Argenteae* 12; Fabrega, *Pasionario*, p.386.

⁴⁵⁶ Simonet, *Historia de los Mozárabes*, p.596, n.2.

problems of the Arabic sources only too well. He is copiously documented, but in directly contradictory accounts; all may be late, their manuscripts certainly are, and it is almost impossible to arbitrate between them. By the twelfth-century, Rodrigo Ximenez de Rada⁴⁵⁷ was already arguing about his significance for the history of the Reconquest.⁴⁵⁸ According to Ibn 'Askar's (1188/9-1239) *History of Malaga*,⁴⁵⁹ he was the descendant of a prominent Visigoth named Marcellus, but his grandfather converted to Islam. Most of the Arabic sources relate his campaigns against Cordoba and his alliances with neighbouring rebels, but with markedly different emphases. It appears that Ibn HafSun alternated periods of opposition to the Umayyads with service to the regime in the army and as a governor. Ibn al-QūTīya says that 'Ibn HafSun died at the beginning of the reign of 'Abd al-RaHmān ibn Muhammad after having made friends with him and pledged his allegiance.'⁴⁶⁰ His career points to a weakness of central control of al-Andalus which otherwise emerges only rarely from the works of Umayyad panegyrists.⁴⁶¹ There are several similarities between the career of Ibn HafSūn and his treatment by later historians, and a more famous medieval Spanish adventurer, the Cid.⁴⁶² Only from the nineteenth century has Ibn HafSun been portrayed as a focus of the nationalist aspirations of indigenous Spaniards. The question of his Christianity is another instance of modern historians selecting their sources according to their own concerns.⁴⁶³ Ibn al-QūTīya, who may be a contemporary witness,⁴⁶⁴ did not mention it. The earliest account of Ibn HafSūn's apostasy to Christianity appears in a text now called the *Anonymous Chronicle of 'Abd al-RaHmān al-NaSir*,⁴⁶⁵ which may date from the tenth or eleventh century, although it survives in a copy of perhaps the fourteenth century. Again, it is Ibn Idhārī, who described the building of the Cordoban mosque in such detail, who claimed to know the exact date of Ibn HafSun's apostasy.⁴⁶⁶ Both 'Arīb ibn Sa'id, quoted by Ibn Idhārī, and the author of the *Anonymous*

⁴⁵⁷ Ximénez de Rada R., *Historia Arabum*, in *Opera*, (Valencia, 1968), p.268.

⁴⁵⁸ Acién Almansa M., *Entre el feudalismo y el Islam. 'Umar ibn Hafsun en los historiadores, en las fuentes y en la historia*, (Jaén, 1994).

⁴⁵⁹ Vallvé Bermejo J, 'Una fuente importante de la historia de Al-Andalus. La <<Historia>> de Ibn 'Askar, *Al-Andalus*, (1966), XXXI, pp.237-265; he does not date the manuscript, which was discovered in Morocco.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibn al-QūTīya, *History of the Conquest of Al-Andalus*, trans. Nichols, p.255.

⁴⁶¹ Marín Guzmán R., 'The Causes of the Revolt of 'Umar ibn Hafsun in Al-Andalus 880-928: A Study in Medieval Islamic Social History', *Arabica*, (1995), XLII, 180-221.

⁴⁶² Fletcher R., *The Quest for El Cid*, (Oxford, 1989).

⁴⁶³ for a particularly strong recent view of Ibn Hafsun as a Christian convert whose religion played a key role in his opposition to Cordoba, see Cutler A., 'The ninth-century Spanish martyrs' movement and the origins of western christian missions to the muslims', *The Muslim World*, (1965), LV, pp.321-339, at p.333: 'In the famous 'Umar ibn HafSun the dreams of the martyrs' movement were perfectly realised.'

⁴⁶⁴ although the surviving manuscript of his *History* is much later; see chapter 6.

⁴⁶⁵ García Gómez, *Una crónica anónima*.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibn Hayyān *Muqtabis*, trans. Guraieb J. *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, XXVIII, (1958), p.172.

Chronicle disparaged Ibn HafSūn as the 'refuge of the unbelievers and hypocrites',⁴⁶⁷ without specifying his apostasy. Archaeologists claim to have found the church where Ibn HafSun was buried, at Las Mesas de Villaverde, Ardales, near Ronda,⁴⁶⁸ but since the identification of this site as Bobastro is still disputed,⁴⁶⁹ this is not very likely; besides, the church has been dated only as 'early medieval', and could be Visigothic.⁴⁷⁰ It is possible that the accusation in the *Anonymous Chronicle of 'Abd al-RaHmān al-NaSir* that Ibn HafSun was an apostate was a particularly vicious *damnatio memoriae* especially as it is elaborated with the story that Ibn HafSūn's apostasy had been secret, and was revealed only when his body was exhumed and found to be buried in the Christian manner, and that 'Abd al-RaHmān III exhumed his corpse and crucified it on the walls of Cordoba between those of two of his sons.

To return to more immediate concerns, none of the sources say that Ibn HafSun had a daughter, and the dates for his career are difficult to square with those given by the *Passion of Argentea*. Argentea was said to have left Bibistrense after its overthrow. Bobastro faced a major Cordoban attack c.923/4 and finally overthrown c.928,⁴⁷¹ when HafS ibn 'Umar, one of several sons of Ibn Hafsūn, was in control, 'Umar ibn HafSūn himself having died c.917.⁴⁷² The *Anonymous Chronicle* says that 'HafS ibn 'Umar ibn HafSūn was brought before the emir with his family and hostages, who confirmed the peace treaty and gave them good welcome. With this good fortune, God, with his power, put an end to the rule of the evil family of HafSūn'. It is just plausible, but rather unlikely, that Argentea saw this as the right time to be martyred. If, however, she had already left Bobastro during one of her father's periodic defeats, what the *Passio* described as the 'turning cycle of her years' in Cordoba must have seemed to stretch interminably if she had to wait for martyrdom until 931 - the date given in the *Passio*. It is impossible to mine the *Passion of Argentea* for facts in any convincing way. The whole confection that Argentea was the daughter of a proto-nationalist Catholic rebel must be rejected, leaving us with something much more complicated.

Like the *Passion of Pelagius*, the *Passion of Argentea* is primarily a treatise on the two principal

⁴⁶⁷ *'amīd al-Kāfirīn wa-rā's al-munāfiqīn'*; García Gómez, *Una crónica anónima*, p.119; Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, p.171.

⁴⁶⁸ Puertas Tricas R., 'La iglesia rupestre de Las Mesas de Villaverde, (Ardales, Málaga)', *Mainake*, I, (1979), 179-216.

⁴⁶⁹ Vallvé Bermejo J., 'De nuevo sobre Bobastro', *Al-Andalus*, (1965), XXX, 139-174; Ación, *Entre el feudalismo y el Islam*, p.22.

⁴⁷⁰ Simonet supposed the ruins to be those of Ibn HafSūn's fortress: Simonet F.J., 'Una expedición a las ruinas de Bobastro. Cartas dirigidas al ilustrísimo señor D. Aureliano Fernández Guerra, *La ciencia cristiana*, (1877), IV, 271-27 [sic], 309-322, 494-506, V, 134-147, cited in Manzanares, *Arabistas españoles*, p.143.

⁴⁷¹ García Gómez, *Una crónica anónima*, pp.140-141, 146 and 148.

⁴⁷² 303/915-16 according to García Gómez, *Una crónica anónima*, p.119; Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, p.171 has 305/917-18.

Christian virtues, described in this text as a twofold handful of flowers - the white of chastity and the purple of martyrdom - and is divided almost equally between the two aspects. Apart from the date given for her martyrdom, the historical details are vague, and the story is modelled on the anonymous hagiographical romances known as the *gesta martyrum*⁴⁷³ rather than on contemporary debate with Islam. Argentea's journey to Cordoba recalls the martyrdom of Agapé, Irene and Chioné at Salonika, who 'when the persecution was raging under the Emperor,..... abandoned their native city, their family, property and possessions because of their love of God and their expectation of heavenly things'.⁴⁷⁴ When Argentea made a public declaration of her faith:

'the crowd excited into fury brought the follower of Christ before the judge. Interrogated by the judge about the conditions of the faith, she responded with constancy thus: Why do you exasperate me with your questions? Have I not testified that I was a follower of the embraced Christian faith? But because according to the apostolic dogma, which believed in the heart leads to justice and confessed through the mouth to deliverance, I confess before all: I believe in one God in three persons, adored in indistinguishable substance, and declare the personality to be unconfused.'⁴⁷⁵

Holding ludicrously complicated beliefs about the nature of God was one of the accusations made against Christians by Muslim polemic, but this passage seems to have been lifted from a passion of a much earlier period, where the Trinitarian emphasis seems to be addressing anti-Arian concerns. This impression is reinforced by the relatively good Latin of this text. Equally anachronistic is the reference to an unnamed *praeses*, whose judgement is enforced by *lictors*, surely out of place in tenth-century Cordoba. Yet, if the hagiographer was merely reworking a conventional passion for anti-Muslim polemic, the result is not a success; some of the new details work against the picture of Cordoba as a city dominated by Muslim persecutors, and the focus for opposition to Islam that he or she may be trying to present. The text says of Argentea's arrival in Cordoba, 'united with religious people in that city, and firm in the usual fashion, she emptied herself busily in continence, and thus for a long time she lived through the turning circle of the years. With how many and what kinds of virtues she flourished in her fashion and was illustrious in pious acts, if we tried to set them all out with our pen we would seem to set out what was no less decorative and boring'. The impression thus given that there was a flourishing Christian community in Cordoba is the only part of the whole story which seems to ring true. Some of the churches built in the Visigothic period, including the basilica of the Three Saints where Argentea was said to have been buried, survived into the Reconquest period. Several

⁴⁷³ Cooper K., 'The martyr, the *matrona* and the bishop: networks of allegiance in early sixth-century Rome', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, forthcoming.

⁴⁷⁴ Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, p.281.

⁴⁷⁵ *Vita Argenteae*, 13, Fabrega, *Pasionario*, p.386.

inscriptions, or the copies of others made by earlier antiquarians, commemorated nuns who died in the tenth century.⁴⁷⁶ Christians established prominent roles in government; the Arabic sources mention them briefly as members of embassies to the Christian courts of northern Spain, western Europe and Byzantium.⁴⁷⁷ The impression one gains from these fragments is that Cordoba was a Christian as well as a Muslim city. A pious woman from outside the capital would easily have found a convent to receive her. Being martyred in the spectacular way outlined by the *Passio* might, however, have been more difficult.

The task of interpreting the *Passion of Argentea* is made more difficult because it is not clear when and for whom the text was written. Argentea may not have been remembered in Cordoba. Her feast-day is not listed in the *Calendar of Cordoba*. In both the Arabic and Latin versions of the *Calendar of Cordoba*, October 13 is given as 'the feast of three martyrs put to death in the city of Cordoba. The sepulchre is in the District of the Tower.' The Latin version adds: 'And their festival is in the [church of] the Three Saints.'⁴⁷⁸ Although the saints' names are not given, this is assumed to be the church of Faustus, Januarius and Martialis, and this is where Argentea was supposed to have been interred. The church, which was the most important in Cordoba after the Arab conquest, and later changed its name to St. Peter, survived until after the fall of the Umayyads. Yet the memory of Argentea does not seem to have been preserved there.⁴⁷⁹ Two allusions in the text might indicate that the author was a native of Cordoba - it says that Argentea 'made her way to Cordoba as a stranger (*advena*), of which her body would soon in the future be an inhabitant', and after her death, her miracles were 'constantly taking place among us up to now', but neither of these allusions are conclusive. The *Passion of Argentea* could have been written in the North, and like the *Passion of Pelagius* it should be interpreted as relevant to a northern-Spanish audience. Working from the assumption that the *Passion of Argentea* was composed in Northern Spain at about the time that it was copied into the appendix of the first *Passionary of Cardeña*, it is possible to speculate how the *Passion of Argentea* made sense as a product of the Christian kingdoms. Could it perhaps be a moral tale about the duties of a princess, perhaps based on the existence of real martyrs in Cordoba, but addressed to contemporary events in the North?

The names of the participants in the drama are unusual, to put it no more strongly, and suggest that the protagonists of the *Passion of Argentea* are symbolic rather than real. Argentea's name recalls that of a martyr of the ninth century, Aurea: silver and gold. Her father Samuel does not

⁴⁷⁶ Pérez, *Los monjes españoles*, p.266, mentions the nuns Ikilio, Justa and Rufina from the monastery of Santa Eulalia, south of Cordoba, but does not give his sources.

⁴⁷⁷ see chapter 6.

⁴⁷⁸ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.151.

⁴⁷⁹ Pérez F., 'Cordue', in *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de la Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, (Paris, 1956), vol. XIII, pp. 859.

seem to be have anything to do with the biblical Samuel. His name might, however, bring to mind one of the contemporary rulers of León and Pamplona. The rulers of Pamplona were called Sancho Garcés or García Sanches alternately. Sancho the Fat ruled León from 955-957 and from 960-967. Bibistrense, Samuel's royal city, may recall Barbastro, near Huesca, rather than the elusive Bobastro of the Arabic sources. A female saint called Columba was commemorated in the Spanish passionary, but in this context, may have reminded the audience of the dove, the Holy Spirit; it was an appropriate name for a protagonist whose main function in the story was to die. Vulfura sounds like Wulfhere, which is not a Frankish but an Anglo-Saxon name, but suggests a foreigner.⁴⁸⁰ In this story his martyrdom was not described, and his relics were apparently mislaid, so that he seems no more than a literary device, like the monk who told Argentea to wait before she could fulfil her desire to be martyred. Perhaps Vulfura was meant to be downplayed in comparison with Argentea. More probably, he became superfluous to the story. Argentea and her family and companions are improbable, but it is possible that their names helped the audience of the *Passion of Argentea* to locate the story in northern Spain around the end of the tenth century.

It may be possible to pin down the genesis of the story more precisely, as another manifestation of the growth of female monasticism, along with the cult of Pelagius. This cult, as we have seen, was associated with Elvira, sister of Sancho the Fat. Elvira seems, like Argentea, to have been an exemplary princess. Perhaps others were not. When in 957, Sancho the Fat lost his throne, the Arabic sources say that he was restored only with the support of a Cordoban army, after he, his grandmother Tota and García Sánchez I of Navarre had made an embassy to Cordoba, and surrendered a number of frontier fortresses to the Muslims.⁴⁸¹ Perhaps this deal involved sending a royal princess to the Umayyad harem. It was not unknown for the Umayyads to take Christian wives. A woman from Navarre called SubH in the Arabic histories, became prominent at the Cordoban court, after bearing two sons to al-Hakam II.⁴⁸² One of the boys died young, but the other acceded to the throne as Hisham II at an early age and his mother was involved in his regency, possibly becoming the mistress of the chamberlain Ibn Abī Amīr who later usurped the Umayyad throne and took the title al-ManSūr.⁴⁸³ She is commemorated in the inscription on the base of a fountain erected on her orders in 977.⁴⁸⁴ She died in 999.⁴⁸⁵ SubH was said to be a concubine who had been captured in a campaign against Navarre and there is no suggestion that she was of royal blood. Al-ManSūr, however, may have may have married one

⁴⁸⁰ but it recalls the scribe Vuilfurus of *BN n.a.l.* 239; see above.

⁴⁸¹ Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, II, p.251; al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, p.235.

⁴⁸² Ibn al-FaraDī, *Tarīkh 'ulamā' al-Andalus*, p.10; Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane*, II, p.173 and n.4.

⁴⁸³ Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, II, p.268.

⁴⁸⁴ Lévi-Provençal E., *Inscriptions arabes d'Espagne*, (Leiden and Paris, 1931), no.30, pp.37-38.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibn al-FaraDī, *Tarīkh*, no.533, p.152.

of the daughters of Sancho the Fat, or possibly of one of the kings of Navarre; the mother of one of his sons was 'the daughter of Shanjūh, the Christian, the king'.⁴⁸⁶ Since the Arabic sources refer only to the caliph's consorts who provided him with sons, there may have been other Navarrese or Leonese princesses in his entourage who achieved less prominence in Cordoba but whose defection to the seductions of life with the infidel may be the subject to which the *Passion of Argentea* is a counterblast. The hagiographer may be arguing that, rather than travelling to Cordoba to consort with the enemy, a Christian princess, should she find herself in that city, should prepare herself by a life of chastity and prison-visiting to be worthy of a martyr's crown.

Thus Cordoba, seen from the perspective of the *Passion of Pelagius* and the *Passion of Argentea* is not primarily a *topos*; it is not, as one might have expected from modern reconstructions, the place of martyrdom, a far-away city where Christian unease about Islam received its ultimate expression. The two texts were read, and at least one of them may have been written, in Northern Spain. Yet, although the hagiographers do not evoke Umayyad splendour, not even by mentioning the Great mosque, their picture of a city where Christian activities were still openly practised, which must come from the tenth or eleventh centuries, may be more realistic than those drawn by the Arabic historians. The latter were remembering Cordoba long after its glories had passed, when they were free to imagine how it might have been. It is almost certain, from what little has been excavated, that their picture of Cordoba is overdrawn. The authors of the *Passion of Pelagius* and the *Passion of Argentea* had the more immediate concerns of their audiences in mind. They may have been written in response to actual martyrdoms, although the circumstance of these deaths cannot be disentangled from the models of the texts on which they were based, nor from the purposes of their authors. For the hagiographers, the significance of both the tenth-century martyrs of Cordoba was that they died as virgins, and this virginity was perhaps the highest virtue at a time when virtue was threatened by the lure of life under Islam.⁴⁸⁷ Pelagius the child saint served this metaphorical purpose just as well as Argentea did, and his name recalled the saviour of the Christian kingdoms. Both hagiographers showed that to go to Cordoba was to place one's salvation in doubt. In the *Passion of Pelagius*, Cordoba is a city where Christians might be tempted by power, riches and sexual pleasures to fall into sin. In the *Passion of Argentea*, the city has the power to corrupt Christian princes into alliances with the infidel, and their princesses from the chastity and martyrdom of the ideal Christian life. Both texts are polemics, and as such they exaggerated the dangers which faced Christians in the land of Islam. The next chapter illustrates another, more plausible Christian response to life in Cordoba.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, ed. Lévi-Provençal E. (Paris, 1930), III, p.38, cited by Wasserstein D.J., *The Rise and Fall of the Party Kings*, (Princeton, 1985), p.48.

⁴⁸⁷ Cameron A., 'Virginity as Metaphor' in *ibid.* (ed.), *History as Text*, (1989), pp.184-205, at p.191.

6. Recemund and the *Calendar of Cordoba*

'Concerning astrology: Ibn Zaid the bishop, the Cordoban, wrote on this subject. He was the favourite of al-Mustansir ibn an-Nasir the Marwānid [al-Hakam II] for whom he composed the *Book of the Division of the Seasons and the Hygiene of the Body*⁴⁸⁸ in which he indicated the stations of the moon and how these matters were related, and their approximate significance'.⁴⁸⁹

In his recent history of *Moorish Spain*, Fletcher called as one of his key witnesses 'a Mozarabic Christian cleric named Recemund, who ended his life as bishop of the Christian community of Elvira. Recemund had a successful career as a civil servant under 'Abd al-Rahmān III; in 955-6 he had been employed on a diplomatic mission to the German king Otto I ... in about 960 he commissioned a work known to scholars as the *Calendar of Cordoba*'.⁴⁹⁰ It is rare to have enough material to reconstruct the biography of an Andalusian Christian, since most of the narrative sources for al-Andalus in the tenth century are accounts of the achievements of the Umayyad rulers, which hardly ever mention the indigenous population. Fletcher neatly summed up the standard view of Recemund, who has come to epitomise *convivencia*, Christian integration in Muslim Spain. Recemund's mission to Otto is well attested, and he was the dedicatee of a history, the *Antapodosis* [which has been translated as *Tit-for-Tat*] of Liudprand of Cremona,⁴⁹¹ but other aspects of Recemund's biography can be challenged, especially his connection with the *Calendar of Cordoba*. The aim of this chapter is to reconsider the evidence for Recemund, in order to assess the importance both of the man and of the *Calendar* for the history of al-Andalus.

The *Life of John of Gorze*

The main evidence for Recemund is the *Life* of an abbot from Gorze, a daughter house of Metz in Lorraine.⁴⁹² John of Gorze served as ambassador to the Umayyad court in Cordoba. His *Life* survives in one tenth-century copy from Metz, and was probably written by John of St-Arnulf in Metz, who succeeded his namesake as abbot of Gorze. In his preface, the author said that he began to write on the day after the saint's death. The first part, which describes John's origins and education before he became abbot of Gorze, was finished by 978. It is followed by portraits

⁴⁸⁸ *TafSīl al-'Azmān wa-masālih al-'Abdān*.

⁴⁸⁹ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, II, pp.125-6.

⁴⁹⁰ Fletcher R., *Moorish Spain*, (1992), p.62.

⁴⁹¹ Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, trans. Wright F.A., ed. Norwich J.J., *The Embassy to Constantinople and Other Writings*, (1993).

⁴⁹² *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, ed. Pertz, *MGH SS IV*, pp.335-377.

of some of the monks, and of John himself. The final section is a long account of his journey to Cordoba. The author did not give any information about John's abbacy, which he had promised to do in his introduction, perhaps because the work was interrupted; it breaks off in the middle of a page and seems to have been unfinished rather than curtailed in transmission. In spite of this, it is detailed and immediate, although influenced by the hagiographical purpose of its author, as we shall see. In particular, the outline of John of Gorze's embassy to Spain is usually considered trustworthy, since some of the events described can be independently corroborated.

According to the *Life*, John of Gorze's embassy to Cordoba was Otto's response to a delegation from 'Abd al-RaHmān III congratulating Otto on his victories. Liudprand of Cremona reported a purpose which was much less peaceful. A dispute had arisen between the two rulers over the attacks on Otto's lands by pirates who had established their base at Fraxinetum (La Garde Freinet in the Gulf of St. Tropez).⁴⁹³ They had probably been preying on the surrounding area, and on pilgrims crossing the Alps, for about a century. The Latin sources call them Saracens, and later Arabic historians agreed that they were Muslims, but their origins are obscure. It is not clear whether they owed any allegiance to Cordoba, although Ibn Hayyān reported that an unnamed Christian prince, travelling to Cordoba in 940, asked the 'Abd al-RaHmān III to guarantee his safe passage through Fraxinetum,⁴⁹⁴ and the *Life* says that the embassy from Cordoba was intended to forestall any reprisals by Otto against al-Andalus. The mission foundered, however, because the sentiments expressed in the caliph's letters to Otto were considered derogatory to the Christian faith. The ambassadors were kept waiting for three years at Otto's court, then sent back empty-handed. Otto wished to reply to 'Abd al-RaHmān's insults and turned to Adalbert, the bishop of Metz to find suitable men to undertake this dangerous mission; John of Gorze was selected. His party was escorted to Cordoba by merchants from Verdun, who were active along the routes connecting Spain with Northern Europe and Byzantium.⁴⁹⁵ The *Life* does not give the date of John's embassy. It could be the one mentioned by Ibn Idhārī: 'In the year 348 [18 May 953-6 May 954] the ambassadors of Otto, king of the 'Slavs' arrived',⁴⁹⁶ although it is evidence at three centuries' remove and unlikely to be accurate, and there were almost certainly other embassies from Otto to the Umayyads. The embassy to Cordoba cannot be dated from any other source, but it is reasonable to suppose that it took place in the 950s.

The hagiographer noted that John of Gorze was not impressed by the moral standards of the

⁴⁹³ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, I,1, trans. Wright, *The Embassy*, pp.8-9; Senac Ph. *Provence et piraterie sarrasine*, (Paris, 1982), p.20, on the actual site of Fraxinetum.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibn Hayyān, *Muqtabas*, ed. Makki M.A., (Beirut, 1973), p.154.

⁴⁹⁵ Sabbas E., 'Quelques types de marchands des IX^e et X^e siècles', *Revue belge de Philologie et d'histoire*, (1934), XIII, pp. 176-187, at p.183.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibn Idhārī, *Al-Bayan*, II, p. 218.

Christians of Cordoba.⁴⁹⁷ John did not hand over Otto's letters immediately, in spite of threats that if he did not divulge their contents to agents from the palace, he would surely be killed for carrying letters blaspheming against Islam. He had, however, already confided their contents to a *presbyter*, one of the members of the unsuccessful Andalusian delegation; this man, fearing for his life if he returned to the caliph empty-handed, passed on the information to the Cordoban court. 'Abd al-RaHmān was now in a dilemma; honour forced him to kill Otto's ambassador to avenge the insult to his faith, but this risked provoking war with the emperor. The only solution seemed to be for all concerned to pretend that the letters had never existed, but John of Gorze could not be persuaded to agree to this stratagem. First a prominent Jew named Hasdeu (presumably Hasdeu Ibn Shaprūt, mentioned several times in Jewish sources) was sent to mediate with John of Gorze, then the bishop of Cordoba, also called John, who pleaded with John of Gorze, saying that his intransigence was putting the whole Christian community of al-Andalus in danger:

'Consider' he said 'under what conditions we exist. Through our sins we have been reduced to this, that we are subject to the sway of the pagans. The Apostle forbids us to resist legitimate power. There is only one consolation in this calamity, that they do not forbid us our law.....In the circumstances, therefore, it seems wise to us to comply with all things which do not hinder our faith...'⁴⁹⁸

John replied: 'You, who appear to be a bishop, are the last person who should speak thus..... It is a thousand times better for the Christian to suffer the cruel torment of hunger than to eat the food of the gentiles at the cost of his soul'. He quoted scripture against the acceptance by the Christians of al-Andalus of the practise of circumcision. John declared himself able to resist the temptation to abandon his mission. He remained firm even when the caliph threatened to punish the whole Christian community for John's intransigence, saying that he would be torn limb from limb rather than fail in his task of delivering Otto's letters. It was for God, not John, to dictate what would happen to the caliph's Christian subjects. At last 'Abd al-RaHmān, won over by John's courage, decided to send a new embassy to Otto to seek a resolution of the crisis. The man commissioned to head the delegation was Recemund.

There are many references in the Arabic sources to Christian members of embassies from

⁴⁹⁷ Leyser suggested that the pirates of Fraxinetum were merely the pretext for a mission whose real aim was 'religious reconnaissance': Leyser K., 'Ends and means in Liudprand of Cremona' in Howard-Johnson J.D. (ed.), *Byzantium and the West c.850-c.1200*, (Amsterdam, 1988), pp. 119-143, repr. in Reuter T. (ed.), *K. Leyser: Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, (1994), pp.125-142.

⁴⁹⁸ *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, 122.

Cordoba to Christian Europe and Byzantium, but the Arabic historians supply little more than the Christians' names, perhaps with the information that they acted as interpreters. The *Life* gives a detailed account of Recemund's journey to Otto, but it is written from the perspective of the hagiographer concerned to illustrate John of Gorze's sanctity, rather than to provide an unbiased account of Recemund. Thus, Recemund comes out of this story no better than the other Christian collaborators condemned by John. The *Life* described him as a palace official who diligently carried out his duties. His apprehension about being the caliph's envoy to Otto was overcome only by the prospect of material advancement. In the dramatic words of the *Life*, Recemund asked the caliph 'What reward are you going to give to the man who sells you his soul?'⁴⁹⁹ Recemund agreed to lead the embassy if the caliph recompensed him with a see which had just fallen vacant: 'This', the *Life* continues, 'was easily granted, and he was suddenly advanced to the office of bishop from the laity'. Recemund obtained the see of Granada, also known as Illiberis or Elvira; in the dedication of the *Antapodosis*, Liudprand referred to Recemund as the 'bishop of Elvira in Spain',⁵⁰⁰ and this appellation was repeated by Sigibert of Gembloux, Trithemio and the false chronicler of Pavia,⁵⁰¹ who may, however, all have read the *Antapodosis*. Recemund could have served as bishop from 958, succeeding Gapio, who died in that year, and whose name is the last to appear in a list of the bishops of Seville, Toledo and Elvira in the *Codex Emilianense*.⁵⁰² The codex was started in 962, and finished in 994. The reason why the list stops with Gapio may be that, since it was a necrology, Recemund was excluded because he was still alive in 994. This was some forty years after his appointment, however, and it seems that the see of Elvira may have lapsed either during or after Recemund's occupancy, since no more bishops were recorded. Perhaps he was not accepted as bishop because of the uncanonical nature of his elevation.

Yet we should not accept every word of John of St-Arnulf's description of Recemund and the Cordoban Christian community. The hagiographer's working of his material reflects the ideals of the Benedictine reform movement led by Gorze in which John of Gorze played a prominent role.⁵⁰³ The *Life* is given over to the great piety of its subject, and the portrait of John in chapters 72-94 has been shown to echo the Rule of Benedict and the *Collection of capitularies* of Benedict of Aniane.⁵⁰⁴ To some extent, the author pursued this scheme in describing John's journey to Spain, which appears - perhaps factitiously given that the *Life* is incomplete - as a dramatic coda to John's contemplative life as a soldier of Christ. Otto asked for monks to act as

⁴⁹⁹ *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, 128.

⁵⁰⁰ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, I, 1.

⁵⁰¹ *España Sagrada*, LIV, p.180.

⁵⁰² *Nomina defunctorum Episcoporum Spalensis Sedis vel Toletane atque Eliberritane sedis*, cited in *España Sagrada*, LVI, p.179.

⁵⁰³ Parisse M., 'Introduction', in *ibid.* and Oexle O. (eds.), *L'abbaye de Gorze au X^e siècle*, (Nancy, 1993), pp.9-24.

⁵⁰⁴ Barone G., 'Jean de Gorze, moine bénédictin', in Oexle, *L'abbaye de Gorze*, pp.141-158.

his intermediaries in Cordoba, since, as the *Life* puts it, 'being already dead to the world'⁵⁰⁵ they feared no earthly danger. The bishop of Metz's first choice as leader of the delegation to Spain was Wido, but he committed a most unBenedictine crime of disobedience: 'rebuked for having fallen into some neglect of his monastic duties [he] burst out in insults against the abbot and the whole community and, enraged by his great wrath and folly, he refused to submit to any reprimand or monastic discipline, so that at last they removed his cowl and he was expelled from the monastery'.⁵⁰⁶ John volunteered to replace him, and although he was really too valuable to be spared, his sacrifice was accepted in order that he might fulfil his desire for martyrdom. John was not dismayed by 'Abd al-RaHmān's hostile reception; since the Andalusian delegation to Otto had been kept waiting for three years, John in his turn was prepared to be detained for nine. Now the author's angle on his story becomes clear. It is yet another example of the saint's steadfastness in the service of his faith, contrasted with the transgressions of Wido. Once Recemund's embassy had been successfully concluded John was received at the Cordoban court. The impression which the luxury and pageantry of this ceremony must have made is clear from the biographer's long description of it, but his emphasis is on John's refusal to put on elaborate clothes for the occasion, yet another instance of his sanctity. The complaints about the Christians of al-Andalus which John's biographer puts into his mouth may reflect John's views on the compromises involved in living under Muslim rule. But this section of the *Life* reads as though written to adhere to the conventions of the passions of the fourth-century martyrs as closely as the biographer could contrive, given that John returned from Cordoba unharmed and lived for another twenty years. To this end, political differences were played down, and crisis was represented as almost entirely spiritual, hence the *Life's* stress on the two rulers' inability to compose letters whose sentiments the other could tolerate. Thus the Christians who had compromised their faith to such an extent that they were able to live under the domination of infidels had to be condemned. The same bias may colour the picture which the *Life* paints of Recemund.

The sermon on Benedictine values is not the only aspect of the *Life* which contributes to the author's view of Recemund. The hagiographer also praised John of Gorze for his learning, devoting a long section of his work to John's education, his travels through Italy and the scholars with whom he studied.⁵⁰⁷ It seems to have been John's erudition rather than his sanctity which led the lay and ecclesiastical leaders in Metz to appoint him to Gorze. Even after he became abbot, and in the face of his bishop's objections, he continued to travel in pursuit of wisdom. Under his abbacy, Gorze attracted men from as far afield as England, Ireland, Scotland and

⁵⁰⁵ 'utpote seculo jam defunctus', *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, 116.

⁵⁰⁶ *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, 116.

⁵⁰⁷ *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, 17, 22, 24, 33, 41, 43, 52.

Calabria.⁵⁰⁸ It is likely that Recemund too became part of this community. The author of the *Life* included Recemund in his encomium of scholarship, in spite of Recemund's moral failings, describing him as 'most catholic' and as learned in Latin as in Arabic.⁵⁰⁹ As we saw in the previous chapter, this is not the commonly-accepted view of the Christians of al-Andalus, who are usually thought to have lost their Latin at least a century earlier. Recemund's journey, as it is described in the *Life*, looks a scholarly enterprise as much as it does a diplomatic one. His party did not go directly to Frankfurt but to Gorze, arriving in August and spending the autumn and winter there. Recemund went via Gorze on his return journey.⁵¹⁰ There is the suggestion, although it should be no more than this, that he brought with him the *Passion of Pelagius*.⁵¹¹ Unfortunately, there are no surviving examples of Recemund's Latin, although fragments of two anonymous letters written in Cordoba in this period, one of them addressed to the counts Miro and Borrell who ruled Barcelona in the 950s and 60s, could have been written by Recemund.⁵¹² It would be a mistake to attribute to Recemund every contemporary instance of contact between the Latin culture of al-Andalus and that of Christian Europe. Yet it is clear that Recemund was not merely acting as a translator, nor as the venal functionary of an alien ruler, but was able to hold his own among Christian scholars outside Spain.

The dedication of Liudprand's *Antapodosis*

It is in this context that the dedication to Recemund of Liudprand's *Antapodosis* should be seen. Liudprand, a deacon of Pavia, spent his youth at the courts of Hugh of Arles and Berengar of Ivrea, Hugh's successor as ruler of Italy. He deserted Berengar for Otto, then the ruler of Saxony. Liudprand served as Otto's ambassador to Constantinople in 960, and was rewarded with the see of Cremona in the following year. He subsequently took part in Otto's campaign against Berengar in Italy which culminated in Otto's imperial coronation in Rome in 962. Based on the date of 953/4 for John of Gorze's mission to Cordoba, Recemund's journey to Frankfurt is usually dated 956, although it could have been two years' later, when the see of Granada fell vacant. Liudprand was vague about when exactly he himself became an Ottonian partisan, but he

⁵⁰⁸ *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, 17, 33, 41, 43, 52; *Miracula S. Gorgonii*, 26: *MGH SS IV*, p.246, *Vita Gerardi episcopi Tullensis*, 19: *MGH SS IV*, p.486; *Vita Adalberonis II episcopi Mettensis*, 26: *MGH SS IV*, 659ff.; Thompson J.W., 'The introduction of Arabic Science into Lorraine in the Tenth Century', *Isis*, XII, (1929), 184-193.

⁵⁰⁹ *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, 128.

