Bridging the Strait:
The Shared History of Iberia and North Africa in Medieval Muslim and Christian Chronicles

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Dedication

To my parents, for everything

Abstract

This dissertation examines Arabic, Latin, and Ibero-Romance historical chronicles written by Muslims and Christians from the eighth through the fourteenth centuries to investigate connections between Iberia and North Africa on two levels. The first is the historical, considering the extent to which Muslim and Christian chroniclers across the Strait depicted their histories as related, writing about the same people and events. The second is the historiographical, exploring the extent to which chroniclers borrowed from one another directly, and wrote within a common cultural and intellectual framework. I argue that chroniclers on opposite shores of the Strait saw their histories as intrinsically connected, but did not always view all the individuals and populations in the region as participants in a larger community. Perceived differences were frequently rooted in religious identities, but also in ethnic and geopolitical ones. Despite these differences, I present evidence that chroniclers drew upon and elaborated a co-produced and mutually colonizing historical framework, employing similar narrative strategies and invoking a common past in an effort to resolve the ideological problem of competing North African and Iberian claims to power over the same territory. Individual chapters detail how historians across the Strait employed ethnonyms for one another that undermined claims to regional belonging, constructed a shared cultural archive of legendary, apocalyptic, and gendered elements to stake territorial claims, and invoked a rhetoric of emptying and elimination that I read through a settler colonial lens.

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Title	Author	Date	Place of composition (*indicates origin of author)	Language
1. *Chronicle of 754*	Anonymous	ca. 754	Al-Andalus	Latin
2. *Chronicle of Albelda*	Anonymous	881	Asturias	Latin
3. *Prophetic Chronicle*	Anonymous	883	Asturias	Latin
4. *Chronicle of Alfonso III*	Anonymous	ca. 883	Asturias	Latin
5. *Historia Silense*	Anonymous	ca. 1109-1118	León	Latin
6. *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*	Anonymous	First half of 12th c.	Unknown	Latin
7. *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*	Anonymous	ca. 1147	León	Latin
8. *Chronicle of Nájera*	Anonymous	Second half of 12th c.	Nájera	Latin
9. *Liber Regum*	Anonymous	ca. 1194-1211	Navarre	Navarro-Aragonese Romance
10. *Chronicon mundi*	Lucas of Tuy	ca.1236-1239	León	Latin
11. *Latin Chronicle of the Rulers of Castile*	Juan de Soria	ca. 1223-1239	Castile-León	Latin
12. *Historia Gothica*	Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada	ca. 1243-1247	Toledo	Latin
13. *Book of Deeds*	James I of Aragón	ca. 1271-1276	Aragón	Catalán
14. *Estoria de España*	Alfonso X of Castile-León	Second half of 13th c.	Castile-León	Castilian
15. *Kitāb al-ta'rīkh*	Ibn Ḥabīb	First half of 9th c.	Al-Andalus	Arabic
16. *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*	Ibn al-Qūṭiyya	ca. 927-977	Al-Andalus	Arabic
17. *Akhbār majmū'a*	Anonymous	Finished after 961	Al-Andalus	Arabic
18. *Muqtabis fī ta'rīkh al-Andalus*	Ibn Ḥayyān	Before 1076	Al-Andalus	Arabic

19. *Tibyān*	‘Abd Allāh ibn Buluqqīn	ca. 1094-1095	Al-Andalus*	Arabic
20. *Fatḥ al-Andalus*	Anonymous	12th c. or later	Al-Andalus or North Africa	Arabic
21. *Mann bi-l-imāma*	Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt	End of the 12th c.	Al-Andalus	Arabic
22. *Ḥulal al-mawshiyya*	Anonymous	1382	Al-Andalus	Arabic
23. *Futūḥ Miṣr*	Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam	Before 871	Egypt	Arabic
24. “Memoirs”	Al-Baydhaq	Second half of 12th c.	North Africa	Arabic
25. *Kitāb al-iktifā’ fī akhbār al-khulafā’*	Ibn Kardabūs	After 1195	North Africa	Arabic
26. *Kitāb al-mu‘jib*	‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī	ca. 1224	North Africa*	Arabic
27. *Naẓm al-jumān*	Ibn al-Qaṭṭān	ca. 1250	North Africa	Arabic
28. *Bayān al-mughrib*	Ibn ‘Idhārī al-Marrākushī	After 1312	North Africa	Arabic
29. *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*	Ibn Abī Zar‘	First half of 14th c.	North Africa	Arabic
30. *Kitāb al-‘ibar*	Ibn Khaldūn	Late 14th/early 15th c.	North Africa	Arabic

Introduction

Mediterranean studies has flourished in recent decades, offering scholars a transregional framework that includes Europe without automatically centering it. The field has tended to highlight Europe's internal diversity while also exploring its multiple and dynamic relationships with the Middle East and North Africa, understanding the histories of these places as deeply intertwined rather than largely isolated from one another.[1] In scholarship specifically focused on the Middle Ages, the dynamics of interfaith relations and cross-cultural contact remain a significant focus. Iberia in particular has been at the heart of much of this discussion because of its long history of Muslim and Christian rule, its connections to the Middle East and North Africa, and its substantial population of Muslims, Christians, and Jews. North Africa's place in the medieval Mediterranean, on the other hand, is still too often marginalized in the scholarship, partially because its population was more religiously homogeneous than Iberia's and has remained primarily Muslim to this day.[2] Though persistent cultural, economic, and political ties between Iberia and North Africa are acknowledged, they are discussed most frequently in terms of relations between Muslims, obscuring contact and exchange between, for example, North African Muslims and Iberian Christians. While

[1] Mediterranean studies is not, of course, limited to the Middle Ages. Classics in the field which cover the Mediterranean region as a whole include Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2 vols. (London: Collins, 1972); Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000); Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300-900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); David Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); and, more recently, Christophe Picard, *Sea of the Caliphs: The Mediterranean in the Medieval Islamic World*, trans. Nicholas Elliott (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2018).
[2] Ramzi Rouighi, "A Mediterranean of Relations for the Medieval Maghrib: Historiography in Question," *Al-Masāq* 29, no. 3 (2017): 201–20.

this dissertation is broadly situated in the tradition of Mediterranean studies, therefore, it focuses on connectivity across a smaller body of water—the Strait of Gibraltar—considering the extent to which Muslims and Christians on its shores viewed their history as a shared one.[3]

A brief overview of the political history of Iberia will suffice to demonstrate its close and dynamic relationship to North Africa throughout the Middle Ages. Starting in 711, large swathes of the peninsula, previously under the control of the Christian Visigothic monarchy, were conquered and settled by Muslims from the Middle East and North Africa, establishing the polity that came to be known as al-Andalus.[4] A series of Muslim governors initially ruled in the name of the Umayyad caliphate in Damascus, while the fledgling Christian kingdom of Asturias emerged in northern Iberia. In 756, following a period of upheaval that felled the Syrian Umayyads and led to the establishment of the ʻAbbasid caliphate in Iraq, the Umayyad ʻAbd al-Raḥmān I fled the Middle East and took power in al-Andalus as an emir. In 929, his descendant ʻAbd al-Raḥmān III declared himself caliph, intervening in North African affairs in an effort to challenge the Fatimid caliphate that had emerged there two decades earlier.[5] Around the

[3] Though this project would doubtless benefit from the inclusion of Iberian and North African Jewish perspectives on the region's history, the ability to read Hebrew sources remains outside my skillset and therefore the scope of this dissertation.
[4] For a general overview of Andalusi and Maghribi political history, see Hugh Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of al-Andalus* (New York: Longman, 1996); Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
[5] Eduardo Manzano Moreno, *Conquistadores, emires y califas: los Omeyas y la formación de Al-Andalus* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2006); Janina M. Safran, *The Second Umayyad Caliphate: The Articulation of Caliphal Legitimacy in al-Andalus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Maribel Fierro, *ʻAbd al-Rahman III: The First Cordoban Caliph* Makers of the Muslim World (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005).

same time, the Asturian monarchy moved its capital from Oviedo to León, the city by which its kingdom became known.

The Andalusi Umayyad caliphate lasted until 1031, when it finally fragmented into multiple *ṭā'ifa* (party) states after several decades of severe *fitna* (religious and civil strife) in which North Africans played a substantial role.[6] Not long after, the Christian kingdoms of Castile and Portugal and the Crown of Aragón came into being, and the North African Almoravid emirate conquered significant portions of al-Andalus, challenging local Muslim and Christian leaders alike.[7] In the mid-twelfth century this process was repeated with the Almohad caliphate which, like the Almoravid emirate, was based in Marrakesh but administered a vast empire spanning the Strait of Gibraltar.[8] The

[6] For an overview of the period of *fitna* and the subsequent *ṭā'ifa* states, see Peter C. Scales, *The Fall of the Caliphate of Córdoba: Berbers and Andalusis in Conflict* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); David Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings: Politics and Society in Islamic Spain 1002-1086* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985). For a political history of Muslim and Christian rule in Iberia from the late eighth through the mid-eleventh centuries, see Roger Collins, *Caliphs and Kings: Spain, 796-1031* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014).

[7] Teofilo F. Ruiz, *From Heaven to Earth: The Reordering of Castilian Society, 1150-1350* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Brian A. Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished: Christians and Muslims of Catalonia and Aragon, 1050-1300* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Thomas W. Barton, *Victory's Shadow: Conquest and Governance in Medieval Catalonia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019); Thomas Bisson, *Medieval Crown of Aragon: A Short History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[8] On the Almoravids and Almohads, see Amira K. Bennison, *The Almoravid and Almohad Empires* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016); Allen Fromherz, *The Almohads: The Rise of an Islamic Empire* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010); Maribel Fierro, *The Almohad Revolution: Politics and Religion in the Islamic West during the Twelfth-Thirteenth Centuries* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012); Pascal Buresi and Hicham El Aallaoui, *Governing the Empire: Provincial Administration in the Almohad Caliphate (1224-1269): Critical Edition, Translation, and Study of Manuscript 4752 of the Hasaniyya Library in Rabat Containing 77 Taqadim ("appointments")*, trans. Travis Bruce (Boston: Brill, 2013); Patrice Cressier, Maribel Fierro, and Luis Molina, eds., *Los Almohades: problemas y perspectivas* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2005); María Jesús Viguera, ed., *El retroceso territorial de al-Andalus: almorávides y almohades, siglos XI al XIII* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1997); Linda G. Jones, "The Preaching of the Almohads: Loyalty and Resistance across the Strait of Gibraltar," *Medieval Encounters* 19, no. 1–2 (2013); F.-A. de Montequin, "Muslim Spain and the Maghrib: The Artistic Relationship in the Almoravid and Almohad Periods," *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)* 14, no. 2 (1987): 162–71; David Abulafia, "Christian Merchants in the Almohad Cities," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 2 (2010): 251–57.

Almohad movement was founded in the early twelfth century by Ibn Tūmart, an obscure messianic figure from the High Atlas mountains who sought to return Islam to a state of original purity. To this end, he declared himself imam and infallible *mahdī* ("rightly guided one"), and his successor 'Abd al-Mu'min claimed the title of caliph. By the mid-thirteenth century the Almohads' hold on the peninsula had largely lapsed. In North Africa too their empire fragmented into multiple states by 1269, with the Tunis-based Hafsids taking power in parts of Ifrīqiya and the Fes-based Marinids in the Maghrib.[9] The latter continued to undertake campaigns in Iberia, matching the aspirations if not the successes of their predecessors.[10] As Christian conquests in the peninsula progressed southward, with Muslim rule in the peninsula coming to an end in 1492, North Africa became home to large numbers of Muslim and Jewish exiles and refugees, along with Christian mercenaries, merchants, and missionaries.

Only a handful of scholars, however, have broached the question of relationships that not only transcended religious lines but also spanned the Strait. Perhaps the most ambitious in this respect is Allen Fromherz, who argues that we cannot understand the so-called twelfth-century Renaissance in Europe without taking North Africa into account because "medieval Western European and North African history were part of a common

[9] For studies of the Almohad successor states, see: Maya Shatzmiller, *The Berbers and the Islamic State: The Marīnid Experience in Pre-Protectorate Morocco* (Princeton: Markus Weiner, 2000); Maya Shatzmiller, *L'Historiographie mérinide: Ibn Khaldun et ses contemporains* (Leiden: Brill, 1982); Ramzi Rouighi, *The Making of a Mediterranean Emirate: Ifrīqiyā and Its Andalusis, 1200-1400* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Michael Lower, "Ibn al-Lihyani: Sultan of Tunis and Would-Be Christian Convert (1311–18)," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 24, no. 1 (2009): 17–27.
[10] For a collection of studies largely focused on comparisons between the Maghribi Marinids and the Naṣrids of Granada, see Amira K. Bennison, ed., *The Articulation of Power in Medieval Iberia and the Maghrib* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Western Mediterranean culture."[11] In a similar vein but on a smaller scale, Maribel Fierro suggests that the cultural and political project of the renowned Castilian king Alfonso X must be analyzed in the context of the Almohad caliphate.[12] Ramzi Rouighi's study of the Hafsids, on the other hand, focuses on the influence of Andalusi political models in Ifrīqiya, and his study of the emergence of "Berber" as a category likewise argues for the power of Iberian precedents in North Africa.[13]

In his study of *jenets*, Muslim mercenaries of North African origin or descent who served in the Crown of Aragón, Hussein Fancy brings North Africa into the conversation about how to conceptualize medieval interfaith relations in Iberia. He argues persuasively that neither medieval mercenaries nor their employers necessarily felt their cooperation with one another to be a violation of their religious ideals.[14] Fancy offers a powerful and nuanced challenge to Brian Catlos' pragmatist model of interfaith relations, *conveniencia* ("convenience"). Catlos' *conveniencia* is itself intended as a play on words and a counter to the highly contested model of *convivencia*. The term *convivencia*, which was popularized by the Spanish scholar Américo Castro and means "living together," refers to the coexistence of Muslims, Christians, and Jews in medieval Iberia and has often

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[11] Allen J. Fromherz, *The Near West: Medieval North Africa, Latin Europe and the Mediterranean in the Second Axial Age* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 1; Allen J. Fromherz, "North Africa and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Christian Europe and the Almohad Islamic Empire," *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 20, no. 1 (2009): 43–59.
[12] Maribel Fierro, "Alfonso X 'The Wise': The Last Almohad Caliph?," *Medieval Encounters* 15, no. 2/4 (2009): 175–98.
[13] Rouighi, *Making of a Mediterranean Emirate*; Ramzi Rouighi, *Inventing the Berbers: History and Ideology in the Maghrib* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).
[14] Hussein Fancy, *The Mercenary Mediterranean: Sovereignty, Religion, and Violence in the Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2016).

focused more on cooperation and cultural exchange than violence and conflict.[15] By proposing *conveniencia* as an explanatory model instead, Catlos argues that interfaith relations, whether peaceful or violent, were driven primarily by self-interest rather than religious concerns. In contrast, Fancy argues that religious motivations are key to understanding the *jenets* and their role in Iberia, neither of which can be fully understood without attending to their North African and Marinid connections as well.

These scholars show that the multi-directional migration of people and cultures across the Strait drove close political, cultural, and economic ties between its shores during the Middle Ages. Today, the legacy of this shared history can be heard in the resonating rhythms of Moroccan and Spanish music, seen in the matching minarets of medieval mosques that still stand in Marrakesh and Seville, and heard in the many linguistic borrowings between Spanish and Dārija, Moroccan Arabic. It can also be felt in the increasingly elaborate security measures that mark out the boundary between Morocco and the Spanish-held cities of Ceuta and Melilla, among Europe's most heavily fortified borders. And if these militarized borders are generally understood to be the product of modern European colonialism, there is likewise value in considering the cultural borrowings which transcend them as the result of medieval colonialism, often driven by North African powers. Though coloniality is too often ascribed only to modern

[15] Ibid., 106-110. For an overview on the concept of *convivencia* and its impact on medieval Iberian studies, see Alex Novikoff, "Between Tolerance and Intolerance in Medieval Spain: An Historiographic Enigma," *Medieval Encounters* 11, no. 1–2 (2005): 7–36; Jonathan Ray, "Beyond Tolerance and Persecution: Reassessing Our Approach to Medieval Convivencia," *Jewish Social Studies* 11, no. 2 (2005): 1–18; Ryan Szpiech, "The Convivencia Wars: Decoding Historiography's Polemic with Philology," in *A Sea of Languages: Rethinking the Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History*, ed. Susan Akbari and Karla Malette (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013); Mark T. Abate, ed., *Convivencia and Medieval Spain: Essays in Honor of Thomas F. Glick* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

“western” states, the language and insights of postcolonial studies are applicable and useful for conceptualizing how political and cultural relationships between conquerors and conquered were structured in various premodern states. Conversely, by expanding our understanding coloniality to include both premodern and non-European powers—in this case medieval North Africa—we further one of the principal aims of Mediterranean studies, de-centering Europe in our historical narratives of spatial and temporal relationships alike.

This dissertation is premised, therefore, on the relevance of both the Mediterranean and the Strait of Gibraltar as regional frameworks for the study of the Middle Ages. Connections between medieval Iberians and North Africans were many and varied, often colonial, and traversed religious, linguistic, and geopolitical boundaries. I explore how this connectivity is reflected in the historical narratives of medieval Iberians and North Africans, considering the extent to which they understood themselves and their histories to be related. In so doing, I examine the impact and intersections of religious and geopolitical identity in the medieval historical imaginary, extending our understanding of interfaith relations beyond the Strait.

Arabic, Latin, and Ibero-Romance historical chronicles from the eighth through the fourteenth centuries make up the primary source base for this project. North Africa, al-Andalus, and Christian Iberia all produced rich traditions of historical chronicles. Aside from being impressive literary and intellectual endeavors, these writings often comprised an essential and sophisticated part of medieval political programs. Despite similarities in form, purpose, and content, however, they have largely been analyzed in

terms of separate Muslim and Christian traditions. Too often, comparative work has been limited to surface-level efforts to cross-reference and verify concrete data such as dates and names, rather than acknowledging the literary status and intertextualities of these chronicles. In contrast, this project is less concerned with distinguishing between "fact" and "fiction" and more interested in what a comparative approach can tell us about how medieval people in the western Mediterranean understood their relationship to one another across time and space.[16] To this end, I investigate connections between Iberia and North Africa on two levels. The first is the historical, considering the extent to which Muslim and Christian chroniclers across the Strait depicted their histories as related, writing about the same people and events. The second is the historiographical, exploring the extent to which these chroniclers borrowed from one another directly and wrote within a common cultural, literary, and intellectual framework.

I argue that chroniclers on opposite shores of the Strait saw their histories as intrinsically connected, but often did not view all the individuals and populations in the region as participants in a larger community. Perceived differences were frequently

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[16] An emphasis on the former question has fueled heated debates about the relevance of Arabic chronicles, which begin in the ninth century and contain many legendary additions, to the study of the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia. Roger Collins views attempts to distinguish between the legendary and historical elements of later chronicles, whether Muslim or Christian, as "methodologically dubious": Roger Collins, *The Arab Conquest of Spain, 710-797* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 36. More recently, Roberto Marín Guzmán and Eduardo Manzano Moreno have rejected the complete dismissal of later Arabic texts as excessive, and Manzano Moreno especially has made a point of approaching the sources systematically and critically. Nonetheless, he too is often interested in Arabic chronicles' use of fictional topoi to the extent that they allow scholars to attempt to distinguish between historical fact and literary legends: Roberto Marín-Guzmán, "Las fuentes árabes para la reconstrucción de la historia social de la España musulmana. Estudio y clasificación," *Estudios de Africa y Asia* 39, no. 3 (September-December 2004): 513-572; Eduardo Manzano Moreno, "Oriental 'Topoi' in Andalusian Historical Sources," *Arabica* 39, no. 1 (March 1992): 42-58; Manzano Moreno, "Las fuentes árabes sobre la conquista de al-Andalus: una nueva interpretación," *Hispania* LIX, núm. 202 (1999): 389-432; Manzano Moreno, *Conquistadores, emires y califas: Los omeyas y la formación de al-Andalus* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2011).

rooted in religious identities, but also in ethnocultural and geopolitical ones. Despite these differences, I present evidence that chroniclers drew upon and elaborated a co-produced and mutually colonizing historical framework, employing similar narrative strategies and invoking a common past in an effort to resolve the ideological problem of competing North African and Iberian claims to power over the same territory. I further suggest that colonial relationships across the Strait appeared well before the modern period, and that such colonization was not continuous or unidirectional but shifted over time. Common and mutually colonizing aspects of their representations of past and present constituted a significant component of identity formation of North Africans and Iberians in the Middle Ages, while also influencing their visions of the future.

Chapter 1 analyzes the vocabulary used by medieval chroniclers to discuss the places they lived and the peoples who occupied them. I show that while both Muslims and Christians tended to employ historical and ethnic identifiers more often than religious designators, these terms were nonetheless generally used as synonyms for religious identities. Various labels worked to dismiss, dehumanize, and displace the groups to whom they referred, undermining their claims to full belonging in contested territory and collapsing ethnocultural specificity. The use of generalized terms to speak of one another seems to have been strategic, disguising the depth and breadth of knowledge chroniclers had about people of other religions who lived in different places in favor of misrepresenting their identities and delegitimizing their claims to inhabit and rule a given region.

An awareness of historical narratives written in other languages by members of other religions is apparent in other aspects of these chronicles as well, as explored in Chapter 2. I argue that Muslim and Christian chroniclers across the Strait drew upon and elaborated a shared cultural archive, in many cases using the same sources and even borrowing directly from one another. This was particularly common with legendary and fictional elements that were used to explain and justify the eighth-century Islamic conquests, as well as ninth-century apocalyptic visions of the future in which one religion triumphed over the other to unite the communities across the Strait. These conquest narratives and apocalyptic histories were deeply tied up in ideas about the past and future relationship between Iberia and North Africa. Though scholarship has focused on genres like poetry and scientific treatises as sites of interfaith dialogue and exchange, a comparative approach to the chronicles demonstrates that the same was true of medieval historical writing.

Women and gender in these chronicles have often received only superficial treatment, as the texts are considered largely accounts of political and military events that were written by men, for men, and about men. In contrast, Chapter 3 shows that, like masculinity, femininity was deeply connected to discourses of power and conquest, and made statements about political legitimacy, divine support, and regional identity and belonging. I argue that in both Muslim and Christian chronicles, women had a complex and intimate relationship with the exercise of political and military power. In so doing, I challenge the common misconception that women played more active roles and were referred to by name more often in Christian and Iberian chronicles than in Muslim and

North African chronicles. Instead, I suggest that chroniclers depicted a similarly dynamic relationship between women and power, but that this evidence has been interpreted radically differently by scholars of Christian Iberia and those of al-Andalus and the Maghrib. Though chroniclers generally chose to write about women who were their co-religionists, their representation as political actors and literary tropes would have been largely legible across religious, linguistic, and geopolitical boundaries. The relationship between gender and power can thus be understood as part of a shared cultural context in which these chronicles were produced.

Chapter 4 examines another aspect of the shared cultural archive—what I refer to as the logic of resurrection, a three-part narrative cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth. Within this logic, conquered territory tended to be described as already empty or having been emptied and destroyed due to corruption, followed by an ultimate revival and restoration of the land and its people by a new regime. Unlike many of the elements of the shared cultural archive discussed in Chapter 2, which moved mainly from Muslim to Christian sources, the logic of resurrection appeared first in Christian chronicles before becoming part of Muslim narratives. In the former, it functioned to depict Muslims as fundamentally external to the Iberian peninsula, their presence only a temporary result of Visigothic corruption, whereas in the latter the corruption of Iberian rulers was depicted as invalidating native Iberians' rights to their territory, justifying instead the permanent presence and command of Muslims. I suggest that this cycle and the concomitant

reordering of native/foreign status can be read through a settler colonial lens, in conversation with Patrick Wolfe's formulation of a logic of elimination.[17]

Together, these chapters seek to show that Muslims and Christians in medieval Iberia and North Africa frequently included one another in their representations of the past and the future, writing in conversation with historians from other religious, linguistic, and geopolitical backgrounds. Similarities included the kinds of words they used to describe religious and ethnocultural others, the stories they used to narrate moments of major mutual interest like the eighth-century conquests and the end times, their portrayals of women influencing political and military events, and the narrative strategies they used to justify conquering, colonizing, and attempting to eliminate one another. Ultimately, while these chronicles demonstrate a great deal of cultural contact and exchange between Muslims and Christians across the Strait, this *convivencia* did not preclude significant amounts of real and narrative violence. Even when writers across the Strait envisioned a common past and future for the region, it was not always an inclusive one.

The chronicles

Though medieval historical narratives in Arabic, Latin, and Ibero-Romance took a variety of forms, my analysis is limited to a body of texts that I refer to as chronicles. By this, I mean works that are structured more or less chronologically, whether by year,

[17] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387–409.

reign, or some other means, and in which the narrative portions are composed primarily in prose and the focus is principally on past events.[18] In some ways chronicle is a more appropriate term for Latin and Ibero-Romance historical texts, many of which include *chronicon*/*crónica* in their title, along with *historia*/*estoria*.[19] Arabic titles often include the word *tārīkh*/*ta'rīkh*, which is most often translated as "history" but also carries the sense of "date/time"; forms of *fatḥ* (pl. *futūḥ*), meaning "conquest/opening"; and *akhbār*, meaning "reports/anecdotes."[20] Each of these words could be considered to denote a different genre and often indicate certain variations in topic and structure, but I treat them under the broad umbrella of texts I refer to as chronicles.

Historical narratives borrowed from and appeared in multiple literary forms and genres in both Muslim and Christian tradition, in the western Mediterranean and beyond.[21] Though historical narratives can be found, for instance, in Arabic biographical

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[18] Aengus Ward, following Chris Given-Wilson, classifies chronicles very similarly in his examination of late medieval histories from Christian Iberia: Aengus Ward, *History and Chronicles in Late Medieval Iberia: Representations of Wamba in Late Medieval Narrative Histories* (Boston: Brill, 2011), 9; Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (New York: Hambledon and London, 2004). See also Graeme Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Boston: Brill, 2010), 274-282.

[19] For an overview of the Latin chronicle tradition, see R.W. Burgess and Michael Kulikowski, "The History and Origins of the Latin Chronicle Tradition," in *The Medieval Chronicle VI*, ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009), 153–77. For an overview of the Christian historical tradition in Iberia, see Aengus Ward, "Past, Present and Future in the Latin and Romance Historiography of the Medieval Christian Kingdoms of Spain," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 1, no. 2 (2009): 147–62; Peter Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[20] Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 883-889; for a rather limited overview of classical Arabic historiography, see Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); for more a more thorough but considerably dated take, see Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1968).

[21] Nicola Clarke, *The Muslim Conquest of Iberia: Medieval Arabic Narratives* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Ksenia Bonch Reeves, *Visions of Unity after the Visigoths: Early Iberian Latin Chronicles and the Mediterranean World* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016); Lucy Pick, "Islam Concealed and Revealed: The Chronicle of 754 and Beatus of Liébana's Commentary on the Apocalypse," in *Beyond the Reconquista: New Directions in the History of Medieval Iberia (711-1085)*, ed. Simon Barton and Robert Portass (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 257–82; Georges Martin, *Histoires de l'Espagne médiévale: historiographie, geste, romancero*, (Paris: Klincksieck, 1997); Samer M. Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages:*

dictionaries and geographical treatises, I do not include these in my main body of texts. On the other hand, texts I classify as chronicles contain elements of various other genres. Unsurprisingly, for example, authors of both religions included abundant quotes and references to scripture. Christian historians often drew on hagiography, apocalyptic texts, epic, and romance. Muslims engaged with *ḥadīth* (sayings attributed to the prophet Muḥammad and his followers), *adab* (*belles lettres*), and tended to include a great deal of Arabic poetry. While many of the texts I refer to as chronicles were clearly written in conversation with one another, therefore, they were likewise in dialogue with texts from a variety of literary traditions which must also be taken into account.

Since the following chapters are organized thematically, they each make reference to a wide body of chronicles, many of which come up multiple times and some of which are mentioned only occasionally. Though I will do my best to reiterate a few pieces of orienting information each time, I offer a brief description of each chronicle here, operating on the assumption that readers may not be familiar with the entire corpus under consideration. This list does not claim to be exhaustive but only reasonably representative. Chronicles are listed roughly chronologically within three groups: Iberian chronicles in Latin and Ibero-Romance, Andalusi chronicles in Arabic, and North African chronicles in Arabic. By Ibero-Romance, I refer to a variety of vernaculars descended

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Poetry, Public Performance, and the Presentation of the Past (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010); Boaz Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography: Deconstructing Ṭabarī's History* (Boston: Brill, 2004); Fedwa Malti-Douglas, "Texts and Tortures: The Reign of al-Muʿtadid and the Construction of Historical Meaning," *Arabica* 46, no. 3 (1999): 313–36; Robert M. Stein, *Reality Fictions: Romance, History, and Governmental Authority, 1025-1180* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

from Latin which were spoken and written in medieval Iberia; because there was so much variation across time and space I am only more specific in reference to particular chronicles. Finally, because so many of the titles given to these chronicles do not appear to have come from their authors but instead from later editors and scholars, I often render them in English, especially for Latin and Ibero-Romance titles that consist primarily of recognizable cognates.

Iberian chronicles in Latin and Ibero-Romance

1. The earliest peninsular chronicle that speaks at length about the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia is the so-called Mozarabic *Chronicle of 754*. The text was written in Latin by an anonymous author who appears to have been a Christian living in al-Andalus during the second generation after the conquest.[22] There has been considerable speculation concerning the chronicler's native city, exact position within the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and potential position within the Umayyad administration. Though for the most part such conjecture remains inconclusive, what is clear is that the author followed the precedents of earlier universal chronicles in Latin, such as those of Isidore of Seville and John of

[22] For a Latin edition of the text accompanied by a Spanish translation and study: José Eduardo López Pereira, trans., *Crónica Mozárabe de 754* (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1980); José Eduardo López Pereira, *Estudio crítico sobre la Crónica mozárabe de 754* (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1980); for an English translation: Kenneth Baxter Wolf, ed. and trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1990); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 283. The earliest post-conquest Iberian chronicle is the *Arabo-Byzantine Chronicle of 741*, but as its appellation suggests, it is rather more concerned with the histories of the Byzantine and Islamic empires, and devotes a mere sentence to the conquest of Spain: César E. Dubler, "Sobre la crónica arábigo-bizantina en la Peninsula Ibérica" *Al-Andalus* 11, no. 2 (1946): 283-349; Javier Albarrán Iruela, "Dos crónicas mozárabes, fuentes para el estudio de la conquista de al-Ándalus," *Revista Historia Autónoma*, no. 3 (March 2013): 45–58.

Biclaro. The 754 chronicler begins with the reign of the Byzantine emperor Heraclius and moves between events in Byzantium, the Middle East, and Iberia, providing regnal years as well as dates from both Christian and Islamic calendars. The text ends its narrative in 754, closing with a calculation of the time elapsed since the beginning of the world.

2. The anonymous Latin *Chronicle of Albelda* was composed in 881 in the northern Iberian kingdom of Asturias, which emerged in the seventh century as a Christian rival against Muslim al-Andalus.[23] It is named for one of the codices in which the text is preserved. Though some sections of the text contain longer narratives, its primary structuring device is the list. Despite its brevity, however, it is also a universal history that moves chronologically from Adam to the chronicler's present, giving information on the Romans, Visigoths, and Asturians. Like many Muslim and Christian chronicles from the medieval western Mediterranean, it begins with a geographical description.

3. In 883, the *Chronicle of Albelda* was updated with an anonymous addition that is generally known as the *Prophetic Chronicle*.[24] As its name suggests, it includes a prediction that the end of the Umayyad emirate in al-Andalus was nigh and would

[23] For the Latin text and a Spanish translation: Juan Gil Fernández and Juan Ignacio Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III (Rotense y "A Sebastián"); Crónica Albeldense (y "Profética")*, trans. José-Luis Moralejo (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), 153-181, 223-255. For the Latin text and a French translation: Yves Bonnaz, ed. and trans., *Chroniques asturiennes: (fin IXe siècle)* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1987), 10-30. Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 287-288.

[24] For the Latin text and a Spanish translation: Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, trans. Moralejo, 181-188, 255-263; for an English translation: Kenneth Wolf, "Chronica Prophetica," *Pomona Faculty Publications and Research*, 2008, https://scholarship.claremont.edu/pomona_fac_pub/47; for a French translation: Bonnaz, ed. and trans., *Chroniques asturiennes*, 2-9; Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 400.

be followed by the triumph of the Asturian king, Alfonso III. It also gives more information about the history of Islam and the succession of Muslim rulers in the east and the west.

4. The anonymous Latin *Chronicle of Alfonso III* was likewise produced in Asturias in or after 883. The text exists in two main manuscript traditions, typically referred to as the Roda and Oviedo versions.[25] The prologue of each version dates from the first quarter of the tenth century, and the Oviedo text is the earlier. Though the chronicle covers some of the same material as the *Albelda* text, it focuses more tightly on the Visigoths and the Asturians, moving from the succession of Wamba in the mid-seventh century to the succession of Alfonso III in the mid-ninth. I often refer to the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, the *Chronicle of Albelda*, and the *Prophetic Chronicle* under the general phrase "the Asturian chronicles."

5. The anonymous Latin *Historia Silense* appears to have been composed in the early twelfth century, likely between 1109 and 1118.[26] Though I refer to the chronicle by its most common name, which suggests that it was composed in the monastery of Silos, it is now generally accepted that it was produced in the city of

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[25] The Spanish edition and translation refers to the Oviedo version as "ad Sebastianum," while the French edition and translation refers to it as "the erudite version": Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, trans. Moralejo, 114-149, 195-221; Bonnaz, ed. and trans., *Chroniques asturiennes*, 31-59. Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 289.

[26] For Latin editions of the text: Juan A. Estévez Sola, ed., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII, Pars III: Historia Silensis*, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 71B (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018); Justo Pérez de Urbel and Atilano González Ruiz-Zorrilla, eds., *Historia Silense* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1959); for a partial English translation: Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid: Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 9-64; Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 804-805.

León and might more accurately be called the *Historia Legionense*. The author's stated aim is to offer an account of the life and deeds of Alfonso VI of León and Castile (d. 1109)—a goal which is never reached, though the text offers a detailed account of the emperor's paternal and maternal ancestors. This is achieved largely through the insertion of sizeable chunks of narrative from other texts, including the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the *Chronicle of Sampiro*.

6. The Latin *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* is a curious text that likely dates from the first half of the twelfth century.[27] The chronicle draws its material primarily from Latin sources, including Isidore of Seville's *History of the Goths* and the *Chronicle of 754*. Nonetheless, it appears to be the result of information which traveled between Latin and Arabic multiple times, yielding a number of garbled and confusing names and bearing similarities to an Arabic translation of Orosius and to Latin and Ibero-Romance translations of al-Rāzī. The bulk of the text is devoted to a history of Rome and the Visigoths, ending with a brief description of the Islamic conquests of the eighth-century.

7. The anonymous Latin *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* (*Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*) was written in or after 1147.[28] It relates the reign of Alfonso VII of Castile and León (d. 1157) who, like his grandfather Alfonso VI, claimed the title

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[27] For the Latin text and a Spanish translation: Fernando González Muñoz, ed., *La Chronica Gothorum Pseudo-Isidoriana (ms. Paris BN 6113)* (A Coruña: Toxosoutos, 2000). Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 342.

[28] For a Latin edition and study: Emma Falque, Juan Gil, and Antonio Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII Pars I*, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Medievalis LXXI (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990), 111-267. For an English translation: Barton and Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid*, 148-263. For a Spanish translation: Maurilio Pérez González, trans., *Crónica del emperador Alfonso VII* (León: Universidad de León, 1997). Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 287.

of emperor. Appended to the prose chronicle is what is known as the *Poem of Almería* (*Prefatio de Almaria*), relating Alfonso's successful siege of the city, then under Almoravid control, in 1147.

8. The anonymous Latin *Chronicle of Nájera* (*Chronica Naierensis*) dates from the second half and likely the last quarter of the twelfth century.[29] Its name refers to its presumed place of composition, a city in the northeastern region of Rioja. The universal history moves from the creation of the world through the reign of Alfonso VI.
9. The anonymous *Liber Regum* (*Book of Rulers*) is a universal history composed between 1194 and 1211.[30] Despite its Latin title, the *Liber* was written in Navarro-Aragonese Romance. It offers a genealogy of Iberian rulers and was written in praise of the kingdom of Pamplona/Navarre.
10. The *Chronicon mundi* (*Chronicle of the World*) is, as the title suggests, a universal chronicle written in Latin by a man named Lucas, who served as bishop of Tuy from 1239 to 1249.[31] The text was commissioned by Queen Berenguela of Castile (r. 1217-1246) before Lucas assumed the bishopric, and its narrative ends

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[29] For the Latin text: Juan Estévez Sola, ed., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII Pars II: Chronica Naierensis*, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Medievalis 71A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995); for a Spanish translation: Juan A. Estévez Sola, trans., *Crónica najerense* (Madrid: Akal, 2003); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 378.

[30] For a Latin edition and study: Louis Cooper, ed., *El Liber Regum* (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 1960); Louis Cooper, *El liber regum: estudio lingüistico*, Archivo de filología aragonesa. ; Anejo 5 (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 1960); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 2, 1029.

[31] For the Latin text: Lucas de Tuy, *Chronicon mundi*, ed. Emma Falque, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 74 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003); for a somewhat dated Spanish translation: Lucas de Tuy, *Crónica de España por Lucas, Obispo de Túy: Primera edición del texto romanceado, conforme a un códice de la Academia, preparada y prologada por Julio Puyol*, trans. Julio Puyol (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1926); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 2, 1049.

with the conquest of Córdoba by her son Fernando III in 1236. Lucas clearly intended for his text to serve as a mirror for rulers.

11. The *Latin Chronicle of the Rulers of Castile* was written between 1223 and 1239 and is generally attributed to the bishop of Osma, Juan de Soria (d. 1246), who also served as chancellor to Fernando III of Castile and León.[32] The narrative begins in the tenth century with the first independent count of Castile, the famed Fernán González, and like the *Chronicon mundi* ends with Fernando III's capture of Córdoba from Muslims in 1236.
12. The Latin *Historia Gothica* (*Gothic History*) was written in the 1240s by the archbishop of Toledo, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (d. 1247), who also composed a number of other historical texts, including the *Historia Arabum* (*History of the Arabs*).[33] Like many Latin chronicles of the mid-thirteenth century, the *Historia Gothica* begins as a universal history before focusing in on peninsular events. Rodrigo was present in 1212 at the momentous battle of Las Navas de Tolosa when Alfonso VIII defeated the Almohads, a feat which receives substantial attention in the archbishop's chronicle.

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[32] For a Latin edition: Rocío Carande Herrero, Luis Charlo Brea, and Juan A. Estévez Sola, eds., *Chronica hispana saeculi XIII*, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 73 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 9-118; for an English translation: Joseph F. O'Callaghan, trans., *The Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002); for a Spanish translation: Luis Charlo Brea, trans., *Crónica latina de los reyes de Castilla* (Madrid: Akal, 1999); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 359.

[33] For the Latin text: Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie, sive, Historia Gothica*, ed. Juan Fernández Valverde, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 72 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987); for a Spanish translation: Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de los hechos de España*, trans. Juan Fernández Valverde (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1989); for the Latin text of some of Rodrigo's other chronicles: Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Roderici Ximenii de Rada Historiae minores: Dialogus libri vite*, ed. Juan Fernández Valverde, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 72C (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 2, 919-920.

13. The *Book of Deeds* (*Llibre dels fets*) was composed by James I of Aragón (d. 1276).[34] The Catalán text narrates the life and accomplishments of the king in the first-person plural, a relatively rare example of a royal autobiography in this period, and likely dates from the last five years of his reign. James naturally writes with his own self-interest in mind, narrating both his dealings with his nobles in the Crown of Aragón and his efforts to conquer Islamic Majorca and Valencia.

14. The *Estoria de España* (*History of Spain*) was commissioned by Alfonso X of Castile-León (d. 1284) in the second half of the thirteenth century and finished under his son, Sancho IV.[35] The Castilian universal history draws heavily on both Lucas of Tuy and Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada and represented part of Alfonso's ambitious cultural and political project, which included the translation of a number of Arabic and Latin works into Castilian and the production of new vernacular works like the *Cantigas de Santa María* (*Songs of Holy Mary*).

<u>Andalusi chronicles in Arabic</u>

15. The earliest extant chronicle written in Arabic by a Muslim living in al-Andalus is the *History* of Ibn Ḥabīb (d. ca. 852), a jurist (*faqīh*) from the region around

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[34] For the Catalan text: James I, *Llibre dels fets del rei en Jaume*, ed. Jordi Bruguera, 2 vols. (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1991); for an English translation: James I, *The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon: A Translation of the Medieval Catalan Llibre Dels Fets*, trans. Damian J. Smith and Helena Buffery (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 2, 907.

[35] For multiple editions of the Latin text: Aengus Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.0 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2016) <estoria.bham.ac.uk>; for the classic version of the text, now generally dismissed: Ramón Menéndez Pidal, ed., *Primera crónica general de España que mandó componer Alfonso el Sabio y se continuaba bajo Sancho IV en 1289*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1955); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 30, 587-588.

Elvira in southern Iberia.[36] Like many of the Christian peninsular chronicles described in the previous section, it begins as a universal history, though from an Islamic perspective, before relating the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia and focusing in on peninsular history. The text includes a number of *ḥadīth* and seems to have been continued after Ibn Ḥabīb's death by one of his students, likely al-Maghāmī.

16. The *History of the Opening of al-Andalus* (*Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*) of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya (d. 977) offers a description of peninsular history, beginning with an account of the Islamic conquests and the author's royal ancestress Sarah the Goth and ending early in the reign of ʻAbd al-Raḥmān III (d. 961).[37] The chronicle was written largely in support of the Umayyad regime and may have been committed to writing only after Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's death.

17. The anonymous *Akhbār majmūʻa* (*Collected Anecdotes*) exists in a single manuscript copy, which is bound together with a copy of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's *History*.[38] The text's dating is uncertain and it is generally believed to be the result of compilation and elaboration that took place over a period of several

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[36] For the Arabic text: ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj (La historia)*, ed. Jorge Aguadé (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1991).

[37] For a problematic edition of the Arabic text: Muḥammad ibn ʻUmar ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Cairo; Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1982); for an English translation: Muḥammad ibn ʻUmar Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Early Islamic Spain the History of Ibn al-Qūṭīya: A Study of the Unique Arabic Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, with a Translation, Notes, and Comments*, trans. David James (New York: Routledge, 2009); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 827.

[38] For the Arabic text: Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʻa fī fatḥ al-Andalus wa-dhikr umarā'ihā wa-l-ḥurūb al-wāqiʻa bihā baynahum* (Cairo; Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1981); for an English translation: David James, trans., *A History of Early Al-Andalus: The Akhbār Majmū'a* (London: Routledge, 2011).

centuries. The narrative begins with events in the Middle East before turning to peninsular history and the eighth-century conquests. Like Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's text, the *Akhbār* ends with the reign of ʻAbd al-Raḥmān III.

18. The *Muqtabis fī ta'rīkh al-Andalus* (*Seeker of Knowledge about the History of al-Andalus*) was written by the prolific Córdoban historian Ibn Ḥayyān (d. 1076). The *Muqtabis* covers events from the eighth-century conquests to the author's own time.[39] The exact dating of the ten volumes that make up the *Muqtabis* and their relationship to another of Ibn Ḥayyān's historical works, the *Matīn*—which survives only in part in other texts—is highly contested.