⁵¹⁰ *Vita Johannis Gorzensis*, 130.

⁵¹¹ Cerulli E., 'Le Calife 'Abd ar-Rahmān III de Cordoue et le martyr Pelage dans un poème de Hrotsvitha', *Studia Islamica*, (1970), XXXII, pp.69-76.

⁵¹² Mundó A., 'Notas para la historia de la escritura visigótica en su período primitivo' in *Brivium: Homenage a Manuel Cecilio Díaz y Díaz*, (Madrid, 1983), p. 187 and plate 6; Collins R., 'Literacy and the laity in Early Medieval Spain', in McKitterick R. (ed.), *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, (Cambridge, 1990), pp.109-132, at p.113.

could well have been at Otto's court when Recemund arrived. The *Antapodosis* was written, according to the preface to its third book, 'to reveal, declare and stigmatize the doings of this Berengar, who now is not king but rather despot of Italy.....Let this present page then be to them *antapodosis*, that is, repayment.'⁵¹³ In the opening paragraph Liudprand explained the dedication to Recemund and his reasons for writing:

'To the reverend Lord Recemund, Bishop of Elvira, full of all sanctity, Liudprand, the unworthy deacon of Pavia, sends greetings. For two years, dearest father, through lack of skill I have postponed compliance with your request, when you urged me, as one who did not depend on doubtful hearsay but had the sure knowledge of an eye-witness, to set down the doings of the emperors and kings of all Europe.'⁵¹⁴

Liudprand then added three paragraphs on his unfitness to write the work, before using as one of his examples of God's punishment of the wicked and reward of the virtuous, an episode which seems to illustrate quite the opposite, that is the atrocities committed by the Saracens of Fraxinetum. Even though Recemund was representing the Umayyad caliph accused of sheltering the pirates, and though the Italian bishop's home town of Pavia and the surrounding area had been attacked,⁵¹⁵ this had not produced any antagonism between Recemund and Liudprand. The episode of the pirates was a shared concern, and a subject to which Liudprand returned several times in the *Antapodosis*; it seems that by beginning with this flashforward to the matter of Recemund's embassy, Liudprand was closely linking the text with his new friend. He had no more to say about Spain, but he continued to address Recemund throughout the *Antapodosis*,⁵¹⁶ although the work ends with Liudprand's first embassy to Constantinople in 949, well before the meeting between the two men. The *Antapodosis* was clearly written, or rewritten, with Recemund in mind.

Yet the general drift of the *Antapodosis* is difficult to follow. It appears inaccurate, inconsistent, and scurrilous even by the standards of the time; Liudprand's competence and even his mental stability have been impugned. These problems are evident from the opening of the work. Liudprand rather disingenuously elaborated his first reference to Fraxinetum by saying:

'I imagine, my lord, that you are well-acquainted with Fraxinetum and know it better than I do, since you have the information of those who are tributary to your king Abderehamen. But for the benefit of the general reader, I will say here that it has the

⁵¹³ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, III, 1, trans. Wright, p.71.

⁵¹⁴ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, I, 1, trans. Wright, p.7.

⁵¹⁵ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, II, 43-44 and IV, 4.

⁵¹⁶ Liudprand, *Antapodosis* I, 44, III, 1, and IV, 1.

sea on one side, and on all others is protected by a close undergrowth of cactus.'⁵¹⁷

Liudprand then disserted on the defensive virtues of this cactus, which the Saracens had encouraged to grow so large that to stumble against its spines meant certain death. The passage illustrates one of the difficulties in reading the *Antapodosis*, where Liudprand never let historical veracity get in the way of a good tale. Fraxinetum owed its impregnability not to cacti, but to its elevated site; it is not near the sea. Liudprand next recounted several anecdotes about Byzantium and its rulers, before coming to his ostensible purpose, a history of Germany and Italy from 887 to 949, which does not in fact become an eyewitness account until Book IV. Liudprand seems to have had two aims, the personal one of justifying his desertion of Berengar for Otto, and an attempt to show divine retribution, in which, for example, the Saracen attacks on Italy are juxtaposed with the misdemeanours of Pope John with Theodora.⁵¹⁸ It is not clear how well the work achieved either of these goals. Neither does Liudprand seem to be thinking firstly about his Spanish reader. He spent too much time settling personal scores for the *Antapodosis* to function well as the introduction to the recent history of Europe he had promised Recemund, and his moralizing explanations became buried under the weight of anecdotes which filled his pages. Yet he did not deal as harshly with Berengar and his spouse Willa as might have been expected, and, whilst he portrayed Otto favourably, it is difficult to see this text as being addressed to his own circle.⁵¹⁹ Recent interpretations of the work have made sense of it by focussing on Liudprand's praise of Otto,⁵²⁰ especially of his Italian policies.⁵²¹ It is also likely that Recemund understood the purpose of Liudprand's stories better than we do.

Since there is no evidence that the *Antapodosis* reached Spain, one can only speculate about how it might have been received. Yet Recemund may have known what sort of history to expect. He may have read an earlier work by Liudprand, now lost, which is listed in a medieval catalogue as the *Gesta regum et principum partis europae*⁵²² (unless this refers to the *Antapodosis* by another name). The Spaniard may have anticipated using the *Antapodosis* to show his fellow countrymen how divine judgement had influenced the history of Christian Europe. There may have been a demand in al-Andalus for providential history; as we shall see, Orosius' *Seven Books of History against the Pagans* may have been translated into Arabic at the same period to bring

⁵¹⁷ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, I, 2, trans. Wright, p.8.

⁵¹⁸ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, II, 44-47; Sutherland J.N., *Liudprand of Cremona, Bishop, Diplomat, Historian. Studies of the Man and his Age*, (Spoleto, 1988), pp.35-39.

⁵¹⁹ Liudprand, *The Embassy*, p.xiii.

⁵²⁰ Leyser K., 'Liutprand of Cremona, Preacher and Homilist' in Walsh K. and Wood D. (eds.), *The Bible in the Medieval World*, (Oxford, 1985), pp.43-60.

⁵²¹ Buc P., 'Italian Hussies and German Matrons. Liutprand of Cremona on Dynastic Legitimacy', *Frümittelalterliche Studien*, XXIX, (1995), 207-225.

⁵²² Manitius M., 'Geschichtliches aus mittelalterlich Bibliothekskatalogen', *Neues Archiv*, XXXII, (1906), p.689, cited in Sutherland, *Liudprand of Cremona*, p.51.

its message to a wider audience. Liudprand's work may have had an even deeper resonance for a Christian living under Muslim rule. The style of the *Antapodosis*, its mixture of heavy-handed satire and the heroic deeds of kings, are not just the product of Liudprand's psychopathology, but have much in common with the *Phrenesis* of Rather of Verona.⁵²³ Liudprand praised Rather's work, which was written during a period of exile in Pavia, and claimed that part of the *Antapodosis* was written in captivity on the island of Paxos, stretching the facts a little, since he seems merely to have been absent from home on a mission for Otto. Both Rather and Liudprand were referring back to Boethius, whose prose style they adopted, and to the consolation of writing in adversity. As Liudprand says in the opening paragraph of Book VI of the *Antapodosis*, 'If he concentrates on his writing and describes how some rise and some fall on fortune's wheel, he will feel less acutely the troubles that now beset him.'⁵²⁴ Recemund would have understood these sentiments well. Faced with the dominance of Arabic culture in al-Andalus he sought to strengthen his Latin heritage. Recemund was living in spiritual exile under Muslim rule, however comfortable his own life might have been. He may have welcomed the *Antapodosis* as providing him with some consolation in his own adversity.

The *Life of John of Gorze* and the *Antapodosis* show another side to Recemund than the fully-integrated Cordoban functionary of modern histories of al-Andalus. It is not possible to know how significant a figure Recemund was, nor whether he is representative of his contemporaries as a group. The survival of two substantial sources referring to the one episode in which he played a leading role may be no more than chance. Yet they show that for at least one Andalusian Christian, Latin culture was alive. In Gorze and in Frankfurt, Recemund was accepted by Christian scholars, and shared their intellectual concerns.

The Calendar of Cordoba

Recemund's close links with 'Abd al-RaHmān III make it perfectly plausible that he could have composed a calendar for his son al-Hakam II. The work now known as the *Calendar of Cordoba*, however, was first attributed to him in the nineteenth century. The components of this reading are two dissimilar but related manuscripts of a calendar and a number of brief references scattered through the Arabic sources. Recemund was identified as the author of the *Calendar of Cordoba* as a result of applying two systematic errors which have insinuated themselves into modern historiography of al-Andalus. The first was a failure to take any account of the transmission of the *Calendar*. The second was to succumb to the temptation to put together scattered references in the Arabic sources, all of them surviving only in copies made centuries later, to bishops who

⁵²³ Staubach N., 'Historia oder Satira? Zur literarischen Stellung Liudprands von Cremona', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch*, (1989-90, 1991), XXIV-V, 461-87.

⁵²⁴ Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, VI, 1, trans. Wright, p.151.

wrote calendars or went on embassies, none of them named as Recemund. Depending on how many of the inconsistencies in this material one is prepared to skate over, some of the steps in the argument are plausible, but the result is a flight of fancy. Recently, more calendars have been discovered, and many aspects of their composition have been analysed, without, however, provoking any serious challenge to Recemund's authorship of the *Calendar of Cordoba*. Yet, with the information gained from re-examining the nineteenth-century work on Recemund and the *Calendar of Cordoba*, one can draw a more interesting picture of the activities of bishops in al-Andalus.

The *Calendar of Cordoba*, in the 1961 edition of Dozy and Pellat consists of two versions, one in Arabic, the other in Latin, of an astrological almanac of Arabic origin supplemented by a Christian liturgical calendar. The outlines of the two works are very similar and there is no doubt that they are related, although there are obvious differences in content, of which the most striking is that the Latin version includes many more saints. Each begins with a brief summary of its contents and an introduction, to which I will return. This is followed by the calendar proper. Each month is listed first by its Spanish name, then by its Syriac and Coptic names, with the number of days in that month, its zodiac sign, and the position of the sun. Next comes the name of the season and an indication of what weather might be expected. Dietary advice is offered, based on the theory of humours established by Hippocrates and Galen, and a number of medical recommendations, such as whether it is advisable to practise blood-letting or to take certain medicines. Then the days are listed one by one, although neither version of the *Calendar* has an entry for every day. Individual entries vary; some note a Christian festival, others give snippets of astronomical or agricultural information. Much of this was intended to be practical; the entry for 12 January recommends that onions should be planted before the end of the month.⁵²⁵ Each month concludes with a summary of the agricultural activities undertaken during that month, and a passage about nature which is often extensive and lyrical.

The Latin text of the *Calendar* was published in 1838 from a manuscript which may date from the thirteenth century.⁵²⁶ In 1866 an Arabic text written in Hebrew characters was rediscovered in the Bibliothèque National in Paris, and this was presumed to be the original from which the Latin translation was made.⁵²⁷ Seven years later, Dozy published the two texts side by side, and used each to elucidate the textual problems of the other. He seems to have been the person responsible for dating the *Calendar* to 961, although it is not clear what his reasoning was, except that he connected it with the passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter about the calendar dedicated to al-Hakam II, who acceded to the throne in that year. Dozy's setting of the two texts

⁵²⁵ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.29.

⁵²⁶ Libri G., *Histoire des sciences mathématiques en Italie*, (Paris, 1938), p.461, cited in Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.vii.

⁵²⁷ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.vii.

in parallel (which Pons rightly described as 'his curious little work')⁵²⁸ was the basis for Pellat's modern edition. To make matters even more confusing, Pellat combined the two versions to produce a single translation into French, favouring the Arabic version when the Latin is not exactly equivalent. In doing so, he gave the Arabic version priority, and obscured the differences between the two texts. Further, Pellat elaborated his hypothesis that the Latin was a version of the Arabic by 'correcting' the Latin from the Arabic, and by reintroducing into the Arabic version 'missing' passages translated from the Latin, although he did point out where he had done so. He also used a similar work written by Ibn Qutayba of Baghdad (d.889)⁵²⁹ to elucidate difficulties in the Arabic version. Pellat justified his actions by citing the relationship between the two versions of the *Calendar of Cordoba* and other Arabic calendars from outside Spain. However, although such relationships clearly exist, Pellat's corrections make the comparison of the two texts more difficult than it might otherwise be. Further, in making the assumption that the Arabic text was the model for the Latin translation, he does not seem to have been aware of aspects of the manuscript transmission which invalidate his approach, as we shall see. Most importantly for the historiography of the *Calendar*, Pellat was perpetuating Dozy's mistake in combining two different calendars as the *Calendar of Cordoba*. Fortunately, interpretation of the *Calendar* does not entirely depend on the 1961 edition.

The *Books of Anwā'* and other astronomical and astrological works

The two versions of the *Calendar of Cordoba* belong to the genre known as the *Books of Anwā'*.⁵³⁰ The relationship, however, is not straightforward, and it has not been made entirely clear in recent discussions of these works. Consideration of the *Calendar* and its antecedents is complicated by imprecise terminology which is only in part attributable to the fact that Islamic authors used varying names at different times for their astronomical and astrological texts. It is worth making an excursus into the question of the development of the *Books of Anwā'*, as this may shed some light on aspects of the *Calendar of Cordoba* which have been thought, quite erroneously, to be original contributions by the *Calendar's* author, or authors.

Observation of the heavens may have begun with farmers in the Nile valley, who noticed that the rising of the floodwater of the Nile coincided with the first appearance of the star Sirius in the east just before dawn, after a period during which the star rose only in daylight.⁵³¹ The people

⁵²⁸ Pons Boigues F., *Ensayo Bio-Bibliográfico sobre los Historiadores y Geógrafos Árabigos Españoles*, (Madrid, 1893), (repr. Madrid, 1993) p.89.

⁵²⁹ Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-Anwā'*, ed. Hamidullah and Pellat C., (Hyderabad, 1956), cited in Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.xi.

⁵³⁰ *Kutub al-Anwā'*, singular *Kitāb al-Anwā'*.

⁵³¹ North J., *The Fontana History of Astronomy and Cosmology*, (1994), p.12.

of pre-Islamic Arabia saw similar celestial phenomena and associated them with changes in the weather. They divided their calendar into a number of *anwā'* (singular *naw'*). The exact meaning of this term is unclear, although Ibn Qutayba defined the *naw'* as the simultaneous setting of one constellation in the west and the rising of another, paired star or constellation in the east.⁵³² During each *naw'* the weather was thought to be stable and predictable, so that observations of the movement of these stars could be used to direct agricultural activities. Some time before the advent of Islam, the Arabs seem to have become familiar with the stations of the moon, a system of twenty-eight stars or constellations close to which the moon could be observed during each of the twenty-eight nights of its revolution. This came to Arabia from Indian astronomy. The Arabs seem to have transferred to these Indian lunar mansions the names of their *anwā'*. Thus, by the time that the first *Books of Anwā'* were written, probably in the schools of Kufa and Basra in the eighth century,⁵³³ the term *Books of Anwā'* was already something of a misnomer for what was primarily a lunar system. To make matters more complicated, alongside the *Books of Anwā'*, Islamic scholars developed a second type of treatise, called the *Books on Time*.⁵³⁴ These were lexicographical works which assembled the names used for different periods of the day, month and year, and terms describing climate. The two genres were often combined, and the resulting texts could be given either title. Although most astronomers of the Islamic period soon abandoned the lunar mansions in favour of the solar year, lunar phenomena continued to be used in divination, and it is in this form that they passed to western Europe in the later Middle Ages. Calendars such as the *Calendar of Cordoba* were based on the solar year, but in the entries for individual days and months, their authors included discussion of the movements of the stars copied from the older *Books of Anwā'* and lexicographical derivations from the *Books on Time*. These texts too were often misnamed either as *Books of Anwā'* or *Books on Time* or given other titles, making it very difficult to tell from a work's title alone what type of text it is.

The result of this gradual fusing of disparate elements was that calendars combined folk observations and wisdom with scholarship, and astrological predictions with astronomical measurements. The Arabs also adopted, partly or completely, the almanacs which they came across in the conquered lands of the East, North Africa and Spain. The only firm evidence for this is the almanac of Sinān, which was used by the Muslims of Iraq,⁵³⁵ although, as we shall see, some features of the *Calendar of Cordoba* suggest native Egyptian antecedents. Calendars

⁵³² Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-Anwā'*, p.6, Ibn 'ASīm, *Kitāb al-Anwā' wa-l-Azmina - al-Qawl ft-l-Shuhūr: Tratado sobre los Anwā' y los tiempos - capítulo sobre los meses*, ed. and trans. Forcada Nogués M., (Barcelona, 1993), pp.19-20.

⁵³³ The earliest surviving text is a few fragments of the work of Abū IsHāq al-Zajjāj: Varisco D.M., 'The Anwā' stars according to Abū IsHāq al-Zajjāj, *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften*, V, (1989), 145-166, cited in King D.A., 'Astronomy', in Young, Latham and Sergeant, *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, I, p.275; Hill D.A., *Islamic Science and Engineering*, (Edinburgh, 1993), pp.32-33.

⁵³⁴ *Kutub al-Azmina*.

⁵³⁵ Pellat C., 'Anwā'', *EI*, pp.523-4.

similar to the *Calendar of Cordoba* were compiled throughout the Islamic lands. The *Book of Time* of Ibn Māsawayh (d.857),⁵³⁶ active in Baghdad, is the first surviving example, but the encyclopedia compiled by the Ottoman scholar Hajjī Khalīfa in the seventeenth century⁵³⁷ listed many such works, including some twenty written in the ninth and tenth centuries.

Although Hajjī Khalīfa did not mention either of the versions of the *Calendar of Cordoba*, nor any other hispano-arab work of this type, it is likely that the *Books of Anwā'* and related texts were introduced into al-Andalus soon after their development in the East. The earliest manuscript of such a work from al-Andalus now extant is the *Book on the Stars* of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Habīb (d.853).⁵³⁸ It is based partly on a work of the same name by the Eastern scholar Malik ibn Anās (d.795), whose strictly-orthodox interpretation of religious law was favoured in al-Andalus. Malikite influence on the computational treatises written in al-Andalus may be reflected in their emphasis on the determination of the exact times of day for prayers, calculations known as *miqāt*, or sacred astronomy. According to later sources, Qāsim ibn ASbagh (d.952)⁵³⁹ introduced into Spain the *Book of Anwā'* of Ibn Qutayba, and Abū ʿAlī al-Qālī (d.967), who moved to Cordoba in 942, brought with him a similar work by Ibn Durayd. The Andalusis were also familiar with the writings of Abū Hanīfa al-Dīnawarī (d.895), and of several other authors.⁵⁴⁰

The origins of the *Calendar of Cordoba* cannot be pinpointed on astronomical grounds alone. Samsó⁵⁴¹ analysed the numerical data in the two versions of the *Calendar*, starting from the hypothesis that the measurements had been adapted by each compiler for the geographical coordinates of the place where each version was compiled. He looked at the values given by each version of the *Calendar* for the height of the sun at the meridian, the length of its shadow at this point, the duration of night and day, and dawn and dusk. Samsó found his hypothesis to be untenable. Some of the data given in both texts correspond to a latitude of 37;30⁰, which is nearer to Seville than Cordoba. The data reproduced in a fifteenth-century astronomical text which Samsó believed to be related to the Arabic version of the *Calendar of Cordoba*, correspond to a

⁵³⁶ Troupeau G., 'Le Livre du temps de Ibn Māsawayh', (1968), *Arabica*, XV, 113-142.

⁵³⁷ Hajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-zunūn ʿan asāmi al-kutub wa-l-funūn*, ed. and trans. Flügel G., *Lexicon Bibliographicum et Encyclopaedicum*, 7 vols., (Leipzig and London, 1835-58), V, p.53.

⁵³⁸ *Library of the Zāwiya Hamzāwiyya of Aīt Ayache, Morocco, Kitāb al-nujūm*: Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischens Schriftums*, 9 vols, (Leiden, 1967-), VII, p.234, cited in ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Habīb, *Kitāb al-Taʾrīkh*, ed. with commentary Aguado J., (Madrid, 1991), p.68.

⁵³⁹ possibly one of the translators of the Arabic Orosius; see chapter 7.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibn Sīda, *Kitāb al-MukhaSSaS*, (Beirut, no date), pp.12-13; cited in Ibn ʿAsīm, *Kitāb al-Anwā'*, p.39.

⁵⁴¹ Samsó J., 'Sobre los materiales astronómicos en el <<Calendario de Córdoba>> y en su versión latina del siglo VIII' in Vernet J., *Nuevos estudios sobre astronomía española en el siglo de Alfonso X*, (Barcelona, 1983), pp.125-138.

latitude of 38° , much closer to the actual position of Cordoba.⁵⁴² Yet no definite conclusion may be drawn from these discrepancies. A manuscript, dated before 1277, one of more than one hundred surviving examples of the Toledan Tables, a group of medieval astronomical texts, gives Cordoba the latitude of $37;30^{\circ}$, but a nearly-contemporary copy of the same list of geographical coordinates has $38;30^{\circ}$. Both lists were derived from the work of al-Khwārizmī, who introduced the concept of latitude and longitude early in the ninth century. The Toledan tables suffer from many copying errors; in general, values quoted for latitude and longitude continued to be wildly inaccurate throughout the Middle Ages.⁵⁴³ Samsó found that some of the information given by the *Calendar of Cordoba* was grossly aberrant. He concluded that the two versions of the *Calendar* used data from different sources with little concern for its practical value to the reader, and that its function was that of *miqāt*, [sacred astronomy].⁵⁴⁴

The *Calendar of Cordoba*, especially in its Latin version, contains details which link it very firmly with Spain. Yet the authors copied some of the material used by contemporary calendars from the East, such as those attributed to Abū Hanīfa and Ibn Qutayba, apparently without being concerned whether these astronomical calculations worked for Spain.⁵⁴⁵ The way that they did so may give some clues to dating their work. The Latin text cites the astronomer Albeteni,⁵⁴⁶ probably al-Battānī (d.929) from the region around Harrān in Northern Syria, since some of the dates in the *Calendar* coincide with his observations for 882.⁵⁴⁷ The Indian astronomical work called the Siddhanta, known to the Arabs as the SindHind is mentioned twice. The astronomical tables compiled by al-Khwārizmī (d.c.839) using this text were introduced into al-Andalus shortly after 840, but were not adapted for the Islamic calendar and the meridian of Cordoba until al-Maslamah al-Majrītī (of Madrid, d. 1009) worked on them, sometime after 979, when he carried out a series of observations.⁵⁴⁸ The Arabic version of the *Calendar of Cordoba* seems to have relied on the SindHind in al-Khwārizmī's version; thus this text, or an earlier work on which it is based could be dated anywhere between 882 and 980.

Another Andalusian treatise which is nearly contemporary with the *Calendar of Cordoba*, the *Book of Anwā' and Time* of Ibn 'Asīm (d.1013), is even more closely modelled on Eastern

⁵⁴² Cátedra P.M. and Samsó J., *Tratado de Astrología atribuido a Enrique de Villena*, (Barcelona, 1983), cited in Samsó, 'Sobre los materiales astronómicos'.

⁵⁴³ Toomer G.J., 'A Survey of the Toledan Tables', (1968), *Osiris*, XV, pp.5-174.

⁵⁴⁴ see above.

⁵⁴⁵ Vernet J., 'La ciencia en el Islam y Occidente', in *ibid.*, *L'Occidente e l'Islam nell'Alto Medioevo*, (Spoleto, 1965), pp.535-572, at p.545.

⁵⁴⁶ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.31.

⁵⁴⁷ Vernet J., 'La ciencia en el Islam', p.545.

⁵⁴⁸ Samsó J., 'La Tradición Clásica en los Calendarios Agrícolas Hispanoárabes y Norteafricanos', in *Second International Congress of Studies on Cultures of the Western Mediterranean*, (Barcelona, 1978), p.178; Vernet J. 'Al-Majrītī', *EI*, VI, 599-602.

exemplars, and appears to be a resumé of the works of several authors.⁵⁴⁹ It is predominantly a lexicographical text, but it includes a calendar similar to the *Calendar of Cordoba*, based on the solar months under their Syriac names, with the Christian terminology added 'for those who are not Arabs'. Yet the two calendars have little in common apart from the concluding paragraphs which both authors appended for each month. From this we might conclude that the calendars were to be read as literature rather than as manuals; their content was affected as much by the sources which a particular author had to hand as by the precise value to a local audience of the information they imparted. Few later compilers of calendars included that of Ibn ʿAsīm amongst their sources; his work was ignored except that it was quoted in a somewhat random fashion by al-Umawī of Cordoba (d.1206).⁵⁵⁰ Nor was the *Calendar of Cordoba* much exploited; al-Umawī and Ibn al-Bannāʾ of Marrakesh (d.1321) used data which they may have taken from the *Calendar*, but both also used other sources. Although the number of calendars composed in al-Andalus may be small, each one seems to have been an individual composition, dependent on a number of different texts from Spain and the East. It is not surprising that there are at least two different versions of the so-called *Calendar of Cordoba*. Thus, answers to the questions where, when and why the two versions of the *Calendar* were made, must be sought in a detailed comparison between the two texts.

The editors of the *Calendar* thought that a Muslim text, which they described as a *Book of Anwāʾ* was combined with a Christian liturgical calendar to produce the Arabic text which now survives; this, they said, was later translated into Latin, possibly by Gerard of Cremona and the school of translators in Toledo. However, the relationship between the Arabic and Latin texts has never been clarified. The Latin text seems to be of Christian origin, probably translated and perhaps later copied in a part of Spain which had been reconquered by the Christians. Yet it incorporates not only Spanish saints, but elements of the Eastern Christian liturgy. The Arabic version lists some of the Christian festivals but also cites the Qurʾān. Pellat noted: 'There is therefore a rather curious toing-and-froing and a problem which however is not incapable of solution.'⁵⁵¹ Since Pellat has to some extent compounded the confusion between the two texts, it is necessary to try to unravel his edition in order to discuss each in turn. This approach also makes sense in relation to the explanation that Pellat and others have put forward for the discrepancies between the Latin and Arabic versions of the *Calendar*, that two separate authors were involved, a claim to which I will return.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibn ʿAsīm, *Kitāb al-Anwāʾ*, pp.26 and 44.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibn ʿAsīm, *Kitāb al-Anwāʾ*, p.46.

⁵⁵¹ Ibn ʿAsīm, *Kitāb al-Anwāʾ*, p.9.

The Arabic version of the *Calendar of Cordoba*

The Arabic version of the *Calendar* has a long introduction which begins:

'This book was created to recall the periods and the seasons of the year, the number of its months and days, and the course of the sun through the signs of the zodiac and the mansions, the limits of its times of rising and the measure of its declination and elevation, the varying size of its shadow at the meridian and the periodicity of time and the succession of days in the waxing and waning of their length and the cold and hot seasons and the temperate seasons which separate them and the appointed date of each season and the number of its days according to the doctrine of the men of setting straight and computation⁵⁵² and the doctrine of the first physicians who determined the seasons and their characteristics, for there were disagreements between them on this subject which will be pointed out in their place in this book, if God so wishes.....'

After this there is a discussion of the constitution of these divisions of the year according to the practice of pre-Islamic Arabian and later-Muslim astronomers, and the value of the *Kutub al-anwā'* for agriculture and medicine.⁵⁵³

The text continues:

'Then we will mention the months of the *ʿajam*⁵⁵⁴ and the signs of the zodiac and mansions which correspond with them, the number of days in each month, their place in the seasons, their nature and what is beneficial to do during that month, and what care every man should take for his comfort and bodily health.

The beginning of the Christian year is January; they use the chronology of the Bronze Age.⁵⁵⁵ The beginning of the Syriac calendar is October and the Syrians use the chronology of Alexander the Great. But the Christians have not made January the beginning of their chronology because the first day of this month, as they say, is the seventh after the birth of Christ, peace be upon him, and the day of his circumcision.

I have mentioned in this book all the Christian festivals so that this could be an increase

⁵⁵² 'ahl al-hisāb wa-l-ta'dīl': Vernet, 'La ciencia en el Islam, p.545, calls these the 'armchair' astronomers ('de gabinete'), in contrast to 'ashāb al-mumtahan', or observers.

⁵⁵³ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, pp.1-19.

⁵⁵⁴ 'non-arabs': usually translated - as by Pellat - 'of the Christians' and appearing in the Latin text as 'Latinorum'.

⁵⁵⁵ see chapter 7.

in knowledge and help towards their meaning. The Christians have the festival of Easter, which they call 'the Resurrection of Christ' and it is preceded by their fast [explanation of dating of Lent and Easter]

I have established, for the months of the year, tables of their contents and their events, after enumerating the days contained in them, and I have been sure to mention the details and I have indicated them according to their dates, in order to make it easier to extract and gain access to this knowledge, and see it in the right place. And I have added, at the beginning and end of every month, those details that cannot be classified under a particular day, nor entered in the table, all the things occurring on variable days throughout the month. And to God be the prosperity and the recompense, if God wishes.⁵⁵⁶

The passage in which the author gave his reasons for adding the Christian festivals seems to have been passed over in previous discussions of the *Calendar*. The Arabic version of the *Calendar* must have been compiled for readers who were not Christians, since it is offering information to those who know little of such matters. The entry for December 25 states: 'The Christian Feast of the Nativity of Jesus, and this is one of their greatest festivals'.⁵⁵⁷ The entry for April 24 reiterates some of the information given in the introduction on the calculation of Easter: 'This is the last of the appointed dates for the *ʿajam* [Christian] Easter, the greatest of their festivals. And it is absolutely not to be delayed past this point'.⁵⁵⁸ The way in which the festivals are characterised differs from the Latin version. For May 3, the Feast of the Cross, the Arabic has: 'and they claim that they found the Cross of Christ abandoned in Jerusalem', whereas the Latin has: 'On this day is the Christian Feast of the Cross because on this day the Cross of Christ was found buried in Jerusalem'.⁵⁵⁹ The author repeatedly used the Muslim salutations, such as 'peace be upon him'. This does not by itself rule out a Christian author, as the Christians of al-Andalus seem to have used Muslim phrases when writing in Arabic, for stylistic reasons.⁵⁶⁰ However, the frequency with which they are included in the Arabic version of the *Calendar* is striking, and most do not appear in the Latin version. The Muslims of al-Andalus and North Africa used both the Christian and the Muslim calendars and celebrated some of the Christian festivals.⁵⁶¹ January 1 was called 'al Janayro' or 'al Nayruz' (Coptic for New Year) and the birth of John the Baptist was celebrated as 'al-ʿAnsār' (the Helper) or 'al Mahrajān' (the Festival). In a passage quoted by al-Maqqarī, reporting the advice, given to the people of Spain by the

⁵⁵⁶ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.23.

⁵⁵⁷ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.73.

⁵⁵⁸ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.183.

⁵⁵⁹ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.81

⁵⁶⁰ see chapter 7.

⁵⁶¹ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, II, pp.368 and 463.

ninth-century musician and style guru Ziryab that they should change their clothes according to the season, the Christian festivals are cited as Ziryab's reference points. A thirteenth-century theologian from Ceuta, al-ʿAzafī, composed a treatise condemning the dangerous 'innovation' or heresy of celebrating the Christian festivals: Muslims were joining in with so much enthusiasm that they risked falling into apostasy.⁵⁶² They seem to have taken the opportunity of supplementing their own meagre list of festivals with holidays borrowed from their Christian neighbours.

Thus the Arabic version of the *Calendar* could have been compiled by a Christian, or by a well-informed Muslim, who 'Christianized' an Islamic text for a Muslim audience, perhaps for the caliph himself. This is the usual assumption. Yet it is by no means clear that it was the compiler of this version who was responsible for the addition of the Christian festivals. The inclusion of the Feast of the Purification of Mary, which is listed in only one Spanish passionary and is not in the Latin version of the *Calendar*, implies that this festival may have been copied from the exemplar used by the compiler of the Arabic version. The Arabic version, but not the Latin, mentions the days which the Egyptians considered inauspicious, and the fact that the months are given their Coptic and Syrian names is another indication that a cultural magpie had been at work long before the Arabic version was composed. The process of transformation of an Islamic calendar to a Muslim-Christian hybrid may have begun in North Africa or the East; in particular, the inclusion of Christian saints was a feature of precursors of the *Calendar* originating outside Spain, such as the *Calendar* of Ibn Māsayh.⁵⁶³ This casts doubts on the assumption made by the editors of the *Calendar* that the tenth-century compiler was responsible for adding the Christian festivals.

Dozy and Pellat failed to take into account the transmission of the Arabic version of the *Calendar of Cordoba*, which sheds some light on these questions.⁵⁶⁴ The manuscript, in Hebrew characters, appears to be written in a single hand except for one brief addition. The codex in which it was copied begins with a set of astronomical tables calculated for the Year 5111 of the Hebrew World Era [1351] for the city of Huesca. This is followed by a pharmacopoeia from Montpellier in a Hebrew translation. Then comes the text of the *Calendar*. The manuscript ends with an incomplete copy of the pharmacopoeia of Mose ibn Ardut of Huesca, physician to the Infante Alfonso of Aragon, who died during a campaign against Sardinia in 1323. Thus, it seems that the compiler might have been a fourteenth-century Jewish doctor, perhaps from Huesca, who copied out the *Calendar* for his own use. Arabic learning enjoyed high prestige in Jewish

⁵⁶² *Kitāb al-durr al-munazzam fī mawlid al-nabī al-muʿazzam*, trans. Granja, F. de la, 'Fiestas cristianas en Al-Andalus', *Al-Andalus*, (1969), XXXIV, 1-53 and (1970), XXXV, 119-42.

⁵⁶³ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.41.

⁵⁶⁴ Fück J., 'Zum Kalendar von Cordoba von Jahre 961', *Orientalische Literaturzeitung*, (1965), VII/VIII, 333-7.

communities, in spite of their suspicion of Islam.⁵⁶⁵ We cannot assume that the physician of Huesca transcribed the material without alterations. He may have omitted some of the text as irrelevant. This alone could explain why fewer Christian festivals are listed in this version than in the Latin version of the *Calendar*, and why there are few references to Cordoba, and none at all to the martyrs of the 850s, although some of them are commemorated in the Latin version. It could even have been this compiler who wrote the paragraphs explaining why the Christian festivals were included, and outlining the calculation of Easter, if the *Calendar* was drawn up for Jewish readers. Similar reasoning may account for the omission of the diagrams of the constellations and the Bedouin folk sayings about them which are found in the Latin version. It is impossible to establish how extensively the supposed physician of Huesca abbreviated or interpolated but, at the very least, the idea that this Arabic version is a faithful copy of a tenth-century original is difficult to defend.