19. The *Tibyān* (*Illustration*) of ʻAbd Allāh ibn Buluqqīn, the Zirid emir of Granada from 1073 to 1090, is an invaluable source for the *ṭā'ifa* kingdoms of the eleventh century.[40] Like the *Book of Deeds* of James I of Aragón, the *Tibyān* is

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[39] For partial editions of the Arabic text: Abū Marwān Ḥayyān ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥayyān, *Muqtabis II: anales de los emires de Córdoba Alhaquém I (180-206 H./796-822 J.C.) y Abderramán II (206-232/822-847)*, ed. Joaquín Vallvé (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1999); Abū Marwān Ḥayyān ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥayyān 987 or Ibn Ḥayyān, *al-Muqtabas min anbā' ahl al-Andalus*, ed. Maḥmūd ʻAlī Makkī (Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-ʻarabī, 1973); Abū Marwān Ḥayyān ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥayyān, *Kitāb al-Muqtabis fī ta'rīkh rijāl al-Andalus, chronique du règne de calife umaiyade ʻAbd Allāh à Cordoue*, ed. Melchor Martínez Antuña (Paris: Būlus Kitnar, 1937); Abū Marwān Ḥayyān ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥayyān, *al-Muqtabis fi akhbār balad al-Andalus*, ed. ʻAbd al-Raḥmān Ḥajjī, Maktabah al-Andalusīyah 4 (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1965); Abū Marwān Ḥayyān ibn Ḥayyān, *Al-Muqtabas li-Ibn Ḥayyān al-Qurṭubī (al-juz' al-khāmis)*, ed. Pedro Chalmeta, Federico Corriente, and M. Ṣubḥ (Madrid: Instituto hispano-arabe, 1979); for partial Spanish translations: Abū Marwān Ḥayyān ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥayyān, *Crónica de los emires Alḥakam I y ʻAbdarraḥmān II entre los años 796 y 847 (Almuqtabis II-1)*, trans. Maḥmūd ʻAlī Makkī and Federico Corriente (Zaragoza: Instituto de Estudios Islámicos y del Oriente Próximo, 2001); Abū Marwān Ḥayyān ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥayyān, *Crónica del califa ʻAbdarraḥmān III An-Nāṣir entre los años 912 y 942 (al-Muqtabis V)*, trans. María Jesús Viguera and Federico Corriente, Textos medievales 64 (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1981); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 832.

[40] For the Arabic text: ʻAbd Allāh ibn Buluqqīn, *Kitāb al-Tibyān li-l-amīr ʻAbd Allāh ibn Buluqqīn akhir umarā' Banī Zīrī bi-Gharnāṭa*, ed. Amīn Tawfīq al-Ṭībī (Rabat: Manshūrāt ʻukāẓ, 1995); for an English translation: ʻAbd Allāh ibn Buluqqīn, *The Tibyān: Memoirs of ʻAbd Allāh B. Buluggin, Last Zīrid Amir of Granada*, trans. Amin T. Tibi (Boston: Brill, 1986); for a Spanish translation: ʻAbd Allāh ibn Buluqqīn, *El siglo XI en 1a. persona: las "memorias" de ʻAbd Allāh, último rey Zīrí de Granada, destronado por los Almorávides (1090)*, trans. Evariste Lévi-Provençal and Emilio García Gómez (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2009).

autobiographical, though it also offers accounts of several of the emir's predecessors, including the Zirid founder who emigrated from North Africa in the early eleventh century. ʻAbd Allāh narrates his shifting relationships with Alfonso VI of Castile and León, al-Muʻtamid ibn ʻAbbād of Seville, and the Almoravid emir Yūsuf ibn Tāshufīn, by whom he was eventually deposed and exiled to the Maghribi city of Aghmāt, where he completed his memoirs in 1094 or 1095.

20. The exact dating and provenance of the anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* (*Conquest of al-Andalus*), is similarly uncertain.[41] The text appears to be from the early twelfth century at the very earliest, and its author/compiler apparently had only a partial grasp of Arabic. Though I have included the *Fatḥ* in this section because it is concerned primarily with peninsular events, some scholars have argued for its North African origins. The chronicle goes from the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia through the reign of the emir ʻAbd al-Raḥmān I, then offers a brief sketch of events through the eleventh century and ends with the arrival of the Almoravid emir Yūsuf ibn Tāshufīn.

21. The *Mann bi-l-imāma* (*Divine Gift of the Imamate*) of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, an Andalusi author and scribe who served the Almohad caliphate, likely dates to the end of the twelfth century.[42] Of the three volumes that initially made up the

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[41] For the Arabic text: Luis Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus (La Conquista de al-Andalus)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994); for a Spanish translation: Mayte Penelas, trans., *La conquista de al-Andalus* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2002).

[42] For the Arabic text: ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Mann bi-l-imāma: tārīkh bilād al-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus fī ʻahd al-Muwaḥḥidīn*, ed. ʻAbd al-Hādī Tāzī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1987); for a Spanish translation: ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bil-imāma: Estudio preliminar, traduccion e indices por Ambrosio Huici Miranda*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Valencia: Anubar, 1969); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 838.

chronicle, only the second has survived, focusing primarily on the reigns of the Almohad caliphs Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf (r. 1163-1184) and Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Manṣūr (r. 1184-1199). Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt refers to himself in the first person at various points throughout the chronicle when describing events at which he personally was present.

22. The *Ḥulal al-mawshiyya* (*Embroidered Ornaments*) was finished in 1382 by an author whose identity is disputed but who wrote from Iberia in praise of the Naṣrid emir of Granada, Muḥammad V (d. 1391).[43] It covers the Almoravid, Almohad, and Marinid dynasties through the late fourteenth century, though its accounts of later events are considerably more brief. The chronicle emphasizes connections between al-Andalus and the Maghrib, with the prologue contextualizing the role of the North African dynasties in Iberia within the framework of holy war.

North African chronicles in Arabic

23. The *Futūḥ Miṣr* (*Conquests of Egypt*) was composed in the second half of the ninth century by the Egyptian scholar Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam (d. 870/871).[44] The

[43] For the Arabic text: Suhayl Zakār and 'Abd al-Qādir Zamāma, eds., *Kitāb al-ḥulal al-mawshiyya fī dhikr al-akhbār al-Marrākushiyya: li-mu'alif Andalus min ahl al-qarn al-thamin al-ḥijri* (Casablanca: Dār al-rashād al-ḥadītha, 1979); for a Spanish translation: Ambrosio Huici Miranda, trans., *Al-Hulal al Mawsiyya: crónica árabe de las dinastías almorávide, almohade y benimerin* (Tetuán: Editora Marroquí, 1951).

[44] For the full Arabic text: Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *The history of the conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain: known as the Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. Charles Cutler Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922); for the Arabic text and an English translation of the section on al-Andalus: Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest of Spain*, ed. and trans. John Harris Jones (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969); for the Arabic text and a French translation of the sections on Ifrīqiya and al-Andalus: Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Conquête de l'Afrique du Nord et de l'Espagne*, ed. and trans. Albert Gateau, 2nd ed. (Alger: Éditions Carbonel, 1948); for a partial Spanish translation: Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Conquista de Africa del Norte y de España*, trans. Eliseo Vidal Beltrán (Valencia: Anubar, 1966); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 822.

chronicle covers the Islamic conquests of Egypt, Ifrīqiya, and al-Andalus in the seventh and eighth centuries. I generally do not include Egypt in my framing of North Africa, or Egyptian chronicles in the body of texts under consideration, but Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam's text transmits a number of traditions that would remain central to Arabic narratives of the Islamic conquests across the Mediterranean for centuries.[45] Many modern scholars have privileged the *Futūḥ* over the *History* of his contemporary, the Andalusi writer Ibn Ḥabīb. Nonetheless, both contain foundational elements of conquest narratives and were not unrelated—Ibn Ḥabīb studied with Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam's father in Egypt, for example.

24. The so-called "Memoirs" of al-Baydhaq, a supporter of the early Almohads, have survived only in an acephalous manuscript.[46] Though the chronicle is primarily in Arabic, it includes phrases from a Berber language and al-Baydhaq—whose name comes from a Berber word referring to a pawn in chess—was a Ṣanhāja Berber. His chronicle includes his own eyewitness accounts, giving information on the Almohad founder and *mahdī* ("rightly guided one") Ibn Tūmart (d. ca. 1130), the first caliph ʻAbd al-Mu'min (d. 1163), and his successor Abū Yaʻqūb Yūsuf (d. 1184).
25. The *Kitāb al-iktifā' fī akhbār al-khulafā'* (*Adequate Book of the Accounts of the Caliphs*) was composed sometime after 1195 by Ibn Kardabūs, an Ifrīqiyan jurist

[45] Maḥmūd ʻAlī Makkī, "Egipto y la historiografía arabigo-española," *Revista del Instituto de Estudios Islámicos en Madrid* 5, no. 1–2 (1957): 157–248.
[46] For the Arabic text and a French translation: Evariste Lévi-Provençal, ed., *Documents inédits d'histoire almohade: fragments manuscrits du "legajo" 1919 du fonds arabe de l'Escurial* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1928).

(*faqīh*) whose name may indicate Córdoban origins.[47] His narrative covers the rise of Islam through contemporary events.

26. The *Kitāb al-muʿjib fī talkhīṣ akhbār al-Maghrib* (*Book of the Admirable in the Summary of the Reports of the Maghrib*) was written by ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī around 1224.[48] ʿAbd al-Wāḥid was born in Marrakesh but studied for a time in al-Andalus, and his chronicle focuses largely on peninsular events and their relationship to North Africa, taking a broad view of the "Maghrib." He also traveled to Egypt and the Hijaz and may have composed the *Kitāb al-muʿjib* while in the east.
27. The *Naẓm al-jumān* (*String of Pearls*) of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān, written around 1250, initially comprised seven volumes.[49] Only one has survived, covering the period from 1106 to 1139 and giving information about al-Andalus, the Maghrib, and Egypt. Ibn al-Qaṭṭān—not to be confused with another writer by the same name who may have been his father—served the Almohad caliph al-Murtaḍa (d. 1266).
28. The *Bayān al-mughrib* (*Astonishing Account*) of Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, completed sometime after 1312, relates the history of al-Andalus and the Maghrib

[47] For an edition of part of the Arabic text: Ahmad Mujtār al-ʻAbbādī, ed., *Historia del Andalus por Ibn al-Kardabus y su descripción por Ibn al-Sabbat* (Madrid: Instituto de estudios Islámicos, 1971); for a partial Spanish translation: Ibn al-Kardabūs, *Historia de al-Andalus*, trans. Felipe Maíllo Salgado (Madrid: Akal, 2008); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 835.

[48] For the Arabic text: ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Kitāb al-muʿjib fī talkhīṣ akhbār al-Maghrib*, ed. Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy (Leiden: Brill, 1881); for a Spanish translation: ʿAbd al-Wāhid ibn ʿAlī al-Marrākushī, *Kitāb al-Muʾŷib fī taljiṣ ajbār al Magrib ... Lo admirable en el resumen de las noticias del Magrib*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Tetuán: Editora Marroquí, 1955).

[49] For the Arabic text: Ibn al-Qaṭṭān al-Marrākushī, *Naẓm al-jumān li-tartīb mā salafa min akhbār al-zamān*, ed. Maḥmūd ʿAlī Makkī (Beirut: Dār al-gharb al-Islāmī, 1990); for a Spanish translation: Adnan Abdul Hamid Kadhim, "Estudio crítico, traducción y análisis de la obra Nazm Al-Yuman de Ibn al-Qattan" (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1992).

from the Islamic conquests through the end of the Almohad caliphate.[50] Ibn ʿIdhārī, who held an official position in Fes and whose name indicates origins in Marrakesh, was a prolific compiler of historical material.

29. The *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* (*Garden of Pages*) attributed to Ibn Abī Zarʿ is more focused on events in the Maghrib, though at various points connections with and events in al-Andalus are highlighted as well.[51] The chronicle begins with the establishment of the Idrisid dynasty in the late eighth century and goes up to the first third of the fourteenth century. Fes, the capital established by Idrīs II (d. 828) and the hometown of Ibn Abī Zarʿ, is the narrative heart of the text.

30. The *Kitāb al-ʿibar* (*Book of Examples*), best known for its introduction, or *Muqaddima*, was written by the famed Ifrīqiyan scholar Ibn Khaldūn (1332-

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[50] For partial editions of the Arabic text: Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Evariste Lévi-Provençal and George Séraphin Colin, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1948); Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Al-Bayān al-Mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Evariste Lévi-Provençal and George Séraphin Colin, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1930); Muḥammad ibn ʿIdhārī, *Al-Bayān al mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Evariste Lévi-Provençal, vol. 3 (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1930); Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Al-Bayān al-Mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās, 4 vols., Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane au XIIème-XIIIème siècle (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1967); Muḥammad ibn ʿIdhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib: qism al-Muwaḥḥidīn*, ed. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Kattānī (Beirut, Lebanon; Casablanca, Morocco: Dār al-gharb al-islāmī, Dār al-thaqāfa, 1985); for partial Spanish translations (of varying quality): Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Al-Bayān al-mugrib fi ijtiṣār ajbār muluk al-Andalus wa al-Magrib*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda, 2 vols. (Tetuán Editora Marroquí, 1953); Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Al-Bayan al-mughrib; nuevos fragmentos almorávides y almohades*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Valencia: Anubar, 1963); Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *al-Bayān al-mugrib fi ijtiṣar ajbār muluk al-Andalus wa al-Magrib: los Almohades*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Tetuán: Editora Marroqui, 1953); Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Historia de al-Andalus*, trans. Francisco Fernández González (Málaga: Aljaima, 1999); for a French translation: Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad, *Histoire de l'Afrique et de l'Espagne Intitulée Al-Bayano'l-Mogrib, Traduite et Annotée Par E. Fagnan.*, trans. Edmond Fagnan (Alger, 1901); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 834.

[51] For the Arabic text: ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Abī Zarʿ al-Fāsī, *al-Anīs al-muṭrib bi-rawḍ al-qirṭās fī akhbār mulūk al-Maghrib wa-tārīkh madīnat Fās*, ed. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Manṣūr, 2nd ed. (Rabat: Al-maṭbaʿa al-malikiyya, 1999); for a Spanish translation: ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Abī Zar' al-Fāsī, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda, 2 vols. (Valencia, 1964).

1406), whose ancestors had fled Seville after its conquest by Fernando III of Castile in 1248.[52] As well as being a prolific scholar, Ibn Khaldūn was often active on the political scene. He presented the first version of the *Muqaddima* to the Hafsid sultan in 1382. Ibn Khaldūn traveled in Ifrīqiya, the Maghrib, and al-Andalus, spending the last decades of his life revising his historical works in Egypt. The *Muqaddima* is devoted primarily to the theory of historical study and proposes his now famous models of social organization and dynastic rise and decline. The second volume of the *Kitāb al-ʿibar* is devoted to the history of the Arabs in the Middle East and the third covers Arab and Berber history in the west.

Taken together, these chronicles provide a rich body of sources for the study of the historical imaginaries of Muslims and Christians in medieval Iberia and North Africa. The following chapters will explore their relationship to one another and consider their presentation of historical ties across the Strait of Gibraltar.

[52] For editions of the Arabic text: Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh al-ʿAllāmah Ibn Khaldūn: kitāb al-ʿibar wa-dīwān al-mubtadā wa-l-khabar fī ayyām al-ʿArab wa-l-ʿajam wa-l-Barbar wa-man ʿāṣarahum min dhawī al-sulṭān al-akbar* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1982); Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddima*, ed. Abdesselam Cheddadi, 3 vols. (Casablanca: Khizānat Ibn Khaldūn, Bayt al-Funūn wa-l-ʿUlūm wa-l-Ādāb, 2005); for French translations (of varying quality): Ibn Khaldūn, *Histoire des Berbères et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrique Septentrionale*, ed. Paul Casanova, trans. William MacGuckin de Slane, Nouv. éd. pub. sous la direction de Paul Casanova et suivie d'une bibliographie d'Ibn Khaldoun, 3 vols. (Paris, 1925); Ibn-Khaldūn, *Histoire des Arabes et des Berbères du Maghreb*, trans. Abdesselam Cheddadi (Paris: Gallimard, 2012); for an English translation: ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, 3 vols. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958); Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1, 835-837.

Chapter 1: "Naming Iberia(ns) and North Africa(ns)"

If we are to understand the ways that Muslims and Christians across the Strait understood their relationship across time and space, the words they used to describe one another and the places they lived seem a good place to start. More often than not, the names they gave one another did not reflect the ways that the communities and individuals spoke of themselves. This cannot be attributed to linguistic differences alone, since Arabic, Latin, and Ibero-Romance writers showed themselves capable of transliterating and translating words, names, and phrases in a variety of contexts. Instead, many of the words that chroniclers and their contemporaries used to identify religious and ethnocultural others were distinctly derogatory.

These labels represent attempts at othering and displacement that generally were not indicative of what writers knew about the populations in question, but rather constitute what Hélène Sirantoine labels "strategic ignorance."[1] She shows that Christian chroniclers throughout the Middle Ages held remarkable, if varying, knowledge about aspects of the history of Muslims in the Middle East and North Africa. This knowledge was sometimes reflected in the words Christians used to refer to different groups of Muslims and the places they lived, but this was not uniformly the case.[2] Similarly, Amira Bennison demonstrates that Muslims in al-Andalus referred to Christians in Iberia and Europe more generally in ways that indicate a fairly nuanced awareness of cultural and

[1] Hélène Sirantoine, "What's in a Word? Naming 'Muslims' in Medieval Christian Iberia," in *Making the Medieval Relevant: How Medieval Studies Contribute to Improving Our Understanding of the Present*, ed. Chris Jones, Conor Kostick, and Klaus Oschema (Boston: De Gruyter, 2020), 230.

[2] Hélène Sirantoine, "Histories of the Islamic World in the Chronicles of the Kingdom of Leon (End-Ninth to Mid-Twelfth Centuries)," *Parergon* 35, no. 2 (2018): 119–45.

geopolitical specificity within Christendom. She argues that modern scholars have often overstated the binary division of the world into the *dār al-Islām* (domain of Islam) and the *dār al-ḥarb* (domain of war) in the medieval Islamic imaginary.[3] Sirantoine and Bennison's studies suggest that the increased or decreased specificity of the identifiers employed by chroniclers should not be understood as a direct measure of how much Muslims and Christians across the Strait knew about one another. Instead, the choice to elide, conflate, single out, and/or misrepresent specific group names must be analyzed as part of each chronicle's larger historical context and narrative approach to religious and cultural difference.

To this end, this chapter proposes a deeper and broader exploration of the words used by medieval Iberian and North African chroniclers to write about peoples with whom they did not identify and places where they did not live. To some extent, these identifiers can be understood as building blocks for larger narrative strategies and practices aimed at undermining their claims to occupy and rule contested territory. Both Muslims and Christians across Strait used labels for one another that were dehumanizing, demeaned and dismissed one another's religion, and acted to displace other groups geographically and temporally. Such strategies made it easier to justify violence and conquest. Whereas names for groups of people were often aimed at this kind of othering and displacement, however, names given to the places occupied by these groups in some ways suggest more connectivity. Chroniclers did at times refer to enemy territory as "the

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[3] Amira K. Bennison, "The Peoples of the North in the Eyes of the Muslims of Umayyad Al-Andalus (711–1031)," *Journal of Global History* 2, no. 2 (2007): 157–74.

land of the [derogatory term]," but specific place names were typically somewhat more neutral and stable over time. The disconnect between the ways that peoples and places were named in the chronicles may be due to a perception that places could more easily pass from the rule of one group to another and retain the same name, whereas when people converted or assimilated they required new labels.

Naming peoples

Some of the words used by medieval Christians to refer to Muslims have proved so enduring that they still appear uncritically as synonyms for "Muslim" in scholarship in multiple modern languages, and to an even greater extent in popular usage. This is particularly the case with "Saracen" and "Moor."[4] As this section will discuss, however, these and many other terms from the medieval period were rooted in attempts to dismiss, degrade, and/or disingenuously conflate the identities of those to whom they referred. They were never adopted as self-identifiers on any significant scale, and both terms were and are racialized, carrying connotations of African origins and darker skin color. For example, the Spanish word for a person with dark skin, *moreno*, derives from "Moor," while the French *blé sarrasin*, also known as *blé noire*, refers to darker buckwheat flour. Even now, one can walk down a street in the UK and be confronted with signage for the "Saracen's Head" pub, including a caricature of the head in question. Because of the persistence of the derogatory origins and associations of these and similar terms, I use

[4] Ross Brann, "The Moors?," *Medieval Encounters* 15, no. 2–4 (2009): 307–18.

them only as an indicator of the words being used by sources themselves, and not as a descriptor of individuals or groups.

Despite its similarly derogatory origins, the term "Berber" (from the Arabic *barbar*) became so prevalent that it was eventually adopted by a number of groups in medieval North Africa to refer to themselves, and even became a mark of pride.[5] This remains the case in Arabic, English, and multiple other languages today, though the terms Imazighen for people (often rendered Amazigh in English) and Tamazight for language are gaining traction. While "Berber" should therefore not be understood to signify a historically monolithic community of indigenous North Africans, its proud use by some of the people to whom it referred in the past may at least partially justify its continued use in modern scholarship. That being said, the use of Berber as a positive self-identifier in the available sources postdates many of the groups to whom the term is applied by medieval and modern authors alike.

With this in mind, this section attempts to illuminate and draw comparisons between the kinds of words Muslims and Christians across the Strait used for one another in narrating their shared history, without reproducing their usage. As with so many aspects of western Mediterranean history, this work has rarely been comparative across religious and linguistic lines, and there has generally been more interest in Christian words for Muslims than Muslim words for Christians. This even extends to modern translations of medieval Latin and Ibero-Romance chronicles, which tend to preserve

[5] Ramzi Rouighi, *Inventing the Berbers: History and Ideology in the Maghrib* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

more faithfully the words they used to speak about Muslims, whereas modern renderings of medieval Arabic chronicles often generically translate a variety of terms as "Christians." As a result, many of the similarities between the ways Muslim and Christian chroniclers conceived of and categorized one another have been overlooked.

Religious othering

A number of the terms used by Muslims and Christians to refer to one another in Iberian and North African chronicles established alterities based on religious difference and deviance. Generic terms referring to paganism were quite prevalent, including *kāfir* (infidel) and *mushrik* (polytheist) in Arabic, and *paganus*/*pagano* (pagan) in Latin and Ibero-Romance.[6] In many cases their use signaled a deliberate obfuscation of the monotheistic nature of one another's religion, an insult which was underlined by the use of the same labels for genuinely polytheistic peoples like the Vikings in both Muslim and Christian chronicles. Nor were they applied solely across religious lines—the North African Almohad caliphate, for instance, often accused the preceding Almoravid emirate of paganism (*kufr*).[7] Terms connoting paganism and polytheism are much more frequent than those that describe the historical and ideological relationships between Muslims and Christians more positively, like *ahl al-kitāb* (people of the Book) and *ahl al-dhimma* (people of the covenant). Though these terms appear in a variety of medieval sources,

[6] Eva Lapiedra Gutiérrez, *Cómo los musulmanes llamaban a los cristianos hispánicos* (Alicante: Instituto de Cultura Juan Gil-Albert, 1997), 143-175.

[7] 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Zar' al-Fāsī, *al-Anīs al-muṭrib bi-rawḍ al-qirṭās fī akhbār mulūk al-Maghrib wa-tārīkh madīnat Fās*, ed. 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Manṣūr, 2nd ed. (Rabat: al-Maṭba'a al-malikiyya, 1999), 233; 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Zar' al-Fāsī, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Valencia, 1964), 362.

including Islamic scripture and exegesis, and are extremely common in modern scholarship on the period, they are relatively thin on the ground in Arabic chronicles from the western Mediterranean.

Instead, many of the scriptural identifiers Muslims and Christians used for one another emphasized the divergences in their genealogies and rarely reflected the ways people self-identified. This was especially common in medieval Christian usage, which often continued the pre-Islamic conflation of the terms "Ishmaelite," "Hagarene," and "Saracen" with "Arab."[8] Each of these three scriptural labels alluded, in one way or another, to the contrast between Ishmael and Isaac, the sons of Abraham in the Biblical tradition. Whereas Isaac was the son of Abraham and his wife Sarah, Ishmael was Abraham's illegitimate son with Sarah's handmaid, Hagar. Ishmael is moreover described as wild, cast out with his mother for mocking his younger brother, after which he went on to father twelve sons who were equated with the tribes of the Arabs. Isaac, on the other hand, fathered the twelves tribes of Israel. The use of "Ishmaelite" and "Hagarene" to refer to Arabs and Muslims thus highlights the perception of their less illustrious lineage through Ishmael and Hagar. Though Ishmael is cast in a much more positive light in Islamic tradition and medieval Muslims understood themselves to be his descendants, Christians made use of such labels in a very different spirit. The externally applied "Saracen" suggested that Arabs and Muslims misrepresented their lineage and

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[8] John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 11.

falsely claimed descent through Sarah in order to elevate themselves, an explanation famously upheld by Saint Jerome in the fourth century.[9]

"Ishmaelite," "Hagarene," and "Saracen" appear with relative frequency in medieval Iberian chronicles. The most common of these, "Saracen," appears along with "Ishmaelite" in the earliest detailed account of the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia, the *Chronicle of 754*. There is no clear distinction in their usage in the anonymous Latin text, which seems to have been written by a Christian living under Muslim rule. Both terms also appear in late ninth-century Christian chronicles from the northern Iberian kingdom of Asturias—the *Chronicle of Albelda*, the *Prophetic Chronicle*, and the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*. The first of these alleges that "Saracens perversely believe themselves to be from Sarah, but truly they are Hagarenes from Hagar and Ishmaelites from Ishmael."[10] The dismissal of their prestigious genealogy, along with the assertion that they were liars, was prevalent and persistent in medieval Christian judgements of Muslims.

In some later Iberian chronicles, however, "Hagarene" took on a more specific meaning. The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, written in the mid-twelfth century in praise of Alfonso VII, uses "Saracens" as a catchall to describe Muslims in general but gives more specific names to distinguish between different groups of Iberian and North African Muslims. Rather than referring to any Muslim, "Hagarenes" was understood to mean Muslims from al-Andalus. Other words were used for Muslims under the rule of

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[9] Sirantoine, "What's in a Word?", 228.

[10] Juan Gil Fernández and Juan Ignacio Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III (Rotense y "A Sebastián"); Crónica Albeldense (y "Profética")*, trans. José-Luis Moralejo (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), 181.

the Almoravids and the Almohads, two empires that emerged in North Africa in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, respectively, and conquered significant portions of Iberia. The Almohads had just become a major player in Iberian politics at the time the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* was composed. The text refers to the Almohads at times as "Muzmuti," a transliteration of Maṣmūda, one of the major North African tribal groupings involved in the rise of the new dynasty. The chronicle also, however, refers to the first Almohad caliph ʻAbd al-Mu'min as "the king of the Assyrians," likely an attempt to negatively compare him to the Biblical king Nebuchadnezzar.[11]

In the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, the slightly earlier *Historia Silense*, and the thirteenth-century *Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile*, the Almoravids are likewise given a name drawn from scripture—"Moabites." This label may to some extent be the result of transliteration, since the Arabic form of Almoravids, *al-murābiṭūn*, sounds very similar to the Latin form of Moabites, *moabitae*. The Biblical Moabites occupied part of the Dead Sea region and were often at odds with the Israelites. Nevill Barbour suggested, rather halfheartedly, that "perhaps the chroniclers were influenced by a supposed similitude of the Almoravids as overseas enemies of the Christians with the Moabites as enemies of the Jews beyond the waters of the Jordan."[12] Lauded figures like David and Jesus were descended from the Moabites through Ruth, but it is not clear if

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[11] Emma Falque, Juan Gil, and Antonio Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII Pars I*, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Medievalis LXXI (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990), 200, 244; Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid: Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 208-209 n. 25.
[12] Nevill Barbour, "The Significance of the Word Maurus, with Its Derivatives Moro and Moor, and of Other Terms Used by Medieval Writers in Latin to Describe the Inhabitants of Muslim Spain," in *Actas, IV Congresso Do Estudios Árabes e Islámico* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 260.

Latin chroniclers intended to highlight this kinship. Almoravids are not described in particularly favorable terms in either of the two eleventh-century Leonese texts under discussion—whereas Andalusi Muslims are sometimes described as allies, Almoravids are not. It is perhaps more probable that chroniclers gravitated towards labeling Almoravids "Moabites" because the words sounded so similar, and because doing so continued a larger tradition of referring to contemporary adversaries as Biblical enemies of God's chosen people. Nor is it likely that the chroniclers believed the Almoravids to be descended from the Moabites, or the Almohads from Assyrians. They were convenient terms that made a point about the religious and political positioning of specific groups of Muslims in relation to Christians, rather than about their longer genealogy.

The *Historia Silense* also includes a several rather puzzling reference to Muslims as "Amorites" (*Amorrei*). Like the Moabites, the Biblical Amorites were in conflict with the Israelites, and it is possible that phonetic similarities between "Amorites" and "Moors" in Latin may have prompted the usage of the former by the *Silense* chronicler. In the reign of Ordoño II of León (d. 924), the "king of Córdoba" was so pressed by Christian troops that he called upon help from Mauritania and the Moabites. We are told that "thousands of Moors" were killed in the ensuing battle, such that "the limbs of the Amorites covered all the mountains and hills, the forests and fields."[13] In this case, the Moabites could not have been the Almoravids, though it is possible that the chronicler may have projected their existence back into the early tenth century. Regardless,

[13] "Tantam namque ex eis stragem fecisse fertur, quod, si quis astrorum investigator tot milia Maurorum computare conaretur, profecto pre multitudine, cadauerum modum numerus excederet… omnes montes et colles, siluas et agros examines Amorreorum artus tegebant": Ibid., 157-158.

Moabites here is still used to distinguish Andalusi and Maghribi Muslims, and it may be that "Amorites" too was intended to refer to North Africans. A potential connection to North Africans is more elusive in the chronicle's one previous use of the term, when it says that Fruela I, who ruled Asturias in the eighth century, killed 54,000 "Amorites" because the "king of Córdoba" wished to attack Galicia.[14] In both major manuscript traditions of the ninth-century *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, the word used to describe the 54,000 Muslims killed by Fruela is "Chaldeans," so the later Leonese chronicler's choice of "Amorites" appears to diverge from previous historiographical precedent.[15]

"Chaldeans" refers to Muslims elsewhere in the *Historia Silense* and emerged in the Asturian chronicles of the ninth century as yet another scriptural term applied to contemporary groups of people. Kenneth Baxter Wolf argues that chroniclers "tap into the repeated references to the Chaldeans in Jeremiah and other prophetic books, where the term was used almost generically to refer to the scourges suffered by the people of Israel."[16] In a similar vein, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* refers to the Umayyad caliph in Damascus as the "Babylonian king."[17] The Asturian chronicle does not, however, appear to use "Chaldean" to mean anything different from the broad categories of "Saracen" and "Ishmaelite." Towards the very end of the text, we are told that Viking raiders cross to

[14] Juan Estévez Sola, ed., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII, Pars III: Historia Silensis*, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, Vol. 71B (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 158.
[15] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 134-135.
[16] Kenneth Baxter Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 2nd ed. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 54.
[17] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 122-123.

"Mauretania" from Iberia, where they kill many "Chaldeans," so the term clearly applies to Iberian and North African Muslims alike.[18]

Overall, Biblical terms like "Ishmaelite," "Hagarene," and "Saracen" were used by Christian chroniclers to bring attention to the historical and genealogical inferiority of Muslims—but they at least acknowledged the monotheistic nature of Islam, as well as a kinship between the two religions, even if through a lesser branch. Labels like "Moabite," "Chaldean," "Amorite," "Assyrian," and "Babylonian," on the other hand, cast Muslims inaccurately as pagans and polytheists, while also divorcing them from their geographic, temporal, and ethnocultural contexts. Nonetheless, while many of these terms were applied to Muslims of any stripe, some, like "Hagarenes," "Moabites," and "Assyrians," were at times used to acknowledge geopolitical and ethnocultural differences between groups of Muslims in Iberia and North Africa.

The use of scriptural names for contemporary communities is much less common in Muslim chronicles. They occasionally refer to Christians and Christian practice with reference to the *majūs* ("magi"), a term that appears in the Qur'ān and was originally applied to Zoroastrians but which chroniclers also associated with Vikings and occasionally with Christians.[19] Much more common is the term *Naṣārā*, widely used in Arabic to identify to Christians. Like *majūs*, it appears in the Qur'ān, and though its etymology is contested it is generally understood to mean "Nazarene," a term that

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[18] Ibid., 148-149.

[19] Muḥammad ibn 'Umar ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Cairo; Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1982), 78; Abū al-'Abbās Ibn 'Idhārī al-Marrākushī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1967), 51; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 223.

referenced the town in Galilee where Jesus was raised.[20] It was also used by Christian writers in Syriac before the rise of Islam.[21] *Naṣāra*, then, was likely not derogatory in the same sense as many of the labels just discussed, since it appears to have drawn on aspects of Christian history that were not maligned by Muslims. In the western Mediterranean, however, it would have been something of an imported term, externally applied by Arabic speaking conquerors to local Christians. Iberian Christian chroniclers writing in Latin and Ibero-Romance did not refer to themselves as Nazarenes.

As Eva Lapiedra Gutiérrez observes in her thorough analysis of the terms used in Andalusi and Maghribi chronicles to refer to Christians, forms of *Naṣārā* appeared throughout the Middle Ages and in later centuries became one of the most common means of describing Christians.[22] Like "Saracen" and "Ishmaelite" in Latin and Ibero-Romance chronicles, *Naṣāra* was a general label applied to Christians in Iberia, North Africa, and beyond. Forms of the word appear a handful of times in the earliest extant chronicle written in Arabic by an Iberian author following the Islamic conquests, the ninth-century *History* of Ibn Ḥabīb, though several of these instances may be attributed to a continuation of the text by one of his students.[23] The tenth-century *History* of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya uses multiple forms of *Naṣāra* to speak about Christian individuals and their

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[20] Jean M. Fiey, "Naṣārā," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, ed. Peri Bearman et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2012), http://dx.doi.org.ezp3.lib.umn.edu/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0848; Lapiedra Gutiérrez, *Cómo los musulmanes*, 82-87.
[21] Sidney H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 7.
[22] Lapiedra Gutiérrez, *Cómo los musulmanes llamaban a los cristianos*, 87-113.
[23] 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj (La historia)*, ed. Jorge Aguadé (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1991).

religious and political traditions.[24] The idea of conversion to Christianity was often conveyed with the verbs from the same root.[25] *Naṣārā* was thus perhaps the most neutral of the terms used by Arabic chroniclers to describe Christians. Unlike some of the words used by Iberian Christians for Muslims, it highlighted religious difference without erasing core tenets of the religion. Nonetheless, it also ignored ways that western Christians spoke of themselves, and was used fairly interchangeably with more derogatory and inaccurate words.

Geographical and temporal displacement

Many of the scriptural identifiers discussed in the previous section acted to temporally and geographically displace the groups and individuals to whom they referred, evoking distant places and times long past. The use of terms like "Chaldeans," "Assyrians," and even *Naṣārā* elided local contexts and contemporary connections to the events and places detailed in the chronicles. Especially in the case of Christian labels for Muslims, this mattered because it asserted that even centuries after the eighth-century conquests and the conversion of many locals to Islam, Muslims were inherently foreign to Iberia and could never achieve true belonging. Muslims likewise used many terms for

[24] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh*, ed. al-Abyārī, 33, 96.
[25] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain: Known as the Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. Charles Cutler Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 212; Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʿa fī fatḥ al-Andalus wa-dhikr umarāʾihā wa-l-ḥurūb al-wāqiʿa baynahum* (Cairo; Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1981), 28; Luis Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus (La Conquista de al-Andalus)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994), 43; Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās, vol. 4, Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane au XIIème-XIIIème siècle (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1967), 50.

Christians which referred to peoples and places outside of the peninsula, effectively erasing their local ties and occluding geopolitical specificity.

Though many of the scriptural identifiers discussed in the previous section refer to the Middle East, a number of the less religiously colored terms that Muslim and Christian chroniclers used for one another are rooted in Europe and North Africa. In Arabic chronicles, the terms *Rūm* and *Ifranj* are extremely common and have their origins in words different groups used to describe themselves. The former refers to the Romans/Byzantines and the latter to the Franks, but both were quite broadly conceived in medieval usage. Though there are times when *Ifranj* clearly refers to people from Frankish kingdoms and *Rūm* to Byzantines, both terms were at times applied to Iberian Christians as well, especially in later centuries.[26] And of course in the later medieval and early modern period, the Ottomans self-identified as *Rūm*.

The tenth-century *History* of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya mentions that one of the Andalusi Umayyad emirs, ʻAbd al-Raḥmān II, sent delegations to "Qārla [Charles], the king of Ifranja, and to the king of the *Rūm*," presumably the Byzantine emperor.[27] The *Ifranj* and the *Rūm* here are obviously identified as separate political entities. Similarly, the ninth-century *History* of Ibn Ḥabīb distinguishes between the *Ifranj*, *Rūm*, Berbers, and Iberian Christians on several occasions. Ibn Ḥabīb reports that the eighth-century conqueror Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr "left Ifrīqiya…with one hundred Berber noblemen, twenty kings from the kings of the *Rūm*, and one hundred of the kings of al-Andalus."[28] Mūsā presents the

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[26] Lapiedra Gutiérrez, *Cómo los musulmanes*, 114-142, 248-257.
[27] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh*, ed. al-Abyārī, 87.
[28] Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj*, ed. Aguadé, 146.

captives to the Umayyad caliph in Damascus, Sulaymān, prompting the latter to ask about the characteristics of the *Rūm*, the Berbers, the people of al-Andalus, and the *Ifranj*.[29] The *Rūm* in Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* are probably Byzantine Christians in North Africa. Various early Arabic accounts, like that of the ninth-century Egyptian chronicler Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam, describe the presence of *Rūm*, Berbers, and other populations in Ifrīqiya before and during the Islamic conquests. Later texts like the fourteenth-century *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʻIdhārī acknowledge the differences between *Ifranj* and *Rūm* in some contexts, while in other cases using them as generic categories equivalent to *Naṣārā* and other labels for Christians, unmoored from any geopolitical specificity. This was more common with *Rūm* than *Ifranj*. The feminine *rūmiyya* (pl. *rūmiyyāt*), for example, was a common way to speak of enslaved Christian girls and women, regardless of their geopolitical origins.

If Arabic chroniclers were often content to conflate the initially geopolitically rooted terms *Rūm* and *Ifranj*, which referred to two major centers of Christian European power in the centuries following the rise of Islam, Christian Iberian chroniclers betrayed a similar willingness to elide the differences between groups of Muslims. While many common scriptural identifiers like "Chaldean," "Assyrian," and "Babylonian" suggested eastern origins, a number of other words Christians used to describe Muslims in the western Mediterranean emphasized associations with North Africa that were not always accurate. Two Asturian chronicles from the late ninth century, the *Chronicle of Albelda* and the *Prophetic Chronicle*, even say that the prophet Muḥammad preached in Africa, a

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[29] Ibid., 148.

falsehood that may express a genuine lack of knowledge or perhaps a willful ignorance coupled with the strength of their perception of North Africa as the source of Islam and Muslims.[30]

Certainly not all Christian Iberian chronicles offered misinformation on this point. The *Chronicle of 754* displays a nuanced understanding of the relationships between multiple Muslim groups in the decades after the initial Iberian conquests, consistently distinguishing between "Arabs" and "Moors." The Latin term *Mauri* was borrowed from Greek usage and initially referred to the local inhabitants of Mauretania, a Roman province in North Africa. While some scholars have suggested that the *Mauri* and the Berbers should be understood as one and the same, it is important to note that both categories were externally applied and constructed. Without a doubt, however, the use of *Mauri* in the *Chronicle of 754* maps onto later conceptions of Berbers in Arabic texts, and it is clear that the Latin chronicler employs it to speak of North Africans rather than Middle Easterners.

This is the case in an episode from the early 730s involving a man "from the people of the Moors, named Munnuza," who arranges a truce with the Franks and moves against the "Saracens of Spain." This is in response to news that judges in "Libya" are oppressing Munnuza's people.[31] The chronicle depicts affiliation and kinship that span the Strait for two separate groups, the "Moors" and the "Saracens." Though Munnuza is active in Iberia, his loyalty to his people in North Africa supersedes any geopolitical

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[30] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 169, 185.
[31] José Eduardo López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica mozárabe de 754* (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1980), 96-97; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 143-144.

devotion to the Arab governor of al-Andalus, whom Munnuza associates with the Umayyad government in North Africa responsible for appointing abusive judges. The chronicle makes this division clear at various points, referring to "Moors of Spain" and "Saracens of Spain" as distinct groups.[32] It also provides information on what are generally known as the "Berber revolts" of the 740s, which likewise spanned the Strait. The Latin author states that:

> All that vast desert, from which the Arab multitudes had arisen, was full of unrest, unable to tolerate the injustice of the judges. And in the western region, which extends to the southern zone and which is occupied more than any of the others by the Moors, the inhabitants openly shook their necks from the Arab yoke, unanimous and determined in their wrath.[33]

This is the closest we get to a definition of the so-called *Mauri*, who are identified by their origins in northwest Africa.

The 754 chronicler's account of the revolts demonstrates the early association of the term "Moor" not only with North African origins but also with blackness. We are told that the caliph sent an enormous army towards Tangier to subdue the rebels, and the "Moors" descended upon them. The North African troops were naked save loincloths and:

> on their most beautiful horses, showing their ugly color and gnashing their white teeth. The Egyptian horses immediately reared back, fleeing. But when, despairing, they made another charge, the Arab cavalry promptly scattered due to the color of their skin, frightened and seeking flight, and killing themselves and their riders.[34]

[32] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica mozárabe*, 90-91, 108-109; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 141, 149.
[33] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica mozárabe*, 106-107; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 148.
[34] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica mozárabe*, 108-109.

Their skin color is portrayed as so unexpected and disgusting that it startles their enemies' horses, such that they obtain victory not through their own efforts and positive qualities but through a fluke. Though the chronicle was penned by a Christian, it was also written in support of the Umayyad caliphate, a stance which shines through in the disdain for North Africans in the text—as we see when the rebel Munnuza meets a cowardly and ignoble end. In this episode, the rebellious "Moors" are depicted as monstruous and subhuman, a contrast to both Iberian Christians and Arab Muslims.

Another instance of soldiers' blackness terrifying enemy forces appears in an Arabic chronicle from centuries later, the *Fatḥ al-Andalus*. The anonymous author says that in the course of the eighth-century conquests of Iberia, the Muslim leader Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād placed the black troops (*al-sūdān*) under his command at the front of his battle lines, "so that when the Goths saw the appalling sight it frightened them. They also took prisoners from the *Naṣārā* and slaughtered them, cooking them and pretending to eat them."[35] Multiple Arabic chronicles include the use of feigned cannibalism as a scare tactic, but the *Fatḥ* couples it with the terror inspired in the Visigoths by the black soldiers in Ṭāriq's army, drawing on their perceived monstrosity to sell the façade. While neither Christian nor Muslim chroniclers depicted Africans as uniformly black, it remained an important element in narrative attempts to establish the alterity of certain groups in medieval chronicles. For Christians, Muslim and North African identities were conflated with the term "Moor," which in turn was sometimes accompanied with specific

[35] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 17; Mayte Penelas, trans., *La conquista de Al-Andalus* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2002), 11.

descriptions of skin color, whereas for Muslims the term *al-sūdān* (literally "the blacks") referred to Saharan and sub-Saharan west Africans.[36] Their emphasis on darker skin as a visible sign of the lack of humanity of entire groups of people, especially when paired with other means of highlighting inherited difference as inferior, should be understood as a form of racialization.

The Asturian chronicles of the late ninth century continued to make certain distinctions between Muslims of North African and Middle Eastern origin, though such efforts were far less systematic and prevalent than in the *Chronicle of 754*. The *Prophetic Chronicle* says that when the eighth-century Umayyad caliph al-Walīd (rendered Ulith in the Latin text) reigned "in Africa," the first Muslim conqueror arrived in Iberia, while his commander, Mūsā, "remained in Africa and cleansed the lands of the Moors."[37] While it may be that the anonymous chronicler did not intend to locate the caliph in North Africa but merely to assert his power in the region, the claim several passages later that the prophet Muḥammad preached in Africa suggests that this was another error. Nonetheless, the statement that Mūsā cleansed Africa of the "Moors" suggests at least some awareness of differences between groups of Muslims and of conflicts between conquerors from the Middle East and local populations in North Africa.

On one occasion, the *Chronicle of Albelda* appears to refer to Iberian Muslims of North African origin as *Gaetuli*, a Roman term applied to inhabitants of the region south of the Atlas mountains. The anonymous chronicler says that Alfonso II of Asturias

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[36] For a more thorough analysis of external constructions of the *bilād al-sūdān* ("lands of the blacks"), see Michael A. Gomez, *African Dominion: A New History of Empire in Early and Medieval West Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 43-57.
[37] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 183, 257.