Yet the Arabic version does preserve a name which is probably that of a tenth-century author, perhaps the compiler of the text which gave rise to the Huesca copy. It begins: 'Abū l-Hasan ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd the Secretary - may God pardon him and us - said:' Ibn Saʿīd's authorship is apparently confirmed by the colophon: 'End of the Book of ʿArīb *On the Division of the Seasons and the Hygiene of the Body*'⁵⁶⁶ This title, yet another variant of those given to calendrical works, is exactly the same as that of the work which Ibn Zaīd the Cordoban bishop was said to have given to al-Hakam II.⁵⁶⁷ Pellat called the author Ibn Saʿd although the manuscript has Ibn Saʿīd, because Dozy assumed that when the Arabic sources referred to a historian by the name of Ibn Sāʿd, he was the same as ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd. Both men were secretaries, but nowhere in the Arabic text does it say either that ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd was working for al-Hakam II, or that this version of the *Calendar* was composed for the caliph. On the other hand, Ibn Saʿd was cited several times by later historians writing in Arabic as a man of letters who served as secretary to al-Hakam II, and possibly to his father. The conflation of ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd with Ibn Saʿd may be another example of the predilection which Dozy shared with his contemporaries for putting as many pieces as possible into his historiographical jigsaw puzzles, although it is true that the two names are very similar, and ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd may also have been a historian. Dozy's edition of the *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn Idhārī includes fragments of a continuation of the history of al-Tabarī which recounted the history of Spain and North Africa from 912-942. The title of this continuation is obscure, but Dozy believed the author to be ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd, since, according to another Ibn Saʿīd, from North Africa,⁵⁶⁸ ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd composed a history on this

⁵⁶⁵ Nirenberg D., *Communities of Violence; Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*, (Princeton, 1996), pp.167-8.

⁵⁶⁶ *TafSīl al-'Azmān wa-maSāliH al-'Abdān*.

⁵⁶⁷ see the quotation at the beginning of the chapter.

⁵⁶⁸ see below.

subject.⁵⁶⁹ Al-Maqqarī quoted a passage from the same work⁵⁷⁰ and described ʿArīb as one of the greatest of all historians.⁵⁷¹ ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd died c.980. Since he is not identified as a Christian in the Arabic sources, it is probable, although not certain, that he was a Muslim. Dozy believed that ʿArīb himself rather than one of his ancestors had converted to Islam, since none of the references to him gave his genealogy.⁵⁷² He could be one of the non-Arab Muslim bureaucrats who were so useful to the Umayyads because their loyalty was not affected by inter-tribal rivalries.⁵⁷³ ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd was also remembered as a physician, and the author of a treatise on obstetrics which survives in a manuscript now in the Escorial. Ibn al-ʿAwwām, in his *Book on Agriculture*, made several references to the author of a Calendar, under three different but similar names; he could be ʿArīb, although the quotations that Ibn al-ʿAwwām extracted from this author do not match the Arabic version of *Calendar of Cordoba* exactly.⁵⁷⁴ There is, however, enough evidence for ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd to postulate that he was the compiler of the model for the surviving Arabic version of the *Calendar*. Whether this particular text was given to al-Hakam II cannot be established, although it plausible, especially when this version is compared with the surviving Latin text.

The Latin version of the *Calendar of Cordoba*

The Latin version of the *Calendar* appears either to be more 'complete', or to have been compiled for a different purpose. It bears the title 'Liber anoe', where 'Liber' translates 'Kitāb' and 'anoe' is a transliteration of 'Anwā'. There is a brief summary:

'Here begins the 'Liber anoe'. In this book is the remembrance of the years, and their days and the returning of the 'anoe' in their days, and the time for planting and the modes of agriculture and the harmonizing of time and the storing of fruits.'⁵⁷⁵

This is an outline of the introduction which follows, which is very similar to the Arabic version, but the day-by-day entries point to the likelihood that this text is a Christian compilation, because

⁵⁶⁹ Pons Boigues, *Ensayo*, pp. 88-89.

⁵⁷⁰ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, II, p.93.

⁵⁷¹ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, pp. 643 and 661.

⁵⁷² Dozy R., 'Der Cordovaner Arib ibn Said der Secretar und Rabiʿ ibn Zaid der Bischof' *Diario asiático aleman*, XX, 595-609, trans. Custodio Vega A., *España Sagrada*, LVII, (Madrid, 1957), pp.181-196, at p.185.

⁵⁷³ For the Umayyad secretaries in the East see Khalidi T. *Arabic historical thought in the classical period*, (Cambridge, 1994), pp.89-96.

⁵⁷⁴ Dozy, 'Der Cordovaner Arib ibn Said', pp.186-190, citing Ibn al-ʿAwwām, *Kitāb al-filāha*, ed. Banqueri, 2 vols, (Madrid, 1802) [no p. no.].

⁵⁷⁵ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.3.

of the much larger number of saints included. The Christians of al-Andalus did not lack liturgical calendars. Their passionaries commemorated the saints of the Visigothic period and before, although few new saints were added to them.⁵⁷⁶ Yet there is one significant difference between the passionaries and the Latin version of the *Calendar*; the latter includes the ninth-century martyrs Adulphus and John, who died in 822, and Emila and Perfectus, who died in 852.⁵⁷⁷ The calendar also lists Alvarus, and 'Esperende', presumably the bishop Speraindeo, (although neither of these men were martyred) from the ninth century and Pelagius from the tenth.⁵⁷⁸ It is not clear why Andalusian Christians might have produced liturgical calendars in this form. They had preserved their astronomical knowledge after the Muslim conquest, and this may have been the only such lore available to the conquerors until the arrival of astronomical tables from the East in the reign of 'Abd al-RaHmān II.⁵⁷⁹ However, much of it was derived from Isidore, and was of little practical value, although a treatise on astrology copied by Hishām I's astrologer in the ninth century could be of Visigothic origin.⁵⁸⁰ New agricultural practices, particularly the use of irrigation, introduced into Spain by the conquerors, may have enhanced the value of Arabic almanacs for the Christian population, particularly when combined with an updated calendar of saints.

However, the adaptation of such an almanac as a Christian calendar may be an example of the dominance of Arabic culture, rather than demonstrating a need for a new form in which the saints could be commemorated. Thus, when the *Calendar* became a Christian text no attempt was made to hide its Arabic origins. The Latin version is full of Arabic placenames and expressions.⁵⁸¹ The entry for August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, includes the response '*super quam sit salus*', a translation of the Muslim salutation 'peace and blessings upon her'.⁵⁸² This is repeated in a later entry, although no salutation appears at this point in the Arabic version. The Latin '*villa ex villis*' [one of the villas] represents a typical Arabic locution. '*Terram barbarorum*',

⁵⁷⁶ see chapter 5.

⁵⁷⁷ It is odd that only two of Eulogius' martyrs were included, and that Emila's companion Ierimias was not mentioned.

⁵⁷⁸ It has been argued that these saints were not included in the Arabic version because the compiler, if he was a Muslim and a court functionary, would have refrained from bringing them to the attention of the caliph: Coope, *The Martyrs of Córdoba*, p.68.

⁵⁷⁹ Samsó J., 'En torno a los métodos de cálculo utilizados por los astrólogos andalusíes a fines de s. VIII y principios del IX: Algunas hipótesis de trabajo', in *Actas des las II Jornadas de Cultura Arabe e Islámica (1980)*, (Madrid, 1985), pp. 509-22, cited in Glick T.F., *From Muslim fortress to Christian castle: social and cultural change in medieval Spain*, (Manchester, 1995), p.47, n.26.

⁵⁸⁰ Samsó J., 'La Primitiva Versión Arabe del Libro de los Cruces', in Vernet J., *Nuevos estudios*, pp. 149-161.

⁵⁸¹ *España Sagrada*, LVII, p.13.

⁵⁸² Simonet F.X., 'Santoral hispano-mozárabe escrito en 961 por Rabi ben Zaid, obispo de Iliberis', *Ciudad de Dios* (1871), V, pp.105-116 and 192-212, repr. in *España Sagrada*, LVII, pp.123-159, at pp.127-132.

the land of the Berbers, is used for Mauritania, and '*Dominus Romae*', an exact rendering of the Arabic '*Sāhib Rūma*' for '*Romanus Pontifex*'. The naming of Jerusalem as '*domo almeqdis*' translates the Arabic name '*bayt* [house] *al-maqdis/al-muqaddas*'; the translator explained: '*id est Jerusalem*'. Alexander, '*habentis duo cornua*' ['the possessor of two horns', because he ruled both Asia and Europe] is the Arabic name for Alexander the Great. Sometimes the Latin version makes little sense; when the translator wrote: 'In this season there are three scorpions in which it is very cold',⁵⁸³ he was using '*scorpio*' as a translation of the Arabic '*ʿaqārib*' [scorpion], which also means a period of nippy weather.⁵⁸⁴ Details which gave special problems seem to have been omitted, such as the names of stations of moon, and the names given to the types of rain falling at different seasons of the year, which were significant for agriculture in dry countries but may not have been in general use in Spain. The writer did not seem to realise that '*tisrīn al-āwal*', which he translated as '*tisirin primus*' was the Syrian name for October, although this is noted at the beginning of the entry for that month. The register of this translation is thus difficult to grasp. The Arabisms are sometimes used as though such hybrids were acceptable, but at others they suggest that the translator had not mastered his material.

It is difficult to make sense of the Latin text without knowing when it was translated from Arabic. The thirteenth-century manuscript could be either the first translation of this text into Latin, or a copy of an earlier translation. This version of the *Calendar* seems to be based on an earlier text compiled in Cordoba, since it makes many references to local churches and their cults. To give one example, the entry for 6 January in the Arabic version has: 'This is the Christian Feast of the baptism of Jesus; they say that on this night a star appeared above him'; the Latin entry for the same day adds: 'This Feast is celebrated in the monastery of Pinnamellaria'.⁵⁸⁵ But the surviving manuscript cannot be Cordoban because the scribe made so many mistakes with the topography of the area, giving meaningless transliterations of Arabic names for the districts of Cordoba. Since it appears that the writer did not understand either the *Calendar* or the Arabic language very well, the balance of evidence favours a late translation, or a very bad copy of a Christian compilation originally written in Arabic, but in either case, written in circles who were losing contact with the Arabic past of Spain.

The Latin version of the *Calendar of Cordoba* preserves, in a garbled form, the attribution of authorship to ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd. The opening does not translate the phrase naming the author in the Arabic version exactly, but has '*Harib filii Zeid episcopi composuit Mustansir imperatori*.' [Al-Mustansir was the *laqab* or title given to al-Hakam II.] It was the manipulation of this phrase, together with an extravagant interpretation of quotations from the Arabic sources, which allowed

⁵⁸³ 'Et in hoc tempore sunt tres Scorpiones in quibus frigus sit forte'.

⁵⁸⁴ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.14, n.3.

⁵⁸⁵ Dozy and Pellat, *Le Calendrier*, p.27

Saavedra, and after him Dozy, Simonet and subsequent historians, to claim that the Latin text of the *Calendar* was not a copy of that composed by ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd, but was compiled by a second man, Rabīʿ ibn Zaid. Saavedra thought that the use of the genitive indicated a copyist's lapse, and supplied some 'missing words': '*Harib filii (Sad liber, cum additamentis Rabi filii) Zeid, episcopi.....*'⁵⁸⁶ which the copyist is said to have omitted. Dozy rejected this hypothesis as 'completely without substance',⁵⁸⁷ blaming simple confusion of two similar names, although he conceded: 'I confess that this difference is what the English call *very puzzling*' [in English in the original]. There is much simpler explanation. ʿArīb was correctly transliterated as Harīb; Latin translators often used H for the Arabic letter Ain. The problem, if there is one, is in the confusion of Zaid with Saʿīd. To Arabists this seemed unlikely, since the orthography of the two names is quite distinct. As we have seen, however, the Latin text may be distant in time and space from its Arabic origins, and may have become distorted through ill-informed translation or bad copying. Some Arabic texts were first translated into Hebrew, before a Latin version was made. Further it is not certain that transmission and translation of the *Calendar* was exclusively through copying. Many Arabic texts were dictated, and the resulting version read back to the author for his validation, according to the process described by the thirteenth-century scholar Yāqūt.⁵⁸⁸ Perhaps the Christians of al-Andalus also used this method. If the process of translation involved dictation to a writer of Latin who did not know Arabic, the mistake is easy to explain, since Saʿīd and Zaīd might sound the same to someone who did not know how they were spelled. Equally, the mistake could have been made when one Latin manuscript was copied from another by a scribe ignorant of Arabic. Elsewhere in this manuscript there are many equally grave mistakes; for instance, *al-Hajjaj* becomes *Alahazez*. Thus, it is almost certain that the Latin version of the *Calendar* is a version of the work attributed to ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd, although the author's name was mangled in transmission.

Other Spanish calendars

In spite of their common origin, however, the Arabic and Latin versions of the *Calendar* are so different that they must be two different redactions, rather than an original and its translation into Latin. This would also account for the huge discrepancies between the material which Pellat obscured by labelling them 'lacunae'. This hypothesis is supported by the survival of other calendars. One is now a mere fragment of an Arabic papyrus which could date to the tenth

⁵⁸⁶ Saavedra E., *Estudio sobre la invasión de los Arabes*, (Madrid, 1892), p.15; for the connection between Rabīʿ ibn Zaid and Recemund, see below.

⁵⁸⁷ Dozy, 'Die Cordovaner Arib ibn Said' p.196.

⁵⁸⁸ Pedersen J., *Der Arabische Bog*, (Copenhagen, 1946) trans. French G., *The Arabic Book*, (Princeton, 1984), p.27; citing Yāqūt, *Irshad al-arīb ilā maʿrifāt al-adīb (Learned Literary Men)*, 7 vols., ed. Margoliouth D.S., (London, 1907-1926) [no. p. no.].

century.⁵⁸⁹ A manuscript now in the Escorial,⁵⁹⁰ a set of astronomical tables written in Arabic and attributed to Muhammad ibn Abī Ashshokr the Maghrebi, contains a calendar, many of whose entries resemble those of the Latin version of the *Calendar of Cordoba*.⁵⁹¹ The most enlightening comparison can be made with another Latin calendar, now in Vich.⁵⁹² It is dated 1235 and mentions the Feast of Francis of Assisi who died in 1226 and was canonised in 1228; it is probably Catalan. It is thus contemporary with the Latin text of the *Calendar* and supports the impression that both translations might have been made in a part of Spain no longer under Muslim rule. The calendar from Vich is also based on an Arabic almanac, but is independent of the text edited by Pellat, since a different passionary has been added. The adaptation of the model for this calendar seems still to have been in progress, since although the astronomical and agricultural sections of the manuscript are carefully written, the passionary has been both scratched out and interpolated. The Vich version has even more saints than the Latin version of the *Calendar*; January alone has twenty-seven festivals. The translator of this version produces an even more garbled text in many respects than the Latin text of the *Calendar*. Part of the reason for this was his attempt to eradicate from the calendar traces of its origins in Arabic. Although he was forced to use some of the Arabic names for astronomical phenomena, he tried as far as possible to avoid Arabisms and references to Muslims in general, so that 'the Arabs say'⁵⁹³ becomes 'certain people/the ancients said'.⁵⁹⁴ The name of the author does not appear, but echoes of its dedication to al-Hakam II may be detected. The codex containing the calendar is entitled *Liber regius sive descriptio temporum anni* and begins: 'Here begins the Royal Book. The author of this book says...' A fourteenth-century copy of the same work⁵⁹⁵ has the colophon: '*explicit Liber Egregius*, surely a copyist's mistake for *regius*. It is not possible to say whether the Vich calendar was based directly on a tenth-century Arabic text, or was several generations further in its evolution. Yet it clearly belongs to the same family of texts as the Latin version of the *Calendar of Cordoba* and the Arabic compilation from Huesca. These texts should also be compared with other Arabic calendars of peninsula origin, such as that of al-Tujībī and with calendars from North Africa and the East, most of them as yet unedited. The discussion should be widened beyond the two texts edited by Dozy and Pellat, since several calendars, following

⁵⁸⁹ Levi Della Vida G., 'Arabic Papyri in the University Museum in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)' (Rome, 1981), repr. in *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, series III, vol. XXV, fasc. 1, (1989).

⁵⁹⁰ *Escorial cod.ar.* 297.

⁵⁹¹ *España Sagrada*, LVII, pp. 134-5.

⁵⁹² *Vich Museo Episcopal Inventario* 7040, MS 167; Martínez Gázquez J. and Samsó J., *Una nueva traducción latina del Calendario de Córdoba (siglo XIII)*, in Vernet J. (ed.), *Textos y estudios sobre astronomía española en el siglo XIII*, (Barcelona, 1981), pp. 9-78; Samsó J., Martínez Gázquez J., 'Algunas observaciones al texto del Calendario de Córdoba' *Al-Qantara*, (1981), II, pp. 319-342.

⁵⁹³ 'qālat al-^carab'.

⁵⁹⁴ 'dicunt quidam/dicunt antiqui'.

⁵⁹⁵ *MBN* 6.036.

different lines of transmission, may have circulated in Spain. The difference between the two versions edited by Pellat can be explained if the Latin translator was working from an exemplar which was more detailed than the surviving Arabic *Calendar*. It is now clear just how much the editors have confused the discussion by linking the first two calendars to be rediscovered in modern times under the label the *Calendar of Cordoba*.

Recemund and Rabīʿ ibn Zaid

Although there may have been several compilers of calendars in al-Andalus in the tenth century, both the Arabic and the Latin versions of the *Calendar of Cordoba*, and perhaps the Vich calendar as well, can be traced to ʿArīb ibn Saʿīd. What, then, is the evidence that Recemund's literary activities included the composition of a calendar, and how did his name come to be linked with the *Calendar of Cordoba*? It was Simonet, together with his contemporaries Dozy and Saavedra, who developed this idea. They identified Recemund with two bishops mentioned in later Arabic sources. The first was a certain Rabīʿ the bishop said to have brought from Constantinople an expensive enamelled basin to ornament the palace which ʿAbd al-Raḥmān built at Madinat al-Zahrā'.⁵⁹⁶ The second was the bishop Ibn Zaid who gave a calendar to al-Hakam II. In 1871, Simonet published a Spanish translation of the liturgical entries from the *Calendar of Cordoba*, with the title: 'the Hispano-mozarabic Calendar written in 961 by Rabi ben Zaid, bishop of Iliberis',⁵⁹⁷ claiming that: 'Recemund of Iliberis, mentioned by several contemporary foreign writers, is none other than the bishop Rabi ben Zaid, celebrated by the Arab authors for his astronomical knowledge and his journeys.' This is the Recemund familiar from twentieth-century histories of al-Andalus. Although Dozy pointed out some of the problems of the Arabic sources for Recemund, he accepted Simonet's hypothesis. Both Dozy and subsequent historians skated over the vagaries of survival of sources, and, quite unjustifiably, gave equal weight to such remnants as supported their case. I would now like to unpack this historiographical portmanteau. Who was, or were, Rabīʿ and Ibn Zaid, and how are they connected with manuscripts now known as the *Calendar of Cordoba*?

Simonet postulated that sometime before the death of ʿAbd ar-Raḥman in 961 Recemund went on another mission for the caliph, to Jerusalem and Constantinople; it is possible, although there is no evidence for this, that his journey coincided with Liudprand's second embassy to the Byzantine capital in 960, thus perhaps accounting for Liudprand's focus on Constantinople in the *Antapodosis*. The first part of his journey at least may have been a pilgrimage, and Recemund's overall purpose is not known. Accepting for one moment the identification between Recemund

⁵⁹⁶ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, pp.373-4.

⁵⁹⁷ Simonet, 'Santoral hispano-mozárabe'.

and Rabīʿ, the Arabic sources preserve the story that he brought back a gift for the emir:

Ibn Hayyān said that among the marvels of al-Zahrāʾ were two fountains with their basins, so extraordinary in their form and valuable in their workmanship, that in the opinion of that author they were the principal ornament of the palace. The more precious of the two was of gilded bronze, and it was marvellously sculpted with bas-relief representing human figures..... Concerning the remarkable, expensive, engraved and gilded basin: Ahmad the Greek brought it to him, together with Rabīʿ the bishop, coming from Iliyā. And as for the small green basin engraved with human images, Ahmad brought it from Syria or, it is said, from Constantinople with Rabīʿ the bishop and they said that it was unrivalled in singularity and beauty. And it was carried from place to place until it reached the sea. Al-Nasīr [ʿAbd al-RaHmān III] set it up in his sleeping quarters in the eastern chamber called al-Munis and placed in it twelve figures made of red gold, set with pearls and other precious stones.⁵⁹⁸

This is part of a long quotation on the building of the palace of Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ which al-Maqqarī said he had taken from the work of Ibn Hayyān (d.1076), although it is unlikely that al-Maqqarī was indeed quoting his source exactly. In discussing the authorities upon whom Ibn Hayyān had based his work, al-Maqqarī stated that: 'This historian obtained his information from the mouth of Ibn Dahin the jurist, who obtained it from Muslamah ibn ʿAbd Allāh, the teacher and architect'. The latter was said to have flourished during the reign of ʿAbd al-RaHmān; the three names make rather a short chain of witnesses to cover nearly a century. The passage describes the materials brought from all corners of the world, their great beauty, rarity and cost, and the number of workmen involved. It is not clear from the syntax whether Ahmad the Greek was responsible for acquiring both the basins, nor whether Rabīʿ the bishop actually went to Constantinople rather than meeting AHmad on his return journey from the East. But the bishop could fit in this context as one of ʿAbd al-RaHmān's cultural scouts, sent to scour the world for priceless objects to adorn his new palace. Unfortunately, Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ was abandoned in 1008 and fell into ruins, and although these are extensive, the building of the palace is one of those exploits which becomes ever more elaborate in the various later retellings. The sources for Madīnat-al Zahrāʾ have been studied in detail,⁵⁹⁹ and they differ greatly over the supposed site of the palace, the date of construction, its size, the number of men and beasts involved in the work, and the materials used. Where the accounts can be checked against the archaeological remains, they are not in agreement. Marble for the palace was said to have come from Africa, Byzantium and the land of the Franks, yet that used to pave the hall of ʿAbd al-RaHmān III

⁵⁹⁸ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, pp. 373-4.

⁵⁹⁹ Labarta A. and Barceló C., 'Las fuentes árabes sobre al-Zahrāʾ': estado de la cuestión', *Cuadernos de Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ*, (1987), I, pp.93-106.

reveals through chemical analysis that it was quarried in Estremoz, Portugal.⁶⁰⁰ There is one glaring discrepancy between the passages from Ibn Hayyān cited by al-Maqqarī and other writers on Madīnat al-Zahrā'; Ibn Hayyān gave 329 [940/1] as the year in which construction began, but all the others have 325 [936]. This casts grave doubts over the rest of Ibn Hayyān's evidence for the building of the palace, and it is possible that this passage was not in fact from Ibn Hayyān, but was attributed to him because he was the most famous of all Cordoban historians and thus worthy to have written about the palace, which, by the time al-Maqqarī was compiling his history, had become utterly fabulous. The passage on the basins is particularly suspect. The earliest sources mentioned a fountain, thought to have been a present from a foreign ruler. Later writers proposed either Jerusalem or Byzantium as the origin of this fountain, which naturally gave rise to the idea that there were two - one was said to be green, and the other made of gold. Later descriptions became more elaborate still. On the other hand, many descriptions of Madīnat-al-Zahrā' failed to mention a fountain, and the chamber in which it was said to have been placed is not otherwise known to have existed. Thus it is difficult to give much credence to what this text said about Rabīʿ the bishop, other than to say that he was worthy of being remembered as a Christian who might have been involved in the construction of Madīnat al-Zahrā', one of the most important symbols of Umayyad power.

The evidence for Ibn Zaid the bishop is better than that for Rabīʿ. In the passage containing the extract quoted at the head of the chapter, on the *Book of the Division of the Seasons and the Hygiene of the Body* dedicated to al-Hakam II, al-Maqqarī named Ibn Zaīd as one of the famous authors of al-Andalus; each was listed under the branch of scholarship in which they were most prominent. Al-Maqqarī's source was Ibn Saʿīd the Magrebi; al-Maqqarī included this author's biography and quoted seventy-three pages of his work.⁶⁰¹ Born in 1209 or 1214 in Alcalá la Real, near Granada, Ibn Saʿīd travelled in the East, before entering the service of the emir of Tunis; he may have died there, in 1286-7. He belonged to a family of historians, the Banu Saʿīd, and according to some authors, wrote more than four hundred books, but was principally remembered for the *Book of the Sphere of Literature encompassing the Language of the Arabs*⁶⁰² The first fifteen volumes of this work were said to recount the history of the western Islamic realms from 1152 to 1263, and the second half concerned the East, but only fragments survive, although Ibn Saʿīd's history was frequently quoted. He is not a reliable author, combining fact and legend in his histories. His resumé of the literary celebrities of Spain is taken from an appendix which he added to the *Risālah* [letter] of Ibn Hazm (d.1064).⁶⁰³ Ibn Hazm's message

⁶⁰⁰ Vallejo Triano A., 'Madīnat al-Zahrā': The Triumph of the Islamic State', in Dodds J.D. (ed.) *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain*, (New York, 1992), p.29 and p.39 n.6; Labarta and Barceló, 'Las fuentes árabes'.

⁶⁰¹ Pons Boigues, *Ensayo*, pp.306-310.

⁶⁰² *Kitāb falak al-adab al-maḥīT bi-Halā lisān al-ʿarab*.

⁶⁰³ Pellat, C., 'Ibn Hazm, Bibliographie et Apologiste de l'Espagne Musulmane', *Al-Andalus*, (1954), XIX, 53-102.

was that the scholars of al-Andalus were equal with those of the East. Ibn Saʿīd added weight to this argument with his list of scholars, which is unusual in the interest he takes in non-Muslims. This does not, however, guarantee the accuracy of his entry on Ibn Zaīd.

Al-Maqqarī's quotation continues: 'And it was in furthest Ishbīlā [Seville] that he [Ibn Zaid] worked on his writings, and the people of his country accused him of atheism because of his devotion to this matter and none of his writings were published.' Simonet carefully passed over the accusation of heresy by omitting this part of the reference to Ibn Zaid, a practice which, so far as I can tell, has been followed in all subsequent discussions of this passage. Astronomy and astrology were not clearly distinguished in the Middle Ages, but both Christians and Muslims recognised the difference between observation of the heavens made in order to compute the calendar and to regulate agriculture and navigation, and using the positions of the stars to predict men's fate.⁶⁰⁴ In the early centuries of Islam, astronomy and astrology were considered part of the same body of knowledge, and the movements of the stars and planets gave insight both into the will of God and earthly events.⁶⁰⁵ In al-Andalus, according to Saʿīd the Andalusī (1029-1070), 'the practice of astrology has met with some acceptance, both in the past and the present: there were some well-known astrologers in every period, including our own'.⁶⁰⁶ Yet books on astronomy were amongst those condemned as heretical when the library of al-Hakam was broken up by al-Manṣūr. Christian authorities were even more suspicious of astrology. The combination of patristic disapproval and the loss of Greek astrological knowledge in the West meant that there was little Christian interest in astrology until the translation of texts from Arabic in the twelfth century. The suspicion that Gerbert of Aurillac, later pope Sylvester II (999-1003) had been to Cordoba to learn astrology, which first appeared in the work of William of Malmesbury,⁶⁰⁷ was enough to give him the reputation for necromancy. (In fact, he probably travelled no further than Ripoll in Christian Catalonia.) Here perhaps is the substance behind the charge of heresy laid against Ibn Zaid, of which Simonet wished his readers remain in ignorance. Ibn Zaīd was remembered as involved in a science which was controversial even for Muslims, and would not have been considered suitable for a bishop.

Although the sources for Ibn Zaid are late, it is plausible that such a figure existed. But, in order to make one person out of the two bishops Rabīʿ and Ibn Zaid, Simonet and his colleagues were forced into a series of conclusions which range from tenuous to preposterous. Only one person named Rabīʿ ibn Zaīd has been discovered in the Arabic sources. The thirteenth-century author

⁶⁰⁴ Tester, *A History of Western Astrology*, pp.109-123 and 151.

⁶⁰⁵ Stanton C.M., *Higher Learning in Islam: the Classical Period, AD 700-1300*, (Savage, Maryland, 1990), p.108.

⁶⁰⁶ Saʿīd the Andalusī, *Science in the Medieval World: 'Book of the Categories of Nations'*, ed. and trans. Salem S.I. and Kumar A. (Austin, Texas, 1996), p.77.

⁶⁰⁷ William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum* ed. Stubbs W., Rolls Series XC, (1887), p.194.

Ibn Abi Usaybiʿa mentioned him in his biographical dictionary of medical men, in the entry on Ibn al-Kattānī, who died in Zaragoza in 1029.⁶⁰⁸ Ibn al-Kattānī was said to have been a pupil of the bishop ʿAbū al-Harīth, who in turn was a pupil of Rabīʿ ibn Zaīd, described as 'the bishop, the philosopher'. Although the dictionary does not say anything about the relative ages of these men, it is plausible that, two generations before the death of Ibn al-Kattānī, Rabīʿ ibn Zaīd might have been active at the court of al-Hakam II, although the brief mention of this figure does little to fill in the outlines I have been sketching. He is, however, preferable to a second candidate. Simonet suggested that Rabīʿ ibn Zaid was the man whom Alfonso the Wise mentioned in his *Books on Astronomy* under the name Aben Cayut.⁶⁰⁹ The prologue to the Alfonsine Tables begins: 'Yhuda son of Marc son of Mosca and Rabiçag Aben Cayut said...'⁶¹⁰ However, far from this Rabiçag Aben Cayut being a tenth-century author, it is clear that he was active in the thirteenth century; in the prologue to the *Book of the Clock called the Shadow of the Stone*, Alfonso stated: 'we ordered the aforementioned Rabiçag to make this book...'⁶¹¹ and Rabiçag is mentioned several times in the same context. Further, he has been identified as a rabbi from Toledo, Isaac ben Sīd.⁶¹² This is not the only component of Simonet and Dozy's argument which must be rejected.

The identification of Rabīʿ ibn Zaid as the author of the *Calendar of Cordoba* is, at least at first glance, the most beguiling aspect of the nineteenth-century interpretation of this work, and the most difficult to disentangle. As we have seen, the title of the work attributed to Ibn Zaid, the *Book of the divisions of the Seasons and the Hygiene of the Body* is the same as the title given in the colophon to the Arabic version of the *Calendar*. Further, both al-Maqqarī and the Latin version of the *Calendar* said that the work was given to al-Hakam II. But in order to make Rabīʿ ibn Zaid the author, it was necessary too explain away the name ʿArib ibn Saʿīd. This Saavedra failed to do. Moreover, this contrived solution failed to tie up all the threads, since it left ʿArib ibn Saʿīd, the secretary of al-Hakam II and author of a calendar, and Ibn Zaid, who presented a calendar to the caliph. As Pellat acknowledged in the most recent edition of the *Encyclopedia of Islam*:

'the statement of Ibn Saʿīd [in al-Maqqarī] and the colophon of the MS are utterly contradictory. It has to be assumed therefore that an understandable confusion has arisen between the names (which are, it may be observed, anagrams one of the other) and that

⁶⁰⁸ Ibn Abi Usaybiʿa, *Uyūn al-anba fī tabaqāt al-attibāʾ*, ed. Müller, (Cairo, 2 vols., 1882), p.492.

⁶⁰⁹ Dozy, 'Die Cordovaner Arib ibn Said..' p.188.

⁶¹⁰ Simonet, 'Santoral Hispano-Mozárabe', p.128; Rico y Sinobás M., *Libros del saber de Astronomía del Rey D. Alfonso X de Castilla*, (Madrid, 5 vols. 1866-73), vol IV, p.111.

⁶¹¹ Rico, *Libro del saber*, IV, p.1.

⁶¹² Roth N., 'Jewish collaborators in Alfonso's scientific work' in Burns, R.I. (ed.), *Alfonso X the Learned of Castille and his thirteenth-century Renaissance*, (Philadelphia, 1990), pp.59-71.

the blending is so perfect that, towards the end of the introduction, a paragraph relating to the Christian festivals gives the impression that the work is attributable to a single author. As for the information concerning the agricultural activities, hygiene, daily life, etc., so precious in the view of historians, it is not unreasonable to give the credit to ʿArīb rather than to Rabīʿ, since the former was apparently more apt to respect the tradition of *Kutub al-anwāʾ*, which themselves contain facts of this type as well as material concerning astronomy and meteorology. In view of the fact that a *Kitāb Tafsil al-Azmān* [*Book of the Division of the Seasons*] etc., evidently as a result of confusion, is attributed to each of the two authors, the problem remains unsolved'.⁶¹³

Dozy had proposed that the translator of the *Calendar* mixed up Rabīʿ ibn Zaīd with ʿArīb ibn Saīd because he knew that both men had compiled calendars. Recently, Koningsveld turned this argument on its head, arguing that the *Calendar of Cordoba* must be the same as the work mentioned by al-Maqqarī; therefore Rabīʿ ibn Zaid is its author, and the name ʿArīb ibn Saīd is the result of the corruption of the text by a late copyist, influenced by the greater fame of this author.⁶¹⁴ There seems little reason to accept this hypothesis. Since ʿArīb ibn Saīd's authorship is secure, it is possible that al-Maqqarī's reference to Ibn Zaid as the author of the *Book of the Divisions of the Seasons and the Hygiene of the Body* presented to al-Hakam II is wrong. Yet, as there were more than two texts of the *Calendar of Cordoba*, as well as other similar but independent calendars, it is not surprising that the sources name more than one author. From the scant biographical details which survive for ʿArīb ibn Saīd and Ibn Zaid, it is reasonable to suppose that both men composed calendars. Given the fame of al-Hakam's library,⁶¹⁵ it is likely that any book written, or thought to have been written, in al-Andalus at this period would have been validated by a dedication to the caliph.

There is one more link in the chain of Dozy and Simonet's argument, the final piece of evidence which they used to identify Rabīʿ ibn Zaid with Recemund. A bishop called Rabīʿ is mentioned in a statement attributed to Ibn Khaldūn: 'Then came the embassy from the king of the Slavs, who at that time was Otto, and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān sent with the ambassador the bishop Rabīʿ to King Otto and he came back after two years.'⁶¹⁶ This evidence, written at least three centuries after the event, and preserved by al-Maqqarī, does not fit with the *Life of John of Gorze*, which says that John did not return to Europe with Recemund, but remained in Cordoba. This man could be Recemund, but is difficult to be as certain as Dozy was that 'this proves the identity of Recemund

⁶¹³ Pellat C., 'Rabīʿ ibn Zayd', *EI*, pp.351-2.

⁶¹⁴ Koningsveld P. van, 'La littérature cristiano-árabe de le España medieval y el significado de la transmisión textual en árabe de la *Collectio Conciliorum*', in *Concilio III de Toledo, XIV Centenario, 589-1989*, (Toledo, 1991), pp.695-710, at p.701.

⁶¹⁵ see chapter 7.

⁶¹⁶ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, p.235; for a discussion of Ibn Khaldūn's unreliability on the history of Spain, see chapter 7.

with Rabī because it fits him alone'⁶¹⁷ Other bishops may have played the same role. Al-Maqqarī mentioned a bishop of Cordoba, Asbagh ibn Allāh ibn Nabit, whom al-Hakam sent to advise Ordoño II of the Asturias on the implementation of a new peace treaty between the two kingdoms;⁶¹⁸ the same man, now described as 'judge [qādī] of the Christians' served as interpreter for a delegation sent to Cordoba by Queen Elvira of León in 973.⁶¹⁹ The Rabī^c of Ibn Khaldūn could with equal plausibility be the bishop who joined 'Abd al-RaHmān's first delegation, except that the *Life of John of Gorze* says that this bishop died at Otto's court.⁶²⁰ Whilst the statement by Ibn Khaldūn is the closest we have to an identification of Recemund with Rabī^c, it is not good enough, and must be put to one side, together with the reference to Rabī^c the bishop and the enamelled basin. All the sources for Rabī^c and Ibn Zaid are suspect, and merely serve to list a number of enterprises for which Christian bishops might have been remembered. There is no reason to conclude that all these talents were embodied in Recemund.

'Arīb ibn Sa'īd, secretary to al-Hakam II, composed a calendar which was later translated and elaborated by both Christians and Jews, together with other works of the same genre. The existence of such texts demonstrates the vitality of cross-cultural exchange in the tenth-century and later. Recemund could have been the author of such a calendar, although there is no evidence that he was. He was, however, prominent in ecclesiastical and diplomatic circles both in al-Andalus and in Christian Europe, perhaps even in Byzantium. Yet to pin all the evidence reviewed in this chapter to this one man is to underestimate the prominence of educated Christians in early Islamic Spain. Although no-one apart from John of Gorze's biographer and Liudprand paid them much attention, the achievements of Recemund and the bishop or bishops Rabī^c and Ibn Zaid suggest that some Christians flourished under Muslim rule. They were capable of adopting the Arabic language and literary forms without abandoning their faith or own their literary traditions.

⁶¹⁷ Dozy, 'Der Cordovaner Arib ibn Said', p.196.

⁶¹⁸ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, p.160.

⁶¹⁹ Ibn Hayyān, *Muqtabis*, trans. Codera, *Colección de estudios árabes*, IX, p.198, cited by El-Hajji A.A., *Andalusian Diplomatic Relations with Western Europe during the Umayyad Period (AH 138-366/AD 755-976) An Historical Study*, (Beirut, 1970), p.92.

⁶²⁰ *Vita Johannis Gorzensis* 115.

7. The Arabic translation of Orosius.

'In the year 337 [948/9], I believe, Armānūs [Romanus], the ruler of Constantinople, exchanged letters with him [ʿAbd al-RaHmān III]. He also sent him a large quantity of gifts, including the book of Dioscorides on plants [the *Materia Medica*], with remarkable illustrations in the style of Rūm [Byzantium]. This book was written in Greek, which is the same as Ionian. He sent with it the book of Orosius, master storyteller, an admirable history of Rūm, in which are notices about the epochs, stories of the first kings and important moral lessons. Armānūs wrote to an-NaSīr that he would not be able to profit from the remedies described in the book of Dioscorides unless someone was able to put the Greek language into a better form. For if there is someone in your land who is capable of this, you will know the book's usefulness, O King. And as for the book of Orosius, if there are among the Latins [Christians] of your country those who know the Latin language, find them and let them translate it into Arabic for you'.⁶²¹

If Recemund ever received his copy of the *Antapodosis*, the Latin history dedicated to him by Liudprand, it is not obvious where he would have shelved it. There is no surviving history in Latin written in al-Andalus after the two eighth-century chronicles, and no proof that these texts were being read in the tenth century. The work of one of Spain's most famous historians, Orosius, was read, however, although perhaps only in Arabic. *The Seven Books of Histories Against the Pagans*,⁶²² written in 417, is a chronicle of the world from biblical to Christian times. Orosius, a pupil of Augustine, tried to show the working-out of God's purpose in the history of the world, and the parallel fates of the Roman and Christian empires. The period beginning with the birth of Christ was to be the last, triumphant phase of history.⁶²³ As he recounted one disaster and persecution after another, the task which Orosius had set himself became increasingly difficult, culminating in the sack of Rome by the Goths, where the *Histories* end. In spite of this apparent failure, the text became so popular during the Middle Ages that the name 'Orosius' became a synonym for 'history'.⁶²⁴ It is not obvious why the *Histories* were so

⁶²¹ Ibn Abī Usaybīʿa, *ʿUyun al-anba fī tabaqat al-atibba* ed. Müller A., (2 vols., Göttingen, 1882), II, p. 47.

⁶²² *Paulus Orosii adversum paganos libri VII*, ed. Zangemeister (Leipzig, 1889), trans. Deferrari R.J., *Orosius, The Seven Books of History Against the Pagans, The Fathers of the Church*, (Washington, 1964).

⁶²³ Alonso-Núñez J.M., 'La Transición del Mundo Antiguo al Medieval en la historiografía. La Primera Historia Universal Cristiana: Las *Historiae Adversum Paganos* de Paulo Orosio.' in *De la Antigüedad al Medieval, Siglos IV-VIII*, (Oviedo, undated), pp.145-158; Lacroix B., *Orose et ses idées*, (Paris, 1965).

⁶²⁴ Fabrini, F., *Paolo Orosio, Uno Storico*, (Rome, 1979), p.10.

popular; perhaps later readers accepted Orosius' providential version of events in spite of its contradictions, or it could be that his summary saved them the trouble of ploughing through the works of drier historians. The text was widely transmitted; more than two hundred copies survive, including one in Visigothic script.⁶²⁵ Orosius was frequently quoted and translated. His work was turned into a very free Anglo-Saxon version for King Alfred between 889 and 899, half a century before the supposed date of the Arabic translation.⁶²⁶ For both the West Saxons and the Christians of al-Andalus, Orosius' *Histories* may have represented a link between earliest antiquity and their own times.⁶²⁷ The translation of Orosius' *Histories* from Latin into Arabic also bridged the divide between the Christians under Muslim rule and the pre-Islamic history of Spain. This chapter considers some of the problems of the translation of Orosius in order to show the complexity of that bridge.⁶²⁸

The Byzantine gift and the translators.

One manuscript of an Arabic translation of the *Histories* survives in the library of Columbia University, New York.⁶²⁹ The manuscript, which will be considered in more detail later, is incomplete. It seems originally to have comprised a translation of the *Histories* with a continuation which brought the history of Spain up to the conquest. Ibn Abī Usaybī'a, in the passage quoted above, explained how Orosius' *Histories* came to Spain, and why the work was translated. One of the most famous medieval Arabic historians, Ibn Khaldūn, quoted Orosius several times and made two brief references to the translators.⁶³⁰ These sources, however, are both late and contradictory, and the connection between the Columbia manuscript and the references to the translation of Orosius' *Histories* in the works of Ibn Abī Usaybī'a and Ibn Khaldūn is not as

⁶²⁵ Albi Bibliothèque Municipale 29, cited in Lowe E.A., *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, (Oxford, 1953), VI, no.705; Ross D.J.A. 'Illustrated Manuscripts of Orosius' *Scriptorium*, (1955), IX, pp.35-56, at p.35, n.2; Bately J.M., 'King Alfred and the Latin MSS of Orosius' History', *Classica et Medievalia*, (1961), XXII, 69-105; the manuscripts are listed in Bately J.M. and Ross D.J.A., 'A Check-list of Manuscripts of Orosius' *Historiarum Adversos Paganos Libri Septem*', *Scriptorium*, (1961), IV, 2, p.265; Millares Carlo A., *Manuscritos visigóticos*, (Madrid and Barcelona, 1963), pp.79-80, cited in Koningsveld P.Sj. Van, *The Latin Arabic Glossary of the Leiden University Library*, (Leiden, 1977), p.57.

⁶²⁶ Bately J.M. (ed.), *The Old English Orosius*, Early English Text Society Supplementary Series VI, (Oxford, 1980); Lund N. (ed), and Fell C. (trans), *Two Voyagers at the Court of King Alfred: The Ventures of Othere and Wulfstan together with the Description of Northern Europe from the Old English Orosius*, (York, 1984).

⁶²⁷ Smyth A.P., *King Alfred the Great*, (Oxford, 1995), pp.538-9.

⁶²⁸ I will refer to the Latin versions as the *Histories* and to the Arabic translation as the 'Urūsūs.

⁶²⁹ *Columbia University Library*, MS X-893 712 H, ed. Badawi 'A., 'Urūsūs, *Tā'rikh al-ʿālam*, (Beirut, 1982).

⁶³⁰ Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitab al-ʿIbar*, ed. Dagher J., (7 vols., Beirut, 1958-68), II, pp.169 and 402, cited in Badawī, 'Urūsūs, p.11.

obvious as it might at first appear. Attempts to tie the pieces of evidence together have occupied several scholars since the Italian Arabist Levi Della Vida wrote on the 'Urūsūs in the 1950s.⁶³¹ As this chapter will demonstrate, none of the solutions they have proposed are entirely satisfactory. Yet it is the wider question raised by the context for the translation, rather than the minutiae of the problems so far worked over, that make the 'Urūsūs so interesting.

When the Arabic historians looked back on the glories of Umayyad Cordoba they made special mention of its libraries. Even a poor schoolteacher travelled to the East in search of books,⁶³² and the biographical dictionary of Ibn Bashkuwāl named three women who had famous libraries.⁶³³ Al-Maqqarī told the story of a bibliophile who failed to buy a particularly fine volume in Cordoba's book market, outbid by a social climber who did not know what the book was about but wanted it to fill a gap in his new library which was exactly the same size.⁶³⁴ It was one of the duties of Islamic rulers to promote learning. According to tradition, the chief patron of bibliophilic activity in Spain was al-Hakam II. His father 'Abd al-RaHmān III reigned for forty-nine years and, perhaps as an under-employed crown prince, al-Hakam became a patron of the arts. A century later Ibn Hayyān said:

'There was no caliph in all Islam to match al-Hakam in the acquisition of books and poetry and his affection for them and the importance he attached to them. He was a patron of sciences and commended them to his people and they responded willingly. And his gifts established links between him and the scholars in the farthest capitals'.⁶³⁵

The librarian, a eunuch named Bakīya, told Ibn Hazm that the library catalogue of titles and authors' names covered 44 quires of 20 pages each.⁶³⁶ There were reputed to be 400,000 volumes. This impossibly large number was that judged appropriate for an important library; the Vizier of Zuhayr (d.1038), ruler of the taifa kingdom of Almería was also said to have possessed 400,000 books. A catalogue from the library of the Dar al-Hikma in Cairo compiled in 1045 lists

⁶³¹ Levi Della Vida G., 'La traduzione arabe delle storie di Orosio', *Al-Andalus*, (1954), XIX, 257-93.

⁶³² Ibn al-Abbār, *Al-Takmila*, ed. Codera F., (Madrid, 1887-90), no.312, in cited in Ribera y Tarragó J., 'Bibliófilos y bibliotecas en la España Musulmana', in *ibid.*, *Disertaciones y opúsculos*, (2 vols., Madrid, 1928), I, pp.181-228.

⁶³³ Ibn Bashkuwāl, *Al-Sila fī ta'rikh a'immat al-Andalus*, ed. Codera F., (Madrid, 1882), nos.1412, 1415 and 1417, cited in Ribera, 'Bibliófilos', p.199.

⁶³⁴ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, p.302; Ribera, 'Bibliófilos', p.199.

⁶³⁵ *Kitāb al-Muqtabis fī tār'ikh al-Andalus*, ed. Antuña M.M., (Paris, 1937), p.197, cited in Kuhayla U., 'Kitāb al-tawārikh li-Bawlus Urūsiyūs wa tārjamatuḥu', *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos*, XXIII, (1985-6), pp.119-37, at p.124.

⁶³⁶ quoted by al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, 250.

as more realistic figure of approximately 6,500.⁶³⁷ Wasserstein deduced the titles of some fifty books which he believed al-Hakam's library to have contained, but the only surviving volume which can be traced back to Cordoba with certainty is a legal text discovered in Fès in 1934. Most of the other titles in Wasserstein's list came from a description of the library which Ibn al-FaraDī (d. 1013) included in his *History of the Scholars of al-Andalus*, although he may have been writing after the contents of the library had been dispersed.⁶³⁸ It is al-Hakam who is supposed by modern scholars to have sponsored the translation of Orosius' *Histories* into Arabic.

Ibn Abī Usaybi'a's reference to the Byzantine emperor's gift of the *Materia Medica* of Dioscurides and Orosius' *Histories* comes from his *Dictionary of Physicians*. One of Ibn Abī Usaybi'a's subjects was a native of Spain, active in the last quarter of the tenth century, called Abu Daūd Sulaymān ibn Hassan, also known as Ibn Yulyul. He was the author of a work based on the *Materia Medica*. Ibn Abī Usaybi'a quoted Ibn Yulyul as saying:

'The Book of Dioscurides was translated in the City of Peace [Baghdad] during the Abbasid dynasty, in the days of Ya'far al-Mutawakkil (Caliph from 847-861). Its translator was Istafan ibn Basīl the Interpreter from the Greek language into the Arabic language. Hunain ibn Ishāq the Translator scrutinized this translation and corrected and authorized it, because Istafan had explained in Arabic those Greek names (of plants) of which he did not know an equivalent in the Arabic language, in their (original) Greek name. (He did so) trusting that God would send someone after him who would know those and explain them in the Arabic language...'

Ibn Yulyul said: And this book (the Arabic Dioscurides) entered al-Andalus in the translation of Istafan, containing both the plant-names known by him in Arabic and those unknown by him (in their original Greek name). And people, both in the Orient and in al-Andalus profited from the disclosed part of it until the days of al-Nāsir 'Abd al-RaHmān ibn Muhammad ['Abd al-RaHmān III], who at the time was the Lord of al-Andalus'.⁶³⁹

Ibn Yulyul then explained how a copy of Dioscurides in the original Greek came to al-Andalus, together with the *Histories*, and the significance of the new text of the *Materia Medica* for Andalusī scholars. Unfortunately, Ibn Yulyul, or Ibn Abī Usaybi'a, gave such a confused account of the Byzantine gift that it is impossible to date it. Nor is it possible, from this passage alone, to connect the Byzantine copy of the *Histories* either with al-Hakam II or with the 'Urtstils.

⁶³⁷ Wasserstein D., 'The library of Al-Hakam II al-Mustansir and the culture of Islamic Spain', *Manuscripts of the Middle East*, (1990-1), V, 99-105.

⁶³⁸ Ibn al-FaraDī, *Tā'rikh 'ulama' al-Andalus*, p.6; for al-FaraDī, see chapter 8.

⁶³⁹ Ibn Abī Usaybi'a, *'Uyun al-anba*, II, p.47, trans. Koningsveld, *The Latin Arabic Glossary*, p.58.

Apart from the inherent improbability of the biographer's being able to quote his subject at a distance of three centuries, it is characteristic of this type of text that Ibn Yulyul, as reported by his biographer, gave the Byzantine emperor's message to 'Abd al-RaHmān III verbatim whilst getting the the date wrong, unless this is a copyist's mistake. Romanus (920-944) could have sent the books to 'Abd al-RaHmān, but the emperor who sent ambassadors to Cordoba in the late 940s, possibly in 945/6 and again in 947 was Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (944-959).⁶⁴⁰ Most of the commentators on the *'Urūsīūs* seem not to have read the rest of this passage. As Koningsveld pointed out, it should be read in the context of the difficulties which physicians had experienced in using Istafan's defective translation of Dioscurides. Ibn Yulyul went on to describe the problem of translating from the new copy of the *Materia Medica* from Greek into Arabic: 'when al-Nāsir answered Romanus the King he asked him to send to him a man who could speak both Greek and Latin to instruct some of his servants, so that they would be able to act as translators. Thereupon Romanus the King sent to al-Nāsir a monk called Nicholas, who arrived in Cordoba in the year 340 [951/2]'. Nicholas worked with a group of scholars, including Ibn Yulyul himself, to produce a reliable translation. Orosius was not mentioned again, and it seems that the *Histories* were introduced to make the point that a Latin text was easier to deal with because there were Christians in al-Andalus who knew both Arabic and Latin, even if they did not know Greek.⁶⁴¹

Although there is no evidence that he knew himself Latin, Ibn Yulyul acted as an intermediary between Latin and Arabic scholarship.⁶⁴² His *Dictionary* survives in one incomplete manuscript dated 993 [1585].⁶⁴³ (The passage quoted by Ibn Abī Usaybi'fa may have come from an autobiographical colophon to the dictionary, but no such colophon survives.) Ibn Yulyul mentioned several Christian physicians, whom he said were the most eminent medical men in al-Andalus until the middle of the ninth century; 'In al-Andalus medicine was practised according to one of the books of the Christians which had been translated.... It was the Christians who used to practise medicine, but in the time of 'Abd al-RaHmān ibn al-Hakam ['Abd al-RaHmān III] they were not well-versed in this science...'⁶⁴⁴ Once medical texts were available from the East, Christian learning became obsolete: 'Then came the reign of Al-NaSīr li-Dīn Allāh al-RaHmān ibn Muhammad ['Abd al-RaHmān III]. Then great benefit was obtained, and from the East

⁶⁴⁰ Toynbee A., *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his world*, (1973), pp.491-2; the dates are uncertain.

⁶⁴¹ Koningsveld, *The Latin Arabic Glossary*, p.59.

⁶⁴² Vernet J. 'Los médicos andaluces en el Libro de las generaciones de Médicos de Ibn Yulyul', *Anuarios de Estudios Medievales*, (1968), V, 445-462; *ibid.* *La Cultura Hispanoárabe en Oriente y Occidente*, (Barcelona, 1978), p.72.

⁶⁴³ Ibn Yulyul, *Kitāb tabaqāt al-atibbā' wa-l-hukumā*, ed. Sa'īd F., (Cairo, 1955), [the reference to Isidore is on p.35 of the introduction], cited in Koningsveld, *The Latin Arabic Glossary*, p.59.

⁶⁴⁴ trans. in Vernet, 'Los médicos andaluces', pp.453-4.

arrived books of medicine and all the sciences which awoke the interest and famous physicians appeared, from the very beginning of his reign'. In addition to his references to Christian physicians, Ibn Yulyul mentioned Jerome and Isidore among his sources, and may perhaps have known something of Christian history. Yet his reference to the arrival of Orosius's *Histories* in Cordoba should not be taken as meaning that this was the only copy of the *Histories* available in al-Andalus, and therefore the text from which the 'Urūsūs was translated. The *Histories* were certainly circulating in the peninsula. The basis for the 'Urūsūs seems to have been the *Histories* plus the work of an unknown Spanish continuator, and it is unlikely that a Byzantine exemplar would have contained this Visigothic material. Ibn Yulyul provides fascinating insights into the linguistic problems of Andalusī scholarship, but what he is reported to have written about the arrival of Orosius' *Histories* in Cordoba does not help to determine the provenance of the 'Urūsūs..

Ibn Khaldūn is the sole authority for the statement that the *Histories* were translated for al-Hakam, but, although he referred to diplomatic contacts between Constantinople and Cordoba in 336 [947/8: Ibn Abī Usabī'a said 337], and correctly identified the emperor involved, he did not link the translation with a gift of the *Histories* from Byzantium. These two pieces of information seem to have been put together only in the twentieth century. Ibn Khaldūn's references to the translators of the 'Urūsūs have given modern students their most difficult puzzle. Ibn Khaldūn mentioned the translation twice. He cited: "'Urūsūs, the historian of Rūm, in his book which was translated for al-Hakam al-Mustansir of the Bani Umayya by the judge of the Christians and their translator, and Qāsim ibn Asbagh'.⁶⁴⁵ Later in the same work, in an attempt clear up an ambiguity, Ibn Khaldūn said: 'the report of Orosius is preferable, because its writers were two Muslims who translated it for the caliphs in Cordoba, and these two were well-known and they compiled the book'.⁶⁴⁶ From these brief and apparently contradictory notices, several attempts have been made to identify the two translators.

A celebrated legal scholar called Qāsim ibn Asbagh al-Bayyānī was mentioned several times by Ibn al-Farādī.⁶⁴⁷ Later authors also referred to him, although the details of their accounts are different.⁶⁴⁸ They did not connect Qāsim ibn Asbagh with the 'Urūsūs, nor with translation in general. According to Ibn al-Farādī, Qāsim ibn Asbagh was born in 245 [859] and was tutor to al-Hakam before his accession. He died in 341 [952-3]. By the date of the embassies from Constantinople, when the copy of the *Histories* arrived, Qāsim ibn Asbagh was more than ninety

⁶⁴⁵ Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibār*, II, p.169; Badawī, 'Urūsūs, p.11.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibār*, II, p.402; Badawī, 'Urūsūs, p.11.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibn al-Farādī, *Tārīkh 'ulamā' al-Andalus*, nos.1068, 1070, 1071, 1079; cited in Levi, 'La traduzione; Pons, *Ensayo*, pp.105-108.

⁶⁴⁸ Hājji Khalīfa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, V, no. 10626, pp.172-173, Al-Dahabī *Tabaqat al-buffāz*, I, pp.67-8, cited in Levi, 'La traduzione'; Pons, *Ensayo*, pp.59-61.

years old and reported by two authors to be suffering from senile dementia,⁶⁴⁹ so it is most unlikely that he was involved in the translation at this date.

Modern commentators have dealt with this problem in a number of different ways, all of which involve apparently arbitrary decisions to accept some parts of the evidence while discounting others. Their approaches divide into two groups depending on acceptance or rejection of the naming of Qāsim Ibn Asbagh as the translator. If Qāsim ibn Asbagh was involved, the translation must date from before the embassies of the late 940s, and the account of the gift from the Byzantine emperor must be rejected as a red herring. Furthermore, al-Hakam must have commissioned the work when Qasim ibn Asbag was still capable of undertaking it, perhaps twenty years before he became caliph in 961. The alternative is to look for another translator. This has been done by scouring the biographical dictionaries and accounts of later historians. Several names have been proposed, none of which have met with general approval. Badawi put forward two candidates.⁶⁵⁰ The first was a grandson of Qāsim ibn Asbagh called Qāsim ibn Muhammad (d.998), a governor of Tudmir whom Ibn al-FaraDī described as a literary man of good character and mild temper.⁶⁵¹ The second is another man mentioned by Ibn Khaldūn, Asbagh ibn ‘Abd-Allah ibn Nabīl al-Jāthlīq.⁶⁵² Badawī suggested that Ibn Khaldūn wrote his name as Qāsim ibn Asbagh because he was in a hurry and the name of his famous predecessor sprang to mind. Badawī concluded, however, by rejecting all three names. Kuhayla put forward two more names without being any more convincing, contending that the famous historian mixed up the names because he was old and forgetful.⁶⁵³ None of these men were noted translators and their biographers did not say that they knew Latin.

It is even more difficult to establish the identity of the second translator. Ibn Khaldūn identified him only as ‘the judge and translator [*tarjumān*] of the Christians’. He might have been an Arabic-speaking Christian, who could have provided Qasim ibn Asbagh (or whoever the named translator was) with a rough Arabic version of the *Histories* for polishing. The word *tarjumān* meant rather more than ‘translator’. Such men also acted as interpreters of the differences between the laws and customs of the two communities. The term is also used to describe the ambassador Kartiyūs/Kratiyūs the Greek [*al-Rūmī*] whom Theophilus sent to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III in 839. Kartiyūs was a Christian,⁶⁵⁴ although it is possible that Christian converts to Islam also carried out the various functions of a *tarjumān*.

⁶⁴⁹ Ibn al-FaraDī, *Tar’ikh ‘ulama’al-Andalus*, no.1068; Al-Dabbī, *Bugyat al-Multamis*, ed, Codera F., (Madrid, 1884), pp.433-4, cited in Levi, ‘La traduzione’.

⁶⁵⁰ Badawī, ‘*Urūsūs*’, pp.13-15.

⁶⁵¹ Ibn al-FaraDī, *Ta’rīkh al’ulama’*, no.1079.

⁶⁵² Ibn Khaldūn, ‘*Ibār*’, II, p.315.

⁶⁵³ Kuhayla U., ‘*Kitāb al-tawārīkh*’.

⁶⁵⁴ Lévi-Provençal E., ‘Un échange d’ambassades entre Cordoue et Byzance au IX^e siècle’, *Byzantion* XII, (1937), 1-24.

Simonet proposed two names for the second translator.⁶⁵⁵ The first, the judge and translator HafS ibn Albar, is probably too early,⁶⁵⁶ but the second, Walid ibn Jayzuran, also known as Ibn Mughīth, was a contemporary of al-Hakam II. HafS ibn Albar's Christian origin is indicated by his patronymic 'son of Alvarus' and his nickname 'the Goth'; Ibn Mughīth was also a Christian but his name is not obviously so. Ibn Hayyān listed four men who served al-Hakam as interpreters of a deputation from Northern Spain, and if he had not labelled one of them as a judge of the Christians, the others a bishop, an archbishop and a count [*qūmis*], it would have been impossible to tell, from their impeccably Arabic names, that they were Christians.⁶⁵⁷ Thus the first translator, if he was not Qasim ibn Asbagh, could also have been a Christian.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, however, both the translators were Muslims, which seems to rule out Simonet's candidates. It is possible that Ibn Khaldūn's statement is wrong, but if he was correct in maintaining that both the translators were Muslims, the judge, in order to have known Latin, must have been a Christian convert to Islam. The implausibility of this led Kuhayla again to suggest that Ibn Khaldūn was confused; the passage in which he said that two Muslims were responsible for the translation comes many pages after the first reference to the translators, by which time he had forgotten what he had said before. Koningsveld agreed that the translator, even though he was a judge, could have been a Christian. He proposed a neat solution to the problem which hinges on the omission of the word 'and' from two manuscripts of the *History [al-'Ibār]* of Ibn Khaldūn, one apparently corrected in his own hand.⁶⁵⁸ This is slightly rash, because the word 'and' is translated by a single-letter prefix, easily omitted, but if the correct text of the passage reads: Orosius 'was translated for al-Hakam al-Mustansir the Umayyad, by the judge of the Christians and their interpreter in Cordoba, Qasim ibn Asbag....' this amalgamates the two translators into one, and the confusion is reduced. Koningsveld thought that he was a different Qasim ibn Asbagh - not the famous Muslim scholar, but a Christian judge and translator. By describing the translators as Muslims, Ibn Khaldūn may have supposed that this is how the text of a Latin author became available to an Arabic-speaking audience, although, as we have seen, Ibn Yulyul expected Christians to translate it. Ibn Khaldūn, or later copyists, may also have been misled into thinking that the post of judge of the Christians would have been held by a Muslim, but not by the famous scholar Qasim ibn Asbagh, thus turning the translator into two people. It seems that little can be salvaged from Ibn Khaldūn's notices, although responsibility for the confusion may not lie with him alone. One must conclude, however, that the inconsistencies in the accounts of Ibn Yulyul and Ibn Khaldūn are such that no conclusions can be drawn from them. It is clear that they do not prove that the *'Urūsūs* which survives in the Columbia

⁶⁵⁵ Simonet, *Historia de los Mozárabes*, pp.111-112, 171, and 622.

⁶⁵⁶ see below.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibn Hayyān, *Muqtabis*, ed. Al-Hajji, A.A., (Beirut, 1965), p.64, cited in Koningsveld, *The Latin Arabic Glossary*, p.56.

⁶⁵⁸ Koningsveld, *The Latin Arabic Glossary*, p.57.

manuscript is a translation made for al-Hakam from the Byzantine gift; indeed, they suggest that more than one translation could have been made.

The *'Urūstūs* is not the only translation of a Christian history said to have been commissioned for al-Hakam's library. The historian al-Mas'ūdī, who was active in Baghdad and died at Fustāt (Old Cairo) in 956, in his book *Meadows of Gold and Precious Stones*, gave a list of the Frankish kings from Clovis to Louis IV which he said came from a *History of the Franks* by Bishop Godmar of Gerona which Mas'ūdī said was translated for al-Hakam in 939.⁶⁵⁹ Godmar, or Gondemar, II was bishop of Gerona from 943 to 951/2 and wrote a *Chronica regum Francorum*, now lost, c.943.⁶⁶⁰ Al-Mas'ūdi says that he saw a copy of this book at Fustāt, but his use of it lends little credence to this statement. His genealogy is a collection of garbled names, a mere six of them between Qlawdīa [?Clovis (c.481-c.511)], 'the first Christian king', and Qārila [Charlemagne (768-814)], whose reign he truncated to twenty-six years, although the list becomes more accurate nearer the time of writing. Yet the passage could be based on a Christian source, and it is unlikely that al-Mas'ūdī read this text in Latin. Al-Mas'ūdi gave the translation of Godmar's history a context by mentioning Eastern translations of non-Muslim works into Arabic.⁶⁶¹ The *History of Franks*, or something similar, may have been known by historians in the East, some of whom, such as Ibn al-Athīr, were better informed about Frankish history than peninsular historians.⁶⁶²

There are several reasons why al-Hakam might have been eager to have Christian history translated into Arabic. Perhaps he was interested in Latin scholarship for what it could tell him about his Christian subjects, or intended it to stimulate historiography in al-Andalus. Such interest in Christian history seems to have been transient and, if the *'Urūstūs* did reside in al-Hakam's library, it may not have done so for very long. The reign of al-Hakam's son and successor Hishām, was dominated by his vizir, al-ManSūr. In a new climate of ultraorthodoxy, al-ManSūr may have allowed the religious scholars to remove and burn much of the library's contents. The books which offended them were works of what were described as 'the ancient sciences', such as philosophy and astronomy, derived from the Greek heritage. It is not known whether texts of Christian origin perished at this time. In the civil wars of the early eleventh century, Cordoba was threatened by the Berbers; in 1011 the minister Wādih is said to have sold the major part of the library to raise money, and what remained was seized by the Berbers.⁶⁶³ The rulers of the taifa

⁶⁵⁹ Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab w-Ma'ādin, Les Prairies d'Or*, ed. and trans. Barbier de Meynard C. and Pavet de Courteille A., (9 vols., Paris, 1864), III, pp.69-72.

⁶⁶⁰ *España Sagrada*, XLIII, (Madrid, 1819), pp.126-129, cited in Casas Homs J.M., 'Godmar', *DHEE*, p.1019.

⁶⁶¹ Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, VIII, p. 291.

⁶⁶² Collins, 'Literacy and the laity', p.111.

⁶⁶³ Sa'īd al-Andalusī, trans. Salem and Kumar, *Science in the Medieval World*, p.61; Pedersen, trans. French, *The Arabic Book*, p.120.

kingdoms of Zaragoza, Granada and Toledo established important libraries, but there is no further reference to translations from Latin, nor of the possession of Christian texts. Yet knowledge of the *'Urūsūs* survived in the Arabic tradition, and the work was quoted by several later writers. These citations make it possible to see how the work fitted into Arabic scholarship, and they may also help to date its translation.

Orosius in Arabic scholarship

Most of the Arabic scholars who used the *'Urūsūs* copied the first two passages, on the geography of Spain and its division into two parts:

'Spain, taken altogether, by its natural contour is a triangle, and is almost made an island by the surrounding ocean and Tyrrhenian Sea. Its first corner, looking towards the east, pressed in on the right by the province of Aquitania, on the left by the Balearic Sea, is inserted within the territory of the Narbonese. The second corner extends towards the northwest, where Brigantia, a city of Gallaecia, is located and raises its towering lighthouse, one of the few memorable structures, towards the watchtower of Britain. Its third corner is where the Gades Islands, facing the southwest, look upon the Atlas Mountains with the gulf of the ocean intervening.

The Pyrenean forest pastures form the boundary of Hither Spain, beginning on the east and extending to the northern side to the Cantabri and Astures and thence through the Vaccaeii and the Oretani, whom it has to the west; Carthage [Cartagena], situated on the shore of our sea, fixes the boundary. Further Spain has the Vaccaeii, Celtiberi and Oretani on the east; on the north, the ocean; on the west, the ocean; and on the south the strait of Gades; from here our sea, which is called the Tyrrhenian Sea, flows in'.⁶⁶⁴

Molina analysed the variants of these passages appearing in the works of Arab geographers and in later Christian texts which may have been derived from them.⁶⁶⁵ The first section, beginning 'Spain is triangular' appears in eleven versions, eight in Arabic, one in Romance and one in Latin, the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*.⁶⁶⁶ These accounts are broadly similar, but suggest that there were three distinct lines of transmission. The version which is closest to that in the *'Urūsūs*

⁶⁶⁴ Orosius, trans. Deferrari, *The Seven Books of History*, I, p.15.

⁶⁶⁵ Molina L., 'Orosio y los geógrafos Hispanomusulmanes', *Al-Qantara*, (1984), V, 62-92; see also Vallvé J., 'Fuentes latinas de los geógrafos árabes' *Al-Andalus*, (1967), XXXII, 241-260.

⁶⁶⁶ *MGH AA XI*, pp.377-388; *Crónica Seudo Isidoriana*, ed. Benito Vidal A., (Valencia, 1961); Gautier-Dalché P., 'Notes sur la *Crónica Pseudo-Isidoriana*', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, (1984), XIV, 13-32; see below.

of the Columbia manuscript is the one which al-Maqqarī said he was quoting from Ahmad al-Rāzī, active in the ninth century;⁶⁶⁷ that is, al-Rāzī apparently quoted it a century before the translation is supposed to have been made. The version in the fourteenth-century *Chronicle of the Moor Rasis*⁶⁶⁸ may also be a direct descendant from al-Rāzī, as may the version of Yāqūt.⁶⁶⁹ The other two groups of versions, although surviving in earlier copies, diverge more than al-Rāzī's version from their supposed original, giving grounds for the supposition that not all the authors were working from a text identical to the Columbia manuscript. To take just two examples: al-Bakrī⁶⁷⁰ seems to share much of his information with al-Rāzī but also included excerpts from the *Histories* which al-Rāzī did not use, while the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* has an altogether different version. Analysis of the second passage, on the division of Spain into two, is less helpful for two reasons; the Columbia manuscript is badly damaged at this point, and most of the geographers did not reproduce this passage in full. Only the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* kept the basic structure of the *Histories*, which the Columbia manuscript also followed, whilst al-Rāzī and al-Nazzam, both quoted by al-Maqqarī,⁶⁷¹ based their division of Spain not on the former Roman provinces, but on climatic and geographical features. Molina appended to his study a family tree of the different versions of Orosius' geography, concluding that a version of the 'Urūstūs similar to that in the Columbia manuscript served all the geographers as the basis for their descriptions of Spain, but that the *Chronicle of the Moor Rasis* and the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* have a common origin which is not the same as the Columbia version. As was his wont, Sánchez-Albornoz claimed to have discovered this missing link, which he called the *Book of the Prophets*, from a reference in the biographical dictionary of Hajji Khalīfa to 'the book of Orosius, master of stories, which is a chronicle of the kings of Rūm and stories of the prophets sent to them. It was written in Latin'.⁶⁷² Molina described the geographers' use of 'Urūstūs as 'a reflexion of the cultural situation of al-Andalus at the moment when the sorry remnants of the classical world were appropriated by the flowering culture of Islamic Spain'. The Arabic scholars may indeed have used only fragments of the *Histories*, but they seem to have taken them from at least two versions of the work available to them.