"achieved multiple victories against the Ishmaelites, and defeated armies of the *Gaetuli*, one in Asturias…and the other in Galicia."[38] The single use of this term to describe Alfonso's enemies seems intended to express more specificity than broader terms that appear throughout the chronicle, especially when paired with "Ishmaelites." The same passage also mentions Mahṃūd of Mérida, who rebelled against the Andalusi emir and fled to Asturias under the protection of Alfonso, events related in multiple Muslim and Christian chronicles.[39] Though the Albelda chronicler does not specify Maḥmūd's religion or ethnocultural background, he is generally understood to be of North African descent and/or a *muwallad*, someone whose family converted to Islam after the conquests. The mistreatment and inferior status of non-Arab Muslims in al-Andalus prompted a number of revolts, including that of Maḥmūd. It makes sense that the chronicler would mention him in the context of Muslim populations in Iberia who were differentiated from Arabs and associated with North Africa, even if this was achieved through the use of an apparent archaism, *Gaetuli*.[40] The passage in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* that relates the same defeat of the Muslims in Asturias, however, refers to them as Arabs, and it is not clear why the two chroniclers employ different vocabulary to

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[38] Ibid., 174-175, 249.

[39] Ann Christys, "Crossing the Frontier of Ninth-Century Hispania," in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 35–53.

[40] The *Chronicle of Nájera* also refers to a *muwallad* named Mūsā as "of the nation of the Gaetuli (*natione Getulus*)": Juan Estévez Sola, ed., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII Pars II: Chronica Naierensis*, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Medievalis 71A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), 111. This usage is confusing, however, since Mūsā is referred to as "Goth" immediately prior, and praised for his magnificent lineage despite his religion, following similar passages in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the *Historia Silense*: Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 144; Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 148. The editor of the Nájera chronicle suggests that *Getulus* in this case simply meant Goth.

discuss the same event.[41] Either way, the clear distinction between "Moors" and "Saracens" in the *Chronicle of 754* leaves little trace in the Asturian chronicles, where only hints of ethnocultural and geopolitical specificity remain.

Though the majority of the twelfth-century *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* is devoted to pre-conquest history, it too distinguishes between Middle Easterners and North Africans, and its use of "Moors" is often specific to the latter. The anonymous chronicle draws on a mix of Arabic and Latin sources. Like many chronicles from both linguistic traditions, it begins with a geographical description of Iberia, stating that there are "two Spains; that is, the upper and the lower…one of which is close to the Moors, and one of which is farther from them."[42] This suggests that the "Moors" are located across the Strait of Gibraltar, in North Africa. When relating how the Byzantine emperor Heraclius came to power, Pseudo-Isidore says that he gathered "all the African and Arab nations up to the sea of the ocean," along with "all the dromonds and galleys he found in Africa and the Arab territory and that of the Spanish."[43] Though the events in question would have slightly predated the emergence of Islam, and nothing in the text implies that Arabs here are understood to be Muslim, Pseudo-Isidore establishes a close relationship between events in Byzantium, the Arabian peninsula, North Africa, and Iberia. This sets the stage for all the major players in the Islamic conquests, first in the east and then in the west, and indicates that while there were connections between Africans and Arabs, they were not one and the same.

[41] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 138-139, 212-213.
[42] Fernando González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *La Chronica Gothorum Pseudo-Isidoriana (ms. Paris BN 6113)* (A Coruña: Toxosoutos, 2000), 110-111.
[43] Ibid., 174-175.

Even so, a key episode in the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* directly contrasts being a Christian with being a "Moor." To avenge his daughter, who has been raped by the Visigothic king, a man named Julian famously betrays the monarch and guides the Muslim conqueror Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād through Iberia. When Julian initially goes to Ṭāriq with this offer, the Muslim asks him, "What faith will I have in you, since you are a Christian and I am a Moor?"[44] Julian then offers his wife, sons, and wealth as guarantees of his promise. Despite the chronicle's differentiation between Arabs and Africans, therefore, this question towards the end of the text collapses Ṭāriq's Muslim and North African identities into the term "Moor," a state of being considered diametrically opposed to Christianity. If the beginning of the text asserts that one of "the two Spains" is closer to the "Moors" and one farther, the ending shows that the "Moors" have achieved a greater proximity to both than was natural or desirable.

In most Latin and Ibero-Romance chronicles from the tenth century on, the definition of a "Moor" as any Muslim prevailed, concealing ethnocultural and geopolitical specificity. The association between Muslims and North Africa was thus built into one of the most common words used by Christians in medieval Iberia—and indeed Europe more generally—to refer to Muslims. This was significant not only because it erased the Middle Eastern origins of many Andalusis, but also because it continually asserted their foreignness to the peninsula, a kind of double displacement. The collapsing of identities, paired with stereotypes about the startling and monstrous

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[44] Ibid., 184-185.

physiques of black Africans, functioned to racialize Muslims.[45] Like *Ifranj* and *Rūm*, "Moor" suggested a specific geography that was not always accurate for the peoples to whom it was applied, and all three labels were closely linked to religious identity. Unlike these Arabic terms, however, "Moor" persists in modern parlance, on scholarly as well as popular levels, and "is still so unstable a term that it can accommodate efforts to reclaim the figure of Othello as an African or re-invent him as an Arab or a Turk."[46]

Dehumanization

There are elements of dehumanization in many of the terms discussed above, which acted to highlight religious alterity and deviance and to displace groups of people geographically and temporally. This section will examine a number of labels Christian and Muslim chroniclers used for one another which were founded in accusations of barbarity, lack of civilization, and lack of coherent speech.

Perhaps one of the least remarked upon words employed by Muslim chroniclers to speak of Christians is *ʿilj* (pl. *ʿulūj*), which can carry the sense of non-Arab, infidel, barbarian, and/or chattel.[47] *ʿIlj* appears frequently in medieval Iberian and North African chronicles, especially from later centuries. In the anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* it tends to apply to Christians in positions of power, including Roderic, the last Visigothic king of

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[45] "*Moor* in these and other texts of similar provenance underscored for Christian readers not only the Muslims' religious and cultural otherness but also and more particularly their 'foreign,' racialized African origins: their misplaced and thus temporary presence as outsiders supposedly without roots in Castile. Having come from another, darker place, the Moors surely belonged somewhere else": Brann, "The Moors?" 312.
[46] Ibid., 317.
[47] Lapiedra Gutiérrez, *Cómo los musulmanes*, 189-247.

Iberia; Julian, whose vengeance against Roderic set the eighth-century Islamic conquests into motion; Ayla, Roderic's widow who later married the Muslim governor ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz; and Pelayo, the legendary founder of the kingdom of Asturias in northern Iberia.[48] A similar usage prevails in several thirteenth-century chronicles from Maghribi authors. The *Kitāb al-muʿjib* of ʿAbd al-Wāḥid also refers to Julian as *ʿilj*, along with king Alfonso VI of Castile-León,[49] while the *Naẓm al-jumān* of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān applies the term to Reverter, a Christian mercenary who served the Almoravids.[50]

ʿIlj in fourteenth-century chronicles was applied more widely to both individual leaders and Christian Iberian populations, as in the *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʿIdhārī.[51] The *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* of Ibn Abī Zarʿ uses *ʿilj* a number of times to refer to Christians taken captive by Muslims. In these cases the term appears to refer exclusively to adult men, since numbers of *ʿilj* captives taken in a particular attack are often listed alongside other categories of captives, including women (*imraʾa* and *rūmiyya*) and children.[52] This use of *ʿilj*, one meaning of which is "slave" or "chattel," underlines the sense in the *Rawḍ* that Christians were, by definition, meant to be enslaved by Muslims—just as *rūmiyyāt* was rarely used to refer to free Christian women, but instead became a way to speak of

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[48] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 21-22, 42, 48.
[49] ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Histoire des Almohades*, ed. Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1881), 6, 83; ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Kitāb al-Muʿŷib fī Taljiṣ Ajbār al Magrib: Lo admirable en el resumen de las noticias del Magrib*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Tetuán: Editora Marroquí, 1955), 7, 93.
[50] Ibn al-Qaṭṭān al-Marrākushī, *Naẓm al-jumān li-tartīb mā salafa min akhbār al-zamān*, ed. Maḥmūd ʿAlī Makki (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1990), 237-238.
[51] Ibn ʿIdhārī, *Bayān*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 4, 9-10, 12, 14-15.
[52] Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 412, 455, 458, 465-477; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 597, 652, 656, 666-667.

enslaved Christian women from any region. The captives are further dehumanized when Ibn Abī Zar‘ lists them along with other spoils of war, including animals.

More widespread was the term *‘ajam*, from an Arabic root which, like the Greek word from which we derive "barbarian," refers to incoherent speech.[53] Its usage shifted over time, in some contexts referring specifically to Persians, but *‘ajam* was used most generally as an antonym for Arabs, who prided themselves on their eloquence in speech. In the western Mediterranean, it was often applied to Christians and used to describe the languages in which they spoke and wrote.[54] The ninth-century *History* of Ibn Ḥabīb explains that the Goths are "the kings of the *‘ajam* of al-Andalus."[55] Along with *‘ilj*, multiple chronicles also refer to Julian as *‘ajam* and say that one of the Muslim conquerors presented the Umayyad caliph with noble captives from the *‘ajam*.[56] The anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* relates a monk's prediction that ‘Abd al-Raḥmān I, the first Umayyad emir in Iberia, would rule "the Arabs and the *‘ajam*" in al-Andalus.[57] The twelfth-century *Mann bi-l-imāma* of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt makes frequent use of the word *‘ajam*, often giving dates in both Islamic and *ajamī* calendars and describing the

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[53] Lapiedra Gutiérrez, *Cómo los musulmanes*, 258-285.
[54] María Angeles Gallego, "The Languages of Medieval Iberia and Their Religious Dimension," *Medieval Encounters* 9, no. 1 (2003), 126-135.
[55] Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj*, ed. Aguadé, 138.
[56] Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *History*, ed. Torrey, 205; Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ*, ed. al-Abyārī, 33, 36.
[57] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 31; Penelas, trans., *La conquista*, 24.

languages spoken by Iberian Christians as *ʻajamiyya*.[58] The fourteenth-century *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* of Ibn Abī Zarʻ does the same.[59]

The Arabic phrase *barbar*, or Berber, was derived from Greco-Latin usage and, like *ʻajam*, denoted an incoherence of speech and a lack of civilization. Though especially in later centuries it was generally used by Muslims to refer to other Muslims, or to themselves, this was not exclusively the case. Various chronicles use the term *barbar* to speak about North African populations before they had converted to Islam. It is not always clear whether chroniclers understood these pre-Islamic populations to be Christian, Jewish, or pagan. The *Fatḥ al-Andalus* cites the opinion of the famed eleventh-century Andalusi jurist, Ibn Ḥazm, that "infidel Berbers were the worst Berbers, because they were neither people of the Book nor bound by divine law (*sharʻ*), and likewise Berber Muslims are the worst Muslims, and most of them are a disgrace."[60] Many Muslim chroniclers, especially in earlier centuries, associated the people they called *barbar* with ethnocultural and religious inferiority, and the term shares a number of similarities in usage and meaning with labels that Muslims chroniclers generally used for Christians, like *ʻajam* and *ʻilj*. As Nicola Clarke puts it, "the overriding portrayal is of the Berbers as *ʿajam*: non-Arabic speaking barbarians who are barely controllable, barely

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[58] ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Mann bi-l-imāma: tārīkh bilād al-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus fī ʻahd al-Muwaḥḥidīn*, ed. ʻAbd al-Hādī Tāzī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1987), 90, 179, 213, 296, 315, 410; ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bil-imāma: Estudio preliminar, traduccion e indices por Ambrosio Huici Miranda*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Valencia: Anubar, 1969), 24, 70, 87, 144, 157, 213.

[59] Ibn Abī Zarʻ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 191, 310; Ibn Abī Zarʻ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 293; vol. 2, 459.

[60] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 55; Penelas, trans., *La conquista*, 44-45.

civilised, and barely Muslim."[61] That many people came to self-identify as *barbar* over time does not erase the term's discriminatory history or the similarity in the language Muslim chroniclers used to speak of religious and ethnocultural others.

Ramzi Rouighi argues that though *barbar* had a longer history in Arabic usage, it gained the sense of "Berber" as we understand it today only in the context of post-conquest Iberia, where it provided a useful way to distinguish between Arab and non-Arab settlers. In North Africa, on the other hand, Rouighi notes that *barbar* was rarely used by local authors for several centuries after the Islamic conquests, because they tended to use more specific terms.[62] Eventually, however, it became so prevalent that even many North Africans to whom it was externally applied began to use it as a self-identifier, while also maintaining more specific tribal affiliations. Rouighi refers to this process as "Berberization." Notably, many Muslim chronicles from later centuries do not use *barbar* to describe the language spoken by Berbers, instead referring to it as *al-lisān al-gharbī* ("the western tongue") or merely *gharbī* ("western").[63] Though multiple chroniclers report that the Berbers originally migrated from the Middle East, their presence in the west was nonetheless a significant part of how they were defined and distinguished from Arabs, by Muslims and Christians alike.

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[61] Nicola Clarke, "'They are the most treacherous of people': Religious Difference in Arabic Accounts of Three Early Medieval Berber Revolts," *eHumanista* 24 (2013), 512.
[62] Rouighi, *Inventing the Berbers*, 15-43; Ramzi Rouighi, "The Andalusi Origins of the Berbers?" *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 1 (2010): 93–108.
[63] Evariste Lévi-Provençal, ed., *Documents inédits d'histoire almohade: fragments manuscrits du "legajo" 1919 du fonds arabe de l'Escurial* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1928), 100, 163-164; Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. Tāzī, 333, 411, 434; Ibn al-Qaṭṭān, *Naẓm al-jumān*, ed. Makki, 135, 173. Some chronicles, however, do refer to *al-lisān al-barbar(ī)*, *al-lugha al-barbariyya* ("the Berber tongue"), or *kalām al-barbar* ("the speech of the Berbers"): Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 77, 87, 226, 365; Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ*, ed. al-Abyārī, 53.

There is some evidence that Christian chroniclers adopted and appropriated the Arabic use of *barbar*. As previously discussed, Christians tended to associate Muslims with North Africa and made various linguistic efforts over time to differentiate between Muslims of North African and Middle Eastern descent. In the twelfth century, a number of Latin chronicles employed the term *barbarus* ("barbarian") in ways that suggest they alluded not only to the word's Greco-Latin history, but also to its contemporary use in Arabic. The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* says that the Almoravid emir placed the Christian mercenary Reverter in charge of "the captive Christian soldiers and the barbarians."[64] Given the context, it seems clear that "barbarians" in this case is a transliteration of the Arabic *barbar* and that Reverter commanded both Christian and Berber troops in North Africa.

Barbarus may also be used in this way in the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*, though it is less clear. The text says that in the late seventh century, the Visigothic king Gondolus (probably Chindasuinth) "was most learned in the barbarian tongue, and he sent delegations to the barbarians and to the people of the Oriba, as the books of the prophets relate."[65] A modern editor and translator of the text suggests that the Oriba might refer to the Awraba tribe that inhabited the region around Fes, and that the "books of the prophets" are likely Arabic sources.[66] Whether or not this is the case, it seems probable that "barbarians" in this instance refers to North African Berbers. Though the bulk of the text is devoted to ancient and late antique history, it is not clear what other "barbarian"

[64] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 200.
[65] González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *Chronica*, 178-179.
[66] Ibid., 76-79.

people or language might have been meant by a twelfth-century chronicler describing these seventh-century events. Though “Berber” would not have been particularly accurate a label for North African peoples in the seventh century either, it follows contemporary Arabic usage of *barbar*.

The *Historia Silense* uses *barbarus* much more frequently than the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* or the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*, but its meaning is less specific to North Africa, referring instead to Muslims in general. In this case, it seems likely that the *Silense* chronicler intentionally drew on both the Arabic *barbar* and the Greco-Latin *barbarus*. The text compares the Islamic conquests to the flood of Noah, inundating and eliminating Iberia’s traditions of scholarship and knowledge. Muslims are cast as uncivilizing forces who must be overcome, modeled on the “barbarian” waves of the late antiquity. By labeling Muslims *barbarus*, the *Silense* builds on pre-conquest historiography while also echoing one of the common words Iberian Muslims used to differentiate and denigrate one another. In this usage, the word’s shared etymology comes to the fore. In the mid-thirteenth century, the *Chronicon mundi* of Lucas of Tuy followed suit, using *barbarus* in similar ways. Where Arabic writers used *barbar* to collapse the distinct identities of multiple North African populations, Latin writers used *barbarus* as they did “Moor,” grouping all Muslims under a term that vaguely referred to North Africa, simultaneously asserting their foreignness and barbarity—again a form of racialization.

Overall, while Muslim chronicles employed a variety of terms that cast religious and ethnocultural others as uncivilized, incoherent, and effectively subhuman, this

occurred less often in the Christian tradition, where other means of highlighting alterity prevailed. The use of *barbarus* in ways that reflect Arabic usage, however, is a significant exception that adds to the word's convoluted history through multiple linguistic traditions—from Greek to Latin to Arabic and back into Latin with a new layer of meaning.

Naming places

This section examines the words chroniclers used to describe physical and political space in the western Mediterranean. Unlike names for people, names for places in medieval chronicles from Iberia and North Africa tended to be less explicitly connected with religious identity and were more rooted in ancient and late antique administrative divisions than in scriptural language. Nonetheless, place names were clearly understood to be related to a group's right to inhabit and rule a given territory, and to their claims on its past, present, and future. Arabic, Latin, and Ibero-Romance writers also employed similar vocabularies to speak about the spaces that separated and connected them. Ultimately, these terms reveal a great deal about the ways that Muslim and Christian chroniclers conceptualized their relationship to one another across time and space.

Naming Iberia and North Africa

Two of the most enduring ways to refer to the medieval Iberian peninsula, Spain and al-Andalus, are quite common in chronicles from the period, though each tends to

appear almost exclusively in the writings of Christians and Muslims, respectively. Both were used at times as geographical labels that referred to the peninsula as a whole and at times to refer to a particular polity. Though both Muslims and Christians in the western Mediterranean were aware of one another's usage, they generally chose to not mention it, much less adopt it themselves.

As Alejandro García Sanjuán shows in his analysis of medieval Arabic uses of the term al-Andalus, it could contain multiple meanings, though it most often referred to Iberian territories ruled by Muslims.[67] The broader geographical/peninsular usage prevails in Ibn Ḥabīb's ninth-century *History*, which refers to the Visigothic kings as "the kings of al-Andalus," distinguishing them from the leaders of the *Rūm* and the *Ifranj*. As time elapsed after the Islamic conquests, Ibn Ḥabīb's use of al-Andalus easily shifted to refer to the emerging Muslim governorship and emirate. While multiple Arabic authors displayed an awareness of Latin and Ibero-Romance words for Spain and Iberia and even elaborated fabricated etymologies for them, as a later section will explore, they tended not to repeat them after an initial mention that was often included with a geographical description.[68]

Early Christian chroniclers were even less likely to use forms of al-Andalus, though it began to appear with more frequency in thirteenth-century texts like the *Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile* and the *Estoria de España*. The former uses it in a very limited context, saying *populi de Handalucia* and *Handaluces* a handful of times to

[67] Alejandro García Sanjuán, "El significado geográfico del topónimo al-Andalus en las fuentes árabes," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 33, no. 1 (2003), 5-7.
[68] Ibid., 10-11.

distinguish Andalusis from Almohads, using *Andalucia* as a place name, and suggesting that the term came from the Vandals who occupied southern Iberia for a period in late antiquity.[69] The latter text uses it more frequently, mentioning *Andaluzia* in a variety of contexts throughout.[70] A century earlier, some Latin charters also began to use *Indeluciis*/*Induluciis* to specify Andalusis.[71]

The term (Hi)spania has a somewhat more varied history in Christian Iberian usage. As Alexander Pierre Bronisch outlines, in the works of Isidore of Seville and Julian of Toledo it referred most specifically to the Visigothic kingdom in Iberia, but was more generally a geographical term signifying the peninsula.[72] The earliest local Christian chronicle postdating the Islamic conquests, the anonymous *Chronicle of 754*, uses *Hispania* in both senses. Though the chronicler mourns the fall of Spain—the Visigothic state—he nonetheless continues to speak of various groups of Muslims as "the Saracens of Spain" and "the Moors of Spain."

The Asturian chronicles of the ninth century also adopted a flexible definition of Hispania. The *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, for example, preserves the Isidorian usage of Hispania as primarily referring to the Visigothic state when recounting pre-conquest events. Post-conquest Hispania in the text, however, refers not to the peninsula as a

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[69] Rocío Carande Herrero, Luis Charlo Brea, and Juan Estévez Sola, eds., *Chronica hispana saeculi XIII*, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 73 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 97-98.
[70] Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.1, VPE: 4, 47 and 49 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [03/25/2021]. These are just some examples from early on in the *Estoria*, but there are multiple more throughout.
[71] Hélène Sirantoine, "Sobre las primeras fuentes de los términos 'Andaluz' y 'Andalucía': *cum aliis multis indeluciis* y *Alandaluf*, unas ocurrencias documentales y cronísticas a mediados del siglo XII," *Anaquel de estudios árabes* 15 (2004): 185–90.
[72] Alexander Pierre Bronisch, "El concepto de España en la historiografía visigoda y asturiana," *Norba: Revista de Historia* 19 (2006), 9-32.

whole or to the Asturian kingdom that claimed to have rekindled the flame of the Visigoths, but instead to the Muslim polity of al-Andalus.[73] During the reign of Ordoño I, for instance, the Asturian king refortified and repopulated several long-deserted cities "partly with people from his own kingdom and partly with those coming up out of Spain."[74] Similarly, the *Chronicle of Albelda* states that the Asturian king Silo "had peace with Spain," a statement which only makes sense if Spain is understood to be separate from his own kingdom. The *Chronicle of Alfonso III*'s account of Silo's reign says he had peace with the "Ishmaelites," suggesting that Spain in this context does indeed refer to al-Andalus.[75]

Christian chroniclers in later centuries, however, would return to the broader geographical sense of Spain, using it to refer to Christian territory. It was also common for Latin and Ibero-Romance chroniclers to speak of plural "Spains," reflecting ancient usage while also conveying the multiplicity of Christian and Muslim states which made up the peninsula in the Middle Ages. The early twelfth-century *Historia Silense* understands Spain to refer to Christian Iberia or the peninsula more broadly, and tends to describe al-Andalus as the "Toledan kingdom" (*regnum Toletanum*). A few decades later, the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* asserted Alfonso VII's imperial claim to multiple peoples and places in the peninsula. The reclamation of the term Spain(s) to signify primarily Iberian territories under Christian control—whether actually or aspirationally—

[73] Ibid., 32-40.
[74] "Populo partim ex suis, partim ex Spania aduenientibus impleuit": Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 144; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 175.
[75] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 136-137, 174.

coincided with the period of renewed specificity, around the twelfth century, in the terms chroniclers used to identify different groups of Muslims.

Names for North Africa, like Iberia, shared both commonalities and divergences across religious and linguistic lines. Whereas Europe was a broader continental designator for Latin and Ibero-Romance writers, they did not understand Africa to mean the entire African continent but instead generally meant North Africa. The twelfth-century *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*, for instance, distinguishes between Africans and Ethiopians and between Egypt and Africa when explaining the geographic dispersion of Noah's descendants.[76] Later in the text, when describing the emperor Marcian's division of the world into eight parts, the chronicler states that the third part included "Carthage and all of Africa" which had jurisdiction over "Numidia, Bisintia, Barbarica, Africa and its neighbors, and Ethiopia," while the fourth part encompassed Alexandria and "all of Egypt."[77] Africa clearly refers not to the whole continent, then, but to a region roughly corresponding to modern Tunisia, separate from Egypt and Ethiopia. Similarly, the *Chronicle of 754* refers to the "African commander" (*duci Africano*), presumably the Umayyad governor of Ifrīqiya, a territory between Egypt and northwest Africa.[78] This is in the same passage, discussed above, that relates the Umayyad suppression of the revolts of the "Moors," in which the Egyptian horses are frightened by their dark skin. The chronicler's definition of Africa here seems to include neither northwest Africa or Egypt

[76] González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *Chronica*, 114-115.
[77] Ibid., 152-153.
[78] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica mozárabe*, 106-107.

and in fact suggests a significant degree of difference and unfamiliarity between the regions.

The Arabic term Ifrīqiya, like the Latin and Ibero-Romance "Africa," has its roots in the name of a Roman province and indicated roughly the same geography. Egypt was called Miṣr, Ethiopia was al-Ḥabasha, and northwest Africa, more or less corresponding to modern Morocco, was called the Maghrib, meaning "place of the setting sun." In contrast, eastern Islamic regions in the Middle East and the Levant were generally referred to as the Mashriq, "place of the rising sun." The east-west division between the Maghrib and the Mashriq was often invoked by medieval chroniclers, though what was included in each could vary.[79] The *Chronicle of 754* seems to replicate the Arabic division between Maghrib and Mashriq to some extent, referring multiple times to Byzantium/Asia Minor as Romania and to Iberia as part of "the western regions."[80] The text also mentions conflicts between "easterners and westerners" (*orientalia…et occidentalia*), in this case Syrians and Andalusis.[81]

In Muslim chronicles, the Maghrib sometimes encompassed other western regions under Muslim control, like Iberia and Sicily, as well as Ifrīqiya. The term Maghrib al-aqṣā, or "farthest west," could be used to specify northwest Africa/Morocco. This is the case in the fourteenth-century *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* when Ibn Abī Zar' describes the founder of the Idrisid dynasty fleeing from Qayrawān in Ifrīqiya to the Maghrib al-aqṣā, over which

[79] For potential implications of this usage, see Fabio T. López-Lázaro, "The Rise and Global Significance of the First 'West': The Medieval Islamic Maghrib," *Journal of World History* 24, no. 2 (2013): 259–307.
[80] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica mozárabe*, 66-68, 84-85, 90-91; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 90-91, 138, 141.
[81] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica mozárabe*, 112-113; Wolf, *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 150.

he eventually rules.[82] In the thirteenth-century *Kitāb al-mu'jib*, however, 'Abd al-Wāḥid includes al-Andalus in his definition of the Maghrib al-aqṣā.[83]

The Mashriq was likewise a flexible designator in various chronicles. The *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* uses the term on several occasions to refer to Ifrīqiya. Ibn Abī Zar' says that the Almohad caliph 'Abd al-Mu'min goes to the Mashriq to attack Bijāya and al-Mahdiyya (Algerian and Tunisian port cities), that he goes to the Mashriq and takes control of Ifrīqiya as far as Barqa (traditionally the first city conquered by Muslims in Ifrīqiya in the seventh century), and that the Hafsids inherit Almohad power in the Mashriq.[84] Especially in the context of the Almohad caliphate and its successor states, there were a variety of efforts to assert the preeminence of the Maghrib in the Islamic world and to minimize the importance of the Middle East and the Levant, its traditional center. These are apparent in the *Rawḍ*'s Maghrib-centric perspective and its inclusion of Ifrīqiya in the Mashriq rather than the Maghrib.

Though terminologies and boundaries of specific regions varied, therefore, neither medieval Latin nor Arabic chronicles seemed to feel a need to refer to Africa as a continent. In later centuries, however, Latin and Ibero-Romance usage of Africa did become more expansive, and began to include northwest Africa as well. The thirteenth-century *Estoria de España* of Alfonso X, for example, says that "in Africa there was a

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[82] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 21, 23; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 35, 38.
[83] 'Abd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 3, 115; 'Abd al-Wāḥid, *Kitāb al-Mu'ŷib*, trans. Huici Miranda, 3, 119.
[84] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 250, 259, 268, 295; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 385, 394, 406, 439.

province, ruler of ten cities, which was called Tingitania."[85] A few decades earlier, a similar statement appeared in the Latin *Historia* of the archbishop of Toledo, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada.[86] Tingitania generally referred to northwest Africa, including the city of Tangier. By the thirteenth century, then, Africa was much more common in Latin and Ibero-Romance usage and was applied to Ifrīqiya and the Maghrib alike, though other regions in the continent maintained more specificity. Jiménez de Rada was thus able to describe the Almohad caliph Ya'qūb ibn Yūsuf as leader of huge swathes of territory and many communities, saying that "Parthians, Arabs, Africans, Ethiopians, Almohads, and those of the Clear Mountains [the Atlas] were in his army, and the Andalus of Baetica was under his command."[87]

Antique legacies

Establishing narrative control over the more distant history of Iberia and North Africa was one of the ways Muslim and Christian chroniclers worked to legitimize political and religious claims to contested territory in the present and the more recent past. Christian chroniclers often saw themselves as direct descendants of the Greeks, Romans, and Visigoths, and thus viewed their history and Iberian territory as an inheritance. Though many Muslims in Iberia and North Africa would have been descended from the same successive waves of conquerors and settlers, they often

[85] Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.1, VPE: 567, 19 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [03/26/2021].
[86] Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie, sive, Historia Gothica*, ed. Juan Fernández Valverde, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 72 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987), 105.
[87] Ibid., 251.

preferred to assert more exclusively Arab and/or Berber lineages.[88] The strategies Muslims and Christians used to make claims on the ancient past therefore differed substantially.

Even relatively brief Christian texts like the ninth-century *Chronicle of Albelda* made a point of integrating Biblical, Roman, Visigothic, and Asturian history. The twelfth-century *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* is devoted almost entirely to Roman and Visigothic history, culminating in a brief account of the eighth-century Islamic conquests. And as longer universal chronicles became more prevalent in the thirteenth century in both Latin and Ibero-Romance, mythological and Biblical figures came to play an increasingly prominent role in texts like the *Chronicon mundi* of Lucas of Tuy, the *Historia* of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, and the *Estoria de España* of Alfonso X.

Along with narrating these histories as chapters of their own, however, some Christian chroniclers adopted other strategies to assert continuities between past and present. The twelfth-century *Historia Silense*, for instance, employs a number of archaisms to speak about people and places in Iberia and North Africa. As Hélène Sirantoine notes, Muslims in the *Silense* are "characterized by their barbarism, an antiquarian conceit that also shows in the geographical nomenclature employed in the text, where the names of the old Roman provinces are used to locate the territories occupied by the Muslims: *Baetica*, *Lusitania*, *Carthaginensis*."[89] When Fernando I of

[88] Notable exceptions include figures like Ibn al-Qūṭiyya and prominent *muwallad* rebels, as well as proponents of the *shūʿubiyya* movement, like Ibn Gharsiyya: Abū ʿĀmir Ibn Gharsiyah, *The Shuʿubiyya in Al-Andalus: The Risāla of Ibn García and Five Refutations*, trans. James T. Monroe (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); see also Jorge Elices Ocón, "Discourses of Antiquity in Early Medieval Iberia," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 13, no. 1 (2021): 28–52.
[89] Sirantoine, "Histories of the Islamic World," 133.

León goes on campaign in Portugal, it is described as a place "over the greater part of which, from the provinces of Lusitania and Betica, the barbarians held sway, belching forth profanities."[90] When narrating the attack and conquest of Muslim-held cities by Christians, the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* makes a point of giving the cities' ancient names.[91] Similarly, the continued use of "Mauretania" in texts like the *Silense* and the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, paired with the persistence and prevalence of the term "Moors," constitutes an archaism based on Roman geographical and administrative divisions. So does the use of "Africa" and "Africans," for that matter. Both Muslims and the regions they occupied were consigned to the past through the use of archaisms, which functioned in tandem with a variety of scriptural identifiers.

Muslim strategies for counteracting and challenging Christian claims to authority over ancient history included the elaboration of new toponyms and etymologies for place names. Toponyms tended to be connected to prominent figures in the Islamic conquests—the most famous example being the naming of Gibraltar (from the Arabic *jabal Ṭāriq*, "mountain of Ṭāriq"), the landing place of the eighth-century conqueror Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād. Multiple chronicles also mention the naming of an island after one of Ṭāriq's enslaved women, Umm Ḥakīm.[92] The name of another prominent leader of the conquests, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, was likewise attached to various geographical features in chronicle accounts.[93]

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[90] Barton and Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid*, 48; Justo Pérez de Urbel and Atilano González Ruiz-Zorrilla, eds., *Historia Silense* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1959), 188.
[91] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 166-167; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid*, 179-180.
[92] Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest*, ed. Torrey, 206; Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 18.
[93] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ*, ed. al-Abyārī, 35; Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 24, 28.

Etymologies, on the other hand, were generally constructed around legendary figures and populations of antiquity. For instance, rather than being assigned a Roman origin, the term Ifrīqiya is connected to an ancient Arab king named Ifrīqish in the fourteenth-century *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* of Ibn Abī Zar'. He offers several explanations for the origins of the Lamtūna tribe, a subdivision of the Ṣanhāja tribe, which produced the Almoravid dynasty. According to one source cited by Ibn Abī Zar', they are descended from the ancient and lauded Yemeni king Ḥimyar via his descendant Ifrīqish, who:

> went on campaign to the lands of the Maghrib and the territory of Ifrīqiya, and when he penetrated the Maghrib he built the city of Ifrīqiya, derived from his name, leaving in it the Ṣanhāja from among the Ḥimyar and their leaders in order to fend off the Berbers from its surroundings, to extract the *kharāj* tax, and to administer its affairs.[94]

This suggests that the Ṣanhāja, Lamtūna, and Almoravids were not native to North Africa, an assertion which is not uncommon in medieval Arabic accounts of the tribes that came to be known collectively as Berbers.[95] Less common, however, is the claim that the Ṣanhāja and their subtribes were not Berber, but that other North African groups whose presence predated theirs were. Ibn Abī Zar' cites another source which offers somewhat more clarity, saying that Ifrīqish "moved the Berbers from the Levant (*al-Shām*) and Egypt to the Maghrib and built the city of Ifrīqiya, granting the Arabs their homes in the Maghrib and leaving two of his most astute tribes there, the Kutāma and the Ṣanhāja, who remain among the Berbers today."[96] In this account, the Berbers too are

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[94] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 151; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 226-227.
[95] Helena de Felipe, "Leyendas árabes sobre el origen de los beréberes," *Al-Qantara* 11, no. 2 (1990): 379–96.
[96] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 151.

initially foreign to North Africa and Ifrīqish places the Ṣanhāja above them, justifying the rule of the Almoravids over other Arab and Berber tribes centuries later. In the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, the etymology of Ifrīqiya and the figure of Ifrīqish elevate the legacy of the tribes which made up the Almoravids while also establishing deeper historical ties between the Arabs and North Africa, eroding the significance of Greco-Roman conquerors.

Several Arabic chronicles also mention a group of people called the *Afāriqa*, who they seem to understand as more or less native to Ifrīqiya. This was something of a rarity in Muslim and Christian chroniclers' discussion of communities in either Iberia or North Africa, which they tended to describe as having migrated at some point. Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, a ninth-century Egyptian writer, relates the settlement of Palestinian Berbers in Ifrīqiya and the Maghrib, saying that they pushed the *Rūm* out of certain areas, while "the *Afāriqa* remained, and they had been subservient to the *Rūm* under a capitulation agreement (*ṣulḥ*) which they came to with anyone who controlled their lands."[97] Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam was at a substantial remove from the events he recounts, and we should not take him as an authority on the demography of pre-Islamic North Africa. Nonetheless, he obviously understands the *Afāriqa* to be something like a native population, whose religious identity was unclear but who successively submitted to the Romans/Byzantines, the Berbers, and eventually the Muslims.[98]

The *Afāriqa* also appear in the fourteenth-century *Bayān al-maghrib* of Ibn 'Idhārī in several contexts that are noteworthy because of the depiction of them

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[97] Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest*, ed. Torrey, 170.
[98] For more information on the historiography of the *Afāriqa*, see 'Abdulwāhid Dḥanūn Ṭāha, *The Muslim Conquest and Settlement of North Africa and Spain* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 21.

migrating, on multiple occasions, from North Africa to Iberia. When discussing the history of Iberia leading up to the eighth-century Islamic conquests, Ibn ʿIdhārī says that the first people to inhabit the peninsula after the flood were known as *al-Andalish*, so it was named al-Andalus after them. Because they were magi (*majūs*), God sought to remove them, withholding rain until they were forced to leave. Though the chronology is off, it is possible that the etymology of al-Andalus is connected here to the polytheistic Vandals who occupied parts of Iberia and North Africa in the early fifth century, an explanation that appears in some other medieval sources. After an intervening century in which the land "from the border of Ifranja to the sea" remained empty, "a people from the *Afāriqa*" arrived from Ifrīqiya, where the ruler had expelled them because of a famine. The rivers of Iberia then flowed again for another 150 years, until the conquests of the *Ishbāniyya*, the Romans (*ʿajam Rūma/al-Rumāniyyūn*), and finally the Goths.[99] When relating the Islamic conquests of Ifrīqiya and the Maghrib in the seventh century, Ibn ʿIdhārī states that the *Naṣārā* and *Afāriqa* emigrated "to al-Andalus and other islands of the sea" as a result of the scorched earth policy enacted by the Berber queen at the time, the Kāhina.[100]

The first migration of the *Afāriqa* was likely intended to demonstrate the presence of North Africans in Iberia before any of the major populations which would become associated with Christianity—the *Ishbāniyya*/Spanish, the Romans, and the Goths. The residence of the *Afāriqa* in Iberia is positively contrasted with the peninsula's first post-

[99] Ibn ʿIdhārī, *Bayān*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 1-2.
[100] Ibid., 37.

diluvial inhabitants, the pagan *Andalish*. Though the religion of the *Afāriqa* is not mentioned and could not have been Islam, God is on their side. The second migration of the *Afāriqa* suggests that they are not Christian either, since they are named alongside the *Naṣārā*. They are once again expelled from North Africa by an unjust ruler, creating a pattern of migration from North Africa to Iberia that underlined the historical nature of such movement across the Strait. The repeated historical presence of North Africans in Iberia further legitimized the conquests of North African conquerors under the Umayyads, Almoravids, and Almohads. In this telling, no one was truly native to Iberia, but the *Afāriqa* had a recurring claim to occupancy in the peninsula that predated that of the Romans, Visigoths, and *Ishbāniyya*.

The *Ishbāniyya* are connected to a mythological founder named Ishbān, the origin of the name "Spain," an etymological attribution which even made its way into various Christian chronicles. The earliest hint of such an etymology appears in the ninth-century *History* of Ibn al-Ḥabīb, which states that the last Visigothic king of Iberia, Roderic, "was from Aṣbahān, and Aṣbahān is called Ishbān in al-Andalus, and they are the Goths, the kings of the *ʻajam* of al-Andalus."[101] The grammar of the sentence is a bit vague—Aṣbahān is indefinite and singular, suggesting that it may well be a place, but its equation with the definite plural "the Goths" (*al-qūṭiyyūn*) is confusing. A number of Middle Eastern sources are more clear on this point, like the ninth-century *Futūḥ al-buldan* of al-Balādhurī, which says that the king of al-Andalus "so they claim, was from the Ishbān,

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[101] Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj*, ed. Aguadé, 138.

who originate from Aṣbahān," the Persian city of Isfahan.[102] As they did with the Berbers, many Muslim historians sought to establish Middle Eastern origins for pre-Islamic Iberians, drawing on similarities between the Latin and Ibero-Romance word for "Spanish" and the name of a Persian city. It may be the case that the description of the *Andalish* as *majūs* was also intended to connect them to Zoroastrians, who were often referred to as such.

The etymology of Ishbān reappears at various points in the Arabic chronicle tradition in the western Mediterranean. In the fourteenth-century *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʻIdhārī, Ishbān is a poor plowman in Seville who receives a visitation from al-Khaḍir, a prominent mystical figure in Islam who is also known as al-Khiḍr. He warns Ishbān to "treat the sons of the prophets gently when you conquer Jerusalem!" When Ishbān questions how such a thing could be possible since he is so lowly and not of royal lineage, al-Khaḍir causes the plowman's staff to sprout leaves. This vision becomes lodged in Ishbān's heart, and he eventually gains control of al-Andalus and sails to Jerusalem, which he conquers and pillages, killing one hundred thousand Jews and selling another one hundred thousand. He also takes a number of marble statues from the city back with him to al-Andalus and rules for about eighteen more years. His dynasty comprises fifty five kings, who are succeeded by the Visigoths. Though there is no

[102] Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Boston: Brill, 2014), 232; Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī, *The Origins of the Islamic State. Vol. 1: Being a Translation from the Arabic, Accompanied with Annotations, Geographic and Historic Notes of the Kitâb Futûh al-Buldân of al-Imâm Abu-l Abbâs Aḥmad Ibn-Jâbir al-Balâdhuri*, trans. Philip K. Hitti (New York: Columbia University, 1916), 365. For other sources in which this claim appears, see Daniel G. König, *Arabic-Islamic Views of the Latin West: Tracing the Emergence of Medieval Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 154-156.

punishment for his failure to heed al-Khaḍir's advice, his pillaging of the holy city and abuse of the Jews—presumably the aforementioned "sons of the prophets"—cast him in a decidedly negative light.

Ibn ʿIdhārī offers a somewhat clearer etymology than Ibn Ḥabīb, stating, "It is said that Ishbān's name was Iṣbahān, because he was born in Iṣbahān, so he was named for it. God knows best."[103] So while Iṣbahān here is certainly a place, if it refers to the Persian city of Isfahan it is never explained how a poor agricultural laborer made it from there to Seville—the Arabic name for which, Ishbīliyya, also bears a resemblance to Ishbān, and which the preceding passage says was named for the *Ishbāniyya* who conquered the *Afāriqa*. Between their invasion and the description of Ishbān, Ibn ʿIdhārī briefly narrates the arrival of the Romans, the life of Jesus, and the Christianization of the empire, suggesting that Ishbān is not of the *Ishbāniyya*, despite his presence in Seville. His conquest of Jerusalem and treatment of the city's Jews indicate that Ishbān is in fact an Arabic transliteration of Vespasian, a first-century Roman emperor.[104] Most of the populations Ibn ʿIdhārī describes as occupying and ruling in Iberia, therefore, are initially foreign to the peninsula. The *Afāriqa* from Ifrīqiya are the only group described positively, setting a precedent for the continued migration of Muslims from North Africa.

The anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* also mentions a figure named Insabān, a descendant of Noah and the first Greek king to rule al-Andalus.[105] Though the details are confused and do not make a direct etymological connection between Insabān and Spain,

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[103] Ibn ʿIdhārī, *Bayān*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 2.
[104] Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Historia de Al-Andalus*, trans. Francisco Fernández González (Málaga: Aljaima, 1999), 12.
[105] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 35-36; Penelas, trans., *La conquista*, 27-28.

the passage resembles accounts in geographical treatises like that of ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Ḥimyarī attributing the presence of the legendary table of Solomon—which Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād is supposed to have discovered in the course of his Iberian conquests—to Ishbān's conquest of Jerusalem.[106] As Emmanuelle Tixier-Caceres observes, Ishbān's translation of the table of Solomon from the Levant to Iberia is rectified when the Muslim conquerors return it to the Umayyad caliph in Damascus. Ishbān is thus a negative figure, representative of Iberia's pagan past, whose errors are corrected by Muslims. In this way, he is similar to Arabic depictions of the last Visigothic king of Spain, Roderic, discussed in the next chapter.[107]

The attribution of Spain's etymology to a legendary founder also made its way into the Christian chronicle tradition.[108] As early as the twelfth century, the Latin *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* states that "Hispania is named after Ispano, the king who subjugated it."[109] Thirteenth-century chronicles like the Latin *Historia Gothica* of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada and the Castilian *Estoria de España* of Alfonso X were more expansive. Like the *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, they connect Hispan/Espan to Hercules and the Greeks. Unlike Ishbān in the Arabic tradition, Hispan/Espan is praised in these Christian chronicles, which laud his heroic lineage and describe him rebuilding after the

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[106] Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥimyarī, *Al-rawḍ al-miʿṭār fī khabar al-aqṭār: muʿjam jughrāfī maʿa fahāris shāmila*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān, 1984), 33-34; Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥimyarī, *La péninsule Ibérique au moyen-âge d'après le Kitāb ar-rawḍ al-miʿṭār fī ḥabar al-akṭār d'Ibn ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Ḥimyarī*, trans. Evariste Lévi-Provençal (Leiden: Brill, 1938), 8-9.
[107] Emmanuelle Tixier-Caceres, "Regards croisés sur Hispan/Ishbân, énigmatique héros éponyme de l'Espagne," *Studia islamica*, no. 102/103 (2006), 214-215.
[108] Ibid., 201-205.
[109] González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *Chronica*, 112-113.

destruction wrought by Hercules.[110] And while the *Historia* of Jiménez de Rada says merely that Spain was named for him, the *Estoria* asserts that the peninsula's inhabitants changed their name to Spain out of love for him.[111] Though Christian chroniclers accepted the etymology of Spain proposed by earlier Muslim authors, therefore, they viewed him as a positive figure in peninsular history, associated more closely with heroic Greeks than with mystical Muslims like al-Khaḍir. Somewhat ironically, then, Muslim etymologies that attempted to elide narratives of the ancient past which Iberian Christians claimed as part of their heritage were eventually adopted by peninsula Christians and adapted to fit their own purposes.

Straits, shores, and frontiers

Though they gave them different names, Muslim and Christian chroniclers across the Strait made use of a variety of terms to speak of their geographical and spatial relationship to one another. Within the Iberian peninsula, they referenced frontiers and borderlands, and in speaking of Iberia and North Africa they often used terms that acknowledged a close relationship across the Strait of Gibraltar. This vocabulary emphasizes how frequently Muslims and Christians in the western Mediterranean factored their proximity to one another into their definitions and conceptions of

[110] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 19; Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de los hechos de España*, trans. Juan Fernández Valverde (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1989), 70-71; Aengus Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), VPE: 10 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [03/24/2021].
[111] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 17; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia*, trans. Fernández Valverde, 69; Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.1, VPE: 9, 5 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [03/24/2021].

geographical and political space. Ultimately, writers of both religions were invested in questions of historical connectivity across the Strait and their impact on the present and future.

As we have already seen, various Arabic chronicles considered al-Andalus to be part of the Maghrib in the broader sense of the "west," and it was common for the titles and contents of their texts to refer to both al-Andalus and the Maghrib. The thirteenth-century *Kitāb al-mu'jib* of 'Abd al-Wāḥid even asserts a more tangible physical connection between the shores of Iberia and North Africa: "Historians say that in ancient times the *Rūm* built a bridge over this Strait (*khalīj*), but then the waters rose and covered it. And the people of the island of Tarīf say that they see it and its remains at times when the sea is calm and the waters are clear."[112] Whereas Arabic authors made frequent reference to the Strait of Gibraltar, often calling it the *majāz*, *zuqāq*, or *khalīj*, Latin and Ibero-Romance writers tended not to name the Strait explicitly.[113] Instead, they often referred to the Maghrib as "the other side of the sea," employing Latin and Ibero-Romance phrases like *ultramar*, *transmarinus*, and *dallend mar*. Iberia, by contrast, was at various points referred to as "this side of the sea" (*cis mare* and *daquend mar*). In the context of eastern crusades, *ultramar* could also refer to the Holy Land. This vocabulary emphasized the physical and geographical gulf between Iberia and North Africa, often carrying a sense of religious difference and distance, while simultaneously defining the regions in question in relationship to one another.

[112] 'Abd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 258; 'Abd al-Wāḥid, *Kitāb al-Mu'ŷib*, trans. Huici Miranda, 291.
[113] Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *History*, ed. Torrey, 205; 'Abd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 4, 6, ; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 468, 501.

Similarly, the Arabic word *ʿudwa*, meaning "shore" (and, vocalized as *ʿaduwwa*, meaning "enemy"), was often used to speak of the lands on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar. Though *ʿudwa* most often signified the Maghrib, it could also be used to refer to al-Andalus. Which shore was meant is generally indicated either by context or by the use of additional descriptors, such as *al-Maghrib al-ʿudwa*. The *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, for example, employs *ʿudwa* in a wide variety of ways. At times, *ʿudwa* clearly means the Maghrib and is listed with al-Andalus and occasionally Ifrīqiya as well.[114] Ibn Abī Zarʿ also uses it to mean al-Andalus, however, as with the phrase "the Maghrib and the *ʿudwa*."[115] Furthermore, he says that the Almohad caliphs ʿAbd al-Mu'min and Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf were "obeyed by the people of both shores (*ʿudwatayn*)."[116] Similarly, the anonymous fourteenth-century *Ḥulal al-mawshiyya* concludes by expressing the hope that "our hands and their hands may unite the two shores (*ʿudwatayn*)."[117]

In the twelfth-century *Mann bi-l-imāma* of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, the term *ʿudwī* is associated with Maghribis and contrasted with *ʿajamī*, which in this case refers to Andalusi Muslims. Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt includes a brief anecdote about how he himself divined the Almohads' 1165 victory over an Andalusi rebel named Ibn Mardanīsh. News of the triumph was conveyed to the caliph Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf in a letter that arrived in Marrakesh after only sixteen days—but not before our prescient chronicler announced the

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[114] Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 120-121, 124, 174; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 186-187, 189, 265.
[115] Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 255; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 390.
[116] Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 270, 274; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 408, 414.
[117] Zakār and Zamāma, eds., *al-Ḥulal al-mawshiyya*, 190; Huici Miranda, trans., *al-Hulal al Mawsiyya*, 211.

conquest himself, having correctly interpreted a vision of a cat devouring a bird on the roof of the caliph's residence. Obviously, he explained to his astonished companions, the cat resembled an *'udwī* lion and the bird was an *'ajamī* dove, so one could conclude that the Almohads had triumphed over the *'ajam*.[118] Though Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt himself was an Andalusi, he defines even Muslim enemies of the Almohads as *'ajam*—a term that is generally understood to mean non-Arab, but which in this context takes on the sense of non-Almohad and which was heightened by accusations that Ibn Mardanīsh allied with Christians.

'Udwa, along with *ḥayy* ("neighborhood"), is also used in the *Rawḍ* to refer to the two main quarters of Fes, the city at the heart of the *Rawḍ*'s conception of the Islamic Maghrib. Ibn Abī Zar' says that Idrīs II founded Fes in 808, first constructing the Andalusi quarter (*'udwat al-Andalus*) and then the Qayrawani quarter (*'udwat al-Qarawiyyīn*).[119] Each quarter had its own walls, separated by a gate, and received its name from its respective settlers, who hailed from al-Andalus and Qayrawan.[120] Ibn Abī Zar' follows the fate of the city quarters from their founding, noting when they were occupied by competing rulers and when their walls were torn down and they were joined under the Almoravids.[121] Though the division of Fes into these quarters is historical and an eponymous mosque remains in each today, the history of the *'udwat al-Andalus* and

[118] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 201; Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bil-imāma*, trans. Huici Miranda, 79.
[119] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 46; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 74.
[120] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 56-57; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 91-92.
[121] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. Ibn Manṣūr, 140, 179; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 211, 273.

the *ʿudwat al-Qarawiyyīn* clearly carries symbolic meaning in the *Rawḍ* as well. They represent the nearest major powers, both of which produced rival caliphates—the Andalusi Umayyads and the Ifrīqiyan Fatimids—that attempted to incorporate the Maghrib into their domains. In the Maghrib-centric narrative of Ibn Abī Zarʿ, al-Andalus and Ifrīqiya are at the heart of the historic capital of the Maghrib, but they do not overshadow it. It is fitting, then, that he often refers to these quarters as *ʿudwa*s, defined simultaneously by their physical proximity and the barriers that separate them, with their past, present, and future inextricably linked.

Whereas the *Rawḍ* focuses on boundaries and relationships between different groups of Muslims in North Africa, many chroniclers employed a variety of terms to speak about borders and frontier regions between Muslims and Christians within the Iberian peninsula. Though their location naturally shifted over time as territory changed hands, chroniclers of both religions often described border regions as empty and deserted, even though this was far from the case. Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's tenth-century *History* refers to "the wasteland (*qafr*) between Islam and polytheism (*shirk*)" as a region where *muwallad*s and rebels operated.[122] The twelfth-century *Mann bi-l-imāma* of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt says the Almohad caliph Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf "repopulated the deserted borderlands (*al-thughūr al-qafra*) against the greed of the *Naṣārā*."[123] In Arabic chronicles, *thughūr* (s. *thaghr*), often translated as "marches," was typically used to refer to border regions between peninsular Muslim and Christian polities. During the caliphal period in al-

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[122] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ*, ed. al-Abyārī, 101.
[123] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. Tāzī, 167.

Andalus, authors like Ibn al-Qūṭiyya also distinguished between a number of different *thughūr*, including the far march (*al-thaghr al-aqṣā*) and the near march (*al-thaghr al-adnā*), but these terms do not seem to have reflected a clear administrative division.[124]

Vocabulary surrounding frontiers and borders was likewise dynamic in Christian chronicles.[125] Earlier texts tended to refer to specific locations. Ninth-century Asturian chronicles generally located the frontier around the Duero river valley and what they called the *Campos Góticos*, and they often described Christian kings repopulating these regions. The twelfth-century *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* tended to focus further south, on Extremadura, and also refers to frontiers more generally as *extremi*. In the thirteenth-century Catalán *Book of Deeds* of James I of Aragón, the *frontera* was a moving target as the king conquered new territory from Muslims in Valencia, and over time *frontera* became the predominant word used to refer to Christian-Muslim borders in Ibero-Romance texts. While the terms they used differed, therefore, Muslim and Christian writers on both sides of the Strait frequently spoke of the bodies of water and land that simultaneously divided and connected them.

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[124] Eduardo Manzano Moreno, *La frontera de al-Andalus en época de los omeyas* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1991).
[125] José María Monsalvo Antón, "Espacios y fronteras en el discurso territorial del reino de Asturias (del Cantábrico al Duero en las 'Crónicas Asturianas')," *Studia historica: Historia medieval*, no. 23 (2005): 43–87; Enrique Rodríguez-Picavea, "The Frontier and Royal Power in Medieval Spain: A Developmental Hypothesis," *The Medieval History Journal* 8, no. 2 (2005): 273–301; Thomas W. Barton, "Lords, Settlers and Shifting Frontiers in Medieval Catalonia," *Journal of Medieval History* 36, no. 3 (2010): 204–52.

Transliterations

Though the bulk of this chapter has focused on instances when Muslims and Christians chose to ignore self-identifiers and instead used their own words to describe one another, it is important to acknowledge that this was not exclusively the case. On many occasions, some of which have already been mentioned, chroniclers also transliterated names and terms from other languages in ways that reflect a good deal of knowledge about one another. Unsurprisingly, transliterations were much more common for names of individuals than for groups of people, and for names of smaller places than for broader regions. Chroniclers include transliterated names even when we might not necessarily expect that level of detail, occasionally mentioning, for example, the names of women of other religions. The *Chronicle of Albelda* records the names of the Muslim leader of Talamanca, Mozeror, and his wife, Balkaiz, who were allowed to leave the city in peace after its conquest by the Asturian king Ordoño I.[126] Similarly, the *History* of Ibn Qūṭiyya offers not only the name of a major Andalusi official, the Christian count Antonian (*al-qawmis al-Naṣrānī Antniyān*), but also his mother, Juliana the Christian (*Ylyāna al-Naṣrāniyya*).[127]

Some transliterations, like *Rūm* and *Ifranj*, became fairly detached from their original geopolitical meanings and contexts. Others, like Latin transliterations of Almoravid, Maṣmūda, and Almohad, remained more closely tied to the people to whom they initially referred, but this did not stop Christian chroniclers from misrepresenting

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[126] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 175, 249-250.
[127] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh*, ed. al-Abyārī, 96; James, trans., *Early Islamic Spain*, 115.

their meanings and etymologies, intentionally or otherwise. The thirteenth-century *Historia* of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada correctly names the Almoravids rather than referring to them as Moabites, and likewise uses the term Almohad. The archbishop offers several etymologies for the Almohads, one of which—that it means "the united ones"—is correct. The other, while not accurate, at least makes phonological and ideological sense, connecting the name of the Almohads to the messianic title of their founding figure, Almohadi (*al-mahdī*, or "rightly guided one," from a similar-sounding but nonetheless distinct root in Arabic than Almohads/*al-muwaḥḥidūn*).[128] The author of the *Historia Silense* clearly understands the meaning of the honorific title given to the famed tenth-century Muslim chamberlain al-Manṣūr, "the victorious." Instead of explaining this to the reader, however, the text merely refers to him as "the king [of the Saracens], who gave himself the false name Almanzor, which he was not previously nor will he be in the future."[129]

Just as Christian chroniclers occasionally deigned to refer to specific Muslim groups by the names they used for themselves, so too Muslim chroniclers used transliterations to speak of distinct geopolitical groups of Christians. Arabic histories speak regularly of the Goths (*al-Qūṭiyyūn*), the Basques (*al-Bshāksa*), and the Galicians (*ahl Jillīqiyya*).[130] The Arabic use of Galicia often encompassed the kingdom of Asturias

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[128] Though the text also mistakenly differentiates between Almohadi and Auentumerth (Ibn Tūmart), who were the same person, the former being a title and the latter a name: Jiménez de Rada, *Historia*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 231; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia*, trans. Fernández Valverde, 277-278.
[129] Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorrilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 172.
[130] While the transliteration of "Goths" was more consistent, the other two varied more over time and in different texts. These particular transliterations are drawn from Ibn Ḥabīb's ninth-century *History*: Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj*, ed. Aguadé, 142.

as well, as in the *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, which says that the *ʿilj* Balāya ibn Fāfila (Pelayo son of Favila) rose up and expelled the Arabs. The text adds that he was succeeded by Adfunsh ibn Bīṭra (Alfonso son of Peter), the ancestor of the Banī Adfunsh ("children of Alfonso") "who still hold power today."[131] The *Fatḥ* thus uses a combination of transliteration and traditional Arabic naming conventions to give information about Pelayo and Alfonso's parentage and to identify the latter's descendants as both a dynasty and a tribe.

These particular conventions were occasionally translated by Christian chroniclers as well, as with the mention of Mahomat iben Lup (Muḥammad ibn Lubb) and the Benicasi (Banū Qasī) in the ninth-century *Chronicle of Albelda*.[132] The Banū Qasī were a powerful family of Andalusi *muwallad*s, Muslims who had converted from Christianity after the Islamic conquests or who were descended from post-conquest converts. Latin histories like the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the *Chronicle of Nájera* often render *muwallad* as *mollitus*.[133] The words clearly sound and look similar, but in Latin *mollitus* also means "softened," and it is likely that Christian authors intended it as an insult to those who had converted to Islam. Christian chroniclers also represented the Arabic term *mustaʿrab* in a variety of ways. This word, generally rendered "Mozarab" in English and meaning "Arabized," was used by Muslims to refer to Christians who lived under their rule and who had assimilated to their language and culture. The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* transliterates *mustaʿrab*, mentioning "Christians, who are called Muzarabes,

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[131] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 48; Penelas, trans., *La conquista*, 38.
[132] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 178, 252.
[133] Ibid., 140; Estévez Sola, ed., *Chronica Naierensis*, 107, 111.

who lived in the land of the Hagarenes since ancient times."[134] Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada offers more of a translation, referring to Mozarabs as *mixti Arabes*, "because they lived mixed together with the Arabs."[135] And, of course, "Arabs" is one of the most widely used transliterations in Latin and Ibero-Romance chronicles. Though, like many other terms used to describe Muslims, it is not always applied correctly, at times it does seem to reflect Arabic usage. The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* pairs it several times with "Moabites," apparently referring to various Arab tribes from Ifrīqiya who supported the Almoravids and served them as mercenaries.[136]

Though these examples constitute only a sampling of the kinds of transliterations that appear in both Muslim and Christian chronicles, they demonstrate a substantial awareness, spanning religious and linguistic lines, of the ways that people in Iberia and North Africa spoke and wrote about themselves. This suggests, in turn, that when Muslims and Christians used labels for one another that were inaccurate, generalizing, and dehumanizing, it was often a conscious and calculated choice rather than merely the result of cultural and linguistic ignorance.

Conclusion

If Muslim and Christian chroniclers on both sides of the Strait generally declined to refer to peoples and places using the same vocabulary, the words they did use

[134] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 216.
[135] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 107; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia*, trans. Fernández Valverde, 152.
[136] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 175, 195, 197; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid*, 187, 204, 206.

nonetheless reflect a number of overlaps and similarities in how they conceptualized their relationship to one another across time and space. Perhaps most noticeably, writers of both religions used a variety of terms that, whether or not they denoted religious affiliation, effectively functioned as synonyms for Muslims and Christians. When these labels did have explicit religious associations, they were almost exclusively derogatory and typically included accusations of polytheism. Christians tended to apply the names of scriptural peoples to Muslims, displacing them temporally and geographically. This was less common in Muslim chronicles, but they too used labels that were suggestive of non-Iberian geopolitical contexts and which elided differences between groups of Christians. Arabic terms for religious and ethnocultural others were more likely to imply a lack of civility and humanity, but writers of both religions displayed a marked willingness to collapse and conflate the identities of North Africans, and in some cases they did so using the same language.

Generally speaking, the words chroniclers applied to religious and ethnocultural others functioned to undermine those peoples' claims to inhabit and rule contested territory, while the names they gave to the territories in question often emphasized why members of their own religion deserved to rule them. When place names were transliterated from other linguistic and political traditions, chroniclers frequently included histories and etymologies that supported their own communities and rulers. And just as some of the names they used for peoples established alterity through series of binaries—religiously correct or deviant, civilized or barbaric—so too some of their names for places reflected the tension between regions and populations which were closely linked

and mutually defined even as they regularly sought to enforce separations and overcome one another. Much more than traditional divisions like the *dār al-Islām* and the *dār al-ḥarb*, Muslim and Christian chronicles in the western Mediterranean spoke of frontiers and borderlands, the northern and southern shores of the Strait of Gibraltar, this and that side of the sea. Whether comprised of land or water, the spaces between Muslim and Christian centers of power were highly contested, their location and the terminology used to refer to them in a state of constant flux. Whether they made use of transliterations, translations, or applied their own derogatory labels, medieval chroniclers in Iberia and North Africa were conscious of the impact that the names of peoples and places, past and present, had on contemporary claims to occupy and rule in the region. Though there are times when chroniclers seem genuinely ignorant of other linguistic, religious, and cultural practices, in many cases their choice to identify people differently than they identified themselves was exactly that—a choice.

Chapter 2: Mythologizing and Prophesizing Iberia(ns) and North Africa(ns)

If the vocabulary Muslim and Christian chroniclers used to speak of one another and the places they lived represented the building blocks for narrating their shared history in Iberia and North Africa, this chapter zooms out to examine the broader contours of their constructions of the past. I argue that chroniclers across the Strait not only had a great deal of general and specific knowledge about one another, but that they engaged specifically with one another's historical writings, which constituted part of a larger shared cultural archive. This can be seen in their accounts of events of mutual import and interest that do seem to have taken place, as well as of events that seem clearly ahistorical, such as a number of legends surrounding the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia, and events that had not yet come to pass, like the predicted apocalypse of the late ninth century. This chapter explores these ahistorical and extra-historical narratives, considering what they might tell us about the chronicle genre and its place in the larger context of interfaith relations and literary cultures that spanned multiple languages, religions, and regions.

Modern scholarship has increasingly highlighted literature as a site of intellectual and cultural exchange between Muslims and Christians in medieval Iberia. Scholars like Michelle Hamilton, David Wacks, and Douglas Young make powerful arguments for locating the roots of various Ibero-Romance tropes and forms in Arabic literature.[1] And though there is far less work on the adoption of Christian literary forms by Muslims,

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[1] Michelle Hamilton, *Representing Others in Medieval Iberian Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); David Wacks, *Framing Iberia: Maqamat and Frametale Narratives in Medieval Spain* (Boston: Brill, 2007); Douglas C. Young, *Rogues and Genres: Generic Transformation in the Spanish Picaresque and Arabic Maqāma* (Newark, Delaware: Juan de la Cuesta, 2004).

James Monroe presents evidence that this may have been the case with the *muwāshshaḥa* poetic form.[2] Nor is scholarship on such exchange limited to fictional and poetic forms. Deepened attention to translations and adaptations of Arabic texts in Christian Iberia, like those sponsored by Alfonso X of Castile in the thirteenth century, shows that Arabic sources significantly influenced Latin and Ibero-Romance scientific literature.[3] Theological texts were another site of mutual translation and exchange, largely but not exclusively for polemical purposes, as Jason Busic and Thomas Burman demonstrate.[4]

Medieval historical chronicles have benefited from some of this comparative work. Scholars have shown that, as with other genres and forms, chronicles were translated and adapted across religious and linguistic lines. Though the exact mode of transmission is not always clear, several Christian chronicles are known to be translations

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[2] James T. Monroe, "*Zajal* and *Muwashshaḥa*: Hispano-Arabic Poetry and the Romance Tradition," in Salma Khadra Jayyusi, ed., *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 398-419.
[3] Emilia Calvo, "Some Features of the Old Castilian Alfonsine Translation of ʿAlī ibn Khalaf's Treatise on the Lámina Universal," in *Astrolabes in Medieval Cultures*, ed. Josefina Rodríguez-Arribas et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 107–24; Bernard R. Goldstein, "Astronomy as a 'Neutral Zone': Interreligious Cooperation in Medieval Spain," in *Al-Andalus, Sepharad and Medieval Iberia: Cultural Contact and Diffusion*, ed. Ivy Corfis (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 3–18.
[4] Jason Busic, "Between Latin Theology and Arabic *Kalām*: Samson's *Apologeticus Contra Perfidos* (864 CE) and Ḥafṣ b. Albar al-Qūṭī's Extant Works (Fl. Late Ninth/Early Tenth Centuries)," *Medieval Encounters* 25, no. 5–6 (2019): 553–580; Jason Busic, "Negotiating Language and Religion in Umayyad Córdoba: Hafs b. Albar al-Quti's Arabic Psalter," *eHumanista* 41 (2019): 19–39; Jason Busic, "From Medieval to Early Modern, from Christian to Muslim: Difficult Boundaries in the Arabic Gospels and Paul's Epistles of Biblioteca Nacional de España MS 4971 (Sixteenth-Century Spain)," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 18, no. 4 (2019): 26–50; Jason Busic, "Christian Theology in Arabic and the Mozarabs of Medieval Toledo: Primary Texts, Main Themes, and Potential Problems," in *A Companion to Medieval Toledo: Reconsidering the Canons*, ed. Yasmine Beale-Rivaya and Jason Busic (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 140–63; Jason Busic, "Religious Identity, Language, and Exegesis: The Mozarabs and an Arabic Gospel," *La corónica* 46, no. 2 (2018): 5–31; Thomas E. Burman, "Via *Impugnandi* in the Age of Alfonso VIII: Iberian-Christian *Kalām* and a Latin Triad Revisited," in *King Alfonso VIII of Castile Government, Family, and War*, ed. Kyle C. Lincoln, Damian J. Smith, and Miguel Gómez (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019), 221–39; Thomas E. Burman, "Las Navas de Tolosa and *Liber Alchorani*: Reflections on Iberian Christians and the Qur'an," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 4, no. 1 (2012): 89–93; Thomas E. Burman, *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs, c.1050-1200* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

or adaptations of Muslim works, while many others contain episodes and information drawn from Arabic texts.[5] As with other literary genres, there is less scholarship on the influence of Christian sources on Muslim texts, but Mayte Penelas, Christian Sahner, and Ann Christys have drawn attention to the tenth-century Arabic translation and redaction of the universal history of Orosius, a late antique North African writer and student of Augustine of Hippo.[6] Still, much of the existing scholarship comparing Muslim and Christian historical chronicles is piecemeal and fairly limited, even as our understanding of medieval history writing as a literary genre with close ties to fiction and poetry has moved the field beyond positivist efforts to distinguish fact from fiction.[7] Literary

[5] Matthias M. Tischler, "Translation-Based Chronicles, Twelfth to Thirteenth Centuries. New Sources for the Arabo-Latin Translation Movement in the Iberian Peninsula," *Journal of Transcultural Medieval Studies* 1, no. 2 (2014): 175–218; Diego Catalán and Maria Soledad de Andres, eds., *Cronica del Moro Rasis: version del Ajbar mulutz al-Andalus de Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Musa al-Razi 889-955* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1975); Samuel G. Armistead, "An Anecdote of King Jaume I and Its Arabic Congener," in *Cultures in Contact in Medieval Spain: Historical and Literary Essays Presented to L.P. Harvey*, ed. David Hook and Barry Taylor (London: King's College London, Centre for Late Antique and Mediaeval Studies, 1990), 1–8.

[6] Mayte Penelas, "¿Hubo dos traducciones árabes independientes de las 'Historias contra los paganos' de Orosio?," *Collectanea christiana orientalia*, no. 6 (2009): 223–251; Mayte Penelas, "A Possible Author of the Arabic Translation of Orosius' 'Historiae,'" *Al-Masāq* 13 (2001): 113–135; Christian C. Sahner, "From Augustine to Islam: Translation and History in the Arabic Orosius," *Speculum* 88, no. 4 (13 2013): 905–931; Ann Christys, *Christians in al-Andalus, 711-1000* (Richmond, UK: Curzon, 2002), 135-157.

[7] Marilyn Robinson Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative: A Case Study in Perso-Islamicate Historiography* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980); Ruth Morse, *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation, and Reality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Georges Martin, *Histoires de l'Espagne médiévale: historiographie, geste, romancero* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1997); Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Boaz Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography: Deconstructing Ṭabarī's History* (Boston: Brill, 2004); Pilar Zaldívar Bouthelier, "La ficción en las crónicas andalusíes," *Aragón en la Edad Media*, no. 18 (2004): 37–56; Robert M. Stein, *Reality Fictions: Romance, History, and Governmental Authority, 1025-1180* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); Amaia Arizaleta, ed., *Poétique de la chronique: L'ecriture des textes historiographiques au Moyen Age (péninsule Ibérique et France)* (Toulouse: CNRS--Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 2008); Leonardo Funes, *Investigación literaria de textos medievales: objeto y práctica* (Madrid: Miño y Dávila, 2009); Aengus Ward, "Past, Present and Future in the Latin and Romance Historiography of the Medieval Christian Kingdoms of Spain," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 1, no. 2 (2009): 147–162; Ruth J. Macrides, ed., *History as Literature in Byzantium: Papers from the Fortieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010); Samer M. Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages: Poetry, Public Performance, and the Presentation of the Past* (Notre Dame, IN: University of

analysis comparing Muslim and Christian chronicles still tends to focus on tracing the origins and development of a fairly narrow range of episodes, rather than an in-depth examination of similarities and divergences in content, purpose, and form.

Narratives of the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia constitute one of the most prominent areas of comparison. There are several important reasons for this. The fall of the Visigoths and the establishment of al-Andalus marked the beginning of a recognizably new period in Iberian history, even as some aspects of life continued unchanged. The import of this change was felt by chroniclers at the time and has remained of great interest to modern scholars as well. The conquests, along with their causes and aftermath, also continue to play a critical role in constructions of Spanish national identity. While some assert the importance of Muslims in forming the country's unique national heritage, others cling to the idea that al-Andalus was an interruption of Spain's larger history. Recently, negationists have even attempted to dispute that the conquests took place at all. As Alejandro García Sanjuán explains, by claiming that Islam spread through Iberia exclusively through peaceful immigration and cultural assimilation rather than conquest, negationism successfully appeals to two groups whose ideologies would not typically overlap—conservative nationalists who prefer to deny that Spain was

Notre Dame Press, 2010); Nicola Clarke, *The Muslim Conquest of Iberia: Medieval Arabic Narratives* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Denise K. Filios, "A Good Story Well Told: Memory, Identity, and the Conquest of Iberia," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 6, no. 2 (2014): 127–147; Najam Haider, *The Rebel and the Imām in Early Islam: Explorations in Muslim Historiography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

overcome by Muslim forces, and progressive scholars who seek to dispel stereotypes of medieval Muslims as violent extremists.[8]

The negationist dismissal of the wide and diverse body of evidence we have for the Islamic conquests of Iberia is also facilitated by the prevalence of fictional and legendary episodes in the medieval chronicle tradition. Many of these episodes first appeared in Andalusi and Egyptian texts in the second half of the ninth century, over a century after the events they describe. This has led to significant debate over the usefulness of Arabic chronicles as sources for the conquests, even among scholars who take the fact of their occurrence quite seriously.[9] Though details vary significantly between chronicles, the broad outlines of two major episodes originating in Arabic sources are often included in accounts of the eighth-century conquests—the opening of the locked edifice of Toledo and the betrayal of Julian, each of which generally centers around Roderic, the last Visigothic king.[10] In the former, the Visigothic capital is home to a locked building, which often has a religious function and is to remain unopened. Rather than adding his own lock upon ascending the throne, in the tradition of his predecessors, Roderic decides to open the building. Inside, he finds a box containing an image of

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[8] Alejandro García Sanjuán, "Denying the Islamic Conquest of Iberia: A Historiographical Fraud," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 11, no. 3 (2019): 306–322; Alejandro García Sanjuán, *La conquista islámica de la Península Ibérica y la tergiversación del pasado: del catastrofismo al negacionismo*, Estudios (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2013).

[9] Roger Collins, *The Arab Conquest of Spain, 710-797* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Eduardo Manzano Moreno, *Las fuentes árabes sobre la conquista de Al-Ándalus: una nueva interpretación* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2009); Eduardo Manzano Moreno, *Los relatos sobre la conquista de al-Andalus en las fuentes árabes: un ensayo sobre su procedencia*, 2012; Felipe Maíllo Salgado, *Acerca de la conquista árabe de Hispania: imprecisiones, equívocos y patrañas* (Gijón: Trea, 2011). For a good summary of this debate, see Filios, "A Good Story Well Told," 127-128.

[10] Julia Hernández Juberías, *La península imaginaria: mitos y leyendas sobre al-Andalus* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1996), 165-208.

recognizably Arab warriors, with an inscription warning that whoever opens the building will have brought about the conquest of Spain at their hands. In the latter episode, Julian is often a figure with ties on both sides of the Strait, whether commercial or political. When Roderic rapes Julian's daughter, Julian uses his connections to approach Muslim leaders in North Africa, generally Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād and/or Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, offering to guide Muslim forces in invading Spain.

Though there have been plenty of attempts to connect the figure of Julian and the locked edifice of Toledo to historical people and places, they are not particularly convincing. Regardless, these episodes were an important means by which chroniclers signaled the meaning, moral weight, and legitimacy of the conquests to their audiences, valuable evidence worth careful attention in and of itself. By the early twelfth century these episodes had made their way into Latin chronicles written in Christian Iberia, where they were used to build a mythology around the defeat of the Visigoths that anticipated the ultimate restoration, through military force, of Christian rule throughout the peninsula. Likewise, Arabic chronicles adopted elements of Christian accounts over time, which were often used to deepen the image of the Visigothic monarchy as corrupt and unworthy. In this way, Muslims and Christians alike used the mythology around the conquests to justify past and present military action and political subjugation.

Like other genres that have received more comparative treatment, medieval historical writing was an important and active site of interfaith dialogue, and at various points Christian and Muslim chroniclers worked from the same sources and even borrowed from one another directly. Along with providing information on many of the

same people and events, their works drew on forms of knowledge and frameworks for understanding the world that went well beyond what we might now term strictly historical. The mythology of the Islamic conquests was one entry in a larger cultural archive made up of shared values, narrative structures, and legendary material that carried different ideological weight depending on the context, but which were nonetheless useful and legible to writers and audiences from multiple religious, linguistic, and geopolitical backgrounds.

Though it has received less attention—likely because it appears in far fewer chronicles from the period—apocalypticism was another entry this shared cultural archive. Two ninth-century chronicles, one Muslim and one Christian, predicted the imminent demise of the Umayyad emirate of al-Andalus as the beginning of the impending eschaton, though each anticipated that their respective religion would ultimately and violently triumph. Muslims and Christians in Iberia were likely aware of one another's apocalypticism, and it appears that the vision of the end presented in the Christian prophetic chronicle drew on Islamic historical, theological, and apocalyptic sources. As with the mythology of the conquests, these ninth-century apocalyptic chronicles suggest that adherents of both religions drew on diverse genres from multiple religious and linguistic traditions, with the aim of justifying military action against one another. They also highlight how closely medieval chroniclers perceived the relationship between past and future.

Medieval Iberian and North African chroniclers drew on a wide body of sources. They worked both inside and outside of the chronicle genre, and inside and outside of

their own religious traditions. Attempts to understand and compare them must do the same, especially as increasing attention is paid to issues of representation and alterity. In order to understand how Muslims and Christians constructed their identities in relationship to one another, it is critical to delineate, whenever possible, between what they knew about each other and what they said about each other. As Jessica Coope points out, Christian polemicists in al-Andalus in the ninth century displayed a "discretionary" knowledge of Islam. The literary output of Eulogius and Paulus Alvarus, for instance, "consists of neither accurate statements about Islam nor pure fabrications but is a clever twisting of Muslim beliefs."[11] Andrew Sorber suggests that "Alvarus's derogatory depiction of Islam sought two things: first, to defamiliarize his audience with something quite commonplace, and second, to justify his call for uncompromising preaching against Islam by re-interpreting a religion they encountered daily as an apocalyptic enemy."[12] To put it differently, Paulus Alvarus and Eulogius sought to reorganize and reinterpret some of the contents of the shared cultural archive that prevailed in al-Andalus at the time. The ninth-century polemicists could not control what their fellow Andalusi Christians already knew about the beliefs and practices of their Muslim neighbors, but they could and did try to reframe this knowledge for their own purposes.

This also seems to be the goal of the thirteenth-century Castilian *Estoria de España*'s portrayal of Muḥammad as a false and mendacious prophet, which draws on Islamic traditions about the religion's founder. Without delineating between which parts

[11] Jessica A. Coope, *The Martyrs of Córdoba: Community and Family Conflict in an Age of Mass Conversion* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 50.
[12] Andrew Sorber, "Prophetic Resistance to Islam in Ninth-Century Córdoba: Paulus Alvarus and the *Indiculus Luminosus*," *Medieval Encounters* 25, no. 5–6 (2019), 448.

of the passage were rooted in actual Islamic theology and which parts represented distortions or outright falsehoods, we cannot fully understand how it might have been received by medieval Christian audiences in Iberia. A recent analysis of this passage by Geraldine Hazbun examines the rhetorical and lexical strategies employed by the *Estoria* chroniclers to downgrade the fantastical and miraculous elements of the prophet's biography, concluding that the text highlights mendacity and "strips the history of Islam of any potentially impressive effect it may have on the audience."[13] While much of this reading is sound, it in turn is stripped of some of its explanatory power by Hazbun's failure to mention the Islamic origins of these episodes. Instead, she discusses them in terms of their relationship to Latin Christian chronicles from a few decades prior, primarily the *Historia Arabum* of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada. This ignores the much longer history of these tales in Islamic tradition. Many have their roots in the Qur'ān and were elaborated in later exegetical and biographical writing, like the prophecy that angels would remove and purify Muḥammad's heart during his childhood and his night journey on a winged horse named al-Burāq.[14]

Like the writings of Eulogius and Alvarus, therefore, the life of Muḥammad in the *Estoria* constitutes polemic which draws on a fairly detailed and accurate knowledge of Islamic theology, rather than a case of Christian chroniclers fabricating tales out of whole

[13] Geraldine Hazbun, *Narratives of the Islamic Conquest from Medieval Spain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 32.
[14] Hazbun, *Narratives of the Islamic Conquest*, 33, 37; Steven J. McMichael, "The Night Journey (*al-isrāʾ*) and Ascent (*al-miʿrāj*) of Muhammad in Medieval Muslim and Christian Perspectives," *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 22, no. 3 (2011): 293–309; Uri Rubin, "Muhammad's Night Journey (*israʾ*) to al-Masjid al-Aqsa: Aspects of the Earliest Origins of the Islamic Sanctity of Jerusalem," *al-Qantara* 29, no. 1 (2008): 147–64.

cloth to malign Muḥammad. The *Estoria* does not suggest that Muḥammad was a liar by making up its own tales. Instead, it refutes aspects of Islamic theology that were widely believed and celebrated by asserting that Muḥammad and Muslims were lying about them, a subtler and doubtless more effective approach since its account of Muslim beliefs was based on truth. These stories needed to be called into question not because they were included in earlier Christian chronicles, but because interactions between Muslims and Christians, which only increased with the conquests of the thirteenth century, meant that Christians were exposed to Islamic beliefs and were perceived as being at risk of being swayed by some of them. Mythology was a powerful mode of medieval historical writing, and the *Estoria* chroniclers felt a need to undermine key episodes in the life and mythology of Muḥammad that Iberian Muslims also considered foundational moments in their own history. It is critical to examine not only how medieval Muslims and Christians wrote about one another's history, therefore, but also when they read across genres and religious lines, because we cannot understand how a shared cultural archive was used without first discerning what it included. Such an approach enables us to acknowledge and explore the tension between the proximity suggested by the existence of a shared cultural archive and the desire for distance projected by the construction of alterities.

With this in mind, this chapter examines the construction of the mythology surrounding the Islamic conquests and the apocalypticism of ninth-century texts as entries in a shared cultural archive that encompassed multiple genres. These case studies demonstrate that medieval chroniclers crossed religious and linguistic boundaries, engaging in cultural and intellectual production, while simultaneously attempting to reify

those very boundaries. Interfaith relations could be, and were, both violent and productive. Violence and conquest drove religious and cultural assimilation to some extent, but just as importantly, shared narratives and traditions were deployed to legitimize invasion and the use of force. It is telling that shared legendary and apocalyptic elements were invoked to explain and justify conquests and violence across religious and geopolitical lines.

Medieval chroniclers were conscious that their accounts of the past and predictions for the future needed to resonate with audiences whose lives and identities were situated in and influenced by regional and transregional networks. Claims to sovereignty over contested territory were strengthened with recourse to a shared cultural archive that held and made meaning for multicultural populations. The elements of this archive that seem to have been most compelling to writers and audiences alike were those that went beyond the mundane and into the realm of the mythological and the divine, revealing an ordained and ordered relationship between past, present, and future. Importantly, this cultural archive was not limited to the Iberian peninsula. The relationship between Iberia and North Africa was at the center of both the Julian episode and the apocalyptic predictions used by ninth-century chroniclers to forecast the future of Muslim-Christian relations. North African chroniclers played a critical role in the production, interpretation, and transmission of knowledge about the conquests and the end times. Though Iberians and North Africans were conscious of the eastern origins of Islam and the caliphate, both tended to represent the Strait of Gibraltar as a simultaneous

bridge and border between Christianity and Islam, a focal point of attempts to unify the region under a single rule and religion.

The locked edifice of Toledo

The earliest detailed account of the eighth-century conquests from an Iberian author is the anonymous Latin *Chronicle of 754*, written by a Christian who seems to have lived in al-Andalus. Unlike later texts, its description of the conquests is relatively concise, saying merely that a man named Roderic rebels and usurps the Spanish throne, and that a year into his reign he and the entire Visigothic army, who follow him out of ambition rather than loyalty, are defeated at the hands of Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād and Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr. Roderic then flees and is killed.[15] He is portrayed as an interloper, incapable of commanding the loyalty of his men, and something of a coward. But no further details are furnished to explain what was in fact quite a momentous episode in Iberian history as anything more than a mundane, if crushing, military defeat that resulted from standard-issue political and civil unrest.

This is in rather striking contrast with the chronicle's portrayal of the Arab conquests of Byzantine territory a few decades prior. After successfully pushing back the Persians, the emperor Heraclius accepts honors that his people offer to him instead of to God, growing prideful. The chronicler describes a series of dreams warning Heraclius that he will "be ravaged mercilessly by rats from the desert," followed almost

[15] José Eduardo López Pereira, ed., *Crónica Mozárabe de 754* (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1980), 68-69; Kenneth Baxter Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 2nd ed. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 131.

immediately with a description of "the Saracens," inviting the reader to equate the two. The emperor ignores these dreams, along with astrological readings conveying similar omens, resulting in the conquests of huge swathes of Byzantine territory in the Middle East by Muslims.[16] Despite the lack of an equivalent explanatory anecdote from the Islamic conquests in Iberia, the 754 chronicler unquestionably felt them deeply, famously lamenting, "Who can relate such perils? Who can enumerate such grievous disasters? 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."[17]

As it happened, later chroniclers working in both Latin and Arabic would offer answers to these questions, relating, enumerating, expressing, and ultimately making meaning of the conquests by means of hyperbolic, legendary, and moralizing topoi. In the ninth century, substantially different accounts of the conquests appeared in Egypt, al-Andalus, and Asturias. The earliest of these is the universal chronicle of Ibn Ḥabīb, a Muslim jurist (*faqīh*) from around Elvira, near what would become Granada, who died in the early 850s. Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* drew on the late eighth-century writings of the Egyptian al-Layth ibn Ṣa'd, introducing to the peninsular tradition what would become one of the defining legends of the conquest narrative for centuries.

Ibn Ḥabīb tells of two locked edifices (*baytān*) in Toledo, the Visigothic capital. One of these is filled with twenty-five jeweled crowns, one for each of the Visigothic kings, bearing their name and placed there upon their death. The other building bears

[16] López Pereira, ed., *Crónica Mozárabe*, 26-29; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 112-113.
[17] López Pereira, ed., *Crónica Mozárabe*, 72-73; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 133.

twenty-four locks, added by each of the Visigothic kings until Roderic. In keeping with the rebellious nature ascribed to him in the *Chronicle of 754*, the Roderic of Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* breaks with tradition and the advice of his bishops, deciding to enter the building rather than adding his own lock. Inside, he finds a wooden box or ark (*tābūt*) which contains images of turbaned Arabs with bows and decorated swords. Roderic also finds a letter (*kitāb*) warning that if the house is opened, the warriors in the image will arrive and conquer the kingdom. Immediately following this description, Ibn Ḥabīb states very simply that the Muslims arrived in the same year.[18]

Ibn Ḥabīb's text engages multiple genres, including *ḥadīth* and prophecy, and the story of the two buildings can be understood as related to *'ajā'ib*, wonder tales that were a common feature of Arabic geographical and travel literature and were to some extent a development of longer Greek traditions. In the Andalusi chronicle, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr's travels also extend well beyond his Iberian conquests, and he continues to sail west into strange and unknown geographies, encountering marvels like the city of copper/brass.[19] These tales, along with the locked edifice of Toledo, appear in later texts like the *1001 Nights*, itself a compilation of multiple genres. Though Ibn Ḥabīb's is the earliest local chronicle of the conquests in Arabic that has survived, his focus on fictional and legendary elements has led many scholars to discount the text as a source, and his is one of the very few Arabic chronicles from medieval Iberia that has not been translated into

[18] 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj (La historia)*, ed. Jorge Aguadé (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1991), 140.
[19] Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj*, ed. Aguadé, 145. On the city of copper in the Arabic tradition, see Hernández Juberías, *La península imaginaria*, 27-67. On the role of *'ajā'ib* in Arabic chronicles of the eighth-century conquests, see Clarke, *Muslim Conquest of Iberia*, 69-83.

Spanish, English, or French. Nonetheless, the tale of the locked edifice—and to a lesser extent the building filled with crowns—gained a great deal of traction and popularity in the Arabic chronicle traditions throughout the medieval Mediterranean.

The former features in almost all of the Arabic chronicles that address the conquests in any detail, including that of Ibn Ḥabīb's near contemporary, the Egyptian writer Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam.[20] While Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* is a universal chronicle that begins with the creation of the world before relating more Andalusi-specific events, Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ* focuses on the Islamic conquests of Egypt, Ifrīqiya, the Maghrib, and Iberia. Each text displays the geographical bias of its author. Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam "inscribes Egypt into divine history and implicitly advocates greater local autonomy," contrasting it with the territories conquered further west under the command of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, whereas Ibn Ḥabīb advocates for a more balanced view of these territories and of Mūsā.[21]

The chronicles nonetheless share a number of similarities. Both authors were adherents of the emerging Mālikī school of Islamic jurisprudence, and both infused their histories with *ḥadīth*, sayings and traditions of the Prophet. And, like Ibn Ḥabīb, Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam includes the account of the locked house of Toledo. The source he cites for this anecdote is his father, who was one of Ibn Ḥabīb's teachers.[22] While the Egyptian chronicle lacks some of the details of the Andalusi account, such as the role of the

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[20] With the exception of the anonymous *Akhbār majmuʻa* (*Collected Anecdotes*), the dating of which is uncertain, and the early thirteenth-century *Kitāb al-muʻjib* (*Book of the Admirable*) of the North African writer ʻAbd al-Wāḥid.
[21] Filios, "A Good Story Well Told," 129.
[22] Jorge Aguadé, "Vida y obra de ʻAbd al-Malik b. Habīb," in *Kitāb al-ta'rīj (La historia)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1991), 73.

bishops and the weapons and garb of the Arab warriors depicted within the locked building, the broad contours of the story are the same. Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam says that no king ruled without adding his own lock and that a vague “they” begged the last king to follow this tradition but he refused in favor of entering it himself, only to discover the image of the Arabs and the warning about their impending invasion.[23]

The house of locks is also attested in the *Fatḥ al-Andalus*. The anonymous chronicler gives a fairly similar account to that of Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam but includes a longer exchange with Roderic’s clergy and nobles, who offer to give the king however much treasure he believes he might find within the locked edifice. The text also specifies that the warning of the impending conquests was written on a piece of parchment in *‘ajamiyya*, meaning “the foreign tongue” and here presumably referring to either Latin or Ibero-Romance, as it is legible to Roderic.[24] The *Fatḥ* chronicler and Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam directly connect the house of locks to Visigothic political legitimacy, making it clear that when Roderic refuses to add his own lock and instead removes all the locks from previous kings, he breaks a long tradition and invites ruin upon his kingdom. By emphasizing disagreements with Roderic’s clergy and bishops, Ibn Ḥabīb and the anonymous author of the *Fatḥ* also paint this as a religious failure.