It is not surprising that, with the exception of Ibn Khaldūn, Arabic scholars extracted little from

⁶⁶⁷ Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-tib*, ed. 'Abbās I., (8 vols, Beirut, 1968), I, pp.129-130, cited in Molina, 'Orosio y los geógrafos'.

⁶⁶⁸ Catalán D. and De Andrés M.S., *Crónica del Moro Rasis*, (Madrid, 1984), pp.13-15.

⁶⁶⁹ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, (5 vols., Beirut, 1957), III, p.263, cited in Catalán, *Crónica*, p.XLII.

⁶⁷⁰ Al-Bakrī, *Yugrāfiyāt Al-Andalus wa-Urūbbā min kitāb "al-masālik wa-l-mamālik*, ed. Hajjī A., (Beirut, 1968), pp.65-68, in Molina, 'Orosio y los geógrafos'.

⁶⁷¹ Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-tib*, I, pp.131-2, cited in Molina, 'Orosio y los geógrafos'.

⁶⁷² Hajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, V, n.10625, p.171, cited in Sánchez-Albornoz C., *En Torno a los orígenes del feudalismo*, (2 vols., 2nd edn., Buenos Aires, 1977), II, *Fuentes de la historiografía hispano-musulmana del siglo VIII*, II, p.17; see also pp.127 and 146-147.

the *Histories* apart from the introduction. As a work of Islamic historiography, the *'Urīstūs* is very odd indeed. Most Andalusī Muslim scholars shared with their counterparts in the East a lack of appreciation of Christian history. Muslims from the East considered al-Andalus a backwater, and although by the tenth century Andalusī learning rivalled that of Baghdad, educated Spaniards adopted Eastern Islamic values. Many of the theologians, judges and physicians of al-Andalus travelled to Baghdad or elsewhere in the East to sit at the feet of the masters there - or, at the very least, it was important that their biographers should claim that they had done so. The most advanced studies were of the Qu'rān, the sayings of the Prophet, jurisprudence, and theology. History occupied a lowly position in the Islamic curriculum.⁶⁷³ The study of history was suitable for children, especially young princes. It was not taught in the religious colleges, except for the science of *hadīth*, the transmission of the sayings of Muhammad, which required knowledge of the biographies of the transmitters. In writing history, Andalusian authors were more likely to compile biographies of Muhammad and the early history of Islam than to write about their own part of the world.⁶⁷⁴ The first Andalusī to be remembered as 'the historian' was Ahmad al-Rāzī, whose son 'Isa said of him that he 'collected data from old people and transmitters of reports, which he collated and organized into a history. He was thus the first to codify the rules of historical composition in Spain. His work brought him closer to the sovereign and earned himself and his son a greater measure of royal favour. Together they endowed the Andalusians with a science they had not hitherto practised with success'.⁶⁷⁵ Al-Rāzī does not seem to have had any illustrious successors during the Umayyad period. Lack of interest in the history of al-Andalus was accompanied by total neglect of the pre-Islamic history of Spain. Sā'īd the Andalusī (d.1070), who does not seem to have known the work of Isidore, claimed that Spain was a cultural desert until the eighth century: 'In ancient times, prior to the Arab occupation, al-Andalus was void of any scientific activity and none of its inhabitants became known for any scientific contribution. A few ancient inscriptions dealing with a variety of topics were found in this country, but everyone is in agreement that they were left by the kings of Rome, because al-Andalus formed part of their empire. It remained as such, without any scientific activity, until the advent of the Muslims' conquest. Except for the study of Islamic law and the Arabic language, the lack of interest in science persisted until the Umayyads established their authority'.⁶⁷⁶

Sā'īd's view was echoed by Ibn Hazm, who complained about the dearth of histories of his native

⁶⁷³ Rosenthal F., *A History of Muslim Historiography*, (Leiden, 1952, 2nd edn. 1968).

⁶⁷⁴ Pellat C., 'The Origin and Development of Historiography in Muslim Spain' in Lewis B. and Holt P.M. (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East*, (Oxford, 1962), pp. 118-125.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibn Hayyān, *Muqtabis*, cited in Lévi-Provençal E., *Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane*, III, p. 504.

⁶⁷⁶ Sā'īd al-Andalusī, trans. Salem and Kumar, *Science in the Medieval World*, p.58; Asín Palacios M., *Tres estudios sobre pensamiento y mística hispanomusulmanes*, (Madrid, 1992), pp.21-22.

land.⁶⁷⁷ Ibn Hazm recognised that history, together with religious law and the study of language, was peculiar to each nation and religion. This distinction affected the Muslim attitude to non-Muslim history, which it was thought could only be imperfectly known; one should not waste too much time on it. Further, whilst Muslim history could be written with the didactic purpose of showing virtue rewarded and evil punished, the history of the unbelievers was just a diversion. Although pre-Islamic history, especially from Arabia, was part of Muslim historiography from the earliest days, it was regarded as fabulous, and retold as historical romances embellished with poetry, often in very simple language, or even in a local dialect. Such works, with the stock phrases and other devices of the epic storyteller are still current in Egypt.⁶⁷⁸ The pre-conquest history of Spain may have been regarded in the same light, although the sparseness of the evidence makes interpretation difficult. ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Habib (d.852) compiled part of a history of the world from creation to the Umayyads, which turned the conquest of Spain into a melodrama of treachery and revenge.⁶⁷⁹ This work has been a source of irritation to modern historians of al-Andalus because later sources, which they would like to regard as more trustworthy, repeated much of the same material. Some of Ibn Habīb’s fables may have originated from Egypt,⁶⁸⁰ but he may have been consciously elaborating his account, regarding this as a legitimate approach to the history of Spain before 711. Such works cannot be taken as evidence of a serious interest in non-Muslim history.⁶⁸¹ If the *Histories* were translated for al-Hakam, they would probably have been read as entertainment, not as scholarship.

Only Ibn Khaldūn quoted frequently from the writings of his Christian counterparts. His handling of Orosius as a source for his *History* is worth considering at some length for the light that it sheds on the transmission of Orosius’ *Histories*. Although he was born in Tunisia in 1337 and lived most of his life in North Africa, Ibn Khaldūn studied with Ibn al-Khatīb and others in the kingdom of Granada and returned there for three years as the favourite of Sultan Muhammad V, who sent him as ambassador to Pedro the Cruel in Seville. His decision to write history seems to have resulted from his need to understand his failure to negotiate political change in the Maghreb, which he described in letters written to Ibn al-Khatīb.⁶⁸² Other men had also failed; cities and empires lay in ruins. ‘The condition of the world and of nations, their customs and

⁶⁷⁷ Pellat C., ‘Rasa‘il Ibn Hazm’, *Al-Andalus*, (1954), XIX, 53-102.

⁶⁷⁸ Cachia P., *An overview of modern Arabic literature*, (Edinburgh, 1990), p.18.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibn Habīb, *Kitāb al-Ta’rīkh*.

⁶⁸⁰ Makki A., ‘Egipto y los orígenes de la historiografía árabe-española’, *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos*, (1957), V, 157-248.

⁶⁸¹ Lewis B., ‘The use by Muslim historians of non-Muslim Sources’ in Lewis and Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East*, pp.35-45.

⁶⁸² cited in Lacoste, Y. *Ibn Khaldūn: Naissance de l’Histoire, Passe du tiers monde*, (Paris, 1966), trans. Macey D., *Ibn Khaldūn: The Birth of History and the Past of the Third World*, (1984), p.59.

sects, does not persist in the same form or in a constant manner....'⁶⁸³ The history of the Maghreb could be used to illustrate the principle that 'when there is a general change in conditions, it is as though the whole world were altered.... Therefore there is a need at this time that some one should systematically set down the situation of the world among all regions and races'.⁶⁸⁴ Methodological explanations like these are Ibn Khaldūn's passport to acceptance by many twentieth-century historians, and Ibn Khaldūn has been exonerated of the crimes of which Arabic historians are accused.⁶⁸⁵ Not all contemporary scholars, however, share the general admiration for Ibn Khaldūn. Al-Azmeh⁶⁸⁶ complained that attention is paid almost exclusively to Ibn Khaldūn's 'historical criticism' and 'social theory' to the neglect of other, more 'oriental' aspects of his work. This bias is intensified by the way his writings have been rendered into Western languages, where, in the process of being translated into the language of sociology, his work becomes 'scientific'.⁶⁸⁷ In spite of Ibn Khaldūn's statement of intent, in the *Muqaddimah*, to divest history of its fabulous tales, there was in effect, no better way to establish the truth than to select whatever appeared plausible, and to point to the number of reliable authors who had used the same information. Ultimately, Ibn Khaldūn had the same view as his contemporaries when it came to the criteria for the trustworthiness of a source, including Orosius.

The second volume of the *History*, in which Orosius is quoted repeatedly, is a survey of the biblical and post-biblical history of the Jews and Christians. Ibn Khaldūn introduced extracts about Spain with the words 'Orosius said', even when talking about the Visigothic period. He entitled one section: 'The story of the Goths and what happened to them from the time of the kingdom in al-Andalus until the time of the Islamic conquest, and its elements and destiny this is the sequence of events of those people the Goths; we quote it from the words of Orosius and more properly from our opinion about that....'.⁶⁸⁸ He also credited 'the scholar Isidore bishop of Seville and those who added to it after him.' Yet his quotations, being shortened, mixed up and interpolated rarely match Orosius, either in the *Histories* or in the *'Urūsūs*. In the appendix to

⁶⁸³ Ibn Khaldūn, trans. Rosenthal F., *The Muqaddimah, an Introduction to History*, (3 vols., New York, 1958), I, p.57.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibn Khaldūn, trans. Rosenthal, *Muqaddimah*, I, p.65.

⁶⁸⁵ Humphreys, *Islamic History*, p.135.

⁶⁸⁶ Al-Azmeh A., *Ibn Khaldun in modern scholarship: a study in orientalism*, (1981), p.50.

⁶⁸⁷ The assumption is made 'that Ibn Khaldun employed an 'objective' method which permitted him to make a true sketch of the social and political conditions of his time and, by implication, of social processes generally. ...there are two components at work: thematic entities are identified and taken as universal, and these are then taken to have been processed by Ibn Khaldun in a true and objective way, which is, once again, an universal procedure. In terms as general as these, everything becomes possible....': Al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldūn*, p.159; 'his *History*, considered by many modern scholars to be an unworthy sequel of his celebrated *Muqaddima* was in fact intended to be a precise and carefully-constructed demonstration of the principles of historical change outlined in the *Muqaddima*': Khalidi T. *Arabic historical thought in the classical period*, (Cambridge, 1994), p.22.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibār*, II, p.493; Badawī, *'Urūsūs*, p.496.

his edition of the Columbia manuscript, Badawi listed all fifty-seven of Ibn Khaldūn's citations of Orosius and their relationship with the *Histories*, the '*Urūsīūs*' and other sources.⁶⁸⁹ Six of Ibn Khaldūn's citations of Orosius can be found in the '*Urūsīūs*' but not in the *Histories*, including a passage on the foundation of Carthage⁶⁹⁰ which the geographers al-Bakrī and al-Himyarī also used.⁶⁹¹ Ibn Khaldūn also included passages on the history of Europe, and of Cyprus and Rhodes, which are very similar to those in the '*Urūsīūs*.' Yet he seems to have been using a different translation of the *Histories*. Twenty-two, i.e. almost half, of Ibn Khaldūn's citations are closer to the original Latin *Histories* (in Zangemeister's edition at least), than to the '*Urūsīūs*'. A passage on the history of the Persian empire up to Alexander is much longer than the equivalent section of the '*Urūsīūs*', although condensed compared with the *Histories*.⁶⁹² Many of these extracts, such as the account of Nero's persecution of the Christians and the murders of Peter and Mark,⁶⁹³ are extensively elaborated, suggesting a complicated transmission from the *Histories* to the version that Ibn Khaldūn used, or that Ibn Khaldūn was also relying on other sources. Sometimes Ibn Khaldūn appears confused, as when he said that Orosius had not mentioned Jovian, perhaps because he was misled by the orthography. To make matters even more complicated, on sixteen of the occasions when he introduced his material with the words 'Orosius said', 'Orosius' cannot be shown to have done any such thing, in the *Histories* or in the '*Urūsīūs*'. One of his stories, about Julian the Apostate's death being the consequence of his getting lost in the desert, seems to be a complete fabrication.⁶⁹⁴ Rather than speculating endlessly on Ibn Khaldūn's sources, it is more instructive to be rather more critical than is usual about the way he handled them.

Orosius is not the only non-Muslim historian whose works Ibn Khaldūn used. He quoted two Coptic historians, Jirjīs ibn al-ʿAmīd, whom Ibn Khaldūn called 'the historian of the Christians' and Yūsuf Ibn Karyūn, author of three books of the Maccabeans.⁶⁹⁵ He also consulted the Arabic translation of the *Chronicle of Josippon*⁶⁹⁶ and his use of this source has been compared

⁶⁸⁹ Badawī, '*Urūsīūs*', pp.469-497.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibn Khaldūn, '*Ibār*', II, p.402.

⁶⁹¹ Badawī, '*Urūsīūs*', p.480.

⁶⁹² Ibn Khaldūn, '*Ibār*', II, p.328-330.

⁶⁹³ Ibn Khaldūn, '*Ibār*', II, p.411.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibn Khaldūn, '*Ibār*', II, p.438.

⁶⁹⁵ Fischel, W.J., *Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967).

⁶⁹⁶ Ibn Khaldūn confused Josippon with Josephus, author of *The Jewish Wars*, a common misidentification during the Middle Ages. Josephus was available only in the Greek original and the Latin translation known as the 'Hegesippus', but a Hebrew compilation of several sources including the Latin translation of Josephus, generally known as the *Chronicle of Josippon* had been widely disseminated. Several manuscripts survive of an Arabic translation, including one in Paris dated 1432: MacGuckin de Slane W., *Catalogue des Manuscrits arabes dans la Bibliothèque Nationale*, (Paris, 1883-95), no. 1906, in Fischel, 'Ibn Khaldūn and Josippon'.

in importance with his use of Orosius.⁶⁹⁷ In fact, it is the contrast between Ibn Khaldūn's treatment of the Jewish and Christian historians that is illuminating. Ibn Khaldūn wanted to write about the period between the destruction of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem but lacked information on the Second Temple period,⁶⁹⁸ until: 'there came into my hands when I was in Egypt a book of the learned men of the Jews, one of the contemporaries of that very period, dealing with the history of the Holy Temple and of the two kingdoms during the period between the first destruction by Nebuchadnezzar and the second destruction by Titus when the great exile took place I have summarized its contents as I have found it in the book, for I did not find anything about it from anyone else'. Ibn Khaldūn quoted Josippon directly twenty-two times and reproduced almost verbatim nearly all the chapters in this chronicle up to the destruction of the Second Temple, because it was the only material in his possession that covered the period in which he was interested. Ibn Khaldūn compared Orosius with the Torah, praised for its meticulousness as a historical sources in spite of its theological distortions: 'Orosius, historian of Rūm, declared that [four names] are four of the daughters of Kātīm ibn Bādān ibn Nāfit. And the former is most correct; indeed it is a passage from the Torah'.⁶⁹⁹ Further on he cited Orosius in the same breath as the best Muslim authorities,⁷⁰⁰ but Ibn Khaldūn did not quote Orosius, or any other non-Muslim sources, when a Muslim author had written on the same subject. He took this policy to absurd extremes. When recounting biblical history, which was important to Muslims as the pre-history of Islam, he did not go back to the Bible, but to Muslim historians. The scales had been tipped against the biblical material by al-Tabari.⁷⁰¹ Even Ibn Khaldūn, who was ideally placed to read the scriptures and histories of the Jews and Christians of North Africa, does not seem to have done so with the care demanded by his own theories of historiography. Yet he used 'Orosius' as a form of shorthand for Christian history. Thus Ibn Khaldūn's use of Orosius is not very helpful in establishing in what form the *Histories* were transmitted to him, although it reinforces the conclusion that the Columbia manuscript represents only one of the Arabic versions of Orosius' *Histories*.

The Columbia manuscript

The manuscript, which is the only surviving copy of the *'Urūsūs*, consists of 129 loose pages,

⁶⁹⁷ Fischel W.J., 'Ibn Khaldun and Josippon', in *Homenaje a Millas-Valllicrosa*, (2 vols., Barcelona, 1954), I, 587-598.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibār*, (ed. Bulāq) II, p.116.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibār*, (ed. Bulāq), II, pp.10-11 cited in Fischel, *Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt*, p.139.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibn Khaldūn, *'Ibār*, (ed. Bulāq), II, p.88, cited in Fischel, *Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt*, p.139.

⁷⁰¹ Lewis, 'The Use by Muslim historians,' and Rosenthal F., 'The Influence of the Biblical Tradition on Muslim Historiography', in Lewis and Holt (eds.) *Historians of the Middle East*, pp. 35-45.



Columbia University MS X, 893 f.1r.

(Levi Della Vida, 'La traduzione', plate 11.)

badly torn and chewed by insects, especially at the edges. It is undated. Most of the table of contents survives, listing each book and chapter, with a brief summary.⁷⁰² The first page starts with a summary of chapter III. The extent of the missing material from the beginning of the manuscript would be too much to fit on a single folio. Levi Della Vida argued that two are missing, one side of the first being a translator's or copyist's introduction, which would normally have included the date and probably the place of completion and the name of the copyist and/or his patron. The lemma for each book is repeated, sometimes in modified form, at the beginning of that book. Thus it appears that several pages are missing from the end. The manuscript gives out at Alaric's arrival in Rome, just before the end of the last chapter of the *Histories*. The lemma for chapter 14 at the beginning of the manuscript indicates how the 'Urūsūs went on, and the lemma at the beginning of book VII confirms this:

'Chapter 14 in which are mentioned the emperors from Arcadius up to the time of Heraclius Caesar and the empire of the Goths their contemporaries up to the time of Roderic, at whose hand their dominion was cut short, as well as the people who governed al-Andalus before the Goths ... [line missing] Caesar, Isidore the learned bishop of Seville then after him was added ... [word missing] ... of the empire up to our time according to the extent of their knowledge'.⁷⁰³

'Book VII in which there are accounts of the events of the empire of the Romans, the Caesars, from the time of Augustus, during whose reign Christ was born, up to the time when this book was written, and what was added to it afterwards about the kingdom of the Goths in al-Andalus up to the arrival of Tariq.'

Thus, unless these passages are misleading, the text from which the translators were working was a copy of the *Histories*, to which a Spanish continuation had been added, using Isidore, then extended to 711 by an unknown source. The division of the text into books follows the Latin manuscript tradition, although chapter headings are not a feature of the *Histories* and may have been added when the continuation was added. A number of Arabic words of Spanish provenance, many of them found in the *Latin Arabic Glossary* now in Leiden,⁷⁰⁴ point to a peninsular origin for the translation.

The date 712H [1312] is given in the Columbia catalogue, but the reason for this date is unclear. The first person to mention the manuscript in modern times was Silvestre de Sacy, but none of

⁷⁰² Unfortunately, Badawī omitted this section from his edition.

⁷⁰³ cited in Levi, 'La traduzione' p.268.

⁷⁰⁴ Koningsveld, *The Latin Arabic Glossary*; Badawī, 'Urūsūs, p.498.

the later commentators on the manuscript have confirmed this date.⁷⁰⁵ The manuscript is of paper, which was used in Spain from the ninth century; the oldest paper manuscript is the book made for al-Hakam, dated Shabān 359 [9 June - 7 July 970].⁷⁰⁶ The Columbia manuscript is not written in the same script as the manuscript copied for al-Hakam. There are features which locate it in the Almohad or Almoravid periods, such as Kufic letters and full vocalisation, the marking of the short vowels, which are commonly omitted from Arabic script, which is uncommon in earlier manuscripts. Dating of Arabic manuscripts is, however, a controversial and under-researched area.⁷⁰⁷ It is not possible to distinguish between Andalusī and Magrebi script, and experts may disagree by up to three hundred years in the dates they assign to manuscripts. Most of the surviving manuscripts of this period were discovered in North Africa, but this does not mean that they were all Muslim texts. There was a large community of native Christians in North Africa, and after 1126 there were mass deportations of Christians from al-Andalus to Fès and Meknès, following the unsuccessful attack by Alfonso 'el Batallador' on Granada.⁷⁰⁸ An Arabic translation of the Gospels now in León Cathedral was copied in in 1421 from an exemplar prepared in 1175 by Miqāl ibn 'Abd al-Azīz the bishop, as it says, 'in the City of Fès, in the west part of the [North African] shore in the eleventh year of the exodus of the Christians of al-Andalus towards it, may God restore them'.⁷⁰⁹ Thus the Columbia manuscript may have been copied in al-Andalus or in North Africa; the palaeographic evidence is in favour of the latter and perhaps a fourteenth-century dating, although Koningsveld thought it a century older.⁷¹⁰ This makes the date of the translation which gave rise to this version of the *Histories* impossible to establish.

The translators were obviously struggling with their material. Orosius' convoluted style was difficult to understand, and they may have been working with a corrupt version of the *Histories*.

⁷⁰⁵ Silvestre de Sacy I., *Description de l'Égypte par Abdel-Latif*, (Paris, 1810), pp.495-500 cited in Levi 'La traduzione'; Daiber H., 'Orosius' *Historiae Adversos Paganos* in Arabischer Überlieferung', in Henten J.W. Van, Jonge H.J. De, Rooden P.T. Van, and Wesselius J.W. (eds.), *Tradition and Re-interpretation in Jewish and Early Christian Literature: essays in honour of Jürgen C.H. Lebram*, (Leiden, 1986), pp.202-249, at p.202.

⁷⁰⁶ Levi Provençal E., 'Un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque du Calife al-Hakam II', *Hespéris*, (1934), XVIII, cited in García Gómez E., 'Algunas precisiones sobre la ruina de la Córdoba Omeya', *Al-Andalus*, (1947), XII, 267-293.

⁷⁰⁷ Koningsveld P.Sj. Van, 'Christian-Arabic Manuscripts from the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa: A Historical Interpretation', *Al-Qantara*, (1994), XV, 423-449.

⁷⁰⁸ Al-Wansharīsī, *Al-Mi'yār al-Mugrib wa-l-jāmi' al-Mu'rib 'an fatāwī ahl Ifrīqiya wa-l-Andalus wa-l-Magrib*, (Fès, 1896-1898), II, p.118, cited in Serrano D., 'Dos fetuas sobre la expulsión de mozárabes al Magreb en 1126', *Anaquel de Estudios Arabes*, (1991), II, 162-182; Lagardère V., 'Communautés mozarabes et pouvoir almoravide en 519H/1125 en al-Andalus', *Studia Islamica*, (1989), LXVII, 99-119, describes new deportations to North Africa in 1138 and 1170.

⁷⁰⁹ trans. Koningsveld, 'Christian-Arabic Manuscripts', p.428, two fragments now in Fès may be part of the earlier manuscript.

⁷¹⁰ Koningsveld, 'Christian-Arabic Manuscripts', p.445.

They took great liberties with the text, abbreviating and transposing it and sprinkling their effort with disclaimers, such as 'we have suppressed this, but through a love of conciseness and not wanting to go on at length'. They left out almost the whole of Orosius' prefaces to Books V, VI and VII. Some sections may have been omitted because they were incomprehensible. Others were glossed extensively. There are many spelling mistakes, particularly in the names of places and people, although some of these may be the fault of later copyists. The chronicle is also padded with material which does not come from the *Histories*. Daiber⁷¹¹ concluded that, apart from obvious biblical references, most of the interpolations could have come from Isidore's *Chronica Maiora*, with a few echoes of the *Etymologiae*. The last Byzantine emperor named is Heraclius, who is also the last in Isidore's account. Orosius had skipped over early times, merely demonstrating how the Fall of Man resulted in the Flood, before starting his history proper. The 'Urūstūs fleshed this out with the story of Creation, of Adam and of the dispersal of the descendants of Noah, closely following the Old Testament, but using Creation Era dating, as Isidore had in the *Chronica Maiora*. A later passage on the principate of Augustus also came from Isidore, although the attribution was confused by the compiler or in the process of translation, by the repeated interpolation 'Orosius said'. Isidore seems to be the source of the introductory passages for each of the caesars, although the date given by the 'Urūstūs is almost always different from that of Isidore. The majority of the other additions were also derived from the Christian tradition, such as the reference to St. Martin of Tours, and to Jerome, called 'the translator'. The names of some of the martyrs suffering the Decian persecutions, added to Orosius' very brief account, could have been taken from Eusebius' *History of the Church*. The writers cited 'our book entitled *Chronache*' as their source for the story of Helena's journey to Jerusalem. Levi Della Vida thought this to be a reference to a Spanish continuation of Orosius.⁷¹² Most of these additions could have been made at any time between the early-seventh century and the date when the text was translated.

There are many instances of Muslim influence on the text, which begins with the 'bismillah', the opening words of the Qur'ān. Kuhayla⁷¹³ listed other Islamic borrowings, including QaHTān, one of the descendants of Shem, who was not mentioned in Genesis but was well-known as the legendary ancestor of people of South Arabia. The clearest example of Arabicizing is the presentation of personal names in their Arabic form: 'X ibn Y'. This necessitated the invention of names for the forgotten fathers of the heroes of antiquity; the founder of Rome became Romulus ibn Marcus, and Isidore's Homerus, clearly a Greek, was transliterated as Mīrūš, called 'the Italian poet', and acquired a father called Marcionus. Emperors were almost always made the son of their predecessor. The emperor Constantine's genealogy was traced through seven of

⁷¹¹ Daiber, 'Orosius' *Historiae*', pp.221-248.

⁷¹² Levi, 'La traduzione', p.278.

⁷¹³ Kuhayla, 'Kitāb al-tawārīkh', p.122.

the previous rulers⁷¹⁴ - an impressive accretion for a man whose origins are still obscure. Some of the biblical characters were given the forms of their names as they appear in the Qur'ān. Mount Ararat, where the Ark came to rest, was identified with Mount Judi, according to Islamic belief. In the *Histories*, Orosius' narration of the crucifixion made use of a passage from Virgil. In the *'Urūsūs*, this was turned into a paraphrase in two verses written in an Arabic poetic metre, to which three more verses were added; the source of these verses has not been identified. These features were presumed by modern commentators on this text to indicate that it was of Muslim origin, but the adoption of Islamic terminology is a characteristic of translations into Arabic; translators even used Islamic religious vocabulary in Christian theological texts, just as they adopted Arabic personal names.⁷¹⁵

An interesting interpolation between the end of Book Six and the beginning of Book Seven, is the bizarre story of Augustus' paving of the river Tiber with bronze:

'And in the fourth year of his reign he imposed upon the inhabitants of the world a tribute in bronze, and collected the same amount which everybody would have to pay in gold throughout the whole world: therefore copper was sought in the provinces at any price, so that its price went up above the price of gold. Having collected a vast amount of it, thick plates and plugs were struck out of it, and he paved with them the river of Rome and its banks for a length of forty miles and an impressive width. And the people went so far as to take this as [the beginning of] a new era, which is the era of the Christians [al-Agam] to the present time'.⁷¹⁶

This story seems to be a conflation of two traditions. It may have originated in the Arabic world, but it became mixed up with legendary material from other sources. Versions of the story appear both in the works of later Arabic historians, including Ibn Hayyān, al-Maqqarī and al-Idrīsī. It was also reproduced by several Jewish historians, and in the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*. Thus its inclusion in the *'Urūsūs* does not help to establish the provenance of the translation.

By far the longest interpolations in the *'Urūsūs* are of the legends of Constantine, especially those linking the emperor with pope Silvester. They include the following story:

'At the beginning of his rule Qustantīn adhered to the faith of the pagans, and persecuted

⁷¹⁴ Badawī, *'Urūsūs*, p.457.

⁷¹⁵ Griffith S.H., 'The First *Summa Theologiae* in Arabic: Christian Kalām in Ninth-Century Palestine', in Gervers M., and Bikhazi R.J. (eds.), *Conversion and Continuity: Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands, Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*, (Toronto, 1990), p.18.

⁷¹⁶ Levi Della Vida, G., 'The Bronze Era in Muslim Spain', in *ibid.*, *Note di Storia Letteraria Arabo-Ispanica*, (Rome, 1971), pp.109-122, at p.117.

the Christians and issued edicts against them. And he came to the faith because of a learned Christian called Shalbashtur, [Silvester] patriarch of Rome. Qustantīn had been assiduous in his demands on the Christians and afflicted them greatly. And the sage claimed that [this was why] Qustantīn became troubled by leprosy, which was victorious over him. He grieved sorely because of this and he gathered to him the people skilled in medicine and with insight into illness and gentleness in medical treatment. And he asked them to look into his illness and collected their opinions on it. They decided that he should bathe in a cistern filled with the blood of suckling infants one hour old. So he ordered that many children be brought to him [so that they might] slaughter them in the cistern on a day when he could come and bathe in that fresh blood. He went out to the place which had been prepared. And when he emerged from the palace, a hubbub of wailing was heard from the women whose infants had been taken.

When Qustantīn enquired about this he found that they were the mothers of the infants whom he had gathered to be slaughtered. Qustantīn was merciful towards them and grieved with them for their children and said: 'We do not order the murder of the children of our defeated enemies, rather we order that they should be protected. How then should we deem it permissible to kill the children of our own citizens? I would rather tolerate the illness which has recently come upon me than find it necessary to destroy this group of human souls and their grieving mothers with them. And he ordered the release of the infants and that no more should be collected.

And when he came to his bed that night he saw in a dream an old man who said to him: 'As you have shown mercy on the children and their mothers and born your illness for [the sake of] their liberation, so God shows mercy to you and grants you recovery from your illness. Seek a man of the [Christian] faith called Shalbashtur who will banish the fear from you and instruct you and good health will come to you in body and spirit.' Qustantīn woke up amazed by what he had seen and sent his servants for Shalbashtur. And they brought him and he believed that [Constantine] wanted to kill him. And he [Constantine] studied the new religion at length in piety and deference; we shortened this passage and cut what follows of the discussion of Shalbashtur with the Jews and so on and so forth, through a desire for conciseness'.⁷¹⁷

A Life of St. Silvester circulated in the East in Greek and Syriac versions before 500, but the elaboration of the legend of Constantine and Silvester was an aspect of the propagation of the cult of Constantine in Rome, as the popes asserted the primacy of the Western church over

⁷¹⁷ Badawi, 'Urūstūs, pp.457-8.

Byzantium, culminating in the so-called Donation of Constantine.⁷¹⁸ The *Acta Silvestri*, dating from the early-sixth century, were widely copied; more than three hundred manuscripts survive. They were certainly read in Spain, where the earliest manuscript is a fragment from Silos, possibly from the eleventh century.⁷¹⁹ The story of Constantine's leprosy and his baptism by Silvester, which was already circulating in the sixth century, was taken up by some Byzantine chroniclers as an orthodox alternative to the earlier story that he had been baptised by the Arian bishop Eusebius in Nicomedia.⁷²⁰ Thus it is not possible to determine the date or provenance of the version of Constantine's baptism in the *'Urüstūs*, although an elaborate retelling of the legend is more likely to have been taken from a Western exemplar of the *Histories* than from a copy brought from Constantinople. Another such legend which attracted the attention of the *'Urüstūs* translators or the compilers of their source was the dream which inspired the emperor to build Constantinople, where the *'Urüstūs* version is similar those collected by Aldhelm and William of Malmesbury.⁷²¹

A second Latin history translated into Arabic was discovered in the mosque of Sidi 'Uqba in Qayrawān, founded in 829.⁷²² The Qayrawān manuscript, which is in an even poorer state than the Columbia manuscript, has been dated by Levi Della Vida to the late-thirteenth or early-fourteenth centuries, and by Koningsveld to the twelfth century.⁷²³ It is in three parts, which may not always have existed together. One is a universal chronicle which is particularly garbled, even making allowances for the numerous lacunae in the manuscript. The fables with which the author or translator elaborated his chronicle include an account of the seven disciples sent to Spain by St. Peter to preach the faith, who persuaded the inhabitants to shave off their beards. Again, Constantine is one of the heroes of the chronicle, but the version of his legends presented here is not the same as that in the *'Urüstūs*; the Qayrawān manuscript has Constantine undergoing a secret conversion before his accession to the empire, and introduces the foundation of Constantinople at this point in the narrative. After this, the chronicler leapt four centuries to the Islamic conquest of Spain, with the briefest of introductions: 'then we come to the learned/happy?

⁷¹⁸ Smith J.H., *Constantine the Great*, (1971), pp.217-236; Linder A., 'The myth of Constantine the Great in the west: sources and hagiographic commemoration', *Studi Medievali*, (1975), XVI, 43-95; Levison, W., 'Konstantinische Schenkung und Silvesterlegende', *Studi e Testi*, (1924), XXXVIII, 159-247, reviewed by Fr. Halkin, *Analecta Bollandiana*, (1926), XLIV, 162-4; Duchesne L., *Le liber Pontificalis*, (Paris, 1955), I, CVIIff, trans. Davis R., *The Book of the Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis): The Ancient Biographies of the first ninety Roman bishops to AD 715*, (Liverpool, 1989), pp.14-26.

⁷¹⁹ BN lat. 2178, cited in Levison, 'Konstantinische Schenkung', p.170.

⁷²⁰ Scott R., 'The image of Constantine in Malalas and Theophanes' in Magdalino P. *New Constantines*, pp.57-71.

⁷²¹ Aldhelm, *The Prose Works*, trans. Lapidge M. and Herren M., (Cambridge, 1979), pp.83-84; William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle*, (1847), pp.372-3.

⁷²² Levi Della Vida G., 'Un texte Mozarabe D'Histoire Universelle', in *Etudes D'Orientalisme dédiées a la mémoire de Lévi-Provençal*, (2 vols. Paris, 1962), I, pp. 175-183.