The late tenth-century *History* of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya likewise associates the locked house with religious and political legitimacy. Though he was a Muslim and worked for

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[23] Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Conquête de l’Afrique du Nord et de l’Espagne*, ed. and trans. Albert Gateau, 2nd ed. (Alger: Éditions Carbonel, 1948), 92-93; Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain: Known as the Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. Charles Cutler Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 206.

[24] Luis Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus (La Conquista de al-Andalus)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994), 12-13; Penelas, trans., *Conquista*, 7-8.

the Umayyad caliphate in al-Andalus, Ibn al-Qūṭiyya proudly upheld his Christian heritage through Sarah, the granddaughter of the penultimate Visigothic king Witiza. In Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's account, the building (*bayt*) in Toledo is kept closed but no locks are mentioned. The edifice is venerated because it contains an ark (*tābūt*) that holds the four gospels, upon which the Visigoths swear oaths. The building is only opened when a king dies, so that his name can be inscribed therein. When Roderic takes the throne, however, he wears a crown, although this is "forbidden by Christianity."[25] Multiple other Arabic chronicles, however, include anecdotes about Roderic and other rulers that associate crowns with Christianity and pridefulness.[26] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's emphasis on crowns as un-Christian rather than un-Islamic, therefore, can be understood as part of his broader efforts to highlight the multiple ways that Roderic went against Christianity and violated his own religion. In Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's account, the king is defeated not because he is a Christian, but because he is a *bad* Christian. Along with Roderic's un-Christian crown, his usurpation of the throne is "something not approved of by Christianity," and his opening of both the temple and the ark are "forbidden by Christianity."[27] Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād,

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[25] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ*, ed. al-Abyārī, 33; Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Early Islamic Spain*, trans. James, 51.
[26] Roderic is described as arriving to his final battle at Guadelete wearing a crown, sumptuously dressed, and carried on a litter (*sarīr*) suspended between two mules: Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Conquête*, ed. and trans. Gateau, 96-97; Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *History*, ed. Torrey, 207-208; Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 18; Abū al-'Abbās ibn 'Idhārī al-Marrākushī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Evariste Lévi-Provençal and George Séraphin Colin, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1930), 7. The crown is also a key feature of the famous episode involving 'Abd al-'Azīz, the son of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr and governor of al-Andalus, and his Christian queen, known in Arabic accounts as Ayla and Umm 'Āṣim. The anecdote is clearly intended as a warning for Muslims against religious and cultural assimilation, since the queen persuades her husband to multiple prideful and anti-Islamic acts, including wearing a crown and forcing his subjects to prostrate themselves before him by passing through a very small door into his audience hall: Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmū'a fī fatḥ al-Andalus wa-dhikr umarā'ihā wa-l-ḥurūb al-wāqi'a baynahum* (Cairo; Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1981), 27-28; Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 42; Ibn 'Idhārī, *al-Bayan*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 23.
[27] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ*, 33; James, trans., *Early Islamic Spain*, 51.

on the other hand, is a faithful Muslim and a divinely guided conqueror. While crossing the Strait, the Prophet Muḥammad visits Ṭāriq in a dream and tells him to proceed with his endeavor. [28] Islam and Christianity are not explicitly measured against one another—Ṭāriq succeeds because of his fidelity to his chosen religion, which grants him the right to cross from North Africa to Iberia, and Roderic loses the religious basis of Visigothic legitimacy through multiple actions that go against his religion.

The story of the mysterious building in Toledo also appears in later Maghribi histories, including the early fourteenth-century *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʻIdhārī. Like Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, the Marinid chronicler never describes the building (*bayt*) as locked or bearing locks. He says that upon the death of a king, his name and the length of his reign would be recorded and a crown would be placed in the building. When Roderic desires to open it, his people deny him, instead constructing another one of gold and silver. This does not placate him, and he opens the first building, wherein he finds the crowns, the ark, and the images of turbaned Arabs carrying bows with the warning of their impending invasion. Ibn ʻIdhārī's account contrasts Roderic with Wakhshandash, the penultimate Visigothic king. Waskhshandash is described as the best and wisest among the Christians with regards to upholding their *sunna*, an intriguing translation of Christian religious traditions into an Arabic and Islamic context. Ibn ʻIdhārī explains that the four gospels are a key part of this *sunna*, and Christians follow what it dictates and avoid what it prohibits. Roderic, on the other hand, is not of the "royal house" (*bayt al-mamluka*). He

[28] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ*, 34; James, trans., *Early Islamic Spain*, 52.

kills his predecessor, usurps the throne, and thus "corrupted the traditions (*sunan*) of power."[29]

This account is a striking rendering of the two houses initially reported by Ibn Ḥabīb in the ninth century, and shows that some details, like the crowns, were preserved almost exactly in the nearly five centuries between the Andalusi and the Maghribi chronicles. The *Bayān al-mughrib* picks up on the religious valence of the locked edifice in Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, mentioning the four gospels. Ibn ʿIdhārī uses the word *sunna* (pl. *sunan*) to describe both Christian religious traditions and the political traditions broken by Roderic when he opened the house (as well as the tradition of Visigothic nobles sending their children to be raised at court, which resulted in Roderic's rape of Julian's daughter). This kind of wordplay is likewise in operation with the use of the word *bayt* to describe two places where Roderic had no right to be, but imposed himself anyway—the royal house and the locked edifice of Toledo. Ibn ʿIdhārī was a great collector and compiler of historical anecdotes, but these details demonstrate the care he took in narrating and interpreting centuries' worth of accounts. It is also likely that some of his information about the Iberian conquests came, directly or indirectly, from Christian sources. The chronicler mentions "some books of the foreigners" (*baʿḍ kutub al-ʿajam*), probably referring to Iberian Christians, who were often called *ʿajam* by Andalusis, and their language *ʿajamiyya*.[30]

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[29] Ibn ʿIdhārī, *Bayān*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 2-3.
[30] Ibid., 2.

The locked edifice is absent from accounts of the conquests in the Asturian chronicles of the ninth century and three twelfth-century Latin chronicles, the Leonese *Historia Silense*, the *Chronicle of Pseudo Isidore*, and the Navarrese *Chronicle of Nájera*. It appears in Christian Iberian chronicles by the thirteenth century, however. Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, the archbishop of Toledo, included it in his Latin *Historia Gothica*, written in the first half of the thirteenth century. So did the *Estoria de España*, a vernacular chronicle from the second half of the century that was commissioned by Alfonso X of Castile and drew heavily on Jiménez de Rada. Neither text explicitly equates the number of locks with the number of Visigothic kings, or identifies them as part of a succession ritual. Both refer to the building as a palace, and say that Roderic wishes to open it because he believes he will find treasure within, perhaps an echo of Arabic accounts that mention the collection of crowns. All Roderic finds inside is the ark containing a parchment with the usual warning written in Latin letters.[31] The near emptiness of the building, the parchment, and the language of the warning are all details included in the *Fatḥ al-Andalus*. The three chronicles also offer very similar descriptions of the depicted warriors, with the *Estoria* saying that their visages and vestments closely resemble those of contemporary Arabs. As in the *Fatḥ*, they wear turbans, ride horses, and carry blades and banners. Finally, all three accounts emphasize Roderic's immediate repentance and futile attempt to reverse the portent by locking the building.

[31] Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie, sive, Historia Gothica*, ed. Juan Fernández Valverde, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 72 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987), 99-100; Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de los hechos de España*, trans. Juan Fernández Valverde (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1989),143-144; Aengus Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), VPE: 562, 9-14 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [01/11/2021].

Alan Deyermond observed that the tale of the locked edifice in the *Estoria de España* exemplifies the age-old motif of the broken taboo, but the idea behind the legend is more meaningful than that alone.[32] It is powerfully suggestive, evoking the sense that both the possibility and the inevitability of a highly specific conquest lay hidden in the heart of the Visigothic kingdom—not only in the royal capital of Toledo, but also in an edifice associated with the political and religious legitimacy of its rulers. It points to Roderic's moral inadequacy as a leader, and moreover depicts him as a disruption in the succession and tradition of the Visigothic monarchy. In Muslim accounts, this portent and the king's corruption create ideological space for a new regime and a new religion. Its inclusion helps strengthen the sense that the Muslim conquerors were righteous and destined to succeed. The episode also, however, underlines the importance of the sense that Visigothic Spain as a failed state even before the arrival of Muslims and that religious difference alone was not sufficient basis for conquest in later retellings.

It is perhaps this implication—that Christianity was not inherently inferior to Islam, but corrupt Christians could be overcome by Muslims, whether righteous or wicked—which facilitated the eventual adoption of the locked palace anecdote in Christian accounts. The tale emphasizes internal corruption as the cause of the conquests, placing less explanatory weight on any virtues or strengths of the conquerors. As Christians in the thirteenth century conquered larger and larger swathes of Muslim

[32] Alan Deyermond, "The Death and Rebirth of Visigothic Spain in the Estoria de España," *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 9, no. 3 (1985), 357; with regard to explaining the incorporation of legendary elements in Latin and Spanish chronicles, it is also worth noting Ward's assertion that "chronicles, in various forms, served a similar function in late-thirteenth-century and fourteenth-century Iberia to that served by romance elsewhere": Aengus Ward, "Iberian Historiography and the Alfonsine Legacy," *Hispanic Research Journal* 4, no. 3 (2003), 195.

territory in Iberia and began to incorporate and appropriate an increasing variety of Arabic texts and genres, they seem to have felt confident enough to include this episode and acknowledge the depths of Visigothic corruption, secure in the belief that their redemption and a shift in the balance of power was at hand. Texts like the *Estoria* were, after all, deeply engaged in the work of appropriating and subverting Islamic religious and literary traditions, as with its account of the life of Muḥammad. The inclusion of the locked palace of Toledo in Christian chronicles recognized and met Muslim expectations of conquest narratives, but situated them within a broader chronology of Christian failure and redemption, giving them a different meaning for the present and the future. As the tale became part of a shared cultural archive, therefore, Muslim and Christian chroniclers increasingly agreed on the events of the eighth-century conquests, but interpreted them quite differently.

Julian, his daughter, and the Strait of Gibraltar

Ultimately, the locked edifice of Toledo was never as integral in Christian chronicles of the conquest as it was in Muslim accounts. Nor did it become the same object of fascination in the Spanish imaginary as the story of Julian and his daughter, which was adopted into the Christian tradition about a century earlier.[33] Though details vary between accounts, the broad contours of the story are as follows: Julian is

[33] Elizabeth Drayson, *The King and the Whore: King Roderick and La Cava* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Patricia E. Grieve, *The Eve of Spain: Myths of Origins in the History of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Conflict* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Aengus Ward, "Images of Rodrigo: The Construction of Past and Present in Late Medieval Iberian Chronicles," *Edad Media: revista de historia*, no. 12 (2011): 99–118.

consistently depicted as having connections across the Strait and as loyal to the Visigothic monarchy until the king either rapes or seduces Julian's daughter, or sometimes his wife, who is generally unnamed. When he learns of this, Julian seeks out Muslim leaders in North Africa, offering to guide them through Spain and aid in their conquest in order to exact his revenge. Like the locked edifice of Toledo, the tale of Julian and his daughter emphasizes Roderic's corruption as a major factor in the fall of the Visigoths, but it also weighs in on the historical relationship between Iberia and North Africa, a topic which became increasingly important to Muslim and Christian chroniclers over time.

Julian is absent from the Latin *Chronicle of 754*, though some have conflated him with Urban, who the text briefly describes as a Catholic man from Africa who accompanies and advises Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr on his Iberian campaigns.[34] Roger Collins argues that scholars have been too quick to assume the historicity of Julian based on this mention of Urban, and that the difference between their names is too great to be explained by something like a paleographic error.[35] Either way, the idea that Muslim conquerors were aided by a Christian man with strong ties to or origins in North Africa, was clearly present in the earliest local accounts of the conquests, and gained more traction in the Arabic chronicles of the following century.

Less remarked upon is the echo of certain elements of the Julian episode in the *Chronicle of 754*'s opening passage. The Mozarabic chronicler says that Heraclius rebels

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[34] López Pereira, ed., *Crónica Mozárabe*, 76; Wolf, trans. *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 134.
[35] Collins, *Arab Conquest of Spain*, 36.

against the Byzantine emperor Phocas, sailing from Africa to Constantinople upon learning that the emperor has deported Heraclius' betrothed, Flavia, to Libya.[36] This sequence of events obviously differs from tale of Julian and his daughter in a number of ways, not least in that it occurs a century earlier. Both episodes, however, underline that the mistreatment of a woman, whether sexual or political, was seen as sufficient and legitimate cause for the men close to her to betray and make war against their sovereign. Likewise, both episodes feature North Africa as a source of troops with the power to overthrow established monarchs, whether in Iberia or Byzantium. And though Heraclius is a Christian ruler, in the *Chronicle of 754* it is his pride which allows for the Islamic conquests in the east and eventually the west. The Latin chronicler moves between narrating events in Iberia, Byzantium, and the Middle East, but North Africa is the first region mentioned in the text, the site of the beginning of a sequence of events which led to the fall of Visigothic Spain to Muslims from North Africa. Whether or not this episode influenced or inspired later Arabic accounts of the conquests, it demonstrates the power of two key elements of the tale of Julian and his daughter: the mistreatment of women as cause for overthrowing a ruler, and the close relationship between events in Iberia and North Africa.

Though Julian does not appear in Ibn Ḥabīb's ninth-century *History*, connections across the Strait are embodied in the person of a nameless *shaykh*, who Denise Filios reads as a kind of proto-Julian figure. The *shaykh*, aboard a Christian (*Rūm*) ship off the North African coast, offers aid in the form of mystical knowledge to Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād,

[36] López Pereira, ed., *Crónica Mozárabe*, 24; Wolf, trans. *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 111.

who has been sent by the governor of Ifrīqiya, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr. The *shaykh* tells Ṭāriq that the Berbers will help him conquer Iberia once they are converted to Islam. Filios observes that the mystical *shaykh* seems to be based on the Qur'ānic figure referred to by later theologians as al-Khiḍr, who offered Moses advice and was to be found at the junction of two bodies of water, which some writers located in the Maghrib.[37] The mystical and scriptural associations of the *shaykh* were not translated onto the figure of Julian in later Muslim accounts, but were instead expressed through Ṭāriq's dream visitation by the prophet Muḥammad while crossing the Strait. Julian did, however, take on the *shaykh*'s role as a mediator across religious and geographical boundaries, which became a significant feature of his portrayal in Christian chronicles as well. In the earliest local accounts of the conquest from both a Christian and a Muslim, therefore, we can identify elements that would become central to attempts to explain the crossing of Muslims from North Africa to Iberia.

The first mention of Julian and his daughter occurs in the ninth-century *Conquests* of Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam. Julian appears almost immediately in the Egyptian's account of the invasion of Iberia, following a brief description of Mūsā sending a series of people, and ultimately Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād, to Tangier. Julian is described as a non-Arab (*'ajam*) loyal to Roderic. He controls the Strait as well as governing cities on both shores, Ceuta and Algeciras.[38] Ṭāriq and Julian already have a friendly and peaceful relationship by the time that Julian's daughter is impregnated by Roderic, the very king entrusted with her

[37] Denise Filios, "Legends of the Fall: Conde Julián in Medieval Arabic and Hispano-Latin Historiography," *Medieval Encounters* 15, no. 2–4 (2009), 379-380.
[38] Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *History*, ed. Torrey, 205; Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest of Spain*, trans. John Harris Jones (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969), 18-19.

care and charged with overseeing her education. When Julian decides to bring Ṭāriq and the Arabs to Spain as vengeance, Ṭāriq demands hostages from Julian as a gesture of goodwill, so he sends his other two daughters, suggesting that women were safer in Muslim's care than Christian king's.

Julian's betrayal de-emphasizes the initiative Ibn Ḥabīb ascribes to Mūsā in sending Ṭāriq to scope out the logistics of invading Iberia, in keeping with Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam's overall negative portrayal the Ifrīqiyan governor. In so doing, however, the Egyptian author reifies the Strait of Gibraltar as a significant boundary between Iberia and North Africa, and initially between Christianity and Islam. In Ibn Ḥabīb's account, crossing the Strait requires the mystical knowledge of the nameless *shaykh*, but in Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam's text, the very idea of conquering Iberia comes from within the peninsula—despite the fact, as the chronicle mentions, that ships crossed the Strait so frequently that the arrival of Muslim troops initially went unnoticed. Roderic's violation and Julian's betrayal make the conquest conceivable and achievable. As with the locked edifice of Toledo, this episode centers internal causes for the fall of the Visigothic state, rather than external ones, an emphasis that would remain consistent in both Muslim and Christian accounts over the centuries, even as details changed.

The late tenth-century account of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya likewise juxtaposes the permeability of the Strait with the idea that its traversal by Muslim conquerors must be the result of an internal Iberian failure. Rather than a political figure, Julian is a merchant who travels regularly across the Strait, acquiring horses and hunting birds for Roderic in

North Africa. Upon learning of Roderic's seduction of his daughter, Julian goes to Ṭāriq and informs him of Spain's splendor and the weakness and cowardice of its people.[39]

The anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* gives a more detailed account that mixes these portrayals of Julian, saying he is lord of two North African cities, Tangier and Ceuta, which he rules in Roderic's name. Julian visits Iberia yearly to bring the king hunting birds. In this telling, Julian learns that the king has raped his daughter when she sends him a gift of rare and precious objects, including a rotten egg as a symbol of her stolen virtue. He then returns to court months before he usually would, taking his daughter home on the pretext that her mother is dying. Before they depart, Roderic asks if he has found any more birds for him, and Julian replies ominously that he has found birds the likes of which the king has never seen, which he will bring shortly. He then asks Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr to invade, describing the king's actions and Spain's abundance.[40] In the *Fatḥ* too, then, Julian appears as the sole figure with any real knowledge of events and landscapes on both shores of the Strait. And because he controls North African territory, his betrayal of Roderic and turn to Muslim leadership signal the Islamicization not only of Iberia but also of the northwesternmost reaches of the Maghrib. The Julian episode in Arabic chronicles functions as an acknowledgement of the legacy of Christian rule and residence in North Africa, suggesting that it persisted even into the eighth century. When the fall of the Visigoths gave Muslims control of both sides of the Strait, previous

[39] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ*, 33-34; James, trans., *History*, 51-52.
[40] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 13-15; Penelas, trans., *Conquista*, 8-9.

political and religious unity of Iberia and North Africa returned under Islam and the Umayyads.

The anonymous *Akhbār majmū'a* goes further, depicting the Visigoths as deeply invested in their North African territories. Because of their support, Julian is able to hold Ceuta against Mūsā's forces until civil unrest breaks out in Iberia, resulting in the election of Roderic as king. When Roderic rapes Julian's daughter, the nobleman pledges his allegiance to Mūsā and relinquishes his territory.[41] Dispensing with the idea that the Visigoths were ignorant of developments in North Africa, the *Akhbār* chronicler uses the Julian episode to further underline the past, present, and future unity of the communities across the Strait. Towards the end of the text, the chronicler recounts the success of the caliph 'Abd al-Raḥmān III in conquering Maghribi cities across the Strait, and says if that he had not been overtaken by worldly pleasures, he would have subdued the Mashriq as well as the Maghrib.[42]

Julian's role as border crosser, master of the Strait, and mediator of relations between Iberia and North Africa remained an important function of the episode once it was adopted into the Christian chronicle tradition. Though, like the locked edifice of Toledo, it does not appear in the Asturian chronicles of the ninth century, it was incorporated into two anonymous Latin chronicles in the early twelfth century, the *Historia Silense* and the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*. The Julian episode in the former is more familiar, with Roderic raping Julian's daughter, but in the latter, Witiza is

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[41] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmū'a*, 15-16; David James, trans., *A History of Early al-Andalus: The* Akhbār Majmū'a (London: Routledge, 2011), 48-49.
[42] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmū'a*, 136-137.

responsible for this violation, adding to the Asturian tradition attributing sexual vices to the penultimate Visigothic king. The *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* says that one day, the topic of women's beauty is brought up among the king and his companions, many of whom claim that the beauty of Julian's daughter Oliba is without peer. Upon hearing this, Witiza schemes and finds a way to have Oliba brought to his court from Tangier without her father's knowledge. When Julian discovers that the king has raped his daughter, he abandons Oliba, leaves the city, and goes to Ṭāriq to ask him to invade. When Ṭāriq asks how there can be trust between them as a Muslim and a Christian, Julian leaves his wife in Ṭāriq's care, echoing Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam's assertion that Julian left two of his daughters with the commander.[43]

In the *Historia Silense*, Witiza's sins include compelling clerical marriage and blinding a man with a superior claim to the throne, whose son Roderic succeeds Witiza upon his death. To avenge his father, Roderic sends Witiza's sons to Tingitania, a province in North Africa that the chronicler indicates was also controlled by the Visigothic kings.[44] There they meet count Julian, a Witiza loyalist who is doubly angry because the new king has taken his daughter as a concubine. Julian introduces Witiza's sons to the Muslim conquerors in North Africa, spelling doom for themselves and the entire kingdom of Spain.[45] As with the Heraclius episode in the *Chronicle of 754*, North Africa is a source of support for Iberians wishing to rebel against the ruler. This depiction

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[43] Fernando González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *La Chronica Gothorum Pseudo-Isidoriana (ms. Paris BN 6113)* (A Coruña: Toxosoutos, 2000), 180-185.
[44] Justo Pérez de Urbel and Atilano González Ruiz-Zorrilla, eds., *Historia Silense* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1959), 118.
[45] "Et sibi et totius Ispanie regno perditum iri disposuerunt": Ibid., 127.

of North Africa even holds in Christian sources that do not include the Julian episode, like the ninth-century *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, one manuscript tradition of which says that the sons of Witiza sought the aid of Muslims from North Africa in their rebellion against Roderic.[46]

The *Silense* chronicler indicates that it is upon learning of the count's "dubious faith" that Ṭāriq, sent by the caliph, begins to make war on the king of Spain.[47] While this could refer to Julian's loyalty—or lack thereof—to the monarchy, it may also hint that Julian further betrays his people by converting to Islam. And although Roderic's army is initially successful, slaughtering Ṭāriq's infantry for seven days straight, a key turning point occurs with the declaration of Julian's new faith throughout "all of Africa." This moves Mūsā to direct "an infinite multitude of cavalry and infantry to Spain," overthrowing Roderic and signaling that "the hand of God had withdrawn from Spain on account of the prolonged wickedness of its kings."[48] With the ambiguous use of the Latin *fides*, the *Silense* chronicler suggests that Julian's betrayal and transfer of allegiance is simultaneously political and religious, allowing Muslim North Africans to overcome Iberian Christians. Again, the Islamic conquests are portrayed as a continuation of historical unity across the Strait, but in the Christian text this appears as a perversion, the result of Christian sinfulness which can and must be overcome. It is further

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[46] Juan Gil Fernández and Juan Ignacio Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III (Rotense y "A Sebastián"); Crónica Albeldense (y "Profética")*, trans. José-Luis Moralejo (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), 121, 201.
[47] "Cognita Iuliani dubia fide": Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 128.
[48] "Sed postquam Iuliani fides per omnem Africam declaratur, Muza exercitus Africani regis princeps, cum infinita multitudine equitum peditumque, ad Yspaniam dirigitur… Receserat enim manus Domini ob inueteratam regum malitiam ab Ispania": Ibid., 128-129.

contextualized in the graphic description of Christian armies, centuries later, covering the landscape with Almoravid corpses, suggesting that Iberian Christians were restoring the natural order of things and putting Muslims and North Africans in their place.

The inclusion of such substantially different accounts of the Julian episode in two Latin chronicles of the early twelfth century texts suggests a new relationship to Arabic sources. The exact relationship of the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* to its Latin and Arabic sources remains a point of significant debate, but it appears to be the result of multiple stages of exchange and translation between the two linguistic and literary traditions.[49] The *Historia Silense*'s Arabic sources likewise remain elusive, but it adopts multiple details and episodes from Muslim texts.[50] As discussed in the previous chapter, the *Silense*'s use of the Latin *barbarus* to refer to Muslims seems to have held a double meaning, acting as both a translation of the Arabic *barbar* (Berber) and an allusion to the description of invading populations as barbarians in pre-Islamic Iberian historiography. There is reason to suspect a connection with Ibn Ḥabīb's ninth-century *History* as well. In the Andalusi chronicle, Mūsā is not just a regional governor, but is also portrayed as a kind of seer. He tells Ṭāriq that the man upon whom leadership of the conquest of Iberia should be conferred will be squint-eyed or cross-eyed (*bi-ʻaynihi qabal*), a description that fits Ṭāriq himself.[51] Nearly three centuries later, the *Historia Silense* not only appears to have introduced the figure of Julian into the Christian historiographical canon,

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[49] Ann Christys, "'How Can I Trust You, since You Are a Christian and I Am a Moor?': The Multiple Identities of the Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore," in *Texts and Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Richard Corradini et al. (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006), 359–72; González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *Chronica*, 18-91.
[50] Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 26-32.
[51] Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb*, ed. Aguadé, 137.

but also says that Ṭāriq was squint-eyed (*strabonem*), a detail absent from many of the other Arabic accounts discussed thus far.[52]

The diverging depictions of Julian's betrayal in the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* and the *Historia Silense* indicate the diversity of the Arabic chronicle tradition and the various ways it was translated and interpreted by Christian historians. The *Silense*'s take on the Julian episode was more representative of both Muslim and Christian accounts, not merely because it held that Roderic was to blame for the rape of Julian's daughter, but also because of its attention to the nature of the relationship between North Africa and Iberia. Each chronicle, however, presents interesting understandings of ties across the Strait, which are worth exploring further. As Denise Filios observes, the figure of Julian is a useful entry point into such questions, since he is able to cross borders between geographies and cultures. In the analysis that follows, however, I wish to nuance and challenge some of her assertions about the episode's function in the broader context of the *Historia Silense*, the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*, and the Latin chronicle tradition on the conquests in the preceding centuries.

Specifically, Filios suggests that the Julian episode's appearance in Latin chronicles in the early twelfth century reflects a more positive view of Andalusi Muslims than is to be found in the Asturian chronicles of the ninth century, as well as an openness to the Strait as more than a strict natural border separating "two religions, two cultures, two political systems."[53] It is certainly true that the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*, which

[52] Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 128.
[53] Filios, "Legends of the Fall," 386.

ends with Ṭāriq imposing peace on a peninsula divided by unrest, does not present the Muslim conquests as particularly negative, a stance that seems to be a result of its immersion in Arabic sources. Ann Christys suggests that the text's later copyist, likely working from France, included a kind of appendix to the chronicle in an attempt to assert the pagan identity of Muslims and counterbalance the lack of polemics in the chronicle itself. She speculates that the anonymous chronicler's failure to take a stronger anti-Muslim stance may indicate that they had limited access to Latin narratives that had not been mediated through Arabic texts and Muslim transmitters.[54] It is thus difficult to determine the extent to which various passages or the text as a whole were intended for Muslim or Christian audiences, but there is room for analysis within this ambiguity.

The bulk of the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* is devoted to Biblical, Roman, and Visigothic history, ending with a description of the Islamic conquests. The text emphasizes political and historical-cultural divisions between Iberia and North Africa on multiple occasions, including the traditional attribution of the populations of Asia, Africa, and Europe to the three sons of Noah. The descendants of Ham are said to have fled to Africa, whereas Japhet engendered multiple nations who settled in Spain and who are spoken of quite positively.[55] Later, the chronicler specifies that there were two regions known as Tingitania, one of which was included in the emperor Constantine's division of Spain, and one of which was across the sea.[56] The text thus acknowledges a region

[54] Ann Christys, "Expanding/expounding the Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore: Paris, BN lat. 6113," in *Zwischen Niederschrift und Wiederschrift: Hagiographie und Historiographie im Spannungsfeld von Kompendienüberlieferung und Editionstechnik*, ed. Richard Corradini, Max Diesenberger, and Meta Niederkorn-Bruck (Wien: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010), 79–91.
[55] González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *Chronica*, 114-115.
[56] Ibid., 140-141.

known as Tingitania in North Africa, but suggests that it was politically distinct from Roman Spain. Later, the emperor Marcian imposed a geographical division of the world which again separated Iberia and North Africa.[57]

Pseudo-Isidore also relates several attempts by Visigothic kings to conquer North African territory. King Felius, having fully conquered and subdued Spain with the aid of the Roman emperor, seeks to cross the sea to do the same in Africa. A great wind prevents him from completing the crossing, however, and he returns to the peninsula.[58] A later king launches a campaign against Ceuta, but does not attack the city on Sundays for religious reasons. The people of Ceuta, seeing this, take the opportunity to surprise the king's forces on a Sunday, killing him along with thousands of his troops.[59] Finally, it is possible that another king's embassy to the "Oriba" people may refer to the Awraba tribe of the Maghrib, and that when the chronicler says the king was fluent in the barbarian tongue, this may have meant Berber.[60] The text does not detail the embassy's outcomes, but may suggest another Visigothic attempt to establish a political foothold in North Africa. Julian is the first and only figure portrayed as having a significant role in Iberia and North Africa before the conquests, and it is his connections across the Strait—the nature of which are left vague—which allow him to bring about the downfall of the Visigoths.

In the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*, then, Julian represents the culmination and subversion of multiple Visigothic efforts to establish a political presence across the Strait.

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[57] Ibid., 152-155.
[58] Ibid., 146-147.
[59] Ibid., 160-161.
[60] Ibid., 76-77, 178-179.

Iberia and North Africa are finally united under a single rule, a significant rupture from their historical separation as narrated in the chronicle. The text also provides some evidence for my speculation that Arabic chroniclers drew on the history of Heraclius in their description of the violation of Julian's daughter by the Christian king. According to Pseudo-Isidore, Heraclius rebels against Phocas, "gathering all the African and Arab nations" along with Spanish ships when the emperor tries to marry his betrothed, Flavia, daughter of "the king of Africa." Once Heraclius is emperor and successfully subdues the Persians, he faces war against the Arabs.[61] This account differs from the one offered in the *Chronicle of 754*, but brings Phocas' mistreatment of Flavia more in line with the Visigothic king's rape of Julian's daughter. It continues to present North Africa as a source of rebellion against Christian monarchs while perhaps obliquely suggesting that by accepting the aid of the Arabs in his revolt, Heraclius brings about his own defeat at their hands.

Julian facilitating the Umayyad unification of Iberia and North Africa after millennia of separation could be interpreted from a Christian or a Muslim perspective. In the case of the former, this would not seem to support Filios' suggestion that Pseudo-Isidore viewed the permeability of the Strait positively. On the contrary, it goes against the divisions established with the generations of Noah, and against multiple divisions under Roman emperors. It also highlights that North African Muslims were successful in conquering territory across the Strait, where multiple Visigothic kings had failed. From a Muslim point of view, this may have underlined the significance of the conquerors'

[61] Ibid., 174-177.

achievements, uniting two regions that had historically remained separate. Either way, the text makes a substantial effort to portray the Strait as an effective barrier up to the point of Witiza's violation and Julian's betrayal. In this regard, as with various other details of the Julian episode, the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore* diverges from most surviving Arabic accounts of the conquests, which emphasize historical ties across the Strait and suggest that North African Muslims have assumed control of the region's shared past, present, and future.

The *Historia Silense*, on the other hand, presents a vision of the Strait and the relationship between Iberia and North Africa that is much more in line with previous Latin accounts than Filios suggests. The text affirms that the Visigothic kings ruled six provinces in Iberia, "up to the sea which separates Europe from Africa," as well as the province of Tingitania, "in the furthest reaches of Africa."[62] Immediately after, the chronicler says that in the face of Witiza's corruption, divine providence allowed Spain to be overtaken by barbarians, as the flood of Noah had the earth. While it was natural, therefore, for Iberians to rule North African territory, the *Historia Silense* suggests that the reversal of these power dynamics is a perversion caused by a sinful Visigothic king, casting the Muslim conquerors as a scourge. The Julian episode adds another layer to the corruption of the Visigothic kings and underlines that while Tingitania was once part of the Visigothic kingdom, the two are fundamentally distinct. Tingitania is the place in which internal rebellion is fomented as well as a launching pad for the foreign invaders.

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[62] Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 118; Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid: Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 28.

Even as Christian chroniclers acknowledged the failure of Christian monarchs, they emphasized the distant origins of rebellion and divine punishment, suggesting that what went wrong in Iberia could and should eventually be removed from the peninsula altogether. While the arrival of the Almoravids in the eleventh century indicates that the North African scourge was not yet at an end, the *Silense* chronicler makes a point of providing hyperbolic and graphic accounts of their defeat at the hands of Iberian Christians, assuring the audience that their expulsion is at hand. This is not radically different from Christian accounts of the conquests in preceding centuries. The ninth-century *Chronicle of Alfonso III* is unique in that it makes few direct references to North Africa or the origins of the Muslim invaders, and is more exclusively focused on the peninsula than earlier or later chronicles. One of the last passages in the text, however, indicates that North Africa itself has become the object of a scourge. It says that after terrorizing Spain, Viking raiders cross the sea to Mauretania and kill many Chaldeans.[63] The *Chronicle of Albelda* and its continuation, the *Prophetic Chronicle*, which were produced under the Asturian dynasty at almost the exact same time as the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, are wider in scope and mention relations across the Strait more frequently. As in the *Historia Silense*, North Africa is cast as a place of religious deviance. The Albelda chronicler recounts how the Vandals go from Spain to North Africa, where they subvert the Catholic faith with Arian impiety, and even says that the prophet Muḥammad preached there.[64] The text directly connects the Muslim conquerors to North Africa, even

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[63] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 148-149; Wolf, trans. *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 177.
[64] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 164, 169, 185.

predicting that a final apocalyptic battle between Muslims and Christians will take place shortly in Libya. The *Chronicle of Albelda* and *Prophetic Chronicle* thus assert a historical relationship between Iberia and North Africa that would culminate in the political and religious triumph of Iberian Christians on both sides of the Strait.

The exact nature of ties across the Strait, and their bearing on the Islamic conquests, vary in Christian histories from the eighth to the twelfth centuries. The Julian episode was adopted by Christian chroniclers not only because it fit within their narratives of the corruption of Visigothic monarchs, but also because it could be adopted and adjusted to make a variety of statements about the shared history of Iberia and North Africa. This continued to be the case as chroniclers and patrons like Lucas of Tuy, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, and Alfonso X moved towards universal histories in the thirteenth century. Their histories, like those of the twelfth century, engaged increasingly closely with Arabic sources, and indeed some elements of the Julian episode are conveyed formulaically enough to support the idea that a written rather an oral than source was used by Christian chroniclers.[65]

The Julian episode in the *Chronicon mundi*, composed around 1236 by Lucas of Tuy, mostly follows the account given in the *Historia Silense*, but includes several additional details about Julian and his revenge. Lucas says that Julian tricks Roderic into

[65] The *Akhbār majmūʿa*, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Ibn ʿIdhārī, the *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, Jiménez de Rada, and the *Estoria de España* all present similar explanations for the presence of Julian's daughter at Roderic's court, based on what is supposed to have been the prevailing Visigothic custom of sending noble children to be raised in the palace: Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʿa*, 16; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *History*, ed. Torrey, 205; Ibn ʿIdhārī, *Bayān*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 7; Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 13; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 100; Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.1, VPE: 563, 1 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [01/11/2021].

sending horses and arms to North Africa and to Gaul, telling him that since his reign is secure within Spain, keeping instruments of war in the country would only increase the chance of its people killing one another. Julian then provokes the North Africans and the Franks, newly armed by Spain itself, to attack.[66] Julian's betrayal thus spans the Pyrenees as well as the Strait of Gibraltar, although the alleged Frankish campaign and its effects are largely excluded from the narrative and only mentioned again briefly following Roderic's death.[67] Even as Lucas of Tuy apparently attempts to attribute the fall of the Visigoths to factors beyond Iberia and North Africa, his narrative remains focused on connections across the Strait.

A few years later, in the 1240s, the archbishop of Toledo Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada composed his *Historia Gothica*. His version of the Julian episode likewise touches on both France and North Africa, and in the section on the reign of Witiza the archbishop says that the Visigothic kingdom extended from Tangier to the Rhone.[68] As in the *Chronicon*, the sons of Witiza are exiled to Tingitania, where they encounter a local count named Ricila who had been loyal to their father.[69] Neither Ricila nor the sons of Witiza are mentioned again, but a count named Julian appears in the following section and is described similarly, as a familiar of Witiza who held land and titles in "maritime" regions (*maritimis*). This descriptor is not entirely clear, and a modern Spanish translator

[66] Lucas de Tuy, *Chronicon mundi*, ed. Emma Falque, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 74 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 220.
[67] Ibid., 221.
[68] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 97; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia los hechos de España*, trans. Fernández Valverde, 141.
[69] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 99; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia los hechos de España*, trans. Fernández Valverde, 143.

takes it to mean “the other side of the sea,” North Africa.[70] Shortly after, however, the chronicler says that following their arrival in Algeciras, Muslim conquerors “devastated other maritime places (*loca maritima*),” which were undoubtedly in Iberia. Furthermore, the term is translated into Castilian as *marismas* in the *Estoria de España*, initial versions of which were produced under the patronage of Alfonso X in the second half of the thirteenth century, and which drew heavily on the *Historia Gothica*.[71] Along with the two aforementioned uses in relation to Julian’s holdings and Muslim raids, the term *marismas* appears earlier in the chronicle to refer to territory held by the Suevi in the northwest corner of the peninsula, suggesting that it referred to coastal territory more generally.[72]

It would seem, therefore, that the chronicles of Jiménez de Rada and Alfonso X split Julian into two figures: one who held territory in coastal North Africa, the other in southern Iberia. Roderic sends Julian to North Africa on the pretext of a diplomatic delegation, using his absence to rape either the count’s daughter or his wife. Both the *Chronicon* and the *Estoria* cite this as the reason for the ruin of Spain and Gothic Gaul. While both specify that the Visigothic state encompassed North African holdings, they deemphasize the import of this detail in two ways: by stepping back from earlier claims that Julian controlled territory on both sides of the Strait, and by expressing more concern for the loss of territory in Gaul than in Tingitania. Earlier Christian chronicles were far from disinterested in the relationship between Iberia and France and their rival attempts to rid Christendom of Muslims, but the chronicles of the thirteenth century increasingly

[70] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 100; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia los hechos de España*, trans. Fernández Valverde, 144.
[71] Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.1, VPE: 564, 11 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [01/11/2021].
[72] Ward, ed., *Estoria de Espanna Digital* v.1.1, VPE: 374, 12 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [01/11/2021].

understood the eighth-century Islamic conquests as a disruption of the geopolitical balance not only across the Strait but across the Pyrenees as well.

At roughly the same time, North African Arabic chroniclers under the Almohads and the Marinids began to minimize the Julian episode, expressing the importance of historical relationships across the Strait through other means. This was the case for ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, who composed his *Kitāb al-muʻjib* just a few years before the appearance of the *Chronicon mundi* and the *Historia Gothica*. At the beginning of his chronicle, ʻAbd al-Wāḥid states that the work will largely be devoted to events in the Maghrib, and especially to the Almohads. After an introductory passage, however, he dives into a geographic description of al-Andalus and its conquest by Muslims. He appears to justify this choice by saying that al-Andalus was the seat of government and the "mother" of places in the farthest west (*Maghrib al-aqṣā*) until the conquests of the Almoravid Yūsuf ibn Tāshufīn, when it became dependent on Marrakesh, the Almoravid and Almohad capital.[73]

In ʻAbd al-Wāḥid's account of the eighth-century conquests, Ṭāriq is governor of Tangier. The Christian lord of Algeciras, who is unnamed, asks for the king's daughter in marriage. This angers the king, and he threatens the lord, who responds by gathering his forces and marching upon the king. Ṭāriq, hearing that Algeciras was unprotected, takes advantage of the opportunity to invade. This constitutes an odd inversion of the typical

[73] This description is more or less repeated later in the chronicle when ʻAbd al-Wāḥid narrates the arrival of the Almoravids in the peninsula: ʻAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Histoire des Almohades*, ed. Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1881), 3, 115; ʻAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Kitāb al-Muʻŷib fī Taljiṣ Ajbār al Magrib: Lo admirable en el resumen de las noticias del Magrib*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Tetuán: Editora Marroquí, 1955), 3, 119.

Julian episode in which the noble is interested in the king's daughter, rather than the king raping the noble's daughter. It may be that this account was a misunderstanding on the part of the chronicler, and one which a later editor of the sole surviving manuscript attempted to rectify. The text also says that a Christian (*'ilj*) wrote to Ṭāriq about crossing the Strait, after which a partially obscured marginal addition relates the more traditional details of the tale, naming Roderic but not Julian.[74] The cause of the conquests is thus largely glossed over, with more emphasis placed on Ṭāriq's initiative than Roderic's corruption or Julian's betrayal.

Rather than focusing on a history of Visigothic unity across the Strait, 'Abd al-Wāḥid is more interested in the shifts in power between Iberia and North Africa under Islam. Highlighting the role of conquerors and governors from North Africa in the establishment of al-Andalus made the later Almoravid and Almohad conquests seem all the more natural and inevitable, a kind of return to the triumphs of the eighth century. The *Kitāb al-mu'jib* ends as it begins, with a geographical description the author says is at the request of his patron. He gives details on various North African cities and the distance between them, then does the same for al-Andalus, omitting distances because, he says, the Christian occupation prevented them from being known.[75] 'Abd al-Wāḥid also emphasizes the close physical proximity of Iberia and North Africa and the pre-Visigothic history of connectivity across the Strait. He says that at a certain spot, the sand on either shore can be seen from the other side at any hour of the day. He adds that

[74] 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, "*Kitāb al-mu'jib fī talkhīṣ akhbār al-Maghrib*" (Leiden), Or. 546, Leiden University Special Collections.
[75] 'Abd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 267; 'Abd al-Wāḥid, *Kitāb al-Mu'ŷib*, trans. Huici Miranda, 301.

"historians" relate that the Romans built a bridge across the Strait in ancient times, which has since been covered by water but can still be seen when the sea is clear.[76]

Though Almohad power in the peninsula was on the decline in the 1220s, ʻAbd al-Wāḥid produced what he refers to as a history of the Maghrib by narrating what is in fact principally a history of al-Andalus with a focus on its North African conquerors and rulers. He underlines the historical unity across the Strait of Gibraltar under Rome and Islam, suggesting parallels between the two and emphasizing that continued unity under the latter relied on the actions and presence of North Africans in Iberia. This stance may have seemed increasingly urgent with the growing power of Iberia's Christian kingdoms in the thirteenth century. And so, whether ʻAbd al-Wāḥid was genuinely ignorant of the traditional details of the Julian episode or simply chose to adapt and omit them, his account maintains the idea that internal division in Iberia left an opening for Ṭāriq and that historical unity across the Strait ought to translate to continued unity in the present and future. The blurring of the figures of Julian and Roderic fits within the *Kitāb al-muʻjib*'s larger assertion of that al-Andalus is part of the farthest west, defined by its relationship to Islam and North Africa.