⁷²³ Koningsveld, 'Christian-Arabic manuscripts', p.445.

man Tariq and how he unified al-Andalus'.⁷²⁴ The next section of the manuscript is missing, and it resumes in the middle of a story about count Julian and a Visigothic king identified as Talul or Tulul. After another gap, the history concludes with Tariq's troops eating their captives; this is clearly the end, since the writer appended the Arabic formula 'the book is finished'. To judge by its language and its spelling mistakes, this history is, like the *'Urūsūs*, of Spanish origin. The organisation of the chronicle confirms its Spanish parentage, since it divides history into the Six Ages of Isidore. Appended to the universal chronicle from Qayrawān are two works of Christian-Muslim polemic. One is the dialogue said to have taken place between the Nestorian patriarch of Baghdad, Timothy and the caliph al-Mahdi. This text was widely disseminated in the East and North Africa. The second work is also in the form of a dialogue, but this time the protagonists are not named, and are identified only as a patriarch and a Muslim. The association with these texts of undoubted Christian origin points to a Christian provenance for the chronicle. The Qayrawān history is a much less learned production even than the *'Urūsūs*, but it is very similar in conception, content and execution. Similar histories were written in Arabic, by North-African Christians at this period.⁷²⁵ The earliest to survive is that of Sa'īd ibn Bitrīq, patriarch of Alexandria (933-940), a universal chronicle from the Old Testament through the Islamic conquests, ending in 938. Like the *'Urūsūs*, it is a mixture of scriptural and historical sources sprinkled with legends. Another tenth-century history, by Agapius (Mahbub) ibn Qustantin al-Manbijī, is based on the Byzantine Christian tradition, but includes pre-Islamic history and biographies of the caliphs,⁷²⁶ a hybrid of Christian and Muslim history reminiscent of the *Chronicle of 741* and the *Chronicle of 754*.

To judge by its glosses, the Columbia manuscript seems to have been read in at least two different circles. On folio 79r. there is a Latin gloss, suggesting that the *'Urūsūs* was being read in a part of Spain reconquered from the Muslims, by Christians who were moving from Arabic back to Latin.⁷²⁷ On folios 110r and 118v. an Arabic gloss obviously written by a Muslim criticised the 'unbelief' of the Christians, especially the doctrine of the crucifixion. The Qayrawān manuscript too is glossed in Latin, but it may later have been read by Muslims, hence its place of discovery. The complicated afterlife of these manuscripts makes them difficult to pin down, but they seem to be texts which the Christians produced for their own use, rather than commissioned for Muslim libraries, which later fell into Muslim hands, probably in North Africa. Yet, if this is where Ibn Khaldūn read the *'Urūsūs*, or another translation of the *Histories*, he might have supposed it to have been commissioned for al-Hakam's famous library.

⁷²⁴ f.28v., trans. Levi, 'Un texte Mozarabe', p.190.

⁷²⁵ Troupeau G., 'La littérature arabe chrétienne du X^e au XII^e siècle', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, (1971), XIV, 1-120.

⁷²⁶ Mahbūb ibn Qustantin al-Manbijī, *Kitāb al-Anwān*, ed. Cheiko L., *Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium, Scriptorum Arabici*, series III, (Beirut-Paris, 1905-6), VI, I, p. 4ff., cited in Rosenthal, *A History*, p.138.

⁷²⁷ Koningsveld, 'Christian-Arabic manuscripts', p.445, n.83.

Christian Arabic manuscripts

It is possible to place the *'Urūstūs* and the Qayrawān history in a wider context. Spain was unusual amongst the Islamic conquests in failing, in the long run, to lose its native language to Arabic. Once the last of the conquerors had been expelled, writings in their language had no practical or spiritual use for the majority Christian population. In the twelfth century, a number of Visigothic manuscripts were glossed in Arabic⁷²⁸ and a *Latin-Arabic Glossary* was compiled in Toledo in 1193, to help Christians with their Latin. The use of Arabic by Christians may have been abandoned entirely soon after this. Thus it was easy for later historians of medieval Spain to give the impression that the whole Islamic period had been no more than a hiccup in the rise of Latin culture in the peninsula. In this light, the bilingualism of the Andalusī Christians condemned by Alvarus was skated over as mere pragmatism, a temporary accommodation with the current rulers. However, there is no evidence that the Christians of pre-millennial Islamic Spain saw their situation with so much foresight. Whether they liked it or not, it looked as though the Muslims were here to stay, and so was their language. The extent of acculturation can be disputed, because very few manuscripts survive. Some fragments of Christian Arabic manuscripts have been preserved in book-bindings. Others were copied by Muslim and Jewish scribes for Jewish scholars,⁷²⁹ or in Muslim circles in North Africa, for polemical purposes. The colophon of a copy of the Gospels dated 1493 said that its purpose was 'to take notice of the traditions of the Jews and the Christians and of their despicable beliefs... so that the excessive errors they committed will become clear to those who look into this book.... They will then believe that the religion of Islam is the most superior of all religions..⁷³⁰ Most of the manuscripts date from the twelfth century or later, although some are copies of translations which were probably made before 1000. It is not always obvious whether a manuscript originated in al-Andalus, in north Africa or even in Christian Spain; sometimes Christian manuscripts in Arabic followed Islamic codicological practices, for example in the number of their gatherings but at other times they adhered to Visigothic norms. The existence of other Christian Arabic texts can only be inferred. Some of the Arabic glosses in Visigothic manuscripts quoted passages which seem to have been copied from translations of the works they were glossing. A manuscript of Isidore's *Etymologies*,⁷³¹ with about 1,500 Arabic glosses, provides examples of this practice; a world map on folio 116v. has an Arabic legend which could come from chapter II of the *'Urūstūs*. To

⁷²⁸ Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, pp.45-52.

⁷²⁹ Koningsveld P.Sj. Van, 'Andalusian-Arabic Manuscripts from Christian Spain: a Comparative Intercultural Approach, *Israel Oriental Studies*, (1992), XII, 75-110, at pp.89-91; the manuscripts are listed on pp.100-103.

⁷³⁰ *Munich Codex Ar.* 234, cited in Koningsveld, 'Christian-Arabic Manuscripts', p.431.

⁷³¹ MBN Vit. 14.3, Millares Carlo no.80, cited in Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, pp.45-6.

a Latin manuscript of the *Forum Judicum*⁷³² a lengthy interlinear interpolation in Arabic was added, perhaps from the translation which Ibn Hazm read.⁷³³ Recent studies of this material, particularly by Koningsveld, has shown how much of their literary heritage the Christians of al-Andalus made available in Arabic.⁷³⁴

Nearly all the translations were of sacred texts. During this period the Bible was extensively and repeatedly translated into Arabic throughout the Islamic lands, to make the scriptures available to those Christians who, like the Christians of al-Andalus, spoke their own languages, but used Arabic as their written language and medium of culture.⁷³⁵ By the eleventh century, when Ibn Hazm compiled his *History of Religion*, he was able to consult texts of all sections of the New Testament in Arabic; he described the script and number of leaves of each exemplar.⁷³⁶ Ibn Hazm could have read a copy of the translation of the Gospels made by Ishāq ibn Balask of Cordoba in 946 from the Spanish version of the pre-Jerome *Vetus Latina*, in which each Gospel begins with the bismillah.⁷³⁷ A codex now in Munich⁷³⁸ contains Ishāq's text corrected from an anonymous translation of the Vulgate. Another Arabic translation of the Gospels is attributed to bishop John of Seville, mentioned by Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada.⁷³⁹ This is usually taken to be the John of Seville who attended the Council of Cordoba in 839, but Koningsveld thinks that Jiménez de Rada was referring to the twelfth-century Iohannes Hispalensis, who was famous for his translations from Latin into Arabic. In one manuscript, of which a fragment of Paul's Epistle to the Galatians survives,⁷⁴⁰ the Arabic version seems to have been written first, with the Latin abbreviated and crammed in where it would fit. No complete Old Testament text in Arabic of Spanish origin survives,⁷⁴¹ but marginal glosses in Latin manuscripts make it clear that such translations existed.⁷⁴² There are, however, three manuscripts of Arabic versions of the Psalms.

⁷³² MBN 10.064, Millares Carlo no.86; cited in Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, p.47.

⁷³³ Ibn Hazm, *Kitāb al-fisal*, (Cairo, 1903), II, p.3, cited in Koningsveld, *The Latin Arabic Glossary*, p.47.

⁷³⁴ Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, chapter 3; *ibid.*, 'La literatura cristiano-árabe'; *ibid.*, 'Christian-Arabic Manuscripts'.

⁷³⁵ Although the Latin liturgy was still used both in north Africa and may have survived in al-Andalus: Koningsveld, 'Christian-Arabic manuscripts', p.426.

⁷³⁶ Ibn Hazm, *Kitāb al-fisal*, II, pp.3-4, in Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, p.54.

⁷³⁷ Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, p.55; *ibid.*, 'La literatura cristiano-árabe', p.702; *ibid.*, 'Christian-Arabic manuscripts', p.425.

⁷³⁸ *Munich Codex Ar. 238*, cited in Koningsveld, 'Christian-Arabic manuscripts', p.426.

⁷³⁹ Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *De Rebus Hispaniae*, IV, p.77, in *Opera*, (Valencia, 1968), cited in Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, pp.51-2; d'Alverny M. Th., 'Avendaute' in *Homenage a Millás Vallicrosa*, (Madrid, 1954), I, pp.19-43.

⁷⁴⁰ Tisserant E. and de Bruyne D., 'Une feuille arabo-latine de l'Épître aux Galates', *Revue Biblique*, (1910), NS VII, 321-343.

⁷⁴¹ Ibn Hazm had a ninth-century version made by the Egyptian Jew Saadyah Gaon.

⁷⁴² Koningsveld, *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, p.54.

The earliest of these is a metrical translation into the metre of the *rajaz*, one of the commonest used in Arabic poetry; the same metre as in the poetry interpolated into the *'Urīstīlīs*. It was completed by HafS ibn Albar, whom we have already met, in 889 (the manuscript may have read 989), which survives in a copy made by David Colville (1617-1627) of a manuscript from El Escorial which was probably lost in the fire of 1671.⁷⁴³ HafS ibn Albar said he was working from the Bible of Jerome to replace an earlier, unsatisfactory translation of the psalter. He took care to consult authorities on Arabic,⁷⁴⁴ in order to avoid the criticism of 'the ignorant, obstinate and narrow-minded';⁷⁴⁵ Urvoy interpreted this to mean those who were opposed to Arabicizing Christian texts. She believed that HafS was trying to recapture the essence of the semitic poetry of the Old Testament which had been lost in Jerome's translation.⁷⁴⁶ This may be an imaginative interpretation of the text, but is clear that HafS saw no incompatibility between good Arabic and strong Christian faith; the Arabicizers were 'scholars, trustworthy men of our religion'.⁷⁴⁷ HafS ibn Albar was mentioned by Ibn al-Qūṭīya in his *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus*,⁷⁴⁸ who described him as a judge, and among the descendants of Witiza. He could be the son of Alvarus, the biographer of Eulogius, since his translation was commissioned by a bishop called 'Valens', possibly Valentinius, who corresponded with Alvarus.⁷⁴⁹ HafS may also have written a work of polemic, which was quoted by al-Qurṭubī,⁷⁵⁰ who praised him as 'one of the most intelligent and excellent of men because he wrote under the protection of the Muslims and learned from their sciences things which surpassed those of the Christians'.⁷⁵¹ His career testifies to the demand for translations of Christian biblical and theological texts into Arabic and shows that such translations were sometimes read by Muslim scholars.

⁷⁴³ *Ambrosiana, Milan*, Hammer-Purgstall no.86; ed. and trans. Urvoy M. Th., *Le Psautier Mozarabe de Hafs le Goth*, (Toulouse, 1994); *ibid.*, 'Influence islamique sur le Vocabulaire d'un Psautier Arabe d'Al-Andalus', *Al-Qantara*, (1994), XV, 509-518; Koningsveld questioned the date of the translation because no quotation from it survives which is earlier than the twelfth century; *The Latin-Arabic Glossary*, p.54.

⁷⁴⁴ Urvoy, *Le Psautier*, verse 98.

⁷⁴⁵ Urvoy, *Le Psautier*, verse 108.

⁷⁴⁶ Urvoy, *Le Psautier*, p.xvii.

⁷⁴⁷ Urvoy, *Le Psautier*, verse 100.

⁷⁴⁸ *Historia de la conquista de España de Abenalcotía de Córdoba*, ed. Gayangos P., Saavedra E. and Codera F., (Madrid, 1868), repr. with trans. Ribera y Tarragó J., *Colección de obras arábicas de Historia y Geografía que publica la Real Academia de la Historia*, II, (Madrid, 1926), p. 5, trans. p.3; see chapter 7.

⁷⁴⁹ Dunlop D.M., 'Hafs ibn Albar - the last of the Goths', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, (1954), III-IV, 137-151, reviewed by García Gómez, *Al-Andalus*, XIX, (1954), 481-482; Dunlop, 'Sobre Hafs ibn Albar Al-Quti Al-Qurtubi', *Al-Andalus*, (1955), XX, 211-213.

⁷⁵⁰ Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Flām bi-mā fī dīn al-nasāra min alfasād wa-l-awhām wa-izhār mahāsīn dīn al-islām wa-ithbāt nubuwwāt nabīnā Muhammad 'alayhi al-salāt wa-l-salām*, ed. al-Saqqā A.H., (Cairo, 1980), pp.58 and 422-5, cited in Koningsveld, 'La literatura cristiano-árabe', p.699.

⁷⁵¹ Al-Qurṭubī, *Flām*, p.422, cited in Kuhayla, 'Kitāb al-tawārīkh', p.133.

Another Christian Arabic translation read by al-QurTubī was the *Collection of councils* which survives in one manuscript from El Escorial.⁷⁵² A passage which al-QurTubī attributed to 'the letter of the bishop of León to the bishops of Sicily' is identical to chapter 24 of Book IV of the Escorial manuscript.⁷⁵³ In the Arabic translation, the canons were presented under a series of subject headings, like a collection of the sayings of Muhammad, rather than chronologically as they are in the Latin manuscripts of the same councils. There are several other instances of Arabicizing of the material; as Kassis pointed out: 'the bismillah is 'rather curious when placed on the lips of Reccared in his speech opening the third council of Toledo'.⁷⁵⁴ The manuscript was copied out by Vincentius for a bishop named 'Abd al-Malik and completed in Era 1087 [1049], although the translation itself may be earlier. In 1090, a book of canons written in Arabic was donated to Coimbra on the death of bishop Paternus; two fragments which may be part of this manuscript are now in Lisbon.⁷⁵⁵ Vincentius' copy of the canons is particularly interesting, because it has a number of Latin glosses and a long passage in Latin which Vincentius himself may have copied. Since texts were copied to be read aloud, it made sense to translate them into whichever language their audience better understood. It is also possible that, during periods of tension between Christians and their rulers, it might have been dangerous to read Latin aloud even if one could do so.⁷⁵⁶ Perhaps the middle of the eleventh century is the point of true bilingualism for the Christians of al-Andalus, like Vincentius. As the tide turned and the Christian armies gradually displaced the Arab rulers, Latin texts were copied in greater numbers, and Christian Arabic texts were reclaimed by being translated, or in some cases retranslated, into Latin.

The *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* closes the circle containing the *Histories* and the '*Urūstils*. Now the people of Spain could once again hear their history read in Latin, but in a text which has echoes of the way that history had been presented to them during the Islamic period. As with so many of these works, the date and provenance of the *Pseudo-Isidore* is controversial, and interpretation has been made more difficult by several generations of errors in transmission, including those of the nineteenth-century editors.⁷⁵⁷ Gautier-Dalché believed that the *Pseudo-Isidore* is the translation of history originally written in Arabic, because of the many orthographical errors in the names of people and places. As we have seen, the *Pseudo-Isidore* copied Orosius' geography and it is also interesting to note that, in his description of Spain, the compiler put south at the top and north at the bottom, following Islamic practice. Some of the

⁷⁵² *Escorial MS Ar. 1623*.

⁷⁵³ Al-QurTubī, *Flām*, pp.403-7, cited in Koningsveld, 'La littérature cristiano-árabe', p.704.

⁷⁵⁴ Kassis, H., 'Arabic-speaking christians in Al-Andalus in an age of turmoil (fifth/eleventh century until A.H. 478/A.D. 1085)' *Al-Qantara*, (1994), XV, pp.401-422, at p.418.

⁷⁵⁵ Koningsveld, 'Christian-Arabic manuscripts', p.442.

⁷⁵⁶ Wright R., 'La muerte del ladino escrito', p.3.

⁷⁵⁷ Gautier-Dalché, 'Notes sur la 'Chronica Pseudo-Isidoriana'.

spelling errors were compounded when the text was rendered into Latin. The *Chronicle* may have been copied again in the area around Narbonne, producing further misidentifications of places. The surviving manuscript probably dates from the first half of the twelfth century, certainly after 1115. Like the earlier histories, this is a type of universal chronicle, although very short, based on Orosius and Isidore, with the addition of material on the fall of the Visigoths and the Arab conquest. One of the Christians involved in its transmission produced a revised version of an episode of Visigothic history taken from Isidore. The Visigoth Gesalic was no longer described as seeking help from the Vandals in North Africa against the Burgundians; the *Pseudo-Isidore* has him going to Corinth and returning via Italy, since the Maghreb could no longer be perceived as a potential ally. The *Pseudo-Isidore* looks like a Christian work whose transmission depended on an Arabic translation of the work, perhaps in a version of the chronicle similar to the '*Urīstūs*' version of Orosius' *Histories*.

The outline I have presented removes from the Columbia manuscript some of the historiographical baggage it has accumulated. It is not the sole surviving copy of a translation of the copy of the *Histories* sent from Byzantium to Cordoba, but one among a number of translations into Arabic of Christian texts, both sacred and secular. Although the Christians of al-Andalus never lost their Latin entirely, the Umayyad period saw an increasing demand for Christian texts in Arabic. Orosius' *Histories* seem to have been translated into Arabic more than once, and in different forms. This is how 'Orosius' became synonymous with Christian history for Ibn Khaldūn. When Christian-Arabic texts were no longer useful, many, perhaps most of them were lost, leaving the Columbia manuscript as their most important representative.

8. Sara the Goth and her descendants.

Alamundo [one of the sons of Witiza, the penultimate Visigothic king of Spain] died, leaving a daughter called Sara the Goth and two young sons, one of whom was the metropolitan of Seville, and the other Oppas, who died in Galicia. Artubās [another son of Witiza] enlarged his possessions, seizing those of his nephews, at the time of the beginning of the caliphate of Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik [724-743]. She [Sara the Goth] ordered the construction of a boat in Seville, which was the city where her father Alamundo had fixed his residence, since the thousand villas which had fallen to him were in the west of Spain

Then Sara the Goth sailed with her brothers towards Syria, disembarked in Ascalon and continued on her journey until she stopped in front of the gate of Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik. She informed him of her arrival and of Al-Walīd's pledge to her father, presenting her complaints against the injustices committed by her uncle Artubās. The caliph received her and she saw ʿAbd al-RaHmān ibn Muʿāwīya, a young man who was standing before the caliph. ʿAbd al-RaHmān would often recall this in Spain, when Sara went to Cordoba and was allowed to visit the monarch's family. Hishām, to show his favour to Sara, wrote to Hantala ibn Safwān al-Qalbī, governor of Africa, ordering him to carry out the provisions of Al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and to transmit the order to the governor of Spain Husam ibn Dirār, usually known as Abu Khatab al-Qalbī, who would carry out the order.

The caliph Hishām married her [Sara] to ʿIsa ibn Muzāhim, who went to Spain with her and regained the possession of her villas. This ʿIsa was the forefather of the Banu al-Quṭīyya. From this marriage she had two sons, Ibrāhīm and Ishāk'.⁷⁵⁸

The example of Recemund shows how some Christians prospered without abandoning their faith or their Latin culture, but this may have been the lesser road to success for the indigenous population. For those Spaniards whose ancestors had appeared in the Visigothic chronicles, their chief hope of remaining near the centres of power was to convert to Islam and become clients (*muwālī*) of the new rulers. It is impossible to say how many noble families made this transition, since, apart from a very few exceptions, they cannot be identified in the sources. Not all the clients of prominent Muslim families were Christian converts, since becoming the dependent of a tribal leader was also the way to advancement for a poor man of Muslim origin. Very few of the new Muslims preserved the memory of their Christian past. It cannot be said whether this was due to a deliberate denigration of their origins, or merely the absence of a format in which they

⁷⁵⁸ Ibn al-Qūṭīyya, *Historia*, pp.4-6.

might be expressed. Onomastic investigation has limited results. Some of the genealogies of famous men of Cordoba preserved in the biographical dictionaries begin with men carrying non-Arabic names, but although some of these names were Christian, others may have been Berber. As we have seen, even Christians who did not convert to Islam adopted Arabic names, and were always known by them in the Arabic sources. Thus the process and extent of conversion is almost opaque.

There is, however, one important exception, one scion of a convert family who did not forget his Visigothic origins. He is the tenth-century scholar Abu Bakr Muhammad, author of a *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus*⁷⁵⁹ which is unique in describing the role of the indigenous population in the Islamic conquest of Spain and thus being able to shed some light on the contemporary meaning of conversion and assimilation. The title misrepresents the work, which does indeed begin with a fairly detailed account of the conquest, but is largely a series of eulogies of the emirs from Hisham (788-796) to ʿAbd Allah (888-912). The author was a client of the prominent Qurayshi tribe, and his given name is impeccably Muslim. Yet he adopted, or was given, the remarkable nickname or title Ibn al-QūTīya, which seems to mean 'son of the Gothic woman'. The *History* implies that this ancestor was a member of the Visigothic royal family called Sara. Ibn al-QūTīya's *History* has several passages which show how an accommodation between the Visigoths and their conquerors may have been negotiated, of which the two episodes featuring Sara are perhaps the most interesting. This chapter will discuss the *History*, its author, the problems of the text, with the focus on its value as a source of information about the transition which some Christians made from Visigothic to Islamic nobility.

Ibn al-QūTīya

The family of Ibn al-QūTīya held high rank in al-Andalus, suggesting that their relationship with their patrons, members of the Qurayshi tribe, was of long standing. His father was a judge in Seville and Ecija.⁷⁶⁰ Most of our information on Ibn al-QūTīya himself comes from his pupil al-FaraDī,⁷⁶¹ who was born in Cordoba in 962, served as judge in Valencia and was killed during the Berbers' capture of Cordoba in 1013.⁷⁶² Al-FaraDī was most famous for his biographical dictionary, which includes a comparatively long entry on Ibn al-QūTīya:

⁷⁵⁹ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*. trans. Mansfield Nichols J., Ibn al-Qutiyya, The History of the Conquest of Al-Andalus, unpubl. PhD Diss. (University of North Carolina, 1975).

⁷⁶⁰ Al-Marrākushī, *Al-Dayl wa-l-Takmila*, vol. V/2, ed. ʿAbbās I., (Beirut, 1966), n.775, cited by Fierro M.I., 'La obra histórica de Ibn al-Qutiyya', *Al-Qantara*, (1989), X, 2, pp.485-512.

⁷⁶¹ Ibn al-FaraDī, *Tarikh ʿulamā al-Andalus*, no.1.316, pp.370-372.

⁷⁶² Ibn al-Bashkuwāl, *Kitāb al-Sila fī ta'rikh a'immat al-Andalus*, ed. Codera F., (Madrid, 1882), also ed. al-Husayni I.A., 2 vols., (Cairo, 1955), no. 567, cited by Nichols, Ibn al-Qutiyya; Pons, *Ensayo*, pp.105-108.

'Muhammad (Ibn 'Umar) Ibn 'Abd al-Azīz ibn Ibrāhīm ibn 'Isa ibn Mazāhim, a client of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Azīz, known as Ibn al-QūTīya of Cordoba, whose family came originally from Seville, known by the surname Abū Bakr, studied in Seville with Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah ibn al-Qarn and Hasan ibn 'Abd Allah al-Zabīrī and Sa'īd ibn Jābr and 'Alī ibn Abū Shība and in Cordoba with Tāhir ibn 'Abd al-Azīz and Ibn Abī al-Walīd al-Arj and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahāb ibn Mughīth and Muhammad ibn 'Umar ibn Lubāba and 'Umar ibn HafS ibn Abī Tamām and Aslam ibn 'Abd al-Azīz and AHmad ibn Jild and Muhammad ibn Masūr and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ayman and 'Abd Allah ibn Yūnis and AHmad ibn Bashīr ibn al-Aghbas and Qāsim ibn Asbagh and others.

He was a learned grammarian and more advanced in this subject than the people of his time. He was unsurpassed and no-one matched him. He wrote excellent books on this art, among them the *Book on the Conjugation of Verbs* and the *Book on the Shortened and the Extended Alif* [another grammar] and others. He was the guardian of the stories of al-Andalus, dictating stories of the lives of the emirs and the affairs of the scholars and poets. These he dictated from memory. His grammar books were more often studied. He did not adhere to the rules of *hadīth* or *fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence] in his narratives and he did not return to the original sources; what he recounted conveys meaning but not literal truth. What he said often lacked verification.

He lived to a great age and the people listened to him; generation after generation all the scholars and elders who had charge of the law quoted him. He came to the council and he acted according to the guiding principles of the sons of the kings and others. Feats of speculation about the Arabic language are attributed to him upon hearing⁷⁶³ the *Kāmil* of Muhammad ibn Yazīd al-Mubarrad, which Ibn al-QūTīya would transmit as he had heard it as he had received it from Sa'īd ibn Qāhir. Learned assemblies gave testimony of this.

He died, may Allah have mercy upon him, before we had finished with him on a Monday, seven days before the end of [the month of] Rabī' al-Awwal in the year 367 [977]. He was buried on Wednesday at the hour of afternoon prayers in the burial ground of the Quraysh and Abū Ba'far ibn 'Awn Allah was entrusted with leading the funeral prayers for him.

This combination of a surviving text and a biography of its author is an exciting one for the modern historian, and those who struggle with obscure Latin authors such as 'Fredegar' must envy the Arabist his biographical dictionaries. They are generally regarded as a valuable source for the history of this period. In the case of Ibn al-QūTīya, the witness appears remarkably close to his subject. Although al-FaraDī was only 15 years old when his master died, there is no reason

⁷⁶³ I quote the last two sentences from Nichols, Ibn al-QūTīya, who commented, 'The sense of this phrase is obscure.'

to suppose that he could not have written an accurate account of Ibn al-Qūṭīya's life. Yet there are problems with this passage. Some of the details may be corroborated, as we shall see, but, from the perspective of this chapter, there is one striking omission. Al-FaraDī did not list a book of history (*tar'ikh*) among Ibn al-Qūṭīya's achievements, and he appears to have disparaged his teacher as a historian. Ibn al-Qūṭīya was merely a teller of stories (*akhbār*), which he passed on with scant regard for their accuracy. In an attempt to resolve the disjunction between al-FaraDī's comments and the existence of the *History*, considerable emphasis has been placed on the exact wording of al-FaraDī's grumble that Ibn al-Qūṭīya 'did not adhere to the rules of *hadīth* or *fiqh* in his narratives and he did not return to the original sources; what he recounted conveys meaning but not literal truth.' Al-FaraDī's statement, however, rather than raising insuperable obstacles to the acceptance of the *History* as genuine, may account for some of the difficulties posed by the surviving text of the *History*. Before examining this passage in detail, it is useful to consider the problems of biographical dictionaries and their transmission, which suggest that it may be a mistake to take the biographer too literally.

Biographical dictionaries were among the first products of Arabic literacy; in the East, the earliest surviving texts date from the mid ninth century. Al-FaraDī's compilation is the first known to have been written in al-Andalus. At first, the dictionaries concentrated on religious scholars, but by the tenth century their subjects included poets and other men of letters, judges and physicians. The entries in these dictionaries were stereotyped, as can be seen from a comparison between al-FaraDī's biography of Ibn al-Qūṭīya and the account of the judge and scholar al-Ghāfiqī by Ibn al-Abbār (d.1260), analysed by Humphreys.⁷⁶⁴ Like al-FaraDī, Ibn al-Abbār listed several generations of the genealogy of his subject and the place of origin of his family. He named some of the men with whom he studied, the fields of scholarship in which he excelled, outlined the virtues of his character and gave the date of his death and a brief account of his burial. Such biographies shed more light on the educated classes as a whole than on any individual. Although stereotyped and selective, however, biographical dictionaries are thought to be less susceptible to later interpolation and falsification than other sources.

Yet biographical dictionaries could be misused. In a passage describing the swearing of an oath of loyalty⁷⁶⁵ to Hishām in 976, after the death of his father al-Hakam II, the fourteenth-century author Ibn al-Khātīb gave a long list of the people present. Number eighteen was 'Abū Bakr ibn al-Qūṭīya, imām and writer'.⁷⁶⁶ This list is at first sight a valuable source for the

⁷⁶⁴ Ibn al-Abbār, *Kitāb al-takmila li-kitāb al-sila*, ed. Codera F., *Biblioteca Arabico-Hispana*, V, no.792, p.246; Humphreys S., *Islamic History*, p.190.

⁷⁶⁵ *bai'a*.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibn al-Khātīb, *A'mal al a'lam fi man buyi'a qabla 'l-ihtilām min mulūk al-Islām*, ed. Levi Provençal E., (Beirut, 1956), pp. 48-58 in Avila M^a.L., 'La Proclamación (Bay'a) de Hishām II. Año 976 d.c.', *Al-Qantara*, (1980), I, 79-114.

prosopography of al-Andalus, making up to some extent for the absence of charters. Unfortunately, when the people mentioned are checked against their biographies, it turns out that some had died, others were not yet born and many were outside al-Andalus at the time of Hishām's accession. Ibn al-Khātīb said that he had taken the first paragraph of the account from the work of the eleventh-century historian Ibn Hayyān. This extract, however, cannot be found in the surviving works of Ibn Hayyan, but it is very close to a passage in Ibn Idhārī which may have been copied in the late-thirteenth century. Thus, although the earliest authority for the episode is a text copied a century later than the event reported, the transmission of the text seems reliable. It is perfectly plausible that a ceremony of declaration of allegiance to Hisham took place along the lines which Ibn al-Khatīb described. Yet it seems that almost all but the first ten and the last two of the names listed could have been assembled by Ibn al-Khātīb from a grand trawl of the biographical dictionary of 'Iyād⁷⁶⁷ covering three centuries. Thus, whilst one would like to use this passage as showing Ibn al-QūTīya as a prominent Umayyad loyalist, closer examination of the evidence undermines this interpretation. Similar care must be taken in reading all the sources for this period.

The dictionary of al-FaraDī survives in a single late-medieval manuscript⁷⁶⁸ discovered in Tunis in 1887. This manuscript, however, is not the only account of Ibn al-QūTīya, since he was listed in several other dictionaries.⁷⁶⁹ The similarities between their entries and al-FaraDī's makes it likely that they are all derived from al-FaraDī. Biographical compilers were even more likely than other writers to copy from earlier works, and it is unusual to find two accounts of the same subject which are independent of each other.⁷⁷⁰ Yet the authors did not copy their predecessors word-for-word. 'Iyād (d.1149) described Ibn al-QūTīya as 'the guardian of the stories [*akhbār*] of al-Andalus and the lives of the emirs and the affairs of the scholars; he wrote an excellent book on her history'.⁷⁷¹ Comparison between other entries in 'Iyād's dictionary and the supposed original indicates that 'Iyād was using a manuscript of al-FaraDī's dictionary, but was either adapting it, or using a copy which is not the same as the surviving text.⁷⁷² Ibn Khallikan, in a biographical dictionary completed in Cairo in 1274, said of Ibn al-QūTīya that 'he was the

⁷⁶⁷ 'Iyād, *Tartīb al-Madārik*, 8 vols., (Rabat, no date), cited by Avila, 'La proclamación'.

⁷⁶⁸ I do not know whether it has been dated.

⁷⁶⁹ Fierro, *La obra histórica* n.5; they include: 'Iyād, *Tartīb al-madārik*, 6, 296-298; Yaqūt, *Mu'jam al-'udabā*, (London, 1931), 7, 52-55; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, (ed. I. 'Abbās, Beirut, 1972), IV, 368-71; Ibn Hajār, *Lisān al-mīzān*, (Beirut, 1971), 5, 324-5; Al-Safadī, *Al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, (ed. S. Dederling, Weisbaden, 1981), no.242; Al-Dahābī, *Siyār a'lām al-nubalā*, (Beirut, 1981-1985), 16, no.153.

⁷⁷⁰ Humphreys S., *Islamic History*, p.189.

⁷⁷¹ 'Iyād, *Tartīb*, VI, p.297, cited by Fierro, 'La obra histórica'.

⁷⁷² Castilla J.R., 'El *Ta'rij 'ulamā al-Andalus* de Ibn al-Faradī en la obra del qādī 'Iyād', in Marin M. et al (eds.) *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de Al-Andalus*, 5 vols., (Madrid, 1988-92), II, pp.265-276, cited by Fierro, 'La obra histórica'.

guardian of *hadīth* and *fīqh* and rare stories [*akhbār*]...’⁷⁷³ Ibn Khallikan’s biography is much longer than al-FaraDī’s. It embroiders a list of Ibn al-QūTīya’s virtues with an anecdote illustrating his facility for extemporising verse. Ibn al-Khallikan also added a note about Ibn al-QūTīya’s descent from Sara the Goth, for which he cited an authority which is apparently independent from the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus*. The details of this passage, to which I shall return in the discussion of the *History*’s version of Sara’s story, suggest that the biographer, or his source, was inventing, thus discrediting the whole passage as evidence for Ibn al-QūTīya. Three compilers of biographical dictionaries - Yaqūt, writing half a century before Ibn Khallikan, and the later authors al-Dahabī (d.1348) and al-Safadī (d.1363) all said that Ibn al-QūTīya wrote a book of history [*tarīkh*]. It is possible that these authors have all misunderstood al-FaraDī’s text. Yet Ibn al-QūTīya was remembered as a historian in other, independent, sources. Ibn al-Abbār quoted the eleventh-century Andalusī historian Ibn Hayyān who in turn had cited Ibn al-QūTīya as the source of a story which does not, however, appear in the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus*.⁷⁷⁴ Ibn al-QūTīya was also cited several times by al-Khuṣānī (d.971) in his *Book of the Judges of Cordoba*,⁷⁷⁵ although here again, the extracts do not correspond with the *History*. In the most complete history of al-Andalus, that of al-Maqqarī, Ibn al-QūTīya is praised at one point for his industry and veracity, but criticised at another because he took notes from a visitor to Cordoba who later turned out to be a fraud.⁷⁷⁶ There is only one passage in a later historian which could be reproduced from the *History* of Ibn al-QūTīya. It is an account of the return of Mūsa ibn Nusayr to the East which appears in the last three folios of a manuscript from El Escorial, which has been attributed to Ibn Fayyād.⁷⁷⁷ The author of this text did not name Ibn al-QūTīya as his authority for this episode, and his narrative is more detailed than that of Ibn al-QūTīya, so it is equally plausible that the two men were using a common source. Thus one should have reservations about relying on the surviving manuscript of al-FaraDī as establishing either that Ibn al-QūTīya did not write history, or that he did not transmit it correctly. The manuscript may itself be a miscopied or altered version. The statement that Ibn al-QūTīya was a poor historian may have been interpolated by a later copier of the dictionary who had his own opinions. Similar questions about textual transmission arise when considering the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus*.

⁷⁷³ Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayāt*, IV, p.370, trans. MacGuckin de Slane, *Ibn Khallikān’s Biographical Dictionary*, 4 vols., (Paris, 1842-71), III, 79, cited by Fierro, ‘La obra histórica’.