Another North African account, the early fourteenth-century *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʻIdhārī, similarly devotes relatively little attention to the Julian episode, while emphasizing the longer interconnected history of Iberia and North Africa. After the traditional geographical description common to both Christian and Muslim sources, the

[76] ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 258; ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, *Kitāb al-Muʻŷib*, trans. Huici Miranda, 291. For more on the legend of the bridge over the Strait, see Hernández Juberías, *La península imaginaria*, 108-119.

portion of Ibn ʻIdhārī's text devoted to al-Andalus turns to a series of Iberian settlements after the flood. He says that the first of these were magi, and so God sought to remove them, withholding rain and forcing them out. After one hundred years of emptiness, the peninsula was again inhabited, this time by people from "Afāriqa," who were forced out of Ifrīqiya by its ruler because of a lack of food. When they arrived in Iberia, its rivers flowed again for 150 years, until it was conquered by the "Ishbāniyya," and then the Romans.[77] In the *Bayān*, the earliest history of Iberia is literally one of pagan corruption followed by the return of abundance under North African settlers, who are then destroyed by the people from whom the Spanish got their name.

Shortly thereafter, the chronicle reaches the Islamic conquests of the eighth century. Following the episode of the locked edifice of Toledo, Ibn ʻIdhārī cites multiple sources for the sequence of events leading up to the invasion. Several of these mention Julian but not his motivation or his daughter, generally being much more focused on the chain of command which granted permission for the conquests. One source says that Julian was the son of the king whose throne Roderic usurped, while "others" relate the traditional tale about Roderic's violation of Julian's daughter.[78] Though it is typical of Ibn ʻIdhārī to include varying versions of events, the effect is that, as in the *Kitāb al-muʻjib*, Julian's role is obscured and overshadowed by that of Ṭāriq and his fellow Muslim rulers and conquerors. The inclusion of a much earlier migration from North Africa to Iberia highlights the historical permeability of the Strait. Like the early

[77] Ibn ʻIdhārī, *Bayān*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 1-2.
[78] Ibid., 6-7.

Ifrīqiyans in Iberia, the descendants of the eighth-century conquerors would come under threat from the "Ishbāniyya" in later years. Nonetheless, in the *Bayān* hope remains that medieval Andalusis and Maghribis, whose political union was still theoretically a goal of the North African Marinid dynasty, would be able to counteract this encroachment.

Though Arabic chroniclers in Egypt and then al-Andalus appear to have introduced the Julian episode to conquest narratives, perhaps drawing on accounts of Heraclius and Urban in the *Chronicle of 754*, over the course of centuries they de-emphasized the tale, using other means to articulate the history of Iberian-North African relations. This occurred around the same time, or shortly after, the episode began to gain steam in Christian Iberian chronicles in the early twelfth century. It may have been a response to the appropriation of the tale by Christian writers and the concomitant shift in the balance of power between Muslims and Christians in the region. It may also have been a result of the increased prominence of Maghribis, rather than Andalusis, in the production of Arabic chronicles in this period.

The appearance of the locked palace in thirteenth-century Christian accounts, on the other hand, coincides with a trend towards longer, more detailed universal histories in Latin and Ibero-Romance, in which both Biblical and Greco-Roman mythical narratives were integral starting points. Portents like the locked palace may have made more sense within this framework, which followed a longer and more mythologized chronology for the peninsula in which a sense of divine destiny was strong enough to counterbalance the idea that the seed of the Islamic conquests were encased and foretold within the very heart of the Visigothic monarchy. And though Christians conquered Muslim territory

before the thirteenth century, their increased confidence and the subversive engagement with Arabic texts that characterize this period, especially after the effective withdrawal of the Almohads from the peninsula, may also constitute a partial explanation.

Ultimately, whether or not they did so through the figure of Julian, the shared past of Iberia and North Africa, often with legendary and hyperbolic embellishments, remained an important part of conquest narratives for both Muslim and Christian chroniclers in the Middle Ages. The adoption and growing importance of the Julian episode in Christian chronicles and its subsequent decentering in Muslim chronicles make it an especially interesting entry in the shared cultural archive that spanned the Strait, as does its emphasis on the relationship between North Africa and Iberia. And, critically, medieval chroniclers seem to have proclaimed the region's shared history not to promote religious diversity so much as to justify the dominance of one religion.

Ninth-century prophetic histories

Muslim and Christian chroniclers did not only look to the past to articulate the relationship between Iberia and North Africa—they also looked to the future. In the second half of the ninth century, two chronicles, one Andalusi and one Asturian, predicted the imminent demise of the Andalusi emirate and the ushering in of a new political and spiritual age. This instance of exchange across religious and linguistic lines was much shorter-lived than the transmission of eighth-century conquest narratives, but the similarities in these apocalyptic prophecies are striking nonetheless.

Though apocalypticism prevailed in a variety of forms in both Christianity and Islam in the medieval western Mediterranean, the particular political context of the mid- to late-ninth century are critical for understanding these prophetic histories. In al-Andalus, the Umayyads ruled from Córdoba as emirs, even after the fall of the caliphate in the Middle East to the ʻAbbasids. Meanwhile, the Asturian kings in Oviedo sought to revive the Visigothic order by uniting the peninsula once more under Christian rule. Despite lofty claims to the legacies of their predecessors, however, the Andalusi emirs in the south and the Asturian kings in the north each faced a variety of internal and external threats, not least one another. Prospects were perhaps bleaker for al-Andalus, which was plagued by rebellions. It was by no means clear that the next century would produce two of its strongest leaders, one of whom would shed the title of emir and assume that of caliph, asserting (if not achieving) political and religious leadership of the entire Islamic world. Asturias, on the other hand, was arguably at the peak of its political power and literary output under the reign of Alfonso III, from 866 to 910.[79] It is likely to this imbalance of power that we can partially attribute the appearance of similar apocalyptic and prophetic elements in two nearly contemporary chronicles written in different languages by authors of different religions.

The first of these was composed in Arabic by Ibn Ḥabīb, a Muslim jurist (*faqīh*) from south-central Iberia who died around 853. His universal *History* was relatively unique in al-Andalus in this period. It begins with the creation of the world, covering the

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[79] For an overview of Asturian and Andalusi political and cultural history in this period, see Roger Collins, *Caliphs and Kings: Spain, 796-1031* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 14-120.

lives of the prophets and the establishment of Islam before giving a more localized account of the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia and its subsequent Muslim rulers. After Ibn Ḥabīb's death, the *History* appears to have been supplemented by one of his students, al-Maghāmī, whose additions bring the list of Andalusi emirs up to date.[80] The continuation can thus be dated between the beginning of the emir ʻAbd Allāh's reign in 888 and al-Maghāmī's death in 901.

Though a number of scholars have attributed the prophetic and apocalyptic material in Ibn Ḥabīb's history to his continuator, al-Maghāmī is careful to cite his teacher directly when adding predictions about the destruction of the Umayyad emirate in al-Andalus. There are also multiple other indications that Ibn Ḥabīb himself always intended to build up to a description of the end times. Outlining his plan for the chronicle early on in the text, he explains that he will give an account of how Muslim rule in Iberia will come to an end, and what will take place between that event and the Hour. Ibn Ḥabīb expresses the belief that he himself is living in the end times and predicts that there will be twenty-five emirs of al-Andalus, to match the twenty-five Visigothic kings who ruled Spain.[81] Finally, he says that Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, one of the driving forces in the eighth-century conquests, foretold that Córdoba would fall two hundred years after his departure from the city. As these were presumably lunar years, following the Islamic calendar, this prediction would put the destruction of the Andalusi capital in the first decade of the 900s, within about fifty years of Ibn Ḥabīb's death and just after that of al-Maghāmī.

[80] Aguadé, "Vida y obra," 87-88.
[81] Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb*, ed. Aguadé, 34, 140.

The latter was quite disparaging about the reign of ʿAbd Allāh, the emir under whom he wrote—who also happened to be the twenty-fifth Umayyad ruler in al-Andalus, and therefore the last, according to Ibn Ḥabīb's earlier prediction. Al-Maghāmī says that ʿAbd Allāh "untied all the knots which his father and grandfather had tied in peace" and predicts that Córdoba would fall and be destroyed by a tribe of Berbers during the end times.[82] Al-Maghāmī then attributes the following prediction to Ibn Ḥabīb:

> When the reign of the Umayyads is ended and a man of the clients (*al-mawālī*) or of the Berbers rules, there will be wailing and the second reign of the Umayyads will be in Carmona. Then Córdoba will be destroyed until no one lives there but crows. Power will move to Seville and the caliphs will come from the ʿAbbasids, and they will hold power until the descendants of Abū Ṭālib, until the deceiver (*dajjāl*) goes out. The immigrant (*dākhil*) of the Quraysh and the descendants of Fāṭima will come in and the people of al-Andalus will hand the governorship over to him. In this time Constantinople will be conquered, and the Christians of Córdoba and its surroundings will be killed by the Fāṭimī and no Christian will remain.[83]

It is significant that the continuator's description of ʿAbd Allāh's reign and his prediction about the fall of Córdoba to Berbers are immediately followed by Ibn Ḥabīb's outline of the events which would precede the end times. Pairing this information implies that the emir's troubles should be understood as signs of the impending apocalypse. The reader is left to conclude that ʿAbd Allāh must be the last Umayyad emir in al-Andalus and that a few decades after his rule Córdoba would fall. This event would fulfil the prophecies of both Ibn Ḥabīb and Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, each of which represent steps in a larger sequence of eschatological events that include the destruction and ruin of a number of other Iberian cities. The apocalypse is portrayed as a prolonged process, and al-Maghāmī tells us that

[82] Ibid., 151.
[83] Ibid., 153-154.

according to Ibn Ḥabīb's calculations the seven thousand years of the world would come to a final close about two hundred years after the text's composition.[84]

Unsurprisingly, the chronicle's description of the events that would precede the departure of the *dajjal* or "deceiver," an Islamic figure comparable to the Antichrist, highlights the power struggle between various groups of Iberian Muslims.[85] The prophecy addresses Berbers, Umayyads and their recently converted clients (*mawālī*), ʻAbbasids, and descendants of various members of the prophet Muḥammad's tribe (the Quraysh) and his family (the Fāṭimīs, descendants of Muḥammad's daughter Fāṭima). These groups competed for power in the century and a half after the arrival of Muslims in Iberia.[86] ʻAbd Allāh's reign in particular was plagued by rebellions of *muwallad*s, the descendants of those who had converted to Islam after the conquests and had begun to demand equal treatment as fellow Muslims.[87]

Despite this focus on peninsular power struggles, the inclusion of the conquest of Constantinople, a common feature in Islamic apocalyptic literature from the eastern Mediterranean, indicates that Ibn Ḥabīb understood the apocalypse as an event whose broad geography matched that covered in his chronicle.[88] Similarly, the end of the text includes a number of apocalyptic *ḥadīth*, sayings attributed to the prophet Muḥammad,

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[84] Ibid., 73.
[85] Zeki Saritoprak, "The Legend of al-Dajjāl (Antichrist): The Personification of Evil in the Islamic Tradition," *The Muslim World* 93, no. 2 (2003): 291–307.
[86] Jessica Coope, *The Most Noble of People: Religious, Ethnic, and Gender Identity in Muslim Spain* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017).
[87] Janina M. Safran, *Defining Boundaries in al-Andalus: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Islamic Iberia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 35-80.
[88] Nadia El-Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 60-71.

his family, and his companions. Some were located in specific Iberian cities, while others described the signs and events of the end times in more general terms. Though Ibn Ḥabīb predicted the end of the Umayyad emirate in al-Andalus, his apocalyptic vision went beyond the local and did not relinquish political or spiritual power to Christians on either end of the Mediterranean.

In 881, a few decades after Ibn Ḥabīb's death but before the last of al-Maghāmī's additions, an anonymous writer in Asturias produced the Latin *Chronicle of Albelda*. Like Ibn Ḥabīb's text, it combines elements of a universal history with a more extended treatment of peninsular affairs, though it is considerably more concise. And, like Ibn Ḥabīb's *History*, it features an apocalyptic addition. In 883 an anonymous continuator added a section to the end of the text, often referred to as the *Prophetic Chronicle*, foretelling the end of the Andalusi Umayyad emirate. It states:

> That the Saracens were going to possess the land of the Goths, we find already mentioned in the book *Panticino* of the prophet Ezekiel: "You, son of man, turn your face against Ishmael, and speak to them, saying, 'I have made you the strongest among the nations, multiplied you, strengthened you and placed a sword in your right hand and arrows in your left, so that you might crush nations—may they be scattered in your presence like straw in the face of fire. And you will enter the land of Gog on steady feet, and you will destroy Gog with your sword and place a foot on their neck and make them your servants and tributaries. Nonetheless, because you forsook the Lord your God, so I will abandon you, turn you around and deliver you into the hands of Gog, and you and all your troops will perish by their sword in the land of Libya. As you did to Gog, I will do to you. Once you have held them in servitude for 170 years, Gog will give you your due, as you did.'"[89]

The continuator then goes on to explain that "Gog is certainly the nation of the Goths."[90] It is not clear what is meant by the book *Panticino*, but various portions of this prophecy

[89] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, trans. Moralejo, 185-186.
[90] Ibid., 186.

are drawn from Ezekiel 38 and 39, and the association of the Goths of Iberia with the Biblical Gog follows Isidore of Seville.[91] Predicting the end of Umayyad rule in al-Andalus 170 years after the initial Islamic conquests situates the beginning of this apocalyptic sequence of events in the 880s, precisely at the time the chronicle was being composed and continued, and during the reign of Alfonso III. Some manuscript versions of the chronicle even specify that the Andalusi emirate would be destroyed in the reign of Muḥammad, who ruled from 852 to 886.[92]

Strikingly, then, the Asturian and the Andalusi chronicle both signal the end of the emirate as the first step triggering an apocalyptic sequence of events. And though they name different emirs as the last of the dynasty, only two years separated the reigns of Muḥammad and ʻAbd Allāh. Each text also suggests that there would be a complete annihilation of the enemy, with Ibn Ḥabīb predicting that all the Christians around Córdoba would be killed and none would remain, and the anonymous Asturian asserting that all Muslim troops would perish by the sword. A final battle is implied in both texts, though its location varies, with the Latin chronicler specifying Libya and the Arabic author mentioning Constantinople. A last emperor figure appears in both texts as well, embodied by Alfonso III in the Asturian telling and by the nameless Fāṭimī in the Andalusi chronicle.

Despite these shared features, however, Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* and the Asturian *Prophetic Chronicle* have been largely compared to apocalyptic traditions in eastern

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[91] Wolf, trans. *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 80-81.
[92] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, trans. Moralejo, 182.

Islam and Christianity, respectively. These contexts are certainly important. Both chronicles naturally draw on Christian and Islamic scripture. Ibn Ḥabīb transmits many of the same eschatological *ḥadīth* as the apocalyptic *Kitāb al-fitan* (*Book of Tribulations*) of the Egyptian scholar Nu'aym ibn Ḥammād.[93] Ibn Ḥabīb traveled and studied in Egypt, where he may have met Nu'aym ibn Ḥammād's or learned of his work.[94] Several other features of Ibn Ḥabīb's text mirror eastern Islamic apocalyptic expectation as well, including the conquest of Constantinople, the Antichrist-like figure of the *dajjāl* and the opposition of the Fāṭimī, who can perhaps be understood as a *mahdī* or messiah-like figure.[95]

Another Egyptian contemporary of Ibn Ḥabīb's, the chronicler Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, likewise infused his historical writings with *ḥadīth* and employed apocalyptic language to refer to the Islamic conquests in Iberia. According to him, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr wrote to the caliph saying that his accomplishments were "not conquests but *ḥashr*."[96] *Ḥashr* can mean the congregation or gathering of people on judgement day, but can also denote banishment, expulsion, or forced migration. A chapter of the Qur'an, the *Surat al-ḥashr*, is thought to refer to the prophet Muḥammad's expulsion of an Arabian Jewish tribe, the Banū al-Naḍīr. Mūsā's equation of the conquest of Iberia with *ḥashr* thus appears to make a statement about the nature of the conquests as an expulsion of non-Muslim populations from Iberia, as well as carrying apocalyptic undertones.[97] Taken

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[93] Aguadé, "Vida y obra," 91.
[94] Ibid., 29.
[95] Ibid., 92.
[96] Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *History*, ed. Torrey, 208.
[97] There is evidence that *ḥashr* continued to be used in both of these senses in the tenth century as well. Maribel Fierro analyzes the various eschatological connotations of the Andalusi caliph 'Abd al-Raḥmān

together, these examples illustrate the close relationship between the chronicle genre, *ḥadīth*, and eschatology in the Islamic tradition across the Mediterranean in this period.

Ninth-century Christians in Iberia and the broader Mediterranean region were similarly concerned with apocalypse. The *Prophetic Chronicle* has been compared to the work of Pseudo-Methodius, which circulated in Iberia at least as early as the ninth century and may have been known even earlier to Mozarabs, Arabized Christians in al-Andalus.[98] Along with the *Prophetic Chronicle* and a version of Pseudo-Methodius, the earliest illustrated copy of Beatus of Liébana's *Commentary* on the Apocalypse of John appears to have been produced during the reign of Alfonso III.[99] And, as in the Islamic tradition, historical and apocalyptic writings during this period were closely related. The *Chronicle of 754*, for example, employs an implicit apocalyptic framework comparable to Beatus' *Commentary*, and Christian chroniclers in Iberia were in close conversation with apocalyptic texts from across the Mediterranean.[100] Furthermore, Christian Iberian prophetic and apocalyptic texts like the 854 *Indiculus Luminosus* of Paul Alvarus—a

III's campaigns against Christians, noting that, "A sentence in one of the letters sent by the caliph to muster his army became famous: 'May your levying be not [merely] a levying, but rather a "congregation" (*wa-l-yakun ḥashduka ḥashran lā ḥashdan*)'": Maribel Fierro, "The Battle of the Ditch (*Al-Khandaq*) of the Cordoban Caliph 'Abd al-Raḥmān III," in *The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law, and Thought in Honor of Professor Michael Allan Cook*, ed. Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi, and Michael Bonner (Boston: Brill, 2011), 113.

[98] Ksenia Bonch Reeves, *Visions of Unity after the Visigoths: Early Iberian Latin Chronicles and the Mediterranean World*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 96.

[99] John Williams, *Visions of the End in Medieval Spain: Catalogue of Illustrated Beatus Commentaries on the Apocalypse and Study of the Geneva Beatus*, ed. Therese Martin (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 67.

[100] Lucy Pick, "Islam Concealed and Revealed: The Chronicle of 754 and Beatus of Liébana's Commentary on the Apocalypse," in *Beyond the Reconquista: New Directions in the History of Medieval Iberia (711-1085)*, ed. Simon Barton and Robert Portass (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 257–82; Bonch Reeves, *Visions of Unity*, 71-111.

contemporary of Ibn Ḥabīb who also resided in Córdoba—were very much in line with developments in the Carolingian empire in the ninth century.[101]

Apocalyptic discourse was prevalent in Muslim and Christian communities across the Mediterranean in the ninth century, and in Iberia these communities were in very close contact. Given this context, it is unsurprising that Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* and the *Prophetic Chronicle* share a number of similarities. Despite this, previous scholarship on both chronicles has tended to reject the possibility of much local influence. One scholar remarked that the final battle between Islam and Christianity taking place in Africa "is an idea that could not have occurred to the Mozarabs or the subjects of Alfonso III, but which fits well with an eastern mentality."[102] It is unclear why this would be the case. The *Chronicle of Albelda* includes multiple references to North Africa and its relationship to Iberia, noting that the initial Islamic conquests in the peninsula were carried out by North Africans. The chronicle also asserts that the prophet Muḥammad himself preached in Africa, so there would have been a kind of cyclical and satisfying logic in making it the setting for a final destructive battle between Christianity and Islam. The modern editor of Ibn Ḥabīb's text has likewise suggested that certain *ḥadīth* that mention apocalyptic events taking place in Andalusi cities like Carmona, Seville, Toledo, and Écija are of eastern and likely Egyptian origin, on the basis that some of the locations mentioned in the cities seem to be ahistorical.[103] Even if this is the case, it was common

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[101] Andrew Sorber, "The Indiculus Luminosus and the Creation of a Ninth-Century Prophetic Conflict Between Christianity and Islam," in *Medieval Sicily, al-Andalus, and the Maghrib: Writing in Times of Turmoil*, ed. Nicola Carpentieri and Carol Symes (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2020), 19.
[102] Juan Gil, "Judíos y cristianos en Hispania (s. VIII-IX)," *Hispania Sacra* 31 (1978), 65.
[103] Aguadé, "Vida y obra," 95.

for medieval adaptations of eschatological texts to transplant details into local geographies in ways that may or may not have reflected reality, and this need not have made the text of any less importance to its local audience.

Since both chronicles combine the local and the universal, our understanding of their sources and influences should do the same. Strikingly, neither Ibn Ḥabīb, al-Maghāmī, or the Asturian continuator saw a future for the Umayyad emirate in Iberia. This is likely a reflection of the political context of the last half of the ninth century, in which the emirs were plagued by internal and external threats and the Asturians grew increasingly bold in their rhetoric against peninsular and continental powers alike. It is telling that for the Asturian chronicler salvation is internal to the peninsula, whereas for Ibn Ḥabīb it is external. This demonstrates a sense of confidence on the part of the Asturians in their imminent success against Iberian Muslims, as well as a rejection of Constantinople as the political and spiritual center of Christendom. The *Chronicle of Albelda* presents Byzantine emperors as religiously corrupting, in line with a similarly negative portrayal of the eastern empire in the contemporary *Chronicle of Alfonso III*.

Furthermore, like the *Prophetic Chronicle*, Beatus' *Commentary* locates the Antichrist and apocalyptic events in Africa, using the present tense to speak of destruction and suffering there. Beatus seems to have taken passages on Africa from Tyconius, who had included them as a reference to the persecution of the Donatists. Lucy Pick argues that far from being blind imitation of pre-Islamic precedent, Beatus' grammatical choices and adaptation of Tyconius were "intended to evoke Spain's current

trials and remind readers there of their historic bond with Africa, its predecessor in suffering under the Muslim yoke."[104]

Ibn Ḥabīb's apocalyptic vision pays more attention to conflicts between Islam and Christianity on multiple fronts, locating Islam's ultimate victory in multiple regions. Iberia's salvation comes from a figure referred to specifically as an immigrant (*dākhil*), likely intended as a foil to the first Umayyad emir in al-Andalus, 'Abd al-Raḥmān I al-Dākhil, who was known as "the immigrant" because of his Middle Eastern origins. Ibn Ḥabīb's nameless *dākhil* is set up to succeed where the Umayyad rulers in Damascus and Córdoba did not, defeating both the Christians and the Antichrist-like *dajjāl*. In defining the *dākhil* by his descent from the prophet Muḥammad instead of by association with any contemporary dynasty, Ibn Ḥabīb refuses to locate Islam's salvation in Iberian, North African, or Middle Eastern politics. In general, his concerns about al-Andalus and Islam's fate seem to have had more to do with internal conflicts, and Asturias plays no explicit role in his vision of the end times.

Perhaps the most interesting basis for comparing the two texts occurs in the *Prophetic Chronicle*, which offers the following as a final proof of the prophecy's veracity: "The Saracens themselves, by means of portents and signs of the stars, predict that their destruction draws near, and say that the kingdom of the Goths will be restored by this prince of ours."[105] This could be dismissed easily enough as mere fabrication, if not for the fact that Muslims like Ibn Ḥabīb and al-Maghāmī did indeed circulate similar

[104] Pick, "Islam Concealed and Revealed," 272.
[105] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, trans. Moralejo, 188.

predictions, if not ones that specifically referenced Alfonso III or the Asturians. While the Latin continuator may have had direct or indirect knowledge of Ibn Ḥabīb's text, news of Islamic eschatological traditions about Iberia likely reached the northern kingdom by other means as well, perhaps transmitted by Mozarabs. The idea that Muslims would be driven out of Iberia before the final judgement was a common one in eastern Islamic traditions.[106] Furthermore, the prediction that Andalusi Muslims would be defeated and exiled to North Africa appears in Nu'aym ibn Ḥammād, one of Ibn Ḥabīb's likely sources, in the first half of the ninth century, and seems to have been in circulation in Egypt even earlier.[107]

Intriguingly, these are features that we see in the Asturian chronicle, but not in Ibn Ḥabīb. The expulsion of Muslims to North Africa is consistent with Asturian rhetoric and historical framing in chronicles from the 880s and may have been an even more appealing vision for having gained credence among Muslims as well. While the historical event of the Islamic conquests is widely acknowledged to have impacted Christian apocalyptic thought,[108] Islamic eschatology is most often attributed to Jewish and Christian sources.[109] The bravado of the Asturian monarchy, however, offers a glimpse into a moment in which the reverse may well have been the case. While the *Prophetic*

[106] Justin Stearns, "Representing and Remembering al-Andalus: Some Historical Considerations Regarding the End of Time and the Making of Nostalgia," *Medieval Encounters* 15, no. 2–4 (2009), 366.
[107] Anna Akasoy, "Al-Andalus and the Andalusis in the Islamic Apocalyptic Tradition," in *Peoples of the Apocalypse: Eschatological Beliefs and Political Scenarios*, ed. Wolfram Brandes, Felicitas Schmieder, and Rebekka Voss (Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 217.
[108] Sidney H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 23-44.
[109] Michael Cook, "An Early Islamic Apocalyptic Chronicle," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 52, no. 1 (1993): 25–29.

Chronicle is in line with Ibn Ḥabīb and al-Maghāmī's prediction and dating of the end of the Umayyad emirate, its assurance that Andalusi Muslims would be expelled and ultimately defeated in North Africa suggests that the anonymous continuator may have drawn on other Islamic traditions, possibly originating as far afield as Egypt. Ironically, even as the Asturian chronicle sought to claim Iberia exclusively for Christians, it explicitly acknowledged and incorporated various elements of Islamic apocalyptic thought into its vision of the end times.

However tantalizing it may be to suggest a connection between Ibn Ḥabīb, al-Maghāmī, and the *Prophetic Chronicle*, the point remains that apocalypse and prophecy were of major and immediate concern to both Muslim and Christian chroniclers in ninth-century Iberia. Like the Julian episode, prophecies connecting the imminent demise of the Umayyad emirate with the end times comprised part of a shared cultural archive legible across religious and linguistic lines. Both were intimately bound up in the task of interpreting relationships between past and present, Muslims and Christians, and Iberia and North Africa.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to illustrate the breadth and diversity of what I conceptualize as the shared cultural archive. In constructing their historical narratives, chroniclers from Iberia and North Africa borrowed not only across religious and linguistic lines, but also across geographies and genres. They simultaneously drew on and contributed to a shared cultural archive that changed over time, reflecting the importance

of transregional networks in connecting multicultural communities and chroniclers' conception of how they fit into these networks historically. Our own scholarship on this period and region must be similarly versatile, tracing intellectual and cultural exchange across more than one boundary at a time.

The Asturian and Andalusi prophetic chronicles of the ninth century provide a snapshot of an issue of deep concern to Muslims and Christians across the Mediterranean at the time, suggesting that apocalyptic discourse was a site of multi-stage, multidirectional exchange. The mythology of the Islamic conquests of Iberia were the object of a much longer process of adaptation and interpretation, but they too incorporated multiple genres spanning the Mediterranean. Both the Julian episode and the apocalyptic visions of the ninth-century chronicles demonstrate the importance medieval historians ascribed to the relationship between Iberia and North Africa, even as their interpretations of this relationship varied dramatically. North African chroniclers actively employed and adapted elements of the shared cultural archive, such as the anecdote of the locked house and the Julian episode. Although a sense of Iberian exceptionalism has often prevailed in modern scholarship on interfaith relations, these examples highlight the prevalence of intellectual exchange between Muslims and Christians across the Strait, as well as the continued efforts of chroniclers to reimagine and renegotiate the terms of this relationship in their historical narratives.

It is thus critical to include historical writing in our understanding of the shared cultural archive and our analysis of the construction of identities and alterities in multifaith communities. Genres were fluid, and medieval chroniclers incorporated a

variety of literary traditions into their histories. Furthermore, many chronicles were produced in support of a specific set of political and religious goals, which were often premised on the superiority of a given religion and/or dynasty. A shared cultural archive existed because people from different religious and linguistic backgrounds and who lived in different places were aware of the stories and beliefs of people whose identities differed from their own in various ways. Beyond this kind of mutual awareness, however, a shared archive also implies that these stories and beliefs could exert persuasive power for people of diverse identities and backgrounds.

This persuasive power could be and was used to convince people of their commonalities, as when adherents of the Abrahamic religions pointed to shared aspects of their religious traditions to promote tolerance and coexistence. It could also, however, be weaponized to strengthen calls for division and othering. By including elements of truth, such as that Muslims themselves had predicted the end of the Umayyad emirate, chroniclers lent more legitimacy to their interpretations of the fundamental divisions between religions, like the assertion that Alfonso III would bring about the eschaton and triumph over Muslims in a final battle in Libya. Similarly, by acknowledging widely believed elements of conquest narratives in Muslim chronicles, like the anecdote of the locked edifice of Toledo and the Julian episode, Christian writers were able to reinterpret their message as one of temporary corruption and punishment followed by the ultimate triumph of Christianity in the region. When medieval chroniclers tapped into the persuasive power of the shared cultural archive to make claims about regional history, it was often with polemical intent, and generally supported the right of one group to

dominate others within that region. Even as they wrote of a shared past, therefore, their vision of the future was not always one of continued coexistence.

Chapter 3: Gendering Iberia(ns) and North Africa(ns)

In the previous chapter, the Julian episode was analyzed primarily in terms of how it fit into larger understandings of historical connectivity across the Strait. Expectations of gendered and sexual behavior also play a significant role in this episode, however, and seem to be another reason that it proved so enduring in Muslim histories and was so easily adapted into Christian ones. For chroniclers of both religions, the violation of a young, unmarried woman was a powerful and memorable enough reason for Julian to betray his king in so dramatic a fashion, and evidence of sufficient corruption to justify his downfall at Muslim hands. And indeed, as the tale was taken up by other genres like drama and poetry in the early modern period, the sexual violation of the daughter who came to be known as La Cava, rather than Julian's betrayal, grew into the focal point of the episode.[1] But even from its earliest adoption into Christian chronicles, the tale of Julian and his daughter was registered in the shared cultural archive of Muslims and Christians across the Strait of Gibraltar because it resonated with multiple values and tropes already present in this archive, including constructions of gender and sexuality.

This chapter argues that as they narrated and justified conquest across religious and cultural boundaries, chronicles in the medieval western Mediterranean presented a similar understanding of the relationship between gender and power. While studies of how medieval chronicles constructed masculinity and its relationship to power are critical, here I will focus primarily on the role and representation of women, which

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[1] Elizabeth Drayson, *The King and the Whore: King Roderick and La Cava* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Patricia E. Grieve, *The Eve of Spain: Myths of Origins in the History of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Conflict* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

necessarily includes their relationships with men.[2] Men unquestionably predominate in the pages of these texts, all of which are either anonymous or penned by men, though they were occasionally commissioned by women or produced during a woman's reign. All the same, women are far from absent in medieval chronicles, and appear most often in relation to political power, whether exercising it, imparting it through marriage and kinship, subverting it, or in some way demonstrating that a man did or did not deserve to wield it. Though gender and sexual norms certainly differed for Muslims and Christians, chroniclers in Iberia and North Africa drew on a shared body of tropes and expectations as they narrated the role of women in the unfolding of events of high political, military, and religious import. Critically, women taking an active role in such events is not consistently portrayed as inherently positive or negative.

And intriguingly, these observations hold for most Muslim and Christian chronicles on both sides of the Strait even though, for the most part, chroniclers of different religions rarely wrote about the *same* women, especially in earlier centuries. Julian's daughter is an exception to these generalizations, but she fits within a broader literary tradition of using the violation of women as cause for war. More often, the individual women Muslim chroniclers wrote about were Muslim, and the individual women Christian chroniclers wrote about were Christian—despite there being a fair

[2] For a survey of recent work on the application of masculinity studies to the Middle Ages and the Islamicate world, as well as an intriguing analysis of hegemonic masculinity in Andalusi chronicles, see Nicola Clarke, "'He Lashed His *Mawlā* with a Whip, and Shaved His Head': Masculinity and Hierarchy in Early Andalusi Chronicles," in *Beyond the Reconquista: New Directions in the History of Medieval Iberia (711-1085)*, ed. Simon Barton and Robert Portass (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 232–56. And for the origin of the term, see R. W. Connell, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987); R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender & Society* 19, no. 6 (2005): 829–59.

amount of intermarriage between Muslims and Christians of all social classes, especially in the first three centuries after the Islamic conquests.[3] The near absence of individual named women whose religion differed from that of the chronicler can perhaps be understood in the context of Jessica Coope's observation that medieval texts which sought to maintain religious and cultural boundaries "often either ignore women altogether or express ambivalence about women's place in their confessional community."[4] Chronicles fit both descriptions to some extent, since their focus on regulating territorial boundaries was frequently expressed through the military action of men and justified by religious difference. Women are not ignored in medieval chronicles, however, and are spoken of most often in relation to political legitimacy and the exercise of power, whether their own or that of a man. That Muslim and Christian chroniclers alike spoke primarily of women of their own religion may suggest that their already limited interest in women's relationship to power did not extend across religious lines—or it may reflect the strength of combined gendered and religious boundaries. Either way, the result is that while chroniclers both praised and maligned the influence of women of their own religion in the political sphere, they rarely passed similar judgement on women of other religions, and accusations of women's influence were not often weaponized in historical writing.

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[3] Simon Barton, *Conquerors, Brides, and Concubines: Interfaith Relations and Social Power in Medieval Iberia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Ragnhild Johnsrud Zorgati, *Pluralism in the Middle Ages: Hybrid Identities, Conversion, and Mixed Marriages in Medieval Iberia* (New York: Routledge, 2011); D. Fairchild Ruggles, "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty: Race, Genealogy, and Acculturation in al-Andalus," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 34, no. 1 (2004): 65–94.
[4] Jessica Coope, "Were Women Part of *Convivencia*?," in *Convivencia and Medieval Spain: Essays in Honor of Thomas F. Glick*, ed. Mark T. Abate (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 298.

Whereas the previous chapter discussed elements of the shared cultural archive that were actively borrowed and adapted across religious, linguistic, and geopolitical lines, therefore, this chapter focuses more on commonalities between chronicles that, while perhaps not intentional, would have been passively legible across these lines. I argue that women appear with similar frequency and play similar roles in Muslim and Christian chronicles from Iberia and North Africa. This shared understanding of the relationship between gender performance and political legitimacy does not, however, seem to have developed from the conscious borrowing of particular episodes or tropes across religious lines. Instead, it appears that Muslim and Christian men alike, whether authors or patrons, independently found it useful to include women in their accounts of political, religious, and military events. Whether positive or negative, the narrative function of these women was generally to make a statement about political and/or religious legitimacy.

One potential takeaway from this observation might be that women were reduced to symbols in medieval chronicles, as indeed sometimes they were. But symbols draw their power from some level of shared understanding between authors and audiences about their significance. Just because chroniclers' depictions of women are not representative does not mean they are fully divorced from reality—in this case, a broader sense among chroniclers, patrons, and readers that women played a role in legitimizing conquests and dynasties and influencing political and military events. Julian's daughter, who will be discussed more fully in the following section, may constitute a woman fully reduced to a symbol. She appears to be ahistorical, most accounts do not give her a name,

and few words or actions are attributed to her in a pivotal episode intended to both explain and justify the Islamic conquests of Iberia. The episode does not require her to do or be anything more, since at its heart it is about expectations of hegemonic masculinity—how men ought to treat women, but more specifically, how powerful men ought to treat other powerful men who were subordinate to them. Julian's daughter may be a symbol, but it seems likely that many chroniclers believed her a historical figure and, perhaps more importantly, that for the king to rape her released Julian from his subordination to Roderic, allowing him to avenge his daughter by pledging his loyalty to other powerful men. Women were widely perceived as capable of impacting political and personal relationships between men at the highest levels of government—in the case of Julian's daughter, as a largely passive object of abuse, but in plenty of other cases as agents and actors.

Though my analysis is limited to literary depictions in chronicles, documentary sources often bear out their claims about women's roles in the political sphere. In the thirteenth-century Catalán *Book of Deeds* of James I of Aragón, for example, the king says that the presence of his wife, Queen Yolanda, impacted his negotiations with Muslim leaders, a statement supported by the inclusion of Yolanda's name and seal in both Arabic and Ibero-Romance surrender treaties from 1244.[5] And as Jeffrey Bowman shows, women were often rather more instrumental in their own times than later chroniclers were willing to admit, as is the case of twelfth- and thirteenth-century

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[5] James I, *Llibre dels fets del rei en Jaume*, ed. Jordi Bruguera, vol. 2, (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1991), 208; Robert I. Burns and Paul E. Chevedden, *Negotiating Cultures: Bilingual Surrender Treaties in Muslim-Crusader Spain under James the Conqueror* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 129.

chronicles that obscure and denigrate the active role played by Iberian countesses in the tenth and eleventh centuries.[6] I suggest we read women's power as literary symbols as a muted translation of their power in life—one that is altered so that their depiction in chronicles becomes more of a mirror held up to the men in their lives than a full reflection of the women themselves.

Chronicles afford us a view of only a narrow slice of women's lives, focusing almost exclusively on elite women and women in service to elite men. Though we may wish that chroniclers spoke of women more, or differently, critical insights can be gained from considering why medieval historians did not choose to ignore women entirely or to speak exclusively of men. Ultimately, these chronicles were focused on narrating systems of power over time, of which women formed a part. Men too were rarely mentioned outside of their proximity to people and events of power, with the distinction that men's influence could conceivably be spoken of exclusively in terms of other men, whereas women's power was almost never connected only to other women. And importantly, neither men's nor women's relationship to power is ever described as wholly positive or negative, suggesting that while the exercise of power was gendered, neither Muslim nor Christian chroniclers in medieval Iberia and North Africa saw it as the sole purview of men.

Chroniclers' portrayal of women as players in the political sphere—ranging from symbols to active agents of their own interests, and from positive to negative—

[6] Jeffrey Bowman, "Record, Chronicle and Oblivion: Remembering and Forgetting Elite Women in Medieval Iberia," in *Beyond the Reconquista: New Directions in the History of Medieval Iberia (711-1085)*, ed. Simon Barton and Robert Portass (Boston: Brill, 2020), 201–31.

transcended real differences in the expectations and lived experiences of Muslim and Christian women. Elite Muslim men in al-Andalus and the Maghrib were permitted and able to support multiple wives, along with concubines and enslaved women, for whom there existed the possibility of significant social mobility and manumission if they bore a son. Attitudes towards sex were in some ways more open among Muslims than Christians, but elite Muslim women were also often expected to be more secluded than elite Christian women, and ruled in their own right much less often.

These differences have led to a substantial disparity in modern scholarship on the exercise of power by Muslim and Christian women in Iberia and North Africa. Closer attention to the lives and roles of queens and noblewomen has moved scholars of Christian Iberia to embrace models of co-rulership and collaborative lordship, acknowledging that as they sought to gain and maintain power, kings and nobles relied on, and indeed were expected to rely on, multiple family members including wives, sisters, mothers, and daughters. Scholars have likewise challenged claims that Christian women's public exercise of power and participation in politics in medieval Iberia was rare or exceptional.[7] The same has not been true of scholarship on Muslim women in al-

[7] Theresa Earenfight, "A Lifetime of Power: Beyond Binaries of Gender," in *Medieval Elite Women and the Exercise of Power, 1100-1400: Moving beyond the Exceptionalist Debate*, ed. Heather J. Tanner (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 271–93; Theresa Earenfight, *The King's Other Body: María of Castile and the Crown of Aragon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Theresa Earenfight, ed., *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); Lucy K. Pick, *Her Father's Daughter: Gender, Power, and Religion in the Early Spanish Kingdoms* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017); Miriam Shadis, "Unexceptional Women: Power, Authority, and Queenship in Early Portugal," in *Medieval Elite Women and the Exercise of Power*, ed. Tanner, 247–70; Miriam Shadis, *Berenguela of Castile (1180-1246) and Political Women in the High Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Miriam Shadis, "'Received as a Woman': Rethinking the Concubinage of Aurembiaix of Urgell," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 8, no. 1 (2016): 1–17; Janna Bianchini, *The Queen's Hand: Power and Authority in the Reign of Berenguela of Castile* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Janna Bianchini, "A Mirror for a Queen? Constructions of Queenship in

Andalus and the Maghrib. There has, on the one hand, been a suggestion that Muslim women in al-Andalus had more freedom and access to power than their Middle Eastern and North African counterparts, as a result of their close contact with Christians. This idea has persisted among some scholars even though, as Manuela Marín explains, it is more reflective of broader concerns with the extent of Islamic influence or assimilation in Iberia than with women's history as such.[8] On the other hand, the field has seen a series of less sweeping but more focused studies of individual women who exercised power, as well as the role of women in particular dynasties, especially the Almoravids and the Nasrids.[9] Still, these continue to be considered exceptional cases in the broader history of Islamic Iberia and North Africa during the Middle Ages.

Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century León-Castile," *Journal of Medieval History* 45, no. 4 (2019): 432–56; Therese Martin, "Mujeres, hermanas e hijas: el mecenazgo femenino en la familia de Alfonso VI," *Anales de historia del arte* Volumen extraordinario 2 (2011): 147–79; Therese Martin, "The Art of a Reigning Queen as Dynastic Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain," *Speculum* 80, no. 4 (2005): 1134–71; Therese Martin, *Queen as King: Politics and Architectural Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain* (Boston: Brill, 2006); Nuria Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage in Late Medieval Queenship: Maria de Luna* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); chapters from Elena Woodacre, ed., *Queenship in the Mediterranean: Negotiating the Role of the Queen in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Bowman, 'Record, Chronicle and Oblivion'; Jeffrey A. Bowman, "Countesses in Court: Elite Women, Creativity, and Power in Northern Iberia, 900–1200," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 6, no. 1 (2014): 54–70.

[8] Manuela Marín, *Mujeres en Al-Ándalus* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2000), 11-17. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah and Adrian Gully rehash much of this historiographical discussion, and seem to believe that Christian influence is indeed responsible for the "omnipresent role of Andalusi women," but their argument is undermined, among other things, by their reliance on sources that date much later than the women and events they discuss, though earlier sources are available: "'I Am, by God, Fit for High Positions' On the Political Role of Women in al-Andalus," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 30, no. 2 (2003), 209.

[9] Bárbara Boloix-Gallardo, "Mujer y poder en el reino nazarí de Granada: la sultana Fāṭima bint al-Aḥmar, la perla central del collar de la dinastía (siglo XIV)," *Anuario de estudios medievales* 46, no. 1 (2016): 269–300; Bárbara Boloix-Gallardo, "Beyond the Ḥaram: Ibn al-Khaṭīb and His Privileged Knowledge of Royal Nasrid Women," *Medieval Encounters* 20, no. 4–5 (2014): 383–402; María Jesús Rubiera Mata, "La princesa Fāṭima bint al-Aḥmar, la 'María de Molina' de la dinastía nazarí," *Medievalismo* 6 (1996): 183–89; Maya Shatzmiller, *Her Day in Court: Women's Property Rights in Fifteenth-Century Granada* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); María Jesús Viguera Molíns, "Una andalusí en Galicia y sus cuatro 'transgresiones,'" in *Mujeres y fronteras: homenaje a Cristina Segura Graíño: congreso celebrado en Alcalá la Real, 19 y 20 de Noviembre de 2010*, ed. Francisco Toro Ceballos and José Rodríguez Molina (Jaén: Diputación de Jaén, 2011), 497–505; Manuela Marín, "Una vida de mujer: Ṣubḥ,"

As for Muslim women in chronicles, María Jesús Viguera Molíns argues that they are granted no more than a subject role and a borrowed space, "maintaining and justifying the private situation of women, their incapability, lack of resources, institutional background, possibilities and decency… in any public activity that they dare undertake."[10] This assessment is not so different from scholarship from recent decades on women and power in medieval Christendom. It would seem similarly time for us to turn away from considering powerful Muslim women as exceptions, analyzing instead the ways that power in the medieval Islamic world too depended on the participation of women in various ways. This participation may look different, but as Leslie Peirce points out in the Ottoman context, western concepts of politics and power as public do not

in *Biografías y género biográfico en el occidente islámico*, ed. Maria Luisa Avila Navarro and Manuela Marín (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1997), 425–45; Laura Bariani, "Sobre las relaciones entre Subh y Mubammad ibn Abi ʻAmir al-Mansúr, con particular referencia a su ruptura en 386-388/996-998," *Qurṭuba* 1 (1996): 39–57; Manuela Marín, "The Princess and the Palace. On Hawwa' bint Tashufin and Other Women from the Almoravid Royal Family," in *In and of the Mediterranean: Medieval and Early Modern Iberian Studies*, ed. Michelle Hamilton and Nuria Silleras-Fernandez (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2015), 29–48; Marín, *Mujeres en Al-Ándalus*, 395-598; Gabriel Martínez Gros, "Femmes et pouvoir dans les mémoires d'Abd Allâh b. Zîrî," in *La condición de la mujer en la edad media: actas del coloquio celebrado en la Casa de Velázquez, del 5 al 7 de noviembre de 1984* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1986), 371–78; ʻIsmat Dandash, "Adwār siyāsiyya li-l-nisā' fī dawlat al-Murābiṭīn," in *Actas Del II Congreso Hispano-Marroquí de Ciencias Históricas* (Madrid: Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional, 1992), 49–65; Rafael Valencia, "Presencia de la mujer en la Corte de al-Muʻtamid b. ʻAbbād de Sevilla," in *La Mujer en Al-Andalus: reflejos históricos de su actividad y categorías sociales*, ed. María Jesús Viguera (Madrid: Ediciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1989); Helena de Felipe, "Doblemente invisibles: mujeres bereberes en al-Andalus," *eHumanista* 45 (2020): 213–27; María Jesús Viguera Molíns, "Reflejos cronísticos de mujeres andalusíes y magrebíes," *Anaquel de estudios árabes* 12 (2001): 829-841; Glaire D. Anderson, "A Mother's Gift? Astrology and the Pyxis of al-Mughīra," *Journal of Medieval History* 42, no. 1 (2016): 107–30; Noelia Silva Santa-Cruz, "Ivory Gifts for Women in Caliphal Córdoba: Marriage, Maternity and Sensuality," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 6, no. 1 (2014): 103–25.

[10] María Jesús Viguera Molíns, "A Borrowed Space: Andalusi and Maghribi Women in Chronicles," in *Writing the Feminine Women in Arab Sources*, ed. Randi Deguilhem and Manuela Marín (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 173.

always fit in an Islamic context, where powerful men too were often secluded and closely tied to their households.[11]

With this in mind, this chapter will highlight similarities between Muslim and Christian chroniclers' depictions of women's relationship to power without suggesting that one sprang from the other. Indeed, none of the claims in this chapter need necessarily be limited to or attributed to a specifically western Mediterranean context. Rather than arguing that women's exercise of power in chronicles from Iberia and North Africa is particularly unique, I suggest that scholarship on medieval Muslim and Christian women has prioritized their differences over their similarities in a way that, at least in the evidence presented by the chronicles, is not warranted. This would seem to have more to do with modern stereotypes about the place of women in Islam than it necessarily does with the sources that survive from the Middle Ages.

The treatment of women as a reflection of men's political legitimacy

Even if they developed separately, literary tropes about women in Muslim and Christian chronicles could facilitate the translation of certain elements from one tradition to another, as with the tale of Julian and his daughter. It was taboo for members of both religions to have sex with a woman or girl of high status without the consent of her male relative or owner. And indeed it is mostly Julian's lack of consent and Roderic's violation which are featured in this episode, rather than any emotions or actions on the part of

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[11] Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Julian’s daughter. Importantly, however, Muslim and Christian chroniclers alike use language that makes it clear that she was not an active participant and in some cases that she did not consent, such that Roderic’s actions are better understood as rape than seduction—a distinction that does not always come through clearly in modern scholarship or translations. The *History* of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya says that Roderic “had her” (*nālahā*), the anonymous *Akhbār majmʿūa* that “he fell upon her” (*wathaba ʿalayhā*), the anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* that “he deflowered her” (*iftaḍahā*) while drunk, and the *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʿIdhārī that “he raped her” (*ightaṣabhā*).[12] Similarly, in the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*, the king “had her and deflowered her” (*eam…habuit et stuprauit*), in the *Historia Gothica* of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada “he fell upon her violently” (*violenter opresit*), and in the *Estoria de España* of Alfonso X “he took her by force and lay with her” (*tomol…por fuerça e yogol con ella*).[13]

The primary difference between Muslim and Christian descriptions is that most Christian chroniclers specified that Roderic took Julian’s daughter as a concubine rather than a wife, even though they were betrothed.[14] This renders Roderic’s violation

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[12] Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Cairo; Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1982), 34; Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʿa fī fatḥ al-Andalus wa-dhikr umarāʾihā wa-l-ḥurūb al-wāqiʿa baynahum* (Cairo; Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyya, 1981), 16; Luis Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus (La Conquista de al-Andalus)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994), 14; Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Evariste Lévi-Provençal and George Séraphin Colin, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1930), 7.

[13] Fernando González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *La Chronica Gothorum Pseudo-Isidoriana (ms. Paris BN 6113)* (A Coruña: Toxosoutos, 2000), 182-183; Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie, sive, Historia Gothica*, ed. Juan Fernández Valverde, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 72 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987), 100; Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), VPE: 563, 6 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [01/22/2021].

[14] This occurs in the *Historia Silense*, the *Chronicon mundi*, the *Historia Gothica*, and the *Estoria de España*.

contractual as well as sexual. As with his opening of the locked edifice of Toledo, it adds to the sense that he acted rashly and irrationally, because he could have had Julian's daughter lawfully and with her father's blessing had he simply followed through with the marriage. The tale also fits well within the longer history of sexual deviancy Christian chroniclers ascribed to the last Visigothic kings, especially Witiza. Julian's daughter is not shamed or criticized by Muslim or Christian chroniclers, either for actively encouraging or passively submitting to the king, and the sexual sin is his alone. The only active role she is assigned in these texts is, occasionally, informing her father of what has taken place, as in the *Bayān* and the *Fatḥ*. In the latter, she goes to great lengths to do so, sending Julian a gift including a rotten egg to alert him of her spoiled virtue, since Roderic has ordered that she be confined and forbidden from writing letters.[15] Though the chroniclers do not express much concern for Julian's daughter as an individual, therefore, neither do they suggest that she is at fault for what happened to her, or for her father's subsequent actions.

Nor do Iberian and North African chronicles tend to speak much at all of the sexual misbehavior of women. Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* makes a brief reference to women being satisfied with women and men with men as a sign of the apocalypse,[16] but otherwise sexual immorality is almost exclusively associated with men until the Christian

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[15] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 14; Ibn ʻIdhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 7.

[16] ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīj (La historia)*, ed. Jorge Aguadé (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1991), 155-156.

chronicles of the thirteenth century.[17] More often, the treatment of women signals men's political legitimacy and fitness to rule, or not. This is the case with an episode involving the eighth-century founding figure of the Christian kingdom of Asturias, Pelayo, and his unnamed sister. The tale bears a number of structural similarities to that of Julian and his daughter, though it is limited to Christian chronicles. The episode first appears in the Rotense version of the late ninth-century *Chronicle of Alfonso III*. The anonymous Latin chronicler introduces a figure named Munnuza, the prefect of Gijón and a companion of Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād, a prominent leader of the Islamic conquests. When Pelayo comes to Asturias with his sister, she catches Munnuza's eye, so he sends her brother as an envoy to Córdoba and marries her "by some trick" in his absence. Upon his return, Pelayo, who "had already been thinking about the salvation of the church…hastened to bring this about with all of his courage," rebelling against Muslim rule in defense of Christianity. Ṭāriq and Munnuza try to arrest him, but he is tipped off by a friend and flees to an overflowing river which he is nonetheless able to cross, cutting off the Muslim pursuit. Pelayo then withdraws into the mountain cave from which he famously rallies an Asturian resistance against Muslim ruler, resulting in the battle of Covadonga.[18]

As with the Julian episode, in this tale a corrupt and unfit leader takes a woman related to a high-status Christian man without his permission. And although Munnuza

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[17] As, for example, with the mention of Queen Urraca's illegitimate offspring in the *Historia Gothica* of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada and the *Latin Chronicle of the Kings of Castile* of Juan de Osma: Bianchini, "A Mirror for a Queen?" 446, 448.

[18] Juan Gil Fernández and Juan Ignacio Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III (Rotense y "A Sebastián"); Crónica Albeldense (y "Profética")*, trans. José-Luis Moralejo (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), 122, 124; Kenneth Baxter Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 2nd ed. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 166-167.

marries Pelayo's sister, it is implied that he does this without her consent, resorting to unspecified trickery, but she takes no active role and remains unnamed. Like Julian, Pelayo rebels, an action which ultimately leads to the creation of a new state. Unlike the Julian episode, however, this sequence of events results in a triumph for Iberian Christians. Though the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* does not include the story of Julian and his daughter, it seems quite possible that the Latin chronicler was aware of the Muslim narrative, and intended the episode with Munnuza and Pelayo's sister as a kind of rebuttal. Along with the structural commonalities already discussed, there are several other reasons to suspect this.

First, the episode seems to similarly echo and appropriate elements of another famous moment related to the establishment of al-Andalus in Muslim chronicles, the flight of ʻAbd al-Raḥmān I ibn Muʻāwiyya al-Dākhil. A member of the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus, ʻAbd al-Raḥmān is forced to flee his homeland in the face of the ʻAbbasid revolution of the mid-eighth century, swimming across the Euphrates to evade his would-be captors. He then goes to North Africa, seeking refuge among his mother's relatives, eventually crossing the Strait and to found the Umayyad emirate of Córdoba, ending decades of short and contentious governorships. Pelayo's miraculous flight across the river may perhaps have been intended to counter this powerful narrative of Umayyad conquest and rule in al-Andalus.[19] The earliest Muslim text to include the anecdote about ʻAbd al-Raḥmān I crossing the river appears to be the *Akhbār majmūʻa*, which has eluded definitive dating but was certainly compiled after the composition of the *Chronicle of*

[19] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʻa*, 55; James, trans., *A History of Early al-*Andalus, 76.

Alfonso III. The anonymous Arabic chronicler attributes the anecdote, which is given in the first person, to the emir himself, but no chain of transmission is offered. The Roda Codex in which the Rotense version of the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* appears, however, was copied at least a century after the chronicle's initial composition, around the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century. While there is not a clear timeline for the oral or written transmission of ʻAbd al-Raḥmān's river crossing to Asturian chroniclers and copyists, therefore, it remains within the realm of possibility that it influenced their account of Pelayo.

The tale of Munnuza and Pelayo's sister in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* is also a deviation from the earlier *Chronicle of 754*, which does not mention Pelayo or his sister. The 754 chronicler provides information on a man called Munnuza, a "Moor" who had been fighting the Franks and then focused his efforts on rebelling against the Muslim governor of al-Andalus, in solidarity with the abuse of his people by harsh judges in "Libya." Though multiple scholars warn against confusing the Munnuza of the *Chronicle of 754* with the Munnuza of the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, the similarities between the two are worth examining. In the *Chronicle of 754*, when the Andalusi governor pursues Munnuza, the rebel leader sheds the blood of many Christians in his flight and even burns a bishop. Accompanying him on this journey is his wife, the daughter of a Frankish leader named Eudes, who had offered the marriage as an alliance. Munnuza does nothing to protect his wife from their pursuers, throwing himself off a cliff and abandoning her.

The Andalusi governor then receives her with honor, "resolving to send her across the sea to the sublime prince," the Umayyad caliph in Damascus.[20]

As with the later Munnuza and the Julian episode, the *Chronicle of 754*'s account of Eudes' daughter ascribes the mistreatment of women to men who are not fit to rule. And, like the episode involving Munnuza, Pelayo, and his sister in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, there is a dramatic flight scene and a marriage between a Christian woman of high status and a Muslim leader. Importantly, however, this episode in the *Chronicle of 754* functions mostly to legitimize Umayyad rule in Iberia, North Africa, and the Middle East. The anonymous Latin chronicler, who though Christian likely lived under Muslim rule, depicts the Andalusi governor successfully maintaining power. The Frankish leader Eudes, on the other hand, comes off as naïve, having voluntarily given away his daughter to a man who kills Christians in cold blood and ultimately abandons her. Likewise, Munnuza, who rebels against the governor, meets an ignoble and cowardly end. When Eudes' newly widowed daughter is sent to Damascus, this is described in positive terms, even though the end result was clearly to marry her to another Muslim. The story's message is thus not that it is bad for Christian women to marry Muslim men, but that it is bad to try to make nice with Muslim men who rebelled against the Umayyads.

This makes sense from an author living and working in Umayyad Córdoba, but would not have been of much use for an Asturian chronicler over a century later. It is conceivable that the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* repurposed the figure of Munnuza,

[20] José Eduardo López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica Mozárabe de 754* (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1980), 96-99; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 143-144.

maintaining his negative image but adjusting the details to render someone closer akin to a Muslim Roderic, perhaps in response to the mythology around the eighth-century Islamic conquests in Muslim narratives.[21] Because of the close relationship between Roderic and Pelayo, whom the Rotense version of Asturian text describes as the swordbearer to the last two Visigothic kings, it would have been important to avoid the aspersions cast on his character in Arabic accounts. And Pelayo's emergence as a founding figure of mythic proportions for Asturias may have been a response to increasingly legendary status of the Umayyad emirate's founder, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I. Regardless of whether or not these considerations were at play, however, Pelayo's sister in Christian chronicles and Julian's daughter in Muslim chronicles serve remarkably similar functions, causing their male relatives to rebel against the prevailing ruler and usher in a new state. For this reason, both would feature in Christian historical texts for centuries to come.

The episode with Munnuza, Pelayo, and his sister also appears in the thirteenth-century *Chronicon mundi* of Lucas of Tuy, though the bishop appears to conflate Munnuza and Mūsā/Muza—understandably, given the similarity in spelling and that both fit the description of "companion of Ṭāriq." Otherwise, the *Chronicon*'s account generally matches that of the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, again emphasizing that M(unn)uza

[21] Interestingly, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's historical works include both Munnuza figures. His *History of the Arabs* tells of Munnuza's marriage to Eudes' daughter, while his *Historia Gothica* relays the tale of Munnuza and Pelayo's sister: Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Roderici Ximenii de Rada Historiae minores: Dialogus libri vite*, ed. Juan Fernández Valverde, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 72C (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 107; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 114-115.

sends Pelayo on a diplomatic mission to Córdoba as a trick in order to marry his sister.[22] This detail persists in the *Historia Gothica* of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada and the *Estoria de España* of Alfonso X, both of which also include the explanation, not present in earlier Arabic and Latin accounts, that the king sent Julian as an envoy to North Africa as a ploy to gain access to his daughter.[23] I suggest that this is one way that later chronicles continued to draw parallels between the tale of Julian, his daughter, and Roderic and that of Pelayo, his sister, and Munnuza. Whereas the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* may cast Munnuza as a Muslim version of Roderic, the thirteenth-century chronicles seem to highlight similarities between Pelayo and Julian.

They also, however, portray Julian and Munnuza in a number of similar ways. The *Historia Gothica* and the *Estoria de España* specify that Munnuza was a Christian ally of the Muslims, a description that fits Julian as well and emphasizes the depth of his betrayal of fellow Christians.[24] Both texts, along with the *Chronicon mundi*, connect the deaths of M(unn)uza and Julian. After the Muslim governor receives news of M(unn)uza's death at the hands of the Asturians, he orders the beheadings of Julian and the sons of Witiza, suspecting them of somehow being involved with the affair.[25] These later chronicles portray the Andalusi governor as incapable of protecting his allies from

[22] Lucas de Tuy, *Chronicon mundi*, ed. Emma Falque, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, vol. 74 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 223-224.
[23] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 114; Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), VPE: 574, 4 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [01/26/2021].
[24] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 114; Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), VPE: 574, 1-2 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [01/26/2021].
[25] Lucas de Tuy, *Chronicon mundi*, ed. Falque, 227-228; Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 120; Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), VPE: 580, 3-5 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [01/26/2021].

the Asturians and willing to turn on those who had betrayed their own people to support him, underlining that there was little to be gained from service to Muslims. Julian was always an ambivalent figure in Christian chronicles, which tend to agree that Roderic was at fault for raping the count's daughter but do not ultimately support the count's allegiance to and aid of the Muslim conquerors. It makes sense that as the details of the two stories grew closer over time, they would highlight similarities between Munnuza and Roderic, who erred in taking women without the consent of their male relatives, as well as Munnuza and Julian, who betrayed their co-religionists.

Their poor treatment of Julian's daughter and Pelayo's sister makes it clear that Roderic and Munnuza are unfit for the positions of power they occupy. Muslim and Christian chroniclers used the abuse of women to demonstrate the corruption and illegitimacy of other powerful men as well. The *Chronicle of 754*, for example, says that 'Abd al-'Azīz, Mūsā's son and successor in al-Andalus, treated the daughters of kings and princes as concubines and then "rashly repudiated them." This statement is immediately followed by the news that 'Abd al-'Azīz was killed by his own men while at prayer.[26] While the two are not presented as causally related, it is clear that the anonymous chronicler sees justice in the unceremonious death of a governor who, like Munnuza, so mistreated Christian noblewomen.

In the tenth-century *History* of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, the abuse of women is not attributed directly to the emir, but he is faulted for appointing officials who mistreat

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[26] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica Mozárabe de 754*, 76-79; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 135.

women along with the wider population. During a famine year, the emir Muḥammad asks the governor of Córdoba, Walīd, about collecting the *ʿushūr* (tenths). Walīd responds that since this tax is drawn from crops and harvests, of which there were none that year, the emir should rely on his own food stores and private funds instead, and hope for better the next year. Despite the emir's protestations, al-Walīd refuses to collect the tax, so the emir replaces him with Ḥamdūn ibn Basīl, a tyrannical and oppressive man who promises to extract the tax at any cost. Ḥamdūn proceeds to terrorize the population, "even to the point of ripping off veils," so God brings about his death. When the emir hears of this, he begs Walīd to return to the position, but he refuses.[27] The anecdote criticizes the emir on multiple fronts, including for being miserly rather than generous with his people and for failing to take the sound advice of his appointed officials. The abuse of women, expressed through language of tearing off their veils, is used to demonstrate the dangers of appointing someone like Ḥamdūn to a position of power out of greed.

The twelfth-century *Mann bi-l-imāma* of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, written in support of the Almohad caliphate, includes a particularly disturbing example of the mistreatment of women as a sign of a corrupt and unfit leader. A cousin and brother-in-law of the Andalusi rebel leader Ibn Mardanīsh rises up in Almería on behalf of the Almohads, killing the governor appointed there by Ibn Mardanīsh. When the rebel receives the news of his cousin's defection in favor of the Almohads, Ibn Mardanīsh retaliates by ordering the death of his own sister and her children, because she is married to his cousin. The manner of their death is even more horrifying, according to Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt. Ibn

[27] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. al-Abyārī, 100.

Mardanīsh has "the man charged with the torture of the people" take his sister and her children on a boat to the center of a lake, where he drowns them "in the most loathsome way."[28] Ibn Mardanīsh's willingness to go to such lengths to punish his cousin backfires, however, driving him mad and costing him the allegiance of his remaining supporters and relatives.

Women are uncharacteristically scarce in the *Mann bi-l-imāma*, but Ibn Mardanīsh was a constant thorn in the side of the Almohads for years, and in this context it makes sense for Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt to draw on ideas of gender roles and familial attachment, pulling out all the narrative stops to convince his audience of the rebel's depravity. Conversely, one of the chronicle's few other mentions of women was intended to illustrate the Almohad caliph's benevolence towards women. Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt describes an episode that he witnessed personally while accompanying the caliph on a visit to the newly established city of Rabat, part of a larger ritualized progress throughout Almohad holdings. When a *shaykh* from Badajoz says that he was captured by Christians who took the city and has no means to veil his three daughters, the caliph gifts him money for his ransom and his daughters' trousseaux (*jihāz*).[29] This anecdote shows the caliph to be generous with his subjects and committed to the proper treatment of women, unlike his Muslim and Christian enemies. Both Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt and Ibn al-Qūṭiyya hold their leaders responsible for ensuring that women—even ones the ruler does not

[28] 'Abd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Mann bi-l-imāma: tārīkh bilād al-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus fī 'ahd al-Muwaḥḥidīn*, ed. 'Abd al-Hādī Tāzī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1987), 320-321; 'Abd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Al-Mann bil-imāma: Estudio preliminar, traduccion e indices por Ambrosio Huici Miranda*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Valencia: Anubar, 1969), 161.
[29] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. Tāzī, 361; Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Al-Mann bil-imāma*, trans. Huici Miranda, 182.

know personally—are properly maintained and respected, a task which is closely associated with veiling.

Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, along with the anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* and *Akhbār majmūʻa*, also relates a series of anecdotes in praise of ʻAbd al-Raḥmān I that deal with the emir's treatment of women and his new Andalusi subjects more generally. Before his arrival, al-Andalus was ruled by the governor Yūsuf al-Fihrī and his vizier al-Ṣumayl. The future emir sends his loyal freedman and client Badr ahead of him to scope out the situation, and when he meets with al-Ṣumayl the vizier pledges to secure a betrothal for ʻAbd al-Raḥmān with one of Yūsuf's daughters, along with a government position.[30] As it turns out, however, once ʻAbd al-Raḥmān crosses the Strait, he and Yūsuf meet in battle and the governor is defeated. When ʻAbd al-Raḥmān enters the palace (*qaṣr*) in Córdoba, Yūsuf's wife and two daughters approach him and ask to be treated well. The new emir complies, sending the women home with a trusted client of the deposed governor's. As a token of their thanks, Yūsuf's daughter gifts him an enslaved woman named Ḥulal, who eventually bears his son and successor, Hishām.[31]

Ibn al-Qūṭiyya portrays Yūsuf's wife and daughters as willing and able to advocate for themselves and demand proper treatment, which ʻAbd al-Raḥmān recognizes and respects. It does not hurt that their speech is carefully crafted. They emphasize their kinship, addressing him as cousin (*ibn ʻam*) and flattering him by

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[30] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. al-Abyārī, 46; Muḥammad ibn ʻUmar ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Early Islamic Spain the History of Ibn al-Qūṭīya: A Study of the Unique Arabic Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, with a Translation, Notes, and Comments*, trans. David James (New York: Routledge, 2009), 68.

[31] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. al-Abyārī, 50-51; Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Early Islamic Spain*, trans. James, 71.

acknowledging his successes and calling upon him to do well by them as God has done well by him. Yūsuf's daughter is also willing to put Ḥulal in their place, and though the chronicle does not name either of Yūsuf's daughters, it is possible that the daughter who makes this gift is the same one al-Ṣumayl offered in marriage. Either way, Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's statement that Ḥulal became the mother of the next emir, the highest position an Andalusi woman could hope for, highlights how power transitioned away from both the men and women of Yūsuf's family—an outcome that could perhaps have been avoided had al-Ṣumayl and Yūsuf made different choices.

The *Akhbār majmūʻa* and the *Fatḥ al-Andalus* also recount al-Ṣumayl's suggestion to ʻAbd al-Raḥmān of an alliance through marriage, though the latter text says that the vizier offers his own daughter, rather than Yūsuf's.[32] The two chronicles obscure the role of women in the interaction between ʻAbd al-Raḥmān and the members of Yūsuf's family (*ʻiyāl*), however. In the *Fatḥ*, after defeating Yūsuf in battle, the new emir waits three days to occupy the palace so that the deposed governor's family has time to move elsewhere, avoiding them entirely out of respect.[33] In the *Akhbār*, ʻAbd al-Raḥmān enters the palace to find that people have already looted and robbed Yūsuf's family (*ʻiyāl*), so he expels the perpetrators and clothes "those who had been stripped."[34] Though neither chronicler specifically mentions women here, they do so later, as will be discussed. The word used to refer to Yūsuf's family is generally associated with dependents, and here seems likely to have meant his women, children, and servants. In

[32] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʻa*, 70; Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 75.
[33] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 90.
[34] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʻa*, 83.

both accounts, therefore, it is made clear that ʻAbd al-Raḥmān I treats Yūsuf's women and household with respect, ensuring their safety and honor. In the *Akhbār*, this is immediately contrasted with the shameful actions of looters, motivated by tribal conflicts, who strip vulnerable members of the governor's household even of their clothing.

Both the *Fatḥ* and the *Akhbār* also contrast ʻAbd al-Raḥmān's respectful treatment of Yūsuf's family with his enemies' treatment of the women in his own household. They each say that the emir is gifted two enslaved women, and the *Akhbār* adds that he purchases a third, along with some servants, to create a family (*ʻiyāl*).[35] When ʻAbd al-Raḥmān is away from Córdoba to continue his campaign against Yūsuf, the former governor sends his son Abū Zayd to attack the capital in his absence, and he succeeds in taking the palace. The third enslaved woman purchased by ʻAbd al-Raḥmān, who is pregnant at the time, is rescued and taken in by the family that sold her, and later gives birth to a daughter, ʻĀ'isha. Abū Zayd captures the two other women, but "the people of sense among his companions" remind him that when ʻAbd al-Raḥmān captured his "sisters and mothers," the emir "veiled their nakedness and clothed their nakedness." Abū Zayd then makes arrangements for the two women to be housed elsewhere with their possessions, and the emir's moral example is shown to exercise power even over his enemies.[36] When the women are ultimately returned to the emir, however, the chronicler relates that "he hated them." He gives one to his client, with whom she bears a child, and gives the other woman to someone else who is not specified.[37] In the *Fatḥ*, it is Yūsuf

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[35] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʻa*, 85; Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 92.
[36] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʻa*, 85-86.
[37] Ibid., 92.

himself who recaptures the palace and takes the two women, and a *qāḍī* (judge) who shames him with a reminder that ʻAbd al-Raḥmān waited three days for Yūsuf's women and daughters *(karā'im wa-banāt*) to leave the palace. Yūsuf repents and swears that he has not looked upon the faces of the women, then places them in the care of the *qāḍī*. When ʻAbd al-Raḥmān returns to the city and learns what has taken place, he loses his taste for the women, gifting them to other men.

These continuations of the anecdote about ʻAbd al-Raḥmān's respectful treatment of the women in Yūsuf's household make it clear that while the emir acts honorably without prompting and is thus fit to rule, Yūsuf falls short. That the emir discards the two women with so little thought also highlights the dangers women faced if their honor was not protected, which motivates Yūsuf's wife and daughters to advocate for themselves so actively in Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's telling. Though the emir ensures that the two enslaved women are still provided for and under the protection of prominent men, they nonetheless lose standing, not to mention the potential trauma of their experience and the emir's extreme distaste and hatred for them. The *Fatḥ* and the *Akhbār* are not critical of the emir's rejection of the women, however, but seem to include the detail as a statement on ʻAbd al-Raḥmān's insistence on distancing himself from anything to do with Yūsuf as he established his emirate.

These examples illustrate that in both Muslim and Christian chronicles, women were viewed as an extension of the powerful men to whom they are related, by blood or bond. Their abuse at the hands of men outside their household was an offense against more than just their own person, and was cause for vengeance, which often involved a

removal from power. Similarly, the defense of women, whether or not they were part of a man's own household, signaled that man's righteous action and legitimized his claims to power. Chroniclers used the mistreatment of women to criticize and delegitimize powerful men across religious lines, but also within their own religions. These anecdotes were almost always offered in the context of the establishment of a new government or a rebellion against an existing one, underlining that the treatment of women played a significant symbolic role in demonstrating whether or not men were fit to lead. For the most part, in these cases, it was not the women themselves who were judged positively or negatively, and they were largely passive. Chroniclers also portrayed women taking active roles in the exercise of power, however, and their assessments of these women varied considerably.

Women as political actors and advisors

There are multiple instances in Muslim and Christian chronicles where women actively influence the course of political events, whether by ruling themselves, advising their partners and relatives, or working to ensure the inheritance of a relative. Chroniclers' judgements of these women are most closely correlated with their opinion of the action and individuals in question, rather than the broader idea of women exercising power. The same chronicle could describe two women taking similar actions with substantially different results. One of the most common ways that women act politically in chronicles is in an advisory capacity, offering counsel to their husbands, lovers, brothers, and sons. While women are at times portrayed as conniving and corrupting, they

are also praised for defending their rights and those of their family members in various capacities.

One of the few episodes involving a woman as a political actor that appears in both Muslim and Christian chronicles falls into the former category. Its inclusion by chroniclers of both religions is likely due to its association with the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia, which acquired nearly mythological status and were the subject of active exchange and adaptation across linguistic and cultural lines. This episode involves Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr's son 'Abd al-'Azīz, who becomes governor of al-Andalus after his father's departure. 'Abd al-'Azīz marries Roderic's widow, who is known in Christian sources as Egilona. Her name is often rendered as Ayla in Muslim sources, which also give her Arabic name, Umm 'Āṣim—meaning "mother of 'Āṣim."

Egilona first appears in the Latin *Chronicle of 754*, which describes 'Abd al-'Azīz taking princesses and noblewomen as concubines and then repudiating them. The anonymous chronicler says that along with marrying Egilona, the Andalusi governor takes the riches of Seville for himself and is eventually killed at prayer by a revolt of his own men. Ayyūb, who initiates the assassination, briefly takes power before being replaced by a caliphal appointee. 'Abd al-'Azīz's death is reported to the caliph in Damascus as the result of him taking the advice of his wife to rebel against the Arabs and rule Iberia in his own right.[38] The manner in which this information is presented leads

[38] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica Mozárabe de 754*, 76-79; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 135-136.

one to speculate that the chronicler believed the report given to the caliph to be false and that Egilona was merely a scapegoat for a rebellion actually fomented by Ayyūb.

In later Muslim chronicles, the queen is cast in a more negative light, as her bad advice receives more attention and is more explicitly connected to the revolt by ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz's men. Egilona appears unnamed in the ninth-century *Fuṭūh* of Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam, as Roderic's daughter rather than his widow. The Egyptian chronicler too depicts their marriage enriching the Andalusi governor, saying that "she brought him a great many worldly goods, such as cannot be described."[39] Along with this wealth, however, she also brings a number of worldly ideas which ultimately end her husband's life and reign. She asks her husband why his subjects do not venerate him and prostrate themselves before him as her father's subjects had. In response, he has a short door installed in the side of his palace, so that people entering his presence are forced to bow to him. When the people hear of this, they think that ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz has converted to Christianity, prompting some of his men to conspire to kill him. In this account, Egilona's advice is not explicitly to rebel, but nonetheless involves ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz elevating himself above what is proper, and furthermore carries implications of Christianization. Though gender is not invoked directly, there is a clear inversion of the roles of conqueror and conquered, assimilator and assimilated, at play in this episode, which implies that rather than Islamizing his wife, ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz is Christianized by her.

[39] Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain: Known as the Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. Charles Cutler Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 212.

In Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's tenth-century account, the caliph Sulaymān is at odds with Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, so he gives orders for the assassination of his son 'Abd al-'Azīz. Like the *Chronicle of 754*, it is only after the narration of his death that there is any mention of the governor's wife, who is described only as "a Gothic woman" named Umm 'Āṣim.[40] Since Ibn al-Qūṭiyya himself was descended from a royal Visigothic woman, Witiza's granddaughter Sarah, it is unsurprising that he elides Umm 'Āṣim's royal background, which would have diminished the prestige and honor of his ancestry. And though he does not include the anecdote about the short door, like Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam he emphasizes her Christian background and suggests that it negatively influences her husband. Ibn al-Qūṭiyya says that at the time of his death, 'Abd al-'Azīz has been living in a church, and reiterates this information again almost immediately, telling of his marriage to Umm 'Āṣim and how they lived together in a church. Though the chronicler does not comment further, the repetition of their living situation can likely be read as a critique.

Rather than the anecdote about the door, the anonymous *Akhbār majmū'a* includes an anecdote about a crown to illustrate how 'Abd al-'Azīz succumbs to his wife's bad influence. Umm 'Āṣim is identified as Roderic's widow, and 'Abd al-'Azīz is quite taken with her. She tells him that kings who do not wear crowns have no power, and offers to make him one with some of her own gold and jewels, again highlighting the wealth she brings to their marriage. When 'Abd al-'Azīz objects that "this is not part of our religion," she replies that no one "from the people of your religion" will know if he

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[40] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. al-Abyārī, 37.

wears it in private.[41] She does not let up until he concedes. One day, however, another woman, a former Visigothic princess (*min banāt mulūkihim*) enters their presence and sees the governor wearing the crown. She then goes to her husband Ziyād, a prominent Muslim, and asks if she should make one for him as well. Ziyād too replies, "Adopting such garb is not in our religion," and she counters, "Well, by the religion of the Messiah, it is for your imam!" The speech patterns in the parallel conversations between the two couples are telling. Both men refer to Islam as "our religion," an assertion which their wives immediately dismiss, with Umm ʿĀṣim calling it instead "your religion," and Ziyād's wife swearing by the religion of the Messiah. Clearly, both husbands have failed to properly Islamize their wives, and in the governor's case, he has instead been Christianized. When Ziyād learns of this, he tells other military leaders about it. When they see the truth with their own eyes, they declare that ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz has converted to Christianity and kill him.

The anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* and the fourteenth-century *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʿIdhārī combine multiple elements from previous accounts, including the short door and the crown.[42] Both note that Umm ʿĀṣim was also named Ayla. The *Fatḥ* offers a more positive assessment of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, saying that he conquers many cities and is one of the best governors, but that he is killed because of certain accusations made against him. It adds that at the time of the conquest, Ayla makes a deal for herself, agreeing to the *jizya* tax imposed on non-Muslims in order to maintain her religion. She

[41] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʿa*, 28; James, trans., *A History of Early al-*Andalus, 56-57.
[42] Ibn ʿIdhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 23-25.

also endears herself to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, and comes “to dominate him.”[43] In this account, even though Ayla is criticized, she is represented not just as an advisor to her husband, but also as a woman unafraid of actively negotiating for her own interests.

Despite the initial mention of Egilona moving her husband to rebel in the *Chronicle of 754* and the episode’s elaboration by Muslim chroniclers from Egypt, Iberia, and the Maghrib from the ninth through the fourteenth centuries, it was mostly dropped in the Christian chronicle tradition. It makes a brief reappearance in the thirteenth-century *Estoria de España*, compiled at the behest of Alfonso X of Castile. The text says that Mūsā sends ‘Abd al-‘Azīz to Seville to put down Christian rebels, many of whom are ultimately killed. Later, when Mūsā and other leaders are recalled from Spain by the caliph, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz is designated as “lord of this side of the sea.” He selects Seville as his sea and marries Roderic’s widow Egilona, who advises him to wear a crown, “as was the custom in the time of the Goths.”[44] The chronicle then turns to a description of Pelayo.

The results of Egilona’s advice, the question of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s adherence to or betrayal of Islamic ideals, and even his death were not of interest to the Alfonsine chroniclers. In the *Estoria*, Muslim accounts of Egilona encouraging her new husband to take up a crown serves one main purpose—to illustrate the apparent transfer of power from the Visigoths to the Umayyad governors. Marriage to Egilona symbolizes this transfer, as does the crown. The chronicle’s swift transition away from Andalusi affairs to

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[43] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 42; Mayte Penelas, trans., *La conquista de al-Andalus* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2002), 32.
[44] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), VPE: 572, 16-18 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/07/2021].

the deeds of Pelayo in Asturias, however, signals that while the trappings of Visigothic power may have moved to Muslim hands, the essence of the Visigoths survived in the north. In the *Chronicle of 754* and subsequent Arabic accounts, Egilona can be understood as a political actor, even if she is portrayed negatively, because her advice, drawn from her own experiences and priorities, impacts events at the highest level of government. By omitting the outcome of Egilona's advice, the *Estoria* strips her in many ways of this status as a political actor, rendering her no more than an empty symbol of a fallen dynasty. If it is implied that Egilona betrays her religion and her people by suggesting that her new husband could rule as a Goth, even this is shown to be of no real consequence, because Pelayo takes up the true mantle of the Visigothic legacy.

Along with Roderic's widow, a number of other women associated with the Islamic conquests are described as exercising power and acting politically in the *History* of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya. The tenth-century chronicle opens with the fall of the Visigothic monarchy. It refers to Witiza as "the last of the kings of the Goths," and says that he dies when his three sons were still young, so "their mother held their father's power for them" in Toledo.[45] Roderic, one of Witiza's military commanders, subsequently rebels with other members of the army and occupies Córdoba. It is implied that he would not have been able to do so were the throne still held by an adult man, but Witiza's widow is not criticized for acting as regent, and it is Roderic who cannot respect Visigothic traditions and inheritance. By the time Ṭāriq arrives, Witiza's sons are grown—a feat not wholly supported by the timeline provided—and they support the Muslim conqueror in exchange

[45] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. al-Abyārī, 29.

for an acknowledgement of their rights to their father's estates. They even travel to "the lands of the Berbers" to secure confirmation of these rights from Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, and then continue on to the caliph himself.[46] Later, Witiza's eldest son Almund dies, leaving his third of the inheritance to his daughter Sarah al-Qūṭiyya—the Gothic woman from whom our chronicler was descended and received his name—and her two young brothers. Almund's brother Ardabast then seizes Sarah's land in a series of events closely mirroring what happened to his own mother upon the death of Witiza.

Unlike the unnamed queen regent, however, Sarah does not merely disappear from the narrative at this point. Instead, she travels with her brothers to Ascalon to meet with the caliph. While there, she sees the young 'Abd al-Raḥmān I who would become the first Andalusi emir, as a result of which, in later years, she was given leave to visit the palace and his family in Córdoba. The caliph orders his officials to restore the inheritance of Sarah and her brothers, arranging a marriage for her. When this husband dies, multiple men compete for her hand, and her descendants are among the most noble and notable Andalusi families. Clearly, marriage to a woman of Christian descent did not have to go as poorly as it did for 'Abd al-'Azīz. Sarah's actions, crossing the Mediterranean and requesting that the most powerful man in the Islamic world honor his dynasty's agreement with her father and uncles, is portrayed as positive and successful for herself, her brothers, her husbands, and her children.

Naturally, Ibn al-Qūṭiyya had a vested interest in depicting his ancestress in a way that highlighted his royal lineage and property rights. But though he devotes the most

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[46] Ibid., 30.

attention to her, the *History* also discusses other women taking an active role in politics, including Umm ʻĀṣim. Witiza's widow, though unable to defeat Roderic, nonetheless remains with her sons in the Visigothic capital. The reader is invited to draw comparisons between her and Sarah, whose similar situations are mentioned so close together in the text. While this could perhaps be read as a suggestion that Witiza's widow should have taken more action in defense of her sons' claim to the throne, it was more likely intended to impress upon the reader that property rights were better protected under Islam and the Umayyad caliphate than under Christianity, even for women. That Roderic uses a woman's regency as opportunity to rebel and usurp merely adds to his legacy as a man who took advantage of women and violated Visigothic tradition in equal measure.

Later in his *History*, Ibn al-Qūṭiyya presents a more ambivalent account of a woman advocating for her son's inheritance. Ṭarūb, the mother of the emir ʻAbd al-Raḥmān II's son ʻAbd Allāh, convinces the emir to designate their son as his heir. She is aided by a number of groups in the palace, including women, eunuchs (*fityān*), and servants.[47] It is likely that the emir's willingness to comply with Ṭarūb's wishes stems from his love for and infatuation with her. An anecdote earlier in the chronicle relates that while ʻAbd al-Raḥmān II is on campaign in a frontier region (*thaghr*), he experiences a nocturnal emission. After a poetic exchange with a companion, Ibn al-Shamir, in which the emir refers to a nocturnal visitor from Córdoba, he leaves one of his sons in charge of the army and returns to the capital, "eager for the one who had been companionable to

[47] Ibid., 91.

him among his women (*karā'imihi*)."[48] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya then goes on to share a poem composed by Ibn al-Shamir about the emir's return journey, naming Ṭarūb and comparing her to the sun. Clearly, 'Abd al-Raḥmān finds her company so captivating that he is willing to depart early from an important campaign, so it is not surprising that he is also ready to take her advice on the succession.

Later in life, however, 'Abd al-Raḥmān II begins to favor his son Muḥammad, which leads the chief eunuch to try to assassinate the emir. He is unsuccessful, and though Ibn al-Qūṭiyya does not state specifically whether or not Ṭarūb is involved, the proximity of these details in the text may be telling. When the emir dies of natural causes later, the eunuchs gather to deliberate on who to support as his successor before announcing the news. They are almost unanimous in replying, "Our lord, son of our lady, our guardian and patroness!" One of them, however, speaks up, saying that while he too is "thankful to the lady for her favor," they will be held to account for supporting a profligate drunkard like 'Abd Allāh, Ṭarūb's son, and they should support the pious and honest Muḥammad instead.[49] When they object on the grounds that Muḥammad is too stingy, he reminds them that once Muḥammad controls the treasury he will have the means to be much more generous with them. This argument wins the others over, including two of Ṭarūb's most committed supporters, one of whom is instrumental in sneaking Muḥammad into palace, dressed as his daughter, to take power.

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[48] Ibid., 77.
[49] Ibid., 92.

Though Ṭarūb is not mentioned again, this anecdote opens an interesting window into the role of mothers in the Andalusi Umayyad court.[50] Like Witiza's widow, Ṭarūb is motivated to ensure her son's interests, and like Sarah, she takes action to this end. But 'Abd Allāh is an adult who appears more interested in the pursuit of pleasures than of the duty of governing, while Muḥammad has an equal claim to the succession and is portrayed as an upright man. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that neither Ibn al-Qūṭiyya nor the eunuchs in the episode speak against her—though they cannot ultimately uphold her wishes, they acknowledge that she has been a generous and benevolent benefactress. It is not her character but her son's which is the overriding factor, along with the understanding that were Muḥammad to take power, he could assume Ṭarūb's position as their patron. This demonstrates both the potential and the limits of a mother's economic and political power within the Umayyad court, which rode on the fortunes of her son. But it is not an entirely negative portrayal of Ṭarūb. Nor are palace intrigues wholly maligned, since in this case they lead to the succession of the most worthy candidate, who is himself reliant on the world of women and eunuchs to secure power. Ibn al-Qūṭiyya shows that Muḥammad, even dressed as a woman, acts more manfully than 'Abd Allāh, who lets his rival into the palace under his very nose while he and his guards are distracted by music and drink.

The ninth-century *Chronicle of Alfonso III* also mentions a widowed queen working together with men of the palace to influence the succession of a relative, in this case her nephew. The anonymous Asturian chronicler says that in the late eighth century,

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[50] For more on Ṭarūb and her depiction by Ibn Ḥayyān, see Marín, *Mujeres*, esp. 571-573.

Silo inherited the throne as a result of his marriage to Adosinda, the daughter of a previous king and Ermesinda, Pelayo's daughter. Adosinda had no sons with Silo, but her nephew Alfonso, whose father Fruela had also held the throne, governed the palace during Silo's lifetime. After Silo died of natural causes, "all of the magnates of the palace along with the queen Adosinda, placed Alfonso on the throne." This was a significant moment for the Asturian monarchy because after Adosinda royal power ceased to be transmitted through the matrilineal line.[51] Alfonso's reign was cut short, however, when his uncle Mauregato, "though born of a slave," seized the throne for himself, forcing Alfonso to flee to his mother's relatives.[52] Alfonso's mother Munia was taken as wife by king Fruela after he subdued a rebellion of her people, the Basques.[53] After Mauregato died of natural causes, another of Alfonso's uncles was elected king, and he eventually abdicated in his nephew's favor to resume his life as a deacon.

If Adosinda's attempt to intervene in the succession resembles those of Muslim women like Ṭarūb, Alfonso's flight to his mother's relatives likewise has parallels in Arabic chronicles. The first Umayyad emir of al-Andalus, ʻAbd al-Raḥmān I al-Dākhil, famously fled the ʻAbbāsid revolution in Damascus and took refuge with relatives of his mother, Rāḥ, in North Africa. The *Fatḥ al-Andalus* does not name Rāḥ but says that she was a captive taken from the Nafza tribe, and ʻAbd al-Raḥmān fled to his maternal uncles among the Nafza.[54] The *Akhbār majmūʻa* gives the same information, save the mention

[51] Pick, *Her Father's Daughter*, 44-50.
[52] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 136-139; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 172.
[53] With some manuscript variants specifying that she was "quite young" at the time: Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 134-135.
[54] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 70; Penelas, trans., *La conquista*, 60.

of the captivity of the emir's mother, and adds that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān remained for a time under the protection of the Nafza as he planned his entry to al-Andalus.[55] Both Munia and Rāḥ, therefore, were taken from rebellious populations as marital and/or sexual partners for ruling men. When a regime change threatened the inheritances and lives of their sons, maternal kin networks provided safety and protection until their sons could reassert their power, suggesting that these rebellious territories continued to elude the reach of the Asturian monarchy and the ʿAbbasid caliphate alike.