⁷⁷⁴ Ibn al-Abbār, *Al-Hulla al-siyāra*, ed. Mu’nis Husayn, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1963), I, 45, cited by Fierro, ‘La obra histórica’.

⁷⁷⁵ Al-Khushānī, *Historia de los jueces*, pp.34, 65, 80-81, 87-88, 134 and 136, trans. pp.42-43, 81, 98-100, 106-107, 165, 167-8.

⁷⁷⁶ Al-Maqqarī, *Analectes*, I, 431-32 and II, 6.

⁷⁷⁷ *Escorial* 1.654; Alvarez de Morales C., ‘Aproximación a la figura de Ibn Abī l-Fayyād’, *Cuadernos de Historia del Islam*, (1978-79), XI, 29-127; cited by Fierro, ‘Una obra histórica’.

The History of the Conquest of al-Andalus; history or fable?

The *History* survives in only one copy, Paris BN 1.867, ff. 2-50, which dates from the fourteenth century. In the nineteenth century Cherbonneau made a partial translation from the Paris codex and another manuscript, discovered in Istanbul, which has since disappeared.⁷⁷⁸ The Paris manuscript also includes the sole surviving copy of the *Akbār Majmuʿa*⁷⁷⁹, a collection of historical traditions which may have been written down at the same time as the *History*.⁷⁸⁰ The title *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* which appears in the Paris manuscript is misleading. The work begins with a fairly detailed account of the first years of Muslim rule in Spain, in which three sons of Witiza, the penultimate Visigothic monarch, play a prominent role. According to Ibn al-Qūṭīya, the sons of Witiza were the first Christians to make their peace with the invaders. In the story of the conquest told by Christian historians, from the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, onwards, Witiza and his sons shared with Rodrigo the responsibility for the 'ruin of Spain'. The *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* has a different version of events, which I will discuss in detail below. After his recounting of the conquest comes a chronicle of the caliphs, and the governors of North Africa and Spain, and an account of the problems of maintaining order in the peninsula until the arrival of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I in 756. Most of the rest of the work is a conventional series of eulogies of the Umayyads, made up of anecdotes about the reign of Hishām (788-796), the revolts against al-Hakam I (796-822) and brief accounts of the reigns of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II (822-852), Muhammad (852-886), al-Mundīr (886-888) and ʿAbd Allāh (888-912). It was probably written down after the death of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III in 961, since, although his reign is not covered, he is referred to with the formula 'May God be pleased with him', which implies that he had died. The manuscript names the author twice. The *History* begins: 'Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-Azīz related to us.....'. This name is similar to that given to Ibn al-Qūṭīya by al-FaraDī. The work ends: 'Here ends the history of Ibn al-Qūṭīya, Praise be to God.' Thus the attribution of the text to Ibn al-Qūṭīya seems secure. The problems arise from the structure of the work and the way in which it was transmitted.

The *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* is taken less seriously as a source for the tenth century than other Arabic sources, even though it may be one of the earliest. This is less because of the anecdotal nature of the work, which in this respect is merely more extreme than others of this genre, than because Ibn al-Qūṭīya, contrary to the usual practice, did not quote long passages

⁷⁷⁸ Cherbonneau J. A., 'Extrait du livre d'Ibn El-Khouthiya intitulé "Foutouh Elandalous lil-moslimin"', *Journal Asiatique*, (1853), 5^e série, I, 458-74; *ibid.*, 'Histoire de la conquête de l'Espagne par les musulmans', *Journal Asiatique*, (1856), 5^e série, VIII, 426-82, cited by Ribera, *Historia de los jueces*.

⁷⁷⁹ *Ajbar Machmuā (Colección de tradiciones)*, ed. and trans. Lafuente y Alcántara E., (Madrid, 1867).

⁷⁸⁰ Molina L., 'Los Ajbar Majmuʿa y la historiografía árabe sobre el período omeya en Al-Andalus', *Al-Qantara*, (1989), X, 2, 513-42.

from his predecessors. At the beginning of the *History* Ibn al-QūTīya cited four scholars as his authorities. Two of these were two of the teachers listed by al-FaraDī, a third is known from other biographical dictionaries, but they were not described as historians. Ibn al-QūTīya did not quote from any of these men exactly, however, but used the vague formulae, 'it was said', 'some of the scholars said' etc. For this reason, modern scholars have echoed the criticisms levelled at Ibn al-QūTīya by al-FaraDī. Chalmeta firmly classified the *History* as *akhbār*,⁷⁸¹ distinguishing it from *tar'ikh*, which is said to be passed on by the careful transmission of *hadīth*, exact copying from one's predecessors in a chain stretching back to the events being described. *Akhbār*, in contrast, is the mere selecting of stories from so-called 'oral tradition'. Chalmeta described Ibn al-QūTīya as 'an extreme case..... of oral transmission..... a walking fossil, a living anachronism'. The term 'oral tradition' has been used to account for a multitude of the problems posed by narrative sources written down many years after the events they portray. It is not clear exactly what is meant, but Chalmeta implied that, as a man who eschewed written history, Ibn al-QūTīya felt at liberty to retell old stories as it suited him. It could also mean that Ibn al-QūTīya's stories continued to be passed on by word of mouth for one or more generations before they were written down. This reduces their potential as evidence for 'what actually happened'.

There may be some substance in the accusation that the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* is said to owe its imperfections to a reliance on 'oral tradition'. One of the episodes which Ibn al-QūTīya recounted about Artubās, one of the sons of Witiza, begins, 'and one of the stories about Artubās....'⁷⁸² The formula 'one of the stories' (*min al-akhbār*) is said to be characteristic of *akhbār*, as is the *History's* paucity of dates and the inclusion of poetry. Anthropologists have shown, however, that oral transmission is not synonymous with inaccuracy, much less with fantasy. If Ibn al-QūTīya was using stories which had not yet been written down, they may nevertheless have been known in standard versions. Furthermore, it is likely that he was not plucking them at random, but in order to fill in some of the gaps in the texts available to him. This is impossible to prove, because the texts he names have not survived. On the marriage of Sara the Goth he said: 'this account, or most of it, is found in the *Book on the Conquest of al-Andalus* of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Habīb and in the *arjūza* [a poetic form] of the vizier Tamām ibn Alqama.'⁷⁸³ The story of Sara the Goth, for which Ibn al-QūTīya cited Ibn Habīb as his source, is not mentioned by Ibn Habīb in the one surviving copy of his *History*, although another version of this work might have included it,⁷⁸⁴ but some of the poetry of Tamām ibn Alqama (803-886) was quoted by Ibn al-Abbār.⁷⁸⁵ This poetry deals with the conquest and the names of the

⁷⁸¹ Chalmeta Gendrón P., 'Una historia discontinua e intemporal (jabar)', *Hispania*, (1973), XXXIII, 23-75, at p.40.

⁷⁸² Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, p.36, trans. Ribera, p.28.

⁷⁸³ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, pp.6-7, trans. Ribera, p.4.

⁷⁸⁴ see below.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibn al-Abbār, *Al-Hulla al-siyarā*, I, p.144, cited by Fierro, 'La obra histórica'.

governors and emirs and their battles from the arrival of Tariq in 711 to the reign of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III; Ibn al-Qūṭīya could have read Tama ibn Alqama, although he did not quote the poetry in his own work. Ibn al-Qūṭīya included several stories which are almost certainly without historical foundation; these include the betrayal of Spain to the invaders by Julian as revenge for Rodrigo's rape of his daughter, the conquests of Tariq, the arrival of Mūsa and the rivalry between the two men. There is a fund of stories about the conquest. Rubiera attempted to make historical sense of one of these which Ibn al-Qūṭīya did not relate, the discovery of the Table of Solomon in Toledo,⁷⁸⁶ but most are clearly legendary. Some of these fables were borrowed in their entirety from outside Spain; at least one of the episodes in Ibn al-Qūṭīya's *History* has a prototype in eastern legend.⁷⁸⁷ They may have been based on *topoi* which were deliberately adapted to the history of al-Andalus to enhance particular characteristics of the Umayyad rulers. Many of these stories have been shown to have been reimported into Spain from Egypt in the eighth century and later.⁷⁸⁸ Although the episodes which deal specifically with Witiza's descendants are not in the surviving Egyptian manuscripts, Ibn al-Qūṭīya could have learned of them from Egyptian sources. It is not clear whether he could have seen texts of these stories, or whether they had come to al-Andalus only as oral narratives. Ibn al-Qūṭīya may have heard some of the stories of the conquest from his own family, but he did not mention any such family traditions. Further it is precisely at the point where he introduced the exploits of the sons of Witiza and Sara, presumed to be the Gothic woman from whom he was claiming descent, that he said he was using written authorities, and these have no apparent connection with his family. When he related the anecdotes about Artubās he used the authority of 'a scholar'⁷⁸⁹ Nor did he quote directly the charter⁷⁹⁰ which al-Walīd was said to have handed out to the sons of Witiza, confirming them in possession of their lands. One might have expected that this document, or a memory of its terms from which its wording could be reconstructed, might have been preserved by his family. The fact that he did not have access to such material suggests that there had been a period of forgetting between the conquest and the tenth century which Ibn al-Qūṭīya had to fill from other sources. The question whether he used any written sources remains unresolved. To dismiss Ibn al-Qūṭīya's *History* as purely anecdotal, however, is too harsh, and places too much emphasis on modern historians' ability to distinguish between *akhbār* and *tar'ikh*.

However authoritative Ibn al-Qūṭīya's sources may have been, inaccuracies arose from the process of transmission. The formula 'he related to us' (*akhbār-na*) with which the *History* opens, often implies oral transmission from master to pupil, although this is not invariably the case. This fits well with al-FaraDī's statement that Ibn al-Qūṭīya dictated his stories from

⁷⁸⁶ Rubiera Mata M^a.J., 'La Mesa de Salomón', *Awraq*, III, (1980), 26-31.

⁷⁸⁷ Manzano, 'Oriental Topoi'.

⁷⁸⁸ Dozy R., *Recherches*, I, pp.32-34; Makki, 'Egipto y los orígenes'.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibn al-Qūṭīya, *Historia*, p.5, trans. Ribera, p.3.

⁷⁹⁰ *sijill*.

memory. The biographical dictionaries have preserved the names of several of the students who may have taken down Ibn al-QūTīya's words. According to Ibn Bashkuwāl, who was born in Cordoba in 1100,⁷⁹¹ the *History* could have been transmitted by Ibn al-QūTīya's son, called Abū HafS ʿUmar, who referred to traditions which he had learned from his father, or by his nephew ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Sulaymān (d.429/1037) 'a narrator of histories who would refer for authority to his uncle Abu Bakr.'⁷⁹² The text, however, may have been written down by someone who was not a relative of Ibn al-QūTīya because it says of ʿIsa ibn Muzahīm, the first husband of Sara the Goth that 'he was an ancestor of Ibn al-QūTīya',⁷⁹³ where the writer might have been expected to say 'my ancestor' if he belonged to the same family.⁷⁹⁴ The apparently inconsequential nature of some of the anecdotes, at least for modern readers, and the random way in which they have been collected have been attributed by modern historians to a not-too-bright student. Since the surviving manuscript of the *History* is so late, it is impossible to say what relationship it bears to what might have been dictated and perhaps written by Ibn al-QūTīya.

In the context of Arabic literacy, dictation does not in itself invalidate the *History* as a source, since, according to later authors, this method of transmission was more valid than copying. It may, however, have introduced inaccuracies into the process. Theoretically, students were supposed to obtain material for study and teaching by sitting at the feet of a master, who dictated his own work from memory. Ibn Bashkuwāl mentioned verses by another Cordoban scholar, Ibn Saʿīd al-Tamīmī, in which he expressed his satisfaction at seeing himself surrounded by a thousand students in the Great Mosque, each one taking down what he had dictated.⁷⁹⁵ Having written the text down, the student was to obtain a certificate that his copy was accurate, and that he was licensed to teach from it. This seems to have been the ideal, and the practice may have fallen short. Both teacher and pupil could be at fault. Ibn al-QūTīya was not the only historian criticised for sloppiness. The work of another historian of al-Andalus, Ibn Habīb (d.852), poses similar problems of interpretation to the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus*, and may usefully be compared with it. Ibn Habīb's *History of al-Andalus*⁷⁹⁶ survives in one copy which, like the *History* of Ibn al-QūTīya, is thought to be a pupil's notes rather than the original. In this case, the supposition stands on a firmer basis, since the surviving manuscript carries the name of Yūsuf ibn YaHyā al-Magāmī, who died in 901. To an even greater extent than the *History of the*

⁷⁹¹ Pons, *Ensayo*, p.246.

⁷⁹² Ibn Bashkuwāl, *Kitāb al-Sila*, nos.849 and 765; a slightly later Andalusian biographer, Al-Dhabbī, (*Bughya al-multamis fī Taʾrīkh rijāl ahl al-Andalus*, ed. Codera F. and Ribera J., (Madrid, 1885), *Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana* III, no. 711), refers to a student of Ibn al-QūTīya as passing on his traditions, without, however, specifying history; cited by Fierro, 'La obra histórica'.

⁷⁹³ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, p.6, trans. Ribera, p.4.

⁷⁹⁴ Fierro, 'La obra histórica...', p.489.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibn Bashkuwāl, *Kitāb al-Sila*, no.769, cited in Ribera, 'Biliófilos y bibliotecas', p.204.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibn Habīb, *Kitāb al-Taʾrīkh*.

Conquest of al-Andalus, the *History* of Ibn Habīb is a mish-mash of anecdotes with little apparent basis in reality. The pupil may not be entirely to blame. Al-FaraDī accused Ibn Habīb of a number of breaches of the rules of transmission, including an inability to distinguish true *hadith* from false, and of soliciting authorization to teach the works of his masters by obtaining copies of them without going through the process of hearing, reading and checking them with their authors.⁷⁹⁷ If al-FaraDī, or later interpolators of his dictionary, could be so critical of the reliability even of the authors themselves, it seems that their role in the process of transmission was already considered unsatisfactory; this judgement is increasingly being adopted, although with reluctance, by modern historians. It is possible that Ibn al-QūTīya was indeed telling his students stories which have been condemned as fabulous by his contemporaries. If, in addition, his students were not taking down their master's every word, the interpretation of a single surviving manuscript becomes extremely difficult. It is very probable that several versions of the stories attributed to Ibn al-QūTīya were in circulation, interpolated by his pupils and later generations.

Thus there are enormous problems in accepting the surviving version as a tenth-century work, even at one remove from its author. Any interpretation of the *History* must be provisional, and must always bear these reservations in mind. I will work on the assumption, however, that the *History* does have interesting things to say about the tenth-century perspective on the conquest and its aftermath and I will argue below that, whatever the origins of his information were, the compiler of the *History* who, for the sake of argument, I am going to continue to refer to as Ibn al-QūTīya, was being selective. By his inclusion of so many anecdotes about the Christians who participated in the establishment of al-Andalus Ibn al-QūTīya was giving form to the history of those Christians whose descendants were later to convert to Islam and became part of the establishment. The context for such an attempt was an awakening of interest in the writing of history in al-Andalus. Before studying some of the episodes recounted by Ibn al-QūTīya, it is necessary to consider this context in more detail.

History and genealogy in al-Andalus

Some of the Arabic histories of al-Andalus may date from the ninth century; the most famous is that attributed to Ibn Habīb. Yet it seems that the real historiographical horizon for al-Andalus, the period when histories were being collected and formalised for written rather than oral transmission, was the middle of the tenth century. The interest in history, coming a century later in Spain than in the eastern Islamic lands, seems to have been stimulated by a request from al-Hakam II for scholars to work on the history of al-Andalus, probably made during the reign of his father. Al-Hakam's influence on the cultural life of al-Andalus may have been exaggerated,

⁷⁹⁷ Al-FaraDī, *Tar'ikh*, no. 816, pp.269-270; Ibn Habīb, *Kitāb al-Ta'rikh*, pp.42-43.

but there may be a contemporary witness to his role in promoting the writing of her history. Al-Khushanī (d.971), whose *History of the Judges of Cordoba* survives in a thirteenth-century manuscript,⁷⁹⁸ said of al-Hakam that he 'conceived the excellent plan of initiating the study of history [and] the knowledge of genealogies, and he wished for the merits of the ancestors to be published.' It was necessary to write down 'the dispersed traditions destined to be lost'.⁷⁹⁹ Al-Khusani's text is of course just as open as that of Ibn al-QūTīya to the charge of later interpolation, but a context for al-Hakam's initiative can easily be seen in the aftermath of the proclamation of the caliphate of Cordoba in 929. In a letter to his provincial governors stating his intention of taking the caliphal title, 'Abd al-RaHmān III complained that two centuries of silence on the history of the Umayyads had cast doubt on their legitimacy. The letter was reproduced by Ibn Hayyān and the anonymous author of a chronicle on the reign of 'Abd al-RaHmān III. Neither text survives in a contemporaneous manuscript, but the episode testifies to the importance of history and genealogy to the maintenance of Umayyad power.⁸⁰⁰ It is not certain that the Umayyads held a monopoly on recording the past, however. This was the period when the famous historian AHmad Ar-Rāzī (d.955) flourished; his work does not survive, but it was quoted extensively by later writers. Like his contemporaries, Ar-Rāzī concentrated on the exploits of the Umayyads, but he also described the local histories of the famous towns of al-Andalus.⁸⁰¹ The task of vindicating the Umayyads was accompanied by interest in genealogy in general, in parallel with developments in the eastern Islamic lands.

Eastern traditions stated, or invented, the existence of two races of Arabs in pre-Islamic Arabia, the 'Adnānīs and QaHTānīs.⁸⁰² The descendants of QaHTān were the 'pure Arabs', who traced their origins back to Yemen. The descendants of 'Adnān were the 'assimilated Arabs'⁸⁰³ from northern Arabia. This division was a response to the mutual hostility of these two groups, which persisted throughout the Islamic empire, including al-Andalus.⁸⁰⁴ The two races divided, and each of these subgroups took the name of a founder celebrated for his valour, or remembered for other reasons. These founders were almost invariably male, but occasionally a woman might be

⁷⁹⁸ Oxford, Bodleian Library, Nicholl collection, 127, which also contains the only extant copy of the *Tar'ikh Al-Andalus* of Ibn Habīb; it was copied by Abdulla ibn Muhammad ibn Alī al-Lagwātī in 695 [1295-6]; Ibn Habīb, *Kitāb al-Ta'rih*, p.107.

⁷⁹⁹ Al-Khushānī, *Historia de los jueces*, p.5.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibn Hayyān *Muqtabas V*, ed. Chalmeta, p.241; *Una crónica anónima*, pp.78-9; Martínez Gros G., *L'ideologie omeyyade: La construction de la légitimité du califat de Cordue X^e -XI^e siècles*, (Madrid, 1992), p.29.

⁸⁰¹ Catalan and Andres, *Crónica del Moro Rasis*.

⁸⁰² Duri A.A., *The Historical Formation of the Arab Nation*, trans. L.I. Conrad, (1987), pp.10-11; Teres E., 'Linajes árabes en Al-Andalus según la <<Yamhara>> de Ibn Hazm', *Al-Andalus*, (1957), XXII, 54-103.

⁸⁰³ *al-muta'ariba/ musta'riba*.

⁸⁰⁴ Cagigas, I. de las, *Andalusia Musulmana: Aportaciones a la Delimitation de la Frontera del Andalus*, (Madrid, 1950), pp. 23-24.

remembered for her strong personality. The most important lineage was that of the Banū Hāshīm, the family of Muhammad, which was a subdivision of the Qurayshīs, a tribe of the descendants of ʿAdnān. The stories of the divisions of the tribes and the men associated with them were transmitted orally in poetry which may date to pre-Islamic times, and later in books of genealogies.⁸⁰⁵ Most of these works began with a chapter on the excellence and necessity of the 'science of genealogies',⁸⁰⁶ which was endorsed by the Qurʾān: 'Men, I have created you from a man and a woman, and I have grouped you into peoples and tribes, so that you might know yourselves.'⁸⁰⁷ One of the most celebrated genealogists was Hishām al-Kalbī (d.819) whose detailed work was the basis for most of the later genealogies. In al-Andalus, the earliest known writers of genealogies were Ibn Habīb, who was said to have written a *Genealogy and history of the Qurashis* and *Genealogies, laws and studies of the Arabs*, and Qasim ibn Asbagh (d.951), who wrote a *Book of Genealogies*. None of these works has survived, but they are mentioned in the biographies of their authors,⁸⁰⁸ and several other authors of this period were remembered as genealogists.⁸⁰⁹ Ibn ʿAbd Rabbīhi (d.940) dedicated a chapter of a work called *The Unique Necklace* to genealogies.⁸¹⁰ A work on this topic was ascribed to al-Hakam himself by Ibn Hazm.⁸¹¹ The Muslims of al-Andalus preserved in their *nisba* - the formula Ibn x. ibn y, etc.- the memory of their tribal affiliation, and the tribal system seems to have remained distinct at least until the end of the tenth century, when al-ManSūr tried to destroy it.⁸¹²

Although the Islamic genealogies have been studied for the purposes of prosopography, their construction has only recently been studied using a methodology which has already been applied to similar works written down in northern Europe at about the same time.⁸¹³ It is possible to apply general conclusions which have been drawn from comparisons between written genealogies of the early Middle Ages and the oral traditions of pre-literate peoples gathered by

⁸⁰⁵ *Kutub al-ansab*.

⁸⁰⁶ *ʿilm al-nasab*.

⁸⁰⁷ Quʾrān, 49:13.

⁸⁰⁸ Pons, *Ensayo*, pp.29-38 and 59-60.

⁸⁰⁹ Bosch-Vila J., 'La ciencia de los linajes y los genealogistas en la España musulmana', in *Miscelánea de estudios dedicados al profesor A. Marín Ocete*, I, (1974), 63-77.

⁸¹⁰ *Kitāb al-yatīma fī nasab wa-fadāʾil al-ʿarab* (Book of the unique pearl on the genealogy and virtues of the Arabs), in Ibn ʿAbd al-Rabbīhi, *Al-ʿIqd al-Farīd*, ed. Būlāq, (1876), II, pp.44 seq., cited by Terés, 'Linajes árabes'.

⁸¹¹ *Kitāb ansāb al-tāibīn wa-l-ʿalawīyīn al-qadamīn ilā-l-Maghrib* (Book of genealogies of the vanguard and the illustrious men who came to the Maghreb), quoted by Ibn Hazm, *Yamharat ansāb al-ʿarab*, ed. Lévi-Provençal E., (Cairo, 1948), pp. 81, 375 and 398, cited by Terés, 'Linajes árabes'.

⁸¹² Guichard P., *Al-Andalus*, (Barcelona, 1976), pp.19-20.

⁸¹³ Kennedy H., 'From Oral Tradition to Written Record in Arabic Genealogy', *Arabica*, (1997), XLIV, 531-544.

anthropologists.⁸¹⁴ These elucidate the effect of ideology on the process of transmission. Genealogies may be accurately transmitted from one generation to succeeding generations without being true. They are reconstructions of the past, which may be used in a number of ways to describe the present; they may state the supposed ethnic origins of the group and evoke political stability by giving the sense of historical inevitability to current alliances. Thus, 'pre-literate peoples only preserve versions of their history which explains current social groupings and institutions and ... these versions may bear little relationship to an historical sequence of events ... their oral tradition constitutes both a validation of existing social relationships and a mnemonic device for their transmission and explanation. This applies with particular force to genealogies'.⁸¹⁵ Although genealogies changed with time, some parts of them remained constant, especially those expressing the belief that the tribe had always been united in its present form. Recent ancestors were usually remembered accurately, but earlier sections might be altered to introduce new members or to reflect changes in religious beliefs. Important events in the history of the group, such as migrations, were commemorated in the name of a famous ancestor. This man was often entirely mythical, or, if historical, was born too late to have played any role in the events recounted, since the man most likely to have been remembered was the one who emerged victorious at the end of the confused period of migration, whose actual history is likely to have been lost.⁸¹⁶ Thus it is necessary to know the context of a genealogy, when and where it was written down, in order to make sense of it.

Islamic genealogies are very different from those of the Anglo-Saxons, for example. The scale of genealogical writing, in particular, is quite unlike anything preserved in northern Europe. Nor can they easily be compared with the memories of their ancestors which the twentieth-century Bedouin preserve. Yet some of the same considerations can be seen to influence the collected genealogies of the men of al-Andalus. There were two key components. The prime function of the Islamic genealogists was to extend the chain of ancestors back to the pre-Islamic period. The most successful in doing this was Ibn Hazm; he was writing in the eleventh century, but claimed to be relying heavily on a work, now lost, written a century earlier by AHmad Ar-Rāzī.⁸¹⁷ Second in importance to determining one's origins in Arabia was to record which member of the line it was who had passed to al-Andalus. Those who arrived with Mūsa ibn Nusayr in 711 were

⁸¹⁴ Dumville D., 'Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal Lists' in Sawyer P. and Wood I.N., *Early Medieval Kingship*, (Leeds, 1979), pp. 72-104; Pohl W., 'Tradition, Ethnogenese und literarische Gestaltung: eine Zwischenbilanz', in K. Brunner and B. Merta (eds.), *Ethnogenese und Überlieferung*, (Vienna and Munich, 1994), pp.9-26; see also Balandier G., trans. Sheridan Smith A.M., *Political Anthropology*, (1972), pp.69-70 and 81.

⁸¹⁵ Dumville, 'Kingship', p.85.

⁸¹⁶ Dumville D., 'The West Saxon Genealogical Regnal List and the Chronology of Early Wessex', *Peritia*, IV, (1985), 21-66, repr. in *Britons and Anglo-Saxons in the Early Middle Ages*, (Aldershot, 1993).

⁸¹⁷ AHmad Ar-Rāzī, *Kitāb fī ansāb mashābir ahl al-Andalus* (Book on the genealogies of the most illustrious men of Al-Andalus), cited by Pellat, 'Ibn Hazm'.

called *baladiyyūn*; the companions of Balj who came in 756 in support of ‘Abd al-RaHmān I were called Syrians.⁸¹⁸ Genealogists called these the two rows of the vanguard.⁸¹⁹ The genealogies also recorded those men who had been most distinguished in war and scholarship. Few genealogies could be reconstructed in full; among them were the Banū Hajjāj and Banū Khaldūn of Seville and the Tujībīs of Zaragoza. Ibn Hazm also gave the lineages of some of the Berbers who had crossed to Spain, and a few Spanish families. One of the latter was the Banū Qasī, rulers of Zaragoza and the northern marches of al-Andalus, who traced their line back to a Christian called Cassius who had converted to Islam and become a client of the Umayyads. From the genealogical data, Guichard was able to draw some conclusions about the distribution of land in al-Andalus at time of conquest.⁸²⁰ It is difficult to be sure, however, whether this represents the actual situation after 711 and 756, rather than claims which were being made at the time when the genealogies were written down. The further pitfalls of genealogy are only too well illustrated in Spain. It seems that indigenous Spaniards manufactured Muslim genealogies for themselves, and that such genealogies were adapted to changing circumstances.⁸²¹ Even for the Muslims whose origins in Arabia did not have to be fudged, there was a problem in claiming any role for their family in the conquest of Spain, since it is likely the majority of men who entered Spain in 711 were Berbers, and that few Arabs arrived in Spain until well after the Umayyad takeover of 756. It is almost certain that many of the genealogies were more illustrious in their reconstructions than in actuality.

Thus the subject of ‘ethnicity’ in al-Andalus is hopelessly confused. The fourteenth-century author Abū-l-Walīd ibn NaSr of Granada made an attempt to clarify the matter: ‘In the beginning, there were the Banū Hāsim [the family of Muhammad], who came from Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and North Africa; secondly the noble Arabs and their clients [*māwlas*], thirdly the Berbers, who arrived from North Africa in large numbers, and in fourth place the natives of the country, many of whom converted to Islam, but others kept their faith and lived as conquered subjects. To this race the Romans, Galicians, Castilians, the people of Aragon, the Goths and Franks, etc, belonged. The Jews also belonged to this group; some of them had resided in the Peninsula since before the Muslim invasion, but others arrived later’.⁸²² This jumble of anachronisms - there was no Castile or Aragon at the time of the conquest, and terms such as ‘Roman’, ‘Frank’ and ‘Galician’ had different meanings in different periods and between one author and another - accurately reflects the confusion of the sources. Two centuries earlier, Ibn al-Abbār had attributed

⁸¹⁸ *ṣa‘miyyūn*.

⁸¹⁹ *talī‘a*

⁸²⁰ Guichard, *Al-Andalus*.

⁸²¹ Peñarroja Torrejón L. *Cristianos bajo el islam: los mozárabes hasta la reconquista de Valencia*, (Madrid, 1993), p.64; Manzano, *La Frontera*, pp.197 and 228.

⁸²² Abū-l-Walīd ibn NaSr, *Familias ilustres de Fez*, quoted by Vallvé J., *El califato de Córdoba*, (Madrid, 1992), p.54, who does not give the full reference.

to al-Hakam considerable doubts about the genealogies of his subjects. In an attempt to resolve them, al-Hakam ordered 'the inhabitants of the different regions of al-Andalus that all those whose Arabs whose lineage, tribe or family had been lost or had been relegated to oblivion before his reign should reconstitute the memory of it and, once the nobility of their ancestors had been established by persons competent in this subject, they should inscribe it in special registers so that everyone was aware of his own lineage'.⁸²³ More than two centuries had elapsed between the conquest of al-Andalus and the writing of the *History* of Ibn al-QūTīya. Its author is unlikely to have been as certain of his genealogy as he claimed; if he was insisting on his Christian origins, it must have been for a purpose.

The role played in the 'ethnogenesis' of the Muslim world by adherents of other faiths who converted to Islam and became clients of Muslim rulers is difficult to state clearly. From the earliest years of Islam, there was tension between the integration of outsiders into the new religion, and the demands of maintaining an illustrious lineage. Well before this date, by the time of the genealogies which may have their origins in pre-Islamic poetry, any link there may once have been between tribes and biological exclusivity had been lost, as different groups were coopted into the tribes through clientage. This process was accelerated by urbanisation after the Islamic conquests, and the involvement of people not of Arab origin in the business of government. Some of these men retained their own faith, but many converted to Islam. By the time of the rise to power of the 'Abbasids in Baghdad in the eighth century, *mawālī* were participating in all levels of government and there was also the beginning of the breakdown of the tribal structure in favour of equality between those of Arab and non-Arab origin.⁸²⁴ This was reinforced by the adoption of Arabic as the official language of bureaucracy and scholarship, so that to a large extent the use of Arabic, especially in conjunction with conversion to Islam, became synonymous with being an Arab. This accorded with numerous references to Arabic in the Qur'ān; Arabic was the language in which Muhammad's revelation had been received, and people should be regarded as Arab or non-Arab on the basis of their use of it. Later, this identification broke down in those conquered lands, such as Spain, where the indigenous populations adopted Arabic without necessarily accepting Islam. Yet the distinction between those of Arabian descent and their clients remained blurred. The rhetoric of the genealogies, however, insisted on purity of descent as the criterion for judging a man's right to call himself an Arab. The idea that the Arabs were a single nation developed in the late Umayyad period in the east, in the first half of the eighth century. They were to be distinguished on the basis of biological continuity with those to whom Muhammad's revelation had been granted. Ibn Qutayba of Baghdad (828-889) stated that: 'God sent the Prophet from among them unified them granted them

⁸²³ Ibn al-Abbār, *Al-Hullāt a-siyarā*, pp.202-3, cited by Vallvé, 'El califato'.

⁸²⁴ Duri, *The Historical formation*, p.35.

dominion in the lands and, at a time when there were yet no non-Arabs⁸²⁵ among them, addressed them, saying, 'You are the best nation ever brought forth to men.' Other nations might share this honour by virtue of having joined the Arabs, but they remained newcomers'.⁸²⁶ Such ideas led to learned argument about the exact status of *mawālis*.⁸²⁷ Equality between Arabs and non-Arabs was further eroded by the natural tendency of the ruling dynasties to abandon Islamic principles of equality and the election of rulers on merit in favour of the hereditary principle, reinforcing the insistence on racial purity. This ideal was advanced by the 'Abbasids in the east, who insisted on their divine election as direct descendants of the Prophet. The Umayyads in Spain had more difficulty with this argument, since although they were the descendants of Muhammad, the line passed through Muhammad's opponent Abū Sufyān; the histories of al-Andalus stressed their line of descent from the early caliphs Uthmān and Mu'āwiya. As we have seen, the main focus of Ibn al-Qūṭīya's *History* is the Umayyads. That Ibn al-Qūṭīya wove into this story the history of the family of one of their clients is a significant comment on the role of such people in al-Andalus. It can be clarified by looking at the overall purpose of the work.

Christians in the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus*

The *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* is an exemplary text and many of the episodes Ibn al-Qūṭīya recounted are qualified by explanatory notes, such as 'the reason for this was'. The example which its author is putting forward that of the Umayyads, whose worthy deeds are the focus of the text. Yet Ibn al-Qūṭīya had little time for the lists of campaigns and description of magnificent building programmes which are the stock-in-trade of other histories of the Umayyads. He illustrated the nobility of the emirs and caliphs with a series of lists of their appointment of judges and military commanders, and a number of anecdotes illustrating their justice and clemency, showing the importance of faithful courtiers for good government and of the ruler's generosity, and the influence and public role of scholars. Ibn al-Qūṭīya took the same line on the conquest as the *Akhbār al-Majmū'a*, disparaging Rodrigo as a usurper⁸²⁸ and Mūsa ibn Nusayr as a vulgar adventurer envying the success of Tariq. Ibn al-Qūṭīya managed to maintain his pro-Umayyad line even when recounting episodes in which his sympathies might have lain with rebels against the emirs, such as the revolt of the Arrabal in Cordoba, which included many of his fellow-scholars.⁸²⁹ He exonerated al-Hakam I for the severity with which he suppressed the revolt by the execution of many of the rebels and the destruction of the Arrabal, because of the

⁸²⁵ 'ajam.

⁸²⁶ Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-'arab*, pp.282 and 291, quoted by Duri, *The Historical formation*, p.106.

⁸²⁷ Duri, *The Historical Formation*, p.76, n.34.

⁸²⁸ Ibn al-Qūṭīya, *Historia*, p.2, trans. Ribera, p.2.

⁸²⁹ Ibn al-Qūṭīya, *Historia*, pp.52-56, trans. Ribera, pp.42-45.

piety of his later life.

Some of these tales appear extremely slight, and to read the *History* as a continuous narrative invites irritation with the apparently trivial nature of the author's concerns. The following episode is typical:

'One day an accident befell Hishām (God have mercy upon him) as he was returning from the funeral of Ta'labā ibn 'Ubayd to the dead man's home. A dog rushed him from a house which bordered the well-known cemetery of Quraish. It seized the lined cloak of Nerv cloth that he was wearing and ripped it. He said, "The governor of Cordoba is ordered to fine the owner of this house one dirham because he has let loose a dog in a place where Muslims may be harmed by it." But after he left the house of Ta'labā ibn 'Ubayd he commanded the cancellation of the fine saying, "We have surely distressed the owner of the house more than we are bothered by the tearing of the garment."⁸³⁰

The reader may be forgiven for feeling disappointed that this is how Ibn al-Qūṭīya, or his sources, chose to represent their rulers. This is not history as we think we know it from contemporary Latin chronicles. The *History*, however, invites comparison not with the chronicles, but with the hagiography of Christian saints. Just as the hagiographer illustrated the Christian life with the actions and miracles of his subject, so the author of the *History* is putting forward the Umayyads for emulation, showing how their worthy deeds kept the dynasty in power, and their realm at peace.⁸³¹ Power depended on just government, which meant, amongst other things, good relations with all one's subjects, even in such a small matter as a torn cloak. For the purposes of this study, this can be illustrated in relation to the emirs' Christian subjects and converts to Islam. In particular, Ibn al-Qūṭīya was making specific claims for his own ancestors, which have not been appreciated in previous accounts of the *History*. Chalmeta saw the anecdotes about Sara the Goth and the sons of Witiza as 'the strongest proof of the ignorance of Ibn al-Qūṭīya, and the most powerful demonstration of the extremes to which the fatuous desire to aggrandize his anodyne ancestors could drag him',⁸³² erasing from his mind everything he had ever known about the 'real' history of the Umayyads. The truth content of these stories is indeed negligible. Yet they illustrate different aspects of the process of coming to terms with the conquest. At the risk of becoming as anecdotal as the original, I will illustrate this point with a number of extracts from the *History*, where each reference to a Christian makes some point about the integration of the Christians of al-Andalus into its history and politics.

⁸³⁰ Ibn al-Qūṭīya, *Historia*, trans. Nichol, pp.91-92.

⁸³¹ Fierro, 'La obra histórica'.

⁸³² Chalmeta, *Invasión e islamización*, p. 141.

The first episode relates to the period of the conquest:

'the last king of the Goths of al-Andalus, Ghītīsha [Witiza] left on his death three sons: the eldest was called Alamundo, after him came Romulo, then Artubās. Because at the time of the death of their father they were minors, their mother remained in Toledo ruling the kingdom. Rodrigo, who was a general appointed by the former king, left the court, followed by the military men who were under his command, and established himself in Cordoba.

When Tariq ibn Ziyād entered Spain, in the time of the caliph al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik, Rodrigo wrote to the sons of the king, who were already handsome youths and able to manage a horse, inviting them to help him and unite with him against the common enemy. They gathered the frontier troops and marched out, camping in Secunda; they did not dare to enter Cordoba because they did not have complete confidence in Rodrigo: the latter had to leave the city to join up with them.

They set out immediately to meet Tariq, and when the two armies were on the point of joining battle, Alamundo and his brother agreed amongst themselves to betray Rodrigo. The very same night, they sent messengers to Tariq to inform him that Rodrigo was no more than one of their father's vilest vassals, and to ask him for his protection in order that they might cross to his camp on the following morning. They asked him to confirm and assure their possession of the inheritances or manors that their father had held in Spain. They were three thousand villas, which would later be known as 'the royal villas.'⁸³³ At dawn they crossed over to Tariq's camp with the troops which they had brought with them. This was the cause of the conquest.⁸³⁴

Rather than seeing the defection of the sons of Witiza as part of the 'ruin of Spain' set in motion by Rodrigo, Ibn al-QūTīya, as might be expected, portrayed their action as legitimate. The princes' new status was confirmed in writing, first by Tariq, then by Musa ibn Nusayr in North Africa and finally by the caliph himself, in terms which left neither their landholdings nor their royal status in doubt. That the ancestors of Ibn al-QūTīya had sworn allegiance to the invaders was the nearest equivalent available to a family indigenous to the peninsula of having a member of the family come over with the conquerors. Yet Ibn al-QūTīya was doing far more in this passage than claiming that his family had always been loyal to the regime. He is showing that this situation was acceptable to the heirs of the Visigoths because they did not lose all their land to the invaders.

This episode echoes the much more famous treaty of Tudmir which was drawn up between 'Abd

⁸³³ *safāyāt-al-mulūk*

⁸³⁴ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, pp.2-3, trans. Ribera, pp.1-2.

al-Azīz, the son of Musa ibn Nusayr and Theodimir, the lord of seven towns in south-east Spain. The earliest surviving copy of this treaty is an interpolation into the tenth-century manuscript of *The Chronicle of 754*.⁸³⁵ The text was also preserved in three Arabic works, including a fourteenth-century biographical dictionary.⁸³⁶ The *Chronicle of 754* passage says that Theodimir was a powerful warrior who finally decided to make peace with the invaders. Like the sons of Witiza, he went East to have his settlement with ‘Abd al-Azīz ratified by the caliph:

‘The *Amir Almuminin* found him to be more prudent than the rest, and treated him with honour. The pact which he had made with Abd al-Azīz a short time before was firmly renewed by him. So he returned to Spain rejoicing and remained secure from then on, so that in no way were these powerful bonds dissolved by succeeding Arab rulers.’

In the *Chronicle of 754*, the treaty is dated 5 April 713. There is, however, no firm evidence that it is genuine. The terms of the treaty, protecting the persons of those who submit peacefully, and allowing them freedom to practise their faith in return for the payment of taxes, are similar to those quoted in histories of the conquest of other Islamic lands, such as the *Futūh al-Buldān* of al-Balādhuri (d.892).⁸³⁷ It is not clear whether such descriptions reflect uniformity in the terms of treaties being imposed throughout the Islamic lands from early in the conquest, or a later feeling that such terms ought to have been imposed. The Muslim historians may have been making retrospective claims for the civilised manner in which the conquests had been carried out by invoking conditions for surrender said to have been laid down by ‘Umar II (717-720). Ibn al-Qūṭīya’s story of the preservation by the sons of Witiza of the Visigothic royal estates is so similar to that of Theodimir that he may either have known the story or have seen a version of the treaty. There may be a historical basis for Theodimir, but the treaty shows both Christian and Muslim writers explaining the founding of a state shared between peoples of different origins and faiths, a function which the charter given to the sons of Witiza fulfils in the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus*. Perhaps the reality of the surrender of royal power to the invaders was less willing than it appears in the *History*.

Ibn al-Qūṭīya mentioned another Visigothic family which weathered the conquest by prompt alliance with the Muslim governors. These were the descendants of the count Cassius, known as the Banu Qasi, who were mentioned many times in both the Arabic and northern Christian sources.⁸³⁸ According to Ibn al-Qūṭīya, Qasi/Cassius joined forces with Mūṣā ibn Nusayr and

⁸³⁵ *Chronicle of 754*, CSM I, p.37; trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, pp.149-50; Lopez, *Estudio Crítico*, pp.40-3, see chapter 2.

⁸³⁶ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, pp.39-40.

⁸³⁷ Al-Balādhuri, *Futūh al-Buldān*, ed. Goeje M.D. de, (Leiden, 1866), trans. Hitti P. and Murgotten F., *The Origins of the Islamic State*, 2 vols., (New York, 1916-24), I, pp.187, 223, 246-7, 249, 271-5, and 338-40.

⁸³⁸ Cañada Juste A. ‘Los Banu Qasi (714-924)’, *Príncipe de Viana*, (1980), XLI, 9-96.

Tariq ibn Ziyād, perhaps in 713 or 714, went to Damascus, and converted to Islam.⁸³⁹ Ibn Hazm listed his sons as Fortun, Abu Tawr, Abu Salama, Yunus and Yahya,⁸⁴⁰ and Cañada Juste traced their descent through Fortun and Musa ibn Fortun to Musa ibn Musa, the ruler of Zaragoza from 852, and so powerful in the north that he was called 'the third king of Spain'.⁸⁴¹ Their origins, as recounted by Ibn al-Qūṭīya, may be a product of 'the spurious antiquarianism of the later Umayyad period', as Collins put it,⁸⁴² rather than reliable genealogy, but, like the deeds of the sons of Witiza, they fulfil a need for stories which bridged the conquest.

The second episode to be studied in detail is a story about Artubas, the third son of Witiza, and relates to the period of the establishment of 'Abd al-RaHman I in Spain, which marked a new stage in the conquest and a second turning point in the history of Ibn al-Qūṭīya's family. The evidence for Artubās outside the *History* is very slight, although he could be the Ardo (713-720) who succeeded Achila III as the last Visigothic ruler of Septimania.⁸⁴³ According to Ibn al-Qūṭīya, Artubās lived in Cordoba, and held lands in the centre of the peninsula which 'Abd al-RaHmān coveted:

'Among the stories of Artubas, [it is said that] 'Abd al-RaHmān ibn Mu'āwiya ordered that his landholding be confiscated and the cause of this was that this monarch looked over Artubās' manor one day while he was out on an expedition, in which this man [p.37] was accompanying him, and round about the same he saw not a few of the gifts which the vassals would usually have offered to him during the halts which he made in the villages of his domains. This made him jealous. They were, therefore, confiscated and Artubās had to go and live with his nephews, ending up in penury.[trans p.29] He then made his way to Cordoba, visited the chancellor Ibn Boyt and said to him: 'Do me the favour of asking the Emir, God protect him, permission to see him, because I have come to say goodbye.' The chancellor went to 'Abd al-RaHmān and he ordered Artubās to come before him. On his entry he saw that he was dressed in rags. He asked: 'Hello, Artūbas! What brings you here?' To which he answered: 'You do, who has come between me and my possessions, defaulting on the treaties which your ancestors made with me, without any fault on my part which might authorize it.' 'Abd al-RaHmān continued: 'What's all this about wanting to say goodbye to me? You're surely not going to Rome?' Artubās answered: 'Quite the opposite, man! I heard that you were going to Syria!' 'Abd al-RaHmān replied: 'And who will allow me to return there, seeing that I had to leave to escape being murdered?' Then Artubās asked him: 'Have you the

⁸³⁹ Ibn al-Qūṭīya, *Historia*, trans. Ribera p.50.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibn Hazm, *Yamharat ansab al'Arab*, p.467, trans. Granja, 'La Marca Superior', p.532.

⁸⁴¹ Granja, 'La Marca Superior', pp.470-1; Viguera, *Aragón Musulmana*, p.68.

⁸⁴² Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, p.204.

⁸⁴³ *Ripoll MS Parisinus 466*, cited by Barbero and Vigil, *La Formación del Feudalismo*, p.214.

intention of consolidating your hold on this land so that your son can inherit, or do you want to deprive him of what has been given to you? 'Abd al-RaHmān replied: 'O, no, by God! not only do I want to strengthen my dominion, but also that my son should inherit.' Then Artubās told him: 'Then see how this matter can be arranged.' Then he denounced roundly, without beating about the bush, all the matters which offended the country and 'Abd al-RaHmān was so grateful that he ordered that twenty of Artubās' villas should be returned to him, he lavished on him splendid vestments and gifts and gave him the office of Count, the first to occupy this dignity in al-Andalus'.⁸⁴⁴

The story goes on to underline the equation between landholding and justice. Artubas is described as sharing some of his lands with incoming Muslims for no better reason than his respect for them. It is not clear what relationship these events had to actual landholdings in either the eighth or the tenth centuries. There is no evidence that Ibn al-QūTīya or other clients of the Umayyads claiming descent from the Visigothic royal house still held any of the royal estates, nor that they were in a position to make any claim on them. Indeed, Ibn al-QūTīya, had said earlier in the *History* that the conquerors were settled throughout Spain on lands belonging to the 'people of the book', seized by force or obtained by treaty. Perhaps they were sustained in their present impoverishment by the fiction that, like Artubas, Witiza's descendants had proudly handed over their patrimony. Ibn al-QūTīya was, however, talking up the status of his family in the tenth century by evoking treaties which his ancestors had made with the conquerors.

The further progress of good families of Christian origin may have been in Ibn al-QūTīya's mind in recounting the following anecdote.⁸⁴⁵ When 'Abd al-RaHmān II died, his son Muhammad kept on his father's ministers and servants, including his secretary Abdullah ibn Umayya. As the secretary was ill, his duties were performed temporarily by a Christian, Gomez ibn Antonian. When Abdullah died, Muhammad declared that 'if only Gomez were a Muslim he would not wish to change him for anyone. Hearing this [Gomez] testified in public that he was a Muslim, and he was appointed secretary. Gomez discharged his duties with eloquence and a lively intelligence.' Nevertheless, he made enemies, one of whom wrote to Muhammad:

'It would be one of the strangest and most amazing things, should the 'Abbasid caliphs of the East get to hear of it, that the Umayyads of the West need, in order to fill their highest secretarial post and for excellence in the writing of royal letters, to name an individual like Gomez the Christian, son of Antoniān, son of Juliana, who was also a Christian. Oh, my lord! Why do you not choose better people, who would honour the post not just in the person of the man who occupies it, but also through his illustrious

⁸⁴⁴ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, pp.37-8, trans. Ribera, pp.28-9.

⁸⁴⁵ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, pp. 82-85, trans. Ribera, pp.67-70.

descent....'

The writer named himself as one of these worthies together with several others; one of them was eventually appointed, but not until he had completed several tests, including the writing of a specimen letter, which he passed round several friends before submitting the best version. Ibn al-QūTīya did not say that Gomez was dismissed, nor that Muhammad had been wrong in his judgement to appoint him. His inclusion of such Christians in the *History*, however, is not an example of *shū'ubīya*, a movement, widespread throughout the Islamic lands, to denigrate Arabic culture and history and glorify the past of the subject peoples.⁸⁴⁶ Ibn al-QūTīya was not challenging the status quo. Ribera's interpretation of Ibn al-QūTīya - 'in the core of his being moves and sparkles the Spanish spirit and the exaggerated sense of honour of his Gothic nobility'⁸⁴⁷ - is perfectly in tune with nineteenth-century Spanish concerns with the loss of empire, but far from the spirit of the *History*. Ibn al-QūTīya treated Gomez' expedient conversion to Islam as a matter of course. No doubt many Christians took this route to preferment at court. He seems merely to be ridiculing the opposition of Muslims of longer standing to the integration of the native population into the Umayyad regime.

Yet, as we have seen in the case of Recemund, one did not need to convert to Islam in order to prosper. As a Muslim, Ibn al-QūTīya might not have wanted to spell this out and, indeed, it might have been dangerous for him to have done so. Yet among the Christians worthy of being cited in the *History of the Conquest* was HafS ibn Albar,⁸⁴⁸ whom Ibn al-QūTīya claimed as a descendant of the third son of Witiza: 'Romulo held a thousand villas in the east of Spain, having chosen Toledo as his place of residence. Amongst his descendants are HafS ibn Albar, judge of the Christians.'⁸⁴⁹ HafS, who was known by the nickname 'the Goth', could be the son of Alvarus of Cordoba.⁸⁵⁰ In his last letter to Eleazar, Alvarus boasted of his Visigothic ancestry, although he is not known to claim descent from Witiza, and seems to be making a general claim about the inhabitants of Spain rather than his own lineage.⁸⁵¹ Ibn al-QūTīya did not say why HafS was mentioned in the *History*. As we have seen, he is remembered today for his verse translation into Arabic of the Psalms.⁸⁵² HafS seems to have been both a pious Christian and an 'arabizer'. It is not clear how far Ibn al-QūTīya endorsed this position, but by mentioning HafS as a famous scion of the Visigoths from whom he himself claimed descent, he may have

⁸⁴⁶ Duri A.A., *The Historical Formation*, pp. 102-104

⁸⁴⁷ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, p.xxii

⁸⁴⁸ see chapter 7.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, p.5, trans. Ribera, p.3.

⁸⁵⁰ Dunlop, 'Hafs ibn Albar'; *ibid.*, 'Sobre Hafs ibn Albar'; Koningsveld 'La literatura cristiano-arabe', p.697.

⁸⁵¹ Alvarus, *Epistola*, XX, CSM, I, pp.269-70.

⁸⁵² Urvoy, *Le Psaultier*; *ibid.* 'Influence islamique'.

been putting HafS forward as another example of Christian integration in Islamic society.

Sara the Goth

What was the role of Sara the Goth in the establishment of 'convivencia' between Christians and Muslims? Ibn al-QūTīya told how, when Alamund died, leaving a daughter Sara and two young sons, her uncle Artubās seized their inheritance.⁸⁵³ Sara ordered that a boat should be built:

'Then Sara the Goth sailed with her brothers towards Syria, disembarked in Ascalon and continued on her journey until she stopped in front of the gate of Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik. She informed him of her arrival and of al-Walīd's pledge to her father, presenting her complaints against the injustices committed by her uncle Artubās'.

Sara's journey to the East, however, may also be a literary device to get Sara to meet the caliph, because this meeting had two further consequences. The first was Sara's meeting with ʿAbd al-RaHmān, the future ruler of Spain, who 'would often recall this in Spain, when Sara went to Cordoba and was allowed to meet the monarch's family'. The second consequence was that 'The caliph Hishām married her to Isa ibn Mozāhim, who went to Spain with her and regained possession of her villas. This Isa was the forefather of the Banū al-QūTīya. From this marriage she had two sons, Ibrahīm and Ishāk.' Conveniently for Sara, or for the story that Ibn al-QūTīya was retelling:

'In the same year that ʿAbd al-RaHmān ibn Muʿāwiya [ʿAbd al-RaHmān I] came to Spain, she was widowed and Haya ibn Molamis al-Madhijī and ʿUmayr ibn Saʿīd competed for her hand, but Talaba ibn Ubayd al-Khodamī interceded for ʿUmayr ibn Saʿīd with ʿAbd al-RaHmān ibn Muʿāwiya and he gave her to him in matrimony. From this union were born Habīb ibn Umayr, forefather of the Banū Sīd, the Banū Hajjaj, the Banū Muslima and the Banū al-Jirz, illustrious lineages, whose nobility the other sons of Umayr, born in Seville of other women, could not achieve...'

The scenario is hardly plausible, since according to Ibn al-QūTīya's own chronology, more than thirty years could have elapsed between Sara's first marriage and her second. Yet here again, as in the anecdotes about the confirmation of the sons of Witiza in their landholdings, by recalling Sara's two marriages, Ibn al-QūTīya linked his family with the 'two rows of the vanguard' of the conquerors of Spain.

⁸⁵³ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, pp.4-6, trans. Ribera, pp.3-4.

Few women are mentioned in the Arabic histories, and the prominent role which Ibn al-QūTīya gives to Sara must have particular significance. Women appear in the foundation myths of many cultures, usually relating to the identification between a group and a territory and the allocation of land. Such women often have magical powers, which they deploy to perpetuate the ruling dynasty.⁸⁵⁴ One other Gothic woman appears in the *History* - the wife of ʿAbd al-Azīz, son of the conqueror Mūsa.⁸⁵⁵ Yet this marriage to Umm ʿAsim had catastrophic consequences for ʿAbd al-Azīz. Ibn al-QūTīya echoed the story found both in the Arabic tradition and in the *Chronicle of 754*, that ʿAbd al-Azīz married the widow of Rodrigo (called Egilona in the *Chronicle*), who incited him to usurp the throne of Spain.⁸⁵⁶ All three accounts say that ʿAbd al-Azīz was assassinated. Sara the Goth had no such aspirations, and no magical powers; her significance lies in her two sets of descendants. Note the biblical resonance of the names Sara, ʿIsa i.e. Jesus, Ibrahīm and Ishāk/Isaac. Though they are not used in strict correspondence with the Book of Genesis, they evoke the patriarch Abraham, whom both the Christians and Muslims revered, and the significance of Abraham's descendants as the forerunners of all the nations. It seems that Ibn al-QūTīya is not talking here about actual marriages, but that the descendants of Sara the Goth symbolize the development of post-conquest society, tying the Visigothic past to the structure of al-Andalus in the tenth century. The unusual *laqab* Ibn al-QūTīya applied only to descendants of Sara and her first husband ʿIsa ibn MuzāHim. He may not have been of Arab origin, since he is mentioned without a *nisba* giving the names of his grandfather, and the name ʿIsa could be Christian. Sara's brothers both remained Christian; one was the metropolitan of Seville, the other a bishop called Oppa who defected to the Christian north. Ibn al-QūTīya, the *Chronicle of 754* and the *Chronicle of Alfonso* tell related but incompatible stories about Oppa; in the Christian sources Oppa was described variously as either the brother or the son of Witiza, and as bishop of Seville or Toledo.⁸⁵⁷ If Sara's first husband had been a Muslim, by Islamic law all the descendants of this marriage would have been Muslim, whether or not Sara herself converted. The fact that they continued to be known as the Banū al-QūTīya may imply that this family remained Christian for some considerable time after the conquest. Perhaps one of their descendants converted in circumstances similar to those of Gomez ibn Antoniān. By the time that Ibn al-QūTīya was writing, however, they were good Muslims. This may be the reason Ibn al-QūTīya remembered his family as also being related, although less directly, to a second lineage of the descendants of Sara the Goth, the offspring of a second marriage who were Muslims from the outset because Sara's second husband was Muslim. Ibn al-QūTīya seems to be implying that although his family had not always been Muslim, they had long had good Muslim connections.

⁸⁵⁴ e.g. Wanda, the daughter of Krak, the legendary founder of Cracow, overcame a tyrant making an unsuccessful bid for her hand and landholdings: Slupecki L.P, *Slavonic Pagan Sanctuaries*, (Warsaw, 1994), pp.186-195.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibn al-QūTīya, *Historia*, p.11, trans. Ribera, p.8.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ajbar Machmua*, pp.31-2; *Chronicle of 754*, 15, CSM, I, p.78, trans. Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, p.135.

⁸⁵⁷ Collins, *The Arab Conquest*, p.33.

It should be pointed out in parenthesis, that the version in the *History* is not the only version of Ibn al-QūTīya's ancestry. Ibn Khallikan adds to his biographical entry on Ibn al-QūTīya, the following comment: 'Al-QūTīya ... is the adjective denoting descent from Qūt ibn Ham ibn Nuh (Peace be upon him).⁸⁵⁸ The grandfather of Abu Bakr traced his origins back to him'.⁸⁵⁹ The account of Sara's defence of her inheritance is similar to that found in the *History*. Ibn Khallikan, however, mentions only one marriage. His narrative continues:

'her life lasted into the reign of Emir ʿAbd al-RaHmān bin Muʿāwiya ibn Hishām bin ʿAbd al-Malik, the immigrant into al-Andalus from the family of the Umayyads. When she would enter into his presence he would satisfy her needs. Her name prevailed in her descendants and they are known by it to this day. That is related in the book *Al-iHtīfal fī aʿlām al-rijāl* [*Celebrations of Remarkable Men*], selected and composed of information on the later jurists and savants of Cordoba imparted by the jurist Abū ʿumar AHmad ibn Muhammad ibn ʿAfīf at-Taʿrīkhī [the historian];⁸⁶⁰ that material was explained and written down by the jurist Abū Bakr al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Muffarig ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muffarig al-Maʿāfirī the Cordovan known as al-Qubbashī, who carried at-Taʿrīkhī's teachings in his memory.'

Ibn Khallikan, therefore, has not only a different account of Ibn al-QūTīya's ancestry, but cites a completely different source. It may be thought that, as the author was active much later than Ibn al-QūTīya, his account is more likely than the *History* to be garbled, but since the dates of neither are known this is no more than a supposition. The passage illustrates the continuing interest in genealogy, but also the unreliability of its transmission.

In the version of Ibn al-QūTīya's past given by the *History*, the two lines of descendants of Sara the Goth stand for the ethnic complexity of tenth-century Cordoba. Although the Muslims of Spain were probably more Spaniards than Arabs, they were in no sense proto-nationalists.⁸⁶¹ Apart from Ibn al-QūTīya, writers on the Banu Hajjāj [one of the lines of descent from Sara's second marriage]⁸⁶² did not mention any Visigothic origins of their subjects; either they did not know about it or they paid the subject no attention because they did not feel that their Muslim

⁸⁵⁸ Noah; confusion seems to have arisen from the similarity between al-QūT [the Goth] and Gush, one of the grandsons of Noah.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibn Kallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, III, no.447, trans. Nichols pp.xxii-xxiii.

⁸⁶⁰ died after 1039/430 - Ibn Bashkuwāl, *Kitāb al-sila*, no.311, cited by Nichols.

⁸⁶¹ Guichard, *Al-Andalus*, pp.187-8: 'in spite of their Spanish racial heritage, the descendants of such unions considered themselves as pure Arabs, which must have continued to have important consequences for their mentality and way of behaving.'

⁸⁶² Ibn Hayyān, *Al-Muqtabis de Ibn Hayyān (Muqtabis III)*, ed. Antuña M.M., (Paris, 1937), p.67; Ibn al-FaraDī, quoted in same edition of *Al-Muqtabis*, p.131, al-ʿUdrī, pp.103-4 and Ibn Hazm, *Jamhara*, pp.398-9, cited by Guichard, *Al-Andalus*, p.76.

credentials were in question. Ibn al-Qūṭīya, however, had not finished with this subject. Fierro has pointed out the significance of another passage from the *History*. Al-Sumayl ibn Hātim expressed surprise that Qu'rān III, 134 reads that Muhammad's revelation was handed down to 'the people' (*an-nās*), rather than 'the Arabs'. 'By God! I can see that we will be associated with slaves and the lowest of the low.'⁸⁶³ 'This anecdote relating to a protagonist with a negative image in the *History* can be interpreted as a criticism of the association religion/ethnicity...'⁸⁶⁴ It is not so obvious that, as Fierro suggests, the distinction had lost all its significance. For Ibn al-Qūṭīya, both his Christian past and his status as a *māwla* were live issues.⁸⁶⁵ The two marriages of Sara represent the ambiguous position which Christian converts, the clients of Muslim rulers, occupied.

The *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* may be no more than a collection of stories from different sources, both oral and written, collected at an unknown date, and attributed to Ibn al-Qūṭīya because the compiler of the stories had read in the biographical dictionaries that Ibn al-Qūṭīya was interested in such matters. Yet its message does fit with an interest in history and genealogy in tenth-century al-Andalus. As in the best family sagas, advantageous marriages, treaties and involvement in important historical events ensured the family of Ibn al-Qūṭīya their place in history. But the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* is more interesting than this. The two lines of descendants of Sara the Goth symbolise the history of al-Andalus after 711. The stories of Ibn al-Qūṭīya showed that there was a close and long-standing kinship between those who had come to Spain with the conquerors, and the Spaniards who had made peace with them, and explained to the Christian converts to Islam how they had reached their present position, and what role their ancestors had played in the Islamic conquest.

⁸⁶³ Ibn al-Qūṭīya, *Historia*, pp.40-41, trans. Ribera, pp.31-32.

⁸⁶⁴ Fierro, 'La obra histórica', p.511.

⁸⁶⁵ Barkai, *Cristianos y musulmanes*, pp.62, and 65-67.

9. Conclusion

It is appropriate that Ibn al-Qūṭīya, with his story of a Christian family's integration into Islamic society should have the last word - not because the Banu Qūṭīya converted to Islam, but because they preserved the memory of their Visigothic past, however garbled this became in its retelling. Such continuity with pre-conquest Spain links the literary sources for the Christians of al-Andalus.

Some of the texts we have been considering are clearly unrepresentative of Andalusian Christian society as a whole. Eulogius talked up the martyrs of the 850s and employed anti-Muslim polemic whilst the church hierarchy was comfortable with life under Muslim rule to the extent of being able to hold ecclesiastical councils in Cordoba.⁸⁶⁶ For all his modern fame, Eulogius may have been insignificant in his own lifetime. As we have seen, Eulogius and Alvarus may not have expected their contemporaries to read their works. Christian texts in general survive in such small numbers that it is legitimate to wonder if they were read only by a tiny section of the Christian community. Further, the surviving manuscripts are later copies; the connections between the *'Urūsūs* and the *History of the Conquest of al-Andalus* and the tenth-century texts on which they may have been based are particularly tenuous. The isolation in which some of these works were transmitted is quite clear. Although the eighth-century chronicles were copied in northern Spain, the Asturian chroniclers of the ninth century had not read them. One of the earliest manuscripts of the *Chronicle of Albelda* said that the Gothic kingdom had been 'exterminated' by the Islamic conquest,⁸⁶⁷ which may not be the message that the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* was trying to convey. Even if it were possible to establish the original versions of these texts, and to read them in chronological order, they cannot be seen as a concerted literary response to the Islamic conquest.

Yet, with the exception of the work of Ibn al-Qūṭīya, the sources we have been considering demonstrate remarkable continuity across three centuries. The chronicles of the eighth century show providential history being written in a way which would have been familiar to Isidore a century earlier. The same sort of history continued to be read in the tenth century and beyond, in the work of Orosius, even though by this date Christians probably found it easier to understand in Arabic translation. The adaptation of the Roman martyr acts by Eulogius and by the authors of the *Passio sancti Pelagii* and the *Passio Argenteae* show that there was still an audience for hagiography in the old style adapted to a contemporary message.

⁸⁶⁶ *Concilium Cordubense*, ed. Gil, *CSM* I, pp.135-142.

⁸⁶⁷ Emilianense 39, cited in Linehan, *History and the Historians*, p.89; Martin, G., 'La chute du royaume visigothique d'Espagne dans l'historiographie chrétienne des VII^e et IX^e siècles', *Cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale*, (1984), IX, 207-233.

Although written for a Christian audience, most of these texts show some awareness of the language and literary forms of the conquerors as they were gradually being introduced from the East. The eighth-century chronicles, written at a time when there was almost certainly little Arabic scholarship in Spain, retold news from the East to a much greater extent than in previous Spanish chronicles and the compiler of the *Chronicle of 741* used this material to underline the parallels between Islamic defeats in the East and in Spain. Later, when Arabic became the dominant literary language in the peninsula, Christian texts were translated, and these translations were Islamicized in form and vocabulary, as we have seen. Greenblatt cited this type of 'reproduction of mimetic capital' as evidence of assimilation.⁸⁶⁸ Yet this acculturation was very superficial, since the texts translated were all sacred or ecclesiastical. Even the Latin version of the *Calendar of Cordoba*, probably adapted from an Arabic model compiled by a Muslim, could still have functioned primarily as a liturgical calendar. Furthermore, at the period when these translations were being made, Recemund was received as a Christian scholar in Gorze and Frankfurt, and a Latin history was dedicated to him. Rather than making the facile connection between the use of Arabic and conversion to Islam, one should perhaps bear in mind the numbers of Arabic-speaking Christian communities who have survived in the Middle East to the twentieth century, and conversely, that countries such as Iran and Pakistan have adopted Islam without its language. Alvarus excepted, the Christians of al-Andalus may have experienced few qualms during the transition to Arabic as their principal literary medium. Change of language and form did not affect the context in which sacred texts and Christian histories were used and understood.

It is not possible from this small selection of texts to rule on the extent of conversion or assimilation, since these texts do not address the question directly. This may be because the new regime was accepted, but it may have been imposed by the literary forms themselves. Clearly, it would have been impossible to continue writing about the 'ruin of Spain' in the terms used by the compiler of the *Chronicle of 754*. It is possible that the continued popularity of Orosius meant that there was an audience for providential history, but no means of bringing the story up to date. Such history was not an objective account of the past but an incitement to overcome the sins of the people in order to bring about their temporal as well as their spiritual salvation, and the expulsion of the Arabs was obviously not on the horizon in the early Islamic period.⁸⁶⁹ Two centuries later, the *Passio sancti Pelagii* and the *Passio Argenteae* do seem to contain coded anti-Muslim, or at least, anti-Cordoban messages, but their intended audience may have been very local, as we have seen. Thus, it is not possible identify in any one of these sources 'the Christian response to Islam' in Spain.

The meeting between Christendom and Islam in Spain has been viewed from a number of partisan

⁸⁶⁸ Greenblatt S., *Marvellous Possessions: the wonder of the New World*, (Oxford, 1991), p.6.

⁸⁶⁹ Although the compiler of the *Prophetic Chronicle*, written in northern Spain, produced such a text: Bonnaz, *Chroniques Asturiennes*, pp.1-9.

perspectives. Early medieval historiography in the peninsula is skewed towards the confrontation between Cordoba and the Asturian kingdoms. The propagandists for the Asturian kings and for the emirs and caliphs of Cordoba did their work well, and their interpretations of history dominate the evidence. The descriptions of Cordoba in the Arabic histories of Spain are later, largely legendary accounts. The sources for the kingdom of the Asturias are earlier, although their theme of Visigothic survival did not develop for at least two centuries after the conquest. Asturian propaganda generated the rhetoric of Reconquest. This in turn allowed historians such as Simonet to tell a Catholic, nationalist story of the Christians under Muslim rule. The gulf between Christendom and Islam, however loosely defined, is still very much with us. Thus the debate continues to focus on the oppositional pairs, such as conversion or resistance and continuity or change, beloved of historians. Debates about the nature of colonialism are particularly susceptible to these generalisations, seeking the 'fatal impact' of the colonisers. Historians of the Islamic period in Spain must be particularly careful to avoid such prejudice, whether in favour of or against Islamicization, and to say no more than the sources permit about the process of conquest in any given time and place.⁸⁷⁰ The evidence we have been considering, by its very nature, comes down on the side of continuity, the survival of Christian learning in an Islamic context. Yet to take this material in isolation, without also examining alternative evidence presented in the Arabic narratives, the Asturian chronicles and charters, the archaeology and other sources for early medieval Spain is also to fall into the trap set by these oppositions.

Although there is evidence of conflict between Christian and Muslim in the martyr stories, such conflict may be of little relevance to the Christians of early Islamic Spain as a whole. No doubt an individual Christian was clear about his religious and cultural identity, but may not have let it assume overriding importance in dictating his life choices. Indeed, even the Christian sources, as unrepresentative as they may be, show Christians taking a number of different options. In the ninth century, one could be a martyr, or a churchman loyal to the Islamic regime. In the tenth, one might choose to become a quiet member of a monastic community in the Islamic capital, as Argentea was said to have been. One might be, like Recemund, a functionary in Islamic government and a member of caliphal delegations to northern Europe and Byzantium. Such a position did not prevent Recemund from also being a Latin scholar, and his service to the caliph was rewarded with a bishopric. One might decide to emigrate to the North, perhaps to take up opportunities offered by the expansion of monasticism. Or, like the secretary Gomez ibn Antoniān whose story was told by Ibn al-QūTiya, one might decide that, after all, conversion to Islam was the most expedient path. This diversity should be seen as a mark of the interest of the period. If all these options were possible at the same period, it is very difficult to construct a narrative of Christian conversion or survival. There may have been no concerted Christian resistance movement in Cordoba, but neither was the Visigothic inheritance destroyed. Hence, perhaps, the

⁸⁷⁰ Thomas N., *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government*, (Oxford, 1994), pp.ix, 3 and 15.

apparently seamless nature of the Reconquest and its narratives.

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