The protection of maternal kinship networks may also be at play in the peace that prevails during Silo's reign. The *Chronicle of Alfonso III* states that Silo remained at peace with the "Ishmaelites," and the nearly contemporary *Chronicle of Albelda* says that "he had peace with Spain because of his mother."[56] As discussed in Chapter 1, "Spain" in Christian Iberian chronicles from this period typically refers to al-Andalus, a reading that is further reinforced by the reference to peace with Muslims specifically in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*. Though we cannot be sure, this may suggest that Silo's mother was of Muslim origin, and that her marriage to King Aurelio constituted part of a peace treaty or negotiation. This could explain why the *Albelda* chronicler neglects to name her or elaborate on the means by which peace was achieved, and why her influence is omitted altogether in the Alfonsine chronicle, which nonetheless describes her husband Aurelio's reign as one of peace with the Muslims as well.[57] Regardless of her background, it is

[55] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʿa*, 56-57, 66; James, trans., *A History of Early al-*Andalus, 77, 83.
[56] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 136-137, 174.
[57] Ibid., 136-137.

significant that Silo's mother seems to have been associated with a period of peace between Iberian Muslims and Christians that extended even into her son's reign.

Despite differences in elite family and household structures in Muslim and Christian society, therefore, the parallels between Witiza's widow, Sarah, Ṭarūb, Adosinda, Munia, Rāḥ, and Silo's mother in defending the succession and offering protections to their sons and nephews underlines the influential and accepted role played by women of both religions. Of these women, only Ṭarūb is depicted with a hint of negative judgement—the implicit suggestion that she may have been involved in a plot to assassinate the emir, and her support for a son that was ultimately not deserving of the succession. And though Adosinda's relationship with the palace magnates is not described in as much detail as Ṭarūb's with the palace eunuchs and servants, is it suggestive of the ways that Asturian and Andalusi ruling households resembled one another and functioned similarly.

The fourteenth-century *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* (*Garden of Pages*) of Ibn 'Abī Zar' relates an episode in which a mother goes to even greater lengths than Ṭarūb to ensure her son's succession and, like Silo's mother, may draw on her religious and ethnic background in her efforts. Al-Rashīd is only fourteen years old when his father al-Ma'mūn dies, leaving him the Almohad caliphate. Ibn Abī Zar' says that his mother, Ḥabāb, is a Christian slave (*rūmiyya*), and is "among the most cunning and intelligent of women."[58] Ḥabāb conceals al-Ma'mūn's death and summons the three main commanders of his army, including the

[58] 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Zar' al-Fāsī, *al-Anīs al-muṭrib bi-rawḍ al-qirṭās fī akhbār mulūk al-Maghrib wa-tārīkh madīnat Fās*, ed. 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Manṣūr, 2nd ed. (Rabat: al-Maṭba'a al-malikiyya, 1999), 334; 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Zar' al-Fāsī, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Valencia, 1964), 493.

commander of the Christians, asking them to support her son's succession. In return, she offers a great deal of money and the spoils of Marrakesh, which at the time is occupied by a rival claimant, Yaḥyā, who had been at odds with al-Ma'mūn. The military commanders agree, but when the residents of Marrakesh hear of Ḥabāb's bargain at their expense, they support Yaḥyā, who is nonetheless defeated in battle. The denizens of Marrakesh then bar al-Rashīd from entering the city until he pardons them and agrees to pay the commanders from his own coffers, rather than allowing them to sack the capital. Al-Rashīd rules for ten years and Ḥabāb is not mentioned again, but Ibn Abī Zar' describes her son's rule as marked by extreme violence and a reliance on Christian armies, and the caliph is ultimately drowned in a cistern.[59]

Ḥabāb's intervention forms part of a broader depiction of the dramatic decline and tyranny of the later Almohad dynasty in the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*. Ibn Abī Zar' sharply criticizes al-Rashīd's father al-Ma'mūn for his military and theological concessions to Christians.[60] It seems likely, therefore, that Ḥabāb's Christian origins are partially at play in this account. It is typical of Ibn Abī Zar' to provide the names and ethnic backgrounds of leaders' mothers, a good number of whom are also *rūmiyyāt*. I do not suggest that this background alone was cause for a negative portrayal, therefore, but merely that in this case it is highlighted, along with other details, to compound the image of al-Rashīd, his mother, and his commanders acting in ways that were detrimental to the Muslim community and the Almohad caliphate. Though Ibn Abī Zar' names all three military

[59] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 335; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 495.
[60] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 329-330; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 486-487.

commanders initially, he continually refers to the Christian commander specifically throughout the episode and specifies when al-Rashīd uses Christian armies. Ḥabāb is not criticized for supporting her son or being of Christian origin, but for being willing to sacrifice the residents of Marrakesh to pay for armies, including Christian troops. That she happens to be a woman with a Christian background adds to the sense that something has gone deeply wrong with the exercise of power, but these aspects of her identity alone are not sufficient grounds for censure. Even the way she is described is ambivalent, and Ibn Abī Zarʿ simultaneously acknowledges her remarkable intelligence and suggests that she uses it for cunning purposes.

Like Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, Ibn Abī Zarʿ also portrays the exercise of political influence by some women exclusively positively. This is true of his account of Zaynab, the wife of two early Almoravid emirs. Zaynab also features in the *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʿIdhārī, another North African chronicler and contemporary of Ibn Abī Zarʿ. In both texts, the emir Abū Bakr meets and marries Zaynab in Aghmat. Ibn Abī Zarʿ says that her father is a merchant from Qayrawan, and describes Zaynab as "resolute, sensible, possessed of sound views and intelligence, and abundantly knowledgeable, to the extent that she was called a sorceress."[61] Ibn ʿIdhārī emphasizes her beauty, wealth, and reputation. He adds that she claims that she will only marry the ruler of the entire Maghrib and refuses multiple suitors before Abū Bakr, which leads people to believe that *jinn* speak to her, or that she is a sorceress or seer.[62] Though both chroniclers mention these accusations,

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[61] Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 170.
[62] Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās, vol. 4, Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane au XIIème-XIIIème siècle (Beirut:

neither seems to give them much credence. The *Bayān* says Zaynab promises her new husband great riches. She leads him with his eyes covered to an underground house filled with gold, silver, pearls, and rubies. When she reveals this to him, she tells Abū Bakr that this wealth all belongs to him now, given by God through her hand—but she covers his eyes again before they depart, suggesting that she maintains a substantial degree of control over her fortune.

The emir, who had previously resided in tents, builds a house for his new wife in Aghmat. As a result, the population of the city increases to the point of overcrowding, so Abū Bakr eventually decides to found a new city on the unsettled plain of Marrakesh. The *Rawḍ* attributes the founding of the new Almoravid capital to the next emir, Yūsuf ibn Tāshufīn, who also marries Zaynab. And though Ibn Abī Zar‘ does not explicitly connect their marriage to the establishment of Marrakesh, he reports the emir's purchase of the land immediately after reiterating the fact of their marriage, even though more details on their relationship have already been given earlier on in the section about Abū Bakr's reign.[63] This suggests that both Marinid chroniclers associate marriage to Zaynab with the foundation of the Almoravid capital. Marrakesh is much further south than Fes, the historical Islamic capital of the Maghrib founded by the Idrisid dynasty in the eighth century. The move signaled both the southern origins of the tribes that were most prominent in the Almoravid movement, as well as the increasing focus of its leaders on Saharan conquest and conversion efforts in what chroniclers often refer to as "the lands

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Dār al-thaqāfa, 1967), 18; Ibn ‘Idhārī al-Marrākushī, *Al-Bayan al-mughrib; nuevos fragmentos almorávides y almohades*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Valencia: Anubar, 1963), 36.

[63] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 175; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 267.

of the blacks" (*bilād al-sudān*). That the establishment of Marrakesh is connected to Zaynab indicates the pivotal role she plays in early Almoravid history, rooting the Islamic seat of government further south.

Zaynab is also portrayed as an active participant in Almoravid politics in both the *Bayān* and the *Rawḍ*. When Abū Bakr decides to embark upon a Saharan campaign, "to wage jihad on the pagans among the blacks" and in pursuit of martyrdom, he tells Zaynab that she is too beautiful and delicate to bring to the desert. His solution is to divorce her, and he tells her that after the legal waiting period has elapsed she should marry his cousin Yūsuf ibn Tāshufīn, to whom he entrusts his command in the Maghrib.[64] In this sense, Zaynab very much lives up to her statement in the *Bayān* that she will only marry the ruler of the Maghrib, and Yūsuf's assumption of leadership is intimately connected to his marriage with her. Ibn ʻIdhārī says that Zaynab agrees with Abū Bakr's plan to divorce her, and even mentions that according to some accounts, the plan is hers, and he agrees to the divorce.[65] The *Rawḍ* says that after her marriage to Yūsuf, Zaynab "was the executor of his power and the organizer of his command, and the conqueress (*al-fātiha*), with the excellence of her politics, of the greater part of the lands of the Maghrib"—a description that leads one to suspect she would have fared well enough in the desert.[66] According to the *Bayān*, their marriage brings them both happiness, and Zaynab tells Yūsuf he will rule

[64] Ibn Abī Zarʻ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 170; Ibn Abī Zarʻ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 257-258.
[65] Ibn ʻIdhārī, *al-Bayān*, ed. ʻAbbās, 21; Ibn ʻIdhārī, *Nuevos fragmentos*, trans. Huici Miranda, 44-45.
[66] Ibn Abī Zarʻ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 171; Ibn Abī Zarʻ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 258.

over the entire Maghrib and transfers her fortune to him so that can he purchase horses and pay troops.[67]

Eventually, however, Abū Bakr returns from the Sahara. In the *Rawḍ* this is because he hears of Yūsuf's increasing power, but in the *Bayān* it is simply because his campaign comes to an end. In both accounts, Zaynab offers her husband sage advice for how to approach her ex-husband's impending return. According to Ibn ʿIdhārī, she sees the concern on Yūsuf's face and offers counsel unasked, while according to Ibn Abī Zarʿ he goes to her specifically for this purpose. In the *Rawḍ*, she advises Yūsuf not to show Abū Bakr the usual signs of deference and courtesy, but to shower him with gifts. The *Bayān*'s account is not fully preserved, but Zaynab assures Yūsuf that God no longer favors Abū Bakr, and that he is a good man who will not kill without cause, so Yūsuf need not worry. And indeed, when Abū Bakr sees all that his cousin has done to build and fortify Marrakesh, he decides to give him command permanently. Their meeting is amicable, and Ibn ʿIdhārī reminds the reader that this is the result of Zaynab's advice, who encourages Yūsuf "until he ruled the Maghrib, the happiest reign… and no army ever defeated him."[68] Similarly, the *Rawḍ* describes Zaynab as "the epitome (*ʿunwān*) of his happiness."[69]

The depiction of Zaynab in Ibn ʿIdhārī and Ibn Abī Zarʿ is therefore entirely positive. The closest they come to potential criticism is the mention that some considered her a sorceress, but only Ibn ʿIdhārī provides any basis for her possessing a kind of

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[67] Ibn ʿIdhārī, *al-Bayān*, ed. ʿAbbās, 22; Ibn ʿIdhārī, *Nuevos fragmentos*, trans. Huici Miranda, 46.
[68] Ibn ʿIdhārī, *al-Bayān*, ed. ʿAbbās, 25; Ibn ʿIdhārī, *Nuevos fragmentos*, trans. Huici Miranda, 53.
[69] Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 175; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 267.

premonitory ability, which is closely associated with God's will. Instead, Zaynab is lauded for her intelligence, wisdom, wealth, and beauty, all of which benefit her husbands and the Almoravid dynasty more broadly. Indeed, her vast wealth invites comparisons to the prophet Muḥammad's first wife, Khadīja.[70] Her divorce from Abū Bakr and marriage to Yūsuf signal and foreshadow the transfer of the emirate from one husband to another, which is especially noteworthy because this position does not stem from her own inheritance or family. Zaynab is also a fully realized individual whose words, emotions, and initiatives are foregrounded. She is an equal partner in her decision to marry both men and to divorce Abū Bakr, and she maintains and disposes of her wealth at her discretion. Indeed, in the *Rawḍ* she is described as an able and active co-ruler with Yūsuf, which is not used to criticize either her status as a respectable woman or his as a powerful man.

The complete lack of criticism for Zaynab's active role in politics is especially striking in the context of the Almohad rhetoric about the unnatural inversion of gender roles under the Almoravids. Almohad-era chroniclers often refer to Almoravids as *mulaththimūn*, meaning "veiled ones," alluding to their custom of men, rather than women, wearing veils. The *Kitāb al-mu'jib* (*Book of the Astonishing*) of the Maghribi chronicler Ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid mentions multiple times that the Almoravids failed because they let women control their affairs and were obedient to women.[71] 'Abd al-Waḥid

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[70] Amira K. Bennison, *The Almoravid and Almohad Empires* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 35.
[71] 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Histoire des Almohades*, ed. Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1881), 127, 133, 148; 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Kitāb al-Mu'ŷib fī Taljiṣ Ajbār al Magrib: Lo admirable en el resumen de las noticias del Magrib*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Tetuán: Editora Marroquí, 1955),135, 144, 169.

himself tends to elide or diminish the role of women that receive more detailed treatment in other chronicles. For example, in the lengthy section of the text devoted to the ʻAbbadid ruler of Seville, al-Muʻtamid, he barely mentions the ruler's equally famed favorite, Iʻtimād.[72] And while ʻAbd al-Wāḥid names ʻAbd al-Raḥmān I's mother, Rāḥ, he neglects to speak of the maternal connections in North Africa that proved so pivotal for the aspiring emir as he fled the ʻAbbasids in Damascus and contemplated taking power in al-Andalus. Instead ʻAbd al-Wāḥid says, rather disingenuously, that he arrived in the peninsula "exiled and alone, without family or money."[73]

Indeed many Almohad-era chronicles, including the *Mann bi-l-imāma* of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, the "Memoirs" of al-Baydhaq, and the *Naẓm al-jumān* of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān, are considerably less likely to speak of powerful women neutrally or positively than other Muslim chronicles, whether Iberian or North African.[74] Even so, women exercising power in positive ways are not entirely absent from the Almohad historical corpus either. Al-Baydhaq, for instance, tells of a woman named Tāmāgūnt. She is captured along with four hundred other women during the caliph ʻAbd al-Mu'min's struggles with the Almoravid emir ʻAlī ibn Yūsuf and the Christian mercenary the Reverter in the mid-twelfth century. Tāmāgūnt reminds the caliph that her father defended his predecessor, the Almohad spiritual leader Ibn Tūmart, before the Almoravid emir. ʻAbd al-Mu'min acknowledges this debt and frees Tāmāgūnt, whereupon she asks him if it is right to free

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[72] Who also attracted the attention of later Christian writers: Marín, *Mujeres en al-Ándalus*, 98-100, 582-583. See also Valencia, "Presencia de la mujer."
[73] ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 11; ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, *Kitāb al-Muʻŷib*, trans. Huici Miranda, 13.
[74] Dandash, "Adwār siyāsiyya li-l-nisā'"; Marín, "The Princess and the Palace."

her alone among four hundred others. The caliph again cedes the point, and frees all the women.[75]

Like Sarah the Goth and Yūsuf al-Fihrī's wife and daughters, Tāmāgūnt is vocal in advocating for herself, leveraging her father's actions to remind the caliph of how he should behave not only for her own benefit, but in defense of hundreds of other women as well. The same anecdote is repeated towards the end of al-Baydhaq's text, again naming Tāmāgūnt but providing a different name for her father and mentioning a woman named Ḥawwā', who is described as the wife of Ya'azzā ibn Makhlūf, the same husband named for Tāmāgūnt in the earlier passage.[76] While it may be that Ya'azzā had multiple wives who were captured at the same time, the confusion over Tāmāgūnt's father suggests a more general confusion in the second version of the anecdote. Regardless, that it is included twice in the chronicle suggests its importance in the construction of an image of 'Abd al-Mu'min as an honorable ruler.[77]

It is likewise clear that stories of Zaynab and her role in the early Almoravid dynasty were popular and prevalent enough to survive any Almohad suppression or distaste for the exercise of power by women, none of which is apparent in her treatment in the *Rawḍ* of Ibn Abī Zar' and the *Bayān* of Ibn 'Idhārī. The two wrote at nearly the same time, under the Marinid dynasty that succeeded the Almohads in the western Maghrib. Their positive depictions of Zaynab can perhaps be understood, in part, as a

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[75] Evariste Lévi-Provençal, ed. and trans., *Documents inédits d'histoire almohade: fragments manuscrits du "legajo" 1919 du fonds arabe de l'Escurial* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1928), 88, 142.
[76] Ibid., 129, 220.
[77] Heather J. Empey, "The Mothers of the Caliph's Sons: Women as Spoils of War During the Early Almohad Period," in *Concubines and Courtesans: Women and Slavery in Islamic History*, ed. Matthew Gordon and Kathryn A. Hain (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 146.

rejection of Almohad ideology, but this seems unlikely to be the only reason that they narrate such an active role for her. Their representation of Zaynab appears to reflect what may indeed have been a period of increased political power exercised by Almoravid women, and demonstrates that post-Almohad writers were not only not reluctant to depict this, they were in fact willing to praise it. And, of course, the *Rawḍ*'s account of Ḥabāb suggests that women could actively influence events even under the Almohads.

Ibn Abī Zar' also writes about another North African woman exerting influence over the ruling men to whom she was related—Kanza, the concubine of Idrīs I and mother of Idrīs II, the first and second rulers of the Idrisid dynasty established in the Maghrib in the late eighth century. Idrīs I is set up as a kind of parallel and counter to 'Abd al-Raḥmān I of al-Andalus, who is scarcely mentioned in the *Rawḍ*. The father of Idrīs I rebels against the tyranny of the 'Abbasid caliph and is killed in battle, prompting his son to flee to Walīlī, near where Fes is later founded by his son.[78] Idrīs I is accompanied by his faithful freedman Rāshid, just as 'Abd al-Raḥmān is said to have been accompanied by his freedman Badr, and from Walīlī Idrīs begins his conquests of the Maghrib and is proclaimed imam and emir. Despite Rāshid's aid, however, an assassin sent by the caliph manages to kill Idrīs with poisoned perfume. Adding to the sense of legend surrounding Idrīs I's rise to power, Ibn Abī Zar' says that upon his death, he left no sons, but that one of his enslaved women, a Berber named Kanza, was pregnant by him. On Rāshid's advice, the succession is put on hold until the child is born and its

[78] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 17-22; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 28-38.

gender revealed. Two months later, Kanza bears a son who closely resembles his father and who is likewise named Idrīs. Because he is a boy, he inherits.[79]

It is not until her grandson's reign that we hear about Kanza taking an active role in politics. The *Rawḍ* says that, on her opinion, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs divides his father's territories among himself and his brothers.[80] Those who are too young to receive commands remain in Kanza's care.[81] It is not entirely clear how Ibn Abī Zar‘ views Kanza's advice, since he offers no direct comment, nor does he provide any descriptors of her other than those relating to her enslaved status and her Nafza Berber origins.[82] Conflict between Muḥammad and his brothers ensues almost immediately after the distribution of commands, and he ends up ruling as the sole emir, so her political vision for the family was certainly not enduring. Nonetheless, it is significant that Kanza plays more than just a symbolic role as a member of a conquered population with whom Idrīs I, as an outsider, cemented his political legitimacy and produced an heir with local ties. Her influence endures across multiple generations and she rears and advises her grandsons. In the *Rawḍ*, like Zaynab, Kanza is vocal about her political opinions, which are taken seriously and enacted by men in power. And though Ibn ‘Idhārī's account of the Idrisids is much more cursory than that of Ibn Abī Zar‘, for whom they represent the foundation of Maghribi history, he too mentions Kanza's Berber background and her influence on

[79] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 29-30; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 47-49.
[80] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 62; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 99.
[81] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 65; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 101.
[82] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 30; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 50.

Muḥammad's power sharing with his brothers. Whereas Ibn Abī Zar' refers to Kanza's input as an opinion (*ra'ī*), Ibn 'Idhārī refers to it as a command (*amr*).[83] Again, it is unclear how Ibn 'Idhārī might have felt about her influence, but his choice of a word so closely associated with Islamic rulership is suggestive of her power.

Furthermore, though Arabic chronicles from the region do not depict Muslim women ruling in their own right, they do tell of a Berber woman who ruled as queen while the Islamic conquests were unfolding in North Africa—the shadowy figure of the Kāhina, or "prophetess." A glimpse of her first appears in North African historiography in the ninth-century *Futūḥ* of Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam. The Egyptian chronicler refers to a man called Ibn al-Kāhina, "the son of the prophetess," who resists and challenges the Muslim conquerors before he is eventually killed.[84] A few passages later, he identifies the Kāhina as "the queen of the Berbers, who had subdued most of Ifrīqiya." The text says she was attacked by a Muslim conqueror, Ḥassān, and when they met in battle "she defeated him and killed some of his companions, as well as capturing eighty men, but she released Ḥassān." The Kāhina later released all but one of her prisoners, a man named Khālid, whom "she adopted, and he stood with her."[85] Ḥassān then tries to write to Khālid, but the Kāhina forbids him from responding, so Khālid sends messages concealed in a piece of a bread and in a hole in the pommel of a saddle. Each time, the Kāhina goes

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[83] Abū al-'Abbās ibn 'Idhārī al-Marrākushī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār mulūk al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Evariste Lévi-Provençal and George Séraphin Colin, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1948), 210-211.
[84] Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest*, ed. Torrey, 198-200.
[85] Ibid., 200.

forth, calling, “Oh my sons, your doom is contained within that which people eat!” and “Oh my sons, your doom is contained within dead plants from the ground!”[86]

Despite these warnings, which explain her status as a prophetess, the messages reach Ḥassān, who moves again to attack her. Once more, she goes out, calling upon her sons to look to the skies. They respond that they see only red clouds, and she corrects them, saying it is dust from the horses of the Arabs. The Kāhina then speaks to Khālid, saying that she is “dead,” and reminding him that she adopted him, so he is now charged with looking after his brothers. When he expresses a fear that her sons will not survive, she assures him that they will and that one will gain even greater fame among the Arabs than he has already. Khālid goes to Ḥassān and obtains safe passage for the Kāhina’s sons, and Ḥassān gives the older of them command over a group of Berbers. When Ḥassān meets the Kāhina in battle at the foot of a mountain, she is killed along with her people (*qutilat wa-ʿāmma man maʿhā*), and the place of her death becomes known by her name.

As Abdelmajid Hannoum points out, this episode represents the cooperation of the Berbers in their own conquest and Islamicization. As a result, he concludes that the Kāhina speaks in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam’s chronicle “only to express the opinions of the Muslim community… Behind the voice of the protagonists, there is only the voice of the community, and…the language of the Arabs.”[87] While this is ultimately true of many of the men and women portrayed in the medieval chronicle tradition, it is worth

[86] Ibid., 201.
[87] Abdelmajid Hannoum, *Colonial Histories, Post-Colonial Memories: The Legend of the Kahina, a North African Heroine* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001), 8.

contemplating more deeply Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam’s decision to put these words in the mouth of a non-Muslim Berber queen, prophetess, and warrior. Hannoum notes all the ways that the Kāhina represents a foil for Ḥassān, who is a Muslim man of Arab origin. But the Kāhina is not, ultimately, criticized for much at all in this text. Her death and defeat are predetermined because she is not Muslim, but she is clearly an able political ruler and military commander unhampered by her gender. And though her designation as a prophetess may have emphasized her connection to non-Islamic spiritual and occult traditions, her prophecies are all accurate, suggesting that they are in some way divinely inspired.

If anything, it is the failure of the Kāhina’s sons to appropriately heed and respond to her warnings, and Khālid’s betrayal, which lead to her downfall. She does not, however, fail her sons, biological or adopted. Even if her political and military feats come to an end, the Kāhina succeeds in being a good mother, ensuring the safety and renown of her sons well beyond her death—the kind of action which is often praised by Muslim chroniclers, especially when it results in victories for righteous Muslims, as it does in this case. The Kāhina’s resignation to her fate is very much tied up in an effort to provide a viable future for her sons, something which she plans well in advance, as it is presumably the reason she adopts Khālid. In ‘Abd al-Ḥakam’s text, the submission of the Berbers can be interpreted to some extent as an act of maternal care and sacrifice—the Kāhina must give up her political and military aspirations to save her sons, restoring the natural order and appropriate gender roles.

Nonetheless, the Kāhina is remarkably active in Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam's text, even on a grammatical level. In Arabic verbs indicate the subject's gender, and the chronicler repeatedly uses active verbs to describe her deeds, emphasizing that *she* conquered, *she* ruled, *she* defeated, *she* spoke. Her death, on the other hand, is not attributed to any single person, even to Ḥassān—we are merely told that "she was killed." The cooperation of the Berbers, including women, was understood as integral to the Islamic conquests, and was indeed so significant that Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam could not describe it passively—it required the active, voluntary, and inevitable concession of the Kāhina and others like her. Indeed, it is never Ḥassān's actions directly that cause the Kāhina's defeat, and she is quite successful in defeating him initially. It is instead her prophetic knowledge of the inevitability of the Arab and Islamic triumph, and her care for her sons, which move her to concede—but again, only after a fashion, since for herself she chooses death rather than conversion or submission, itself in some ways a defiance of expected gender roles.

The Kāhina continued to appear in geographical and biographical texts by North African writers and chronicles by eastern Muslims, but did not reappear in the western historiographical tradition until the fourteenth century.[88] Ibn ʻIdhārī says that when Ḥassān arrives in Qayrawan, he asks the people who remains of the greatest kings of Ifrīqiya, so that he might either destroy or convert him. They reply that it is in fact a woman called the Kāhina, who is feared by all the Rūm in Ifrīqiya and obeyed by all the Berbers—"so if you kill her, the whole of the Maghrib will declare for you, and no

[88] For an overview of the Kāhina episode in these intervening texts, see Hannoum, *Colonial Histories*, 9-16.

opposition will remain for you."[89] The Kāhina learns of his intentions and leaves her mountain base with "an incalculable number" of troops, reaching a city before Ḥassān and expelling its Rūmī population, thinking he wants it as a base from which to conquer her. The two eventually meet at a river, and Ḥassān refuses to fight her until the next day, so the two forces spend the night in their saddles before meeting in a great battle from which the Kāhina emerges victorious. The *Bayān* says "she swiftly massacred the Arabs" and, as in the *Futūḥ*, she takes eighty prisoners. She pursues Ḥassān until he leaves Gabes, and rules "all of the Maghrib for five years after Ḥassān."[90]

During this time, the Kāhina speaks to the Berbers, warning them that the Arabs want Ifrīqiya for its cities, gold, and silver, whereas the Berbers want its agriculture and livestock. In order to discourage the Arabs, she says they must destroy the land, so she begins a campaign of cutting trees and razing forts, devastating what had been "a single shelter from Tripoli to Tangier, continuous villages and orderly cities, such that there was no greater good in the regions of the earth." This causes a great exodus of Christians and Africans (*al-naṣārā wa-l-afāriqa*) "to al-Andalus and other islands of the sea."[91] And, as in Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, the Kāhina releases all but one her prisoners, Khālid. She tells him he is the most beautiful and bravest man she has ever seen and that she wishes to breastfeed him so that he will be a brother to her sons. She then covers Khālid in barley flour and oil before bringing him to her breast, calling to her sons and telling them to join

[89] Ibn 'Idhārī, *Al-Bayān al-mughrib*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 1, 35.
[90] Ibid., 36.
[91] Ibid., 36.

him. Ibn ʿIdhārī specifies that "she had two sons, one of whom was Berber, and the other Greek."[92]

When Ḥassān writes to Khālid, he replies with information about the Berbers, saying that they are divided and lack reason. As in the ninth-century account, Khālid conceals his letter in bread, prompting the Kāhina's warning, which this time is addressed to the Berbers as a whole rather than just to her sons and predicts the end of their rule (*mulk*). When the letter arrives, Ḥassān finds it has been corrupted by fire, and orders his messenger to return, only to be informed that since the Kāhina is a prophetess, this will be of no use. Ḥassān sets out to confront her himself. The Kāhina learns of this, and tells her sons that she is dead, and has seen her head cut off and placed in the hands of a great Arab king. Khālid advises her to flee, but she refuses, seeing that he is ashamed of her people. When he and her sons ask about what will happen to them, she predicts that they will wield great power, which they will receive from the one who will kill her. Khālid relays this information to Ḥassān, who agrees to protect the queen's sons, and when the two meet in battle the Kāhina is killed. Her sons accompany Ḥassān to the Maghrib, "attacking the Rūm and the infidels among the Berbers."[93]

Drawing on the development of written and presumably oral accounts about the Kāhina over the course of several centuries, Ibn ʿIdhārī expands on what is already, for Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, a fairly in-depth account of the Berber queen. The additional details provided in the *Bayān* suggest a more negative interpretation of the Kāhina, as well as an

[92] Ibid., 37.
[93] Ibid., 38.

increasing interest in the demographics of pre-conquest North Africa. The Kāhina is still portrayed as the architect of her own military successes and she is able to defeat Ḥassān initially. Though she dominates them in different ways, the Kāhina is depicted as controlling both the Berbers and the Rūm, who in this context can likely be understood to mean the Byzantines. While the Berbers obey her, presumably voluntarily, the Rūm fear her, and she is able to conquer them with ease. But her military abilities are transformed from something praiseworthy to something abhorrent when she turns her capacity for destruction on her own land, employing a scorched earth policy.

Here, the Kāhina's speech may indeed to some extent genuinely represent opposing viewpoints surrounding the Islamic conquests, or at least Ibn 'Idhārī and his sources' speculations thereof, rather than the voice of the victors alone. Unlike the conversation with Khālid and her sons in Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, the Kāhina's speech to her people in the *Bayān* indicates that the Arab conquerors and the residents of North Africa had different understandings of the value and purpose of their land. Whereas the Arabs wished to extract resources and build cities, enacting a colonial regime, the Berbers wished to continue using the land for farming and herding, a reflection of real cultural differences that to some extent persisted for centuries. The Kāhina in Ibn 'Idhārī's text is willing to destroy both urban and agricultural infrastructure to make North Africa a less appealing prize for the Muslim conquerors, but it is clear that her efforts in this regard also hurt her own people. Indeed, it prompts two groups, the Christians and the Afāriqa, to emigrate to al-Andalus—though it is not clear how we should understand the relationship between the Rūm, the Berbers, and these populations.

The queen's role as a caring and protective mother is also subverted and pushed to extremes in Ibn ʻIdhārī's telling. Her praise of Khālid's beauty before she asks him to be her foster son suggests that her affection for him may be more than maternal. And while relationships established through nursing were recognized in medieval Muslim societies, the scene in which the Kāhina prompts Khālid and her two adult sons to feed from her breast is presented as a perversion of this practice and an infantilization of adult men. Similarly, her application of barley flour and oil to Khālid is likely intended to mimic the ancient practice, attested in medieval Andalusi medical texts, of anointing babies with a variety of substances, including salt, oil, and barley flour.[94] That the Kāhina has sons from fathers of different ethnic backgrounds, without any mention of a husband, may also represent an implied critique of her sexual morality. Still, it remains through her actions and prophecies that her sons and the two populations they represent—Greek and Berber—submit to the Arabs and Islam.

As both Kanza and the Kāhina illustrate, therefore, Berber women could either contribute to or challenge the efforts of Muslim conquerors from the Middle East. Their ethnocultural identities and their gender were critical factors in the negotiation of power, conquest, and rule, and their resistance to or cooperation with these efforts became central to narratives of the establishment of new governments and dynasties. Both Kanza and the Kāhina are shown to exercise power and influence the political decisions of the men around them. And in the same way that Ibn ʻIdhārī says Zaynab tells Yūsuf he will

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[94] Miquel Forcada, "Salting Babies. Innovation and Tradition in Premodern Procedures for Neonatal Care," *Suhayl* 11 (2012): 155–78.

rule the entire Maghrib, the people of Qayrawan tell Ḥassān that killing the Kāhina will earn him the allegiance of the entire Maghrib. Whether through death or assimilation, Muslim conquerors had to reckon with the real power of local populations, including women, in order to be successful. This recognition survives in the persistence of these influential Berber women even in triumphalist conquest narratives.

In addition to Kanza, and not long after the passages devoted to Zaynab, Ibn Abī Zar‘ tells of another royal wife who advises her husband—in this case, a Christian. He says that before the 1108 battle of Uclés between the Almoravid army and the forces of Alfonso VI of Castile-León, the king's wife convinces him to send their son, Sancho, in his place. When Sancho approaches with a great number of troops, the emir's son and the governor of Granada, Tamīm, wants to flee. He is advised against this by two of his commanders, Muḥammad ibn Fāṭima and Muḥammad ibn ‘Ā'isha. The Almoravids ultimately emerge victorious and Sancho is killed. The combined blow of his son's death and the military defeat sicken Alfonso, who dies twenty days later.[95] Several of these details are not attested or are contradicted in contemporary Christian chronicles, including the role of Alfonso's wife. Nor does Ibn ‘Idhārī include this element of the anecdote, although he specifies that Sancho's mother is a convert to Christianity, the famous Zaida.[96]

Though Alfonso's wife takes the same action as Zaynab—advising her husband—her advice is bad and leads to the death of her son and husband alike. Because Ibn Abī

[95] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 202; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 310-311.
[96] Ibn ‘Idhārī, *Bayān* IV, ed. ‘Abbās, 50; Ibn ‘Idhārī, *Nuevos fragmentos*, trans. Huici Miranda, 117.

Zar‘ is so vocal in his praise of Zaynab's advice to Yūsuf, and of the emir for taking it, we can see that the issue is not one of a woman overstepping her place, or of a powerful man accepting advice from his wife. It is much more likely that Ibn Abī Zar‘ saw Alfonso and his wife's Christianity as the determining factor in their failure—especially since, though he does not state it explicitly, Zaida converted from Islam to Christianity. Indeed, the unproblematic nature of women's prominence is further underlined by the appearance of two Almoravid military commanders whose names include those of their mothers, literally "Muḥammad son of Fātima" and "Muḥammad son of ‘Ā'isha," rather than the more traditional inclusion of their father's names. As the examples of Ḥabāb, Zaynab, and Alfonso's wife show, Ibn Abī Zar‘ depicts women from diverse backgrounds participating in the exercise of power in both Muslim and Christian societies, with a variety of results. His judgement of them varies just as widely.

Christian chronicles from Iberia also commonly depicted women acting as advisors to ruling men in their households. In early Castile-León, the king's daughters and sisters generally remained unmarried, serving instead as consecrated virgins and administering vast territories and wealth as part of their inheritance, as Lucy Pick discusses in a recent study.[97] This role is evident in contemporary chronicles like the anonymous twelfth-century *Historia Silense*. Though the text fails to provide a full description of the reign of Alfonso VI, its intended subject, the chronicler offers a preview of some of the events of his life and reign before delving more deeply into his ancestral background. Alfonso's father, Ferdinand I of León, initially divides his

[97] Pick, *Her Father's Daughter*.

kingdom evenly among his five children: Sancho (the eldest son), Alfonso, García, Urraca, and Elvira. Despite this, the brothers fight grievously over their inheritances. Sancho besieges Zamora, which resists with Alfonso's aid—and which, though the chronicler does not mention it, is held by Urraca—and Sancho is killed.[98] When Alfonso returns to Zamora, he summons Urraca and "other very illustrious men" for "a secret discussion."[99] Alfonso takes the advice offered by his sister during the course of this meeting and proceeds to capture and imprison his brother García. Though the chronicler assures us that García is well treated, he dies of a fever while still imprisoned. Both Urraca and Elvira attend the funeral, and Alfonso is "strengthened in his father's kingdom."[100]

Urraca is involved, whether explicitly or implicitly, in the elimination of their two other brothers and Alfonso's most immediate rivals. Neither her advice nor Alfonso's actions against his brothers are criticized by the *Silense* chronicler, who excuses the fraternal conflict as Spanish custom and is ultimately adoring of Alfonso. Following the model of Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne*, the *Silense* says that Alfonso, Urraca, and their siblings were all educated by their father in the liberal disciplines which he himself had studied. Once they reached a certain age, their education varied by gender, and seems to have focused more on skills outside of reading and writing, but nonetheless explicitly continued for sons and daughters alike. The chronicler praises Urraca specifically, calling

[98] Justo Pérez de Urbel and Atilano González Ruiz-Zorrilla, eds., *Historia Silense* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1959), 119-121.
[99] Ibid., 122.
[100] Ibid., 125.

her “a girl of the most noble appearance and habits.”[101] The text accounts for the close relationship between Alfonso and Urraca by saying that from childhood she had loved him more than her other brothers, taking the place of a mother.[102] The chronicler praises her counsel and integrity, noting that she eschews marriage in favor of a spiritual marriage to Christ, even though she is never dedicated to a monastic life.[103] Since Urraca is described as well educated, of good counsel and intention, and loving her brother as both a mother and a sister, it is unsurprising that Alfonso seeks out, trusts, and accepts her advice. Much of this portrayal is preserved in the more lengthy account of the thirteenth-century *Historia Gothica* of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada.

Though the details vary, Urraca and Zaynab are presented in comparably positive ways, providing sound guidance on political and military affairs to men in their families, and helping them to secure their rule. Far from being disruptive or corrupting, their presence and advice is actively sought out by their brothers and husbands. Interestingly, Urraca and Alfonso’s relationship also makes an appearance in Ibn ‘Idhārī’s *Bayān al-mughrib*, who offers a less generous interpretation of their closeness than the *Silense*. The Maghribi chronicler too says that Urraca prefers Alfonso to Sancho, claiming that she enlists one of Sancho’s men to assassinate him. Ibn ‘Idhārī then reports that Alfonso and Urraca have an incestuous relationship, “bringing together Christianity and paganism (*majūsiyya*),” for which priests pardon Alfonso.[104] Similar claims about Urraca’s

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[101] Ibid., 184.
[102] For more on Alfonso VI’s relationship with Urraca and other women, see Georges Martin, *Mujeres y poderes en la España medieval: cinco estudios* (Alcalá de Henares: Centro de Estudios Cervantinos, 2011), 45-68.
[103] Ibid., 122-123.
[104] Ibn ‘Idhārī, *al-Bayān*, ed. ‘Abbās, 51; Ibn ‘Idhārī, *Nuevos fragmentos*, trans. Huici Miranda, 120-121.

involvement in Sancho's death, and even about the royal siblings' incestuous relationship, appear in some Christian sources.[105] The *Bayān* seems aware of this sensationalized version of events, which twists Urraca and Alfonso's mutual affection into something sinful and obscene and attributes her willingness to aid him against their other brothers to unnatural lust.

Though such accusations are not a direct comment on Urraca's gender, they may stem in part from a sense that sisters were not suited to act as advisors in the same way as wives. Though royal sisters were certainly acknowledged as capable and suitable advisors in twelfth-century Iberian texts, by the late thirteenth century partnerships between royal mothers and sons, or husbands and wives, were much more common. This may explain the appearance of the incest accusation in the late thirteenth-century work of Fray Juan Gil de Zamora. Nor are sisters typically portrayed as advisors in Maghribi and Andalusi sources from the period. The wide knowledge of Urraca and Alfonso's close partnership and ruthless tactics made them an easy target, and one that Muslim chroniclers like Ibn 'Idhārī would have been eager to hit, given the king's success in conquering Muslim territory in Iberia. This animosity perhaps accounts for the otherwise fairly rare occurrence of a chronicler criticizing a woman's sexual behavior and naming a historical woman of another religion.

In the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, the close relationship between the ruler, his sister, and his wife feature prominently and positively, as with the depiction of

[105] Evariste Lévi-Provençal and Ramón Menéndez Pidal, "Alfonso VI y su hermana la infanta Urraca," *al-Andalus* 13, no. 1 (1948): 157–66.

Zaynab in the *Rawḍ* and the *Bayān*, and of Urraca in the *Silense*.[106] Conversely, the relationship between the king and his mother—another Alfonso and another Urraca—are downplayed. The anonymous Latin text from the mid-twelfth century centers on the reign of Alfonso VII. The king inherited the throne from his mother Urraca, who ruled in her own right for years after the death of her father, Alfonso VI.[107] Though the chronicler never directly criticizes her, various mentions of her reign are accompanied by notices of how she lost territory to Aragonese and Muslims, and we are told that Urraca's son restored happiness that had not existed since his grandfather's time.[108] Urraca was not necessarily opposed to her son's interests, but she ruled in her own right before he inherited the throne, unlike Ḥabāb and Ṭarūb. The mother-son dynamic thus takes on a different tone in this chronicle. As Janna Bianchini points out, this was likewise the case with Berenguela of Castile and her son Fernando III in the thirteenth century, a situation which affected how multiple chroniclers writing under Berenguela and Fernando narrated Urraca's reign.[109] It is perhaps to avoid too close an examination of the mother-son

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[106] For an analysis of the prevalence of the women in this text, see Georges Martin, "Valoración de la mujer en la Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris," *e-Spania* 15 (2013), https://doi.org/10.4000/e-spania.22311.
[107] On Urraca, see Martin, *Queen as King*; Martin, "The Art of a Reigning Queen"; Jitske Jasperse, "Manly Minds in Female Bodies: Three Women and Their Power through Coins and Seals," *Arenal: Revista de historia de las mujeres* 25, no. 2 (2018): 296–321.
[108] Emma Falque, Juan Gil, and Antonio Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII Pars I*, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Medievalis LXXI (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990), 153, 162, 183, 201; Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid: Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 166, 175, 194, 209.
[109] Bianchini, "A Mirror for a Queen?". On Berenguela see Bianchini, *The Queen's Hand*; Shadis, *Berenguela of Castile*; Georges Martin, "Régner sans régner: Bérengère de Castille (1214-1246) au miroir de l'historiographie de son temps," *e-Spania* 1 (2012), https://doi.org/10.4000/e-spania.326; Georges Martin, "Negociación y diplomacia en la vida de Berenguela de Castilla (1214-1246). Cuestionamiento genérico," *e-Spania*, no. 4 (2007), https://doi.org/10.4000/e-spania.21609; Miriam Shadis, "Women and Las Navas de Tolosa," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 4, no. 1 (2012): 71–76; Anaïs Waag, "Rethinking Battle Commemoration: Female Letters and the Myth of the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212)," *Journal of Medieval History* 45, no. 4 (2019): 457–80.

relationship that the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* opens with the death of Urraca and the accession of Alfonso.

His wife Berenguela and his sister Sancha, on the other hand, are mentioned often and uniformly praised. The king's marriage to Berenguela occurs fairly early in the chronicle, and we are told that she is "a wholly beautiful and exceedingly decorous young girl, a lover of chastity and truth and all those who fear God." She bears Alfonso sons, and he seeks her advice along with that of his sister the infanta Sancha "in everything," and all of their counsel benefits him.[110] Berenguela and Sancha are generous patrons of religious institutions who make many charitable contributions, and Sancha is charged with raising one of her brother's natural daughters, Urraca. When a rebellious count finally submits to the king and asks for a castle in return, Alfonso summons the infanta, the queen, and "other counselors who were prudent in such affairs." On their advice, he grants the castle to the count, "so that he would not rebel again, as he had rebelled under the queen Lady Urraca."[111]

Unlike Zaynab in the *Bayān* and the *Rawḍ*, Sancha and Berenguela's individual advice is not specified, but is given as part of a larger group among whom they are the only ones named. Their presence among his advisors is distinguished but in no way disruptive, and the outcome of their advice is pointedly contrasted with a decision made by Alfonso's mother, perhaps suggesting that one role for women was appropriate while the other was less so. Though the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* does not criticize

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[110] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 155.
[111] Ibid., 171.

Urraca explicitly based on her gender, its portrayal of her as weak and fearful in the face of male rivals is telling. Ultimately, while the chronicle portrays the active roles of Alfonso's wife and sister in various spheres, it seems most comfortable narrating royal women who depend on men for their power, rather than detailing the process by which Alfonso received his power and right to rule directly from his mother, who ruled herself.

The Latin chronicle also makes a brief mention of Muslim women being included in high-level discussions. When the Muslim leader of Rueda, known as Zafadola (a Latinization of Sayf al-Dawla), hears of how Alfonso was betrayed by the king of Aragón, he calls "his sons and wives and alguaziles [viziers] and alcaides [commanders]."[112] Zafadola asks them if they know of the deeds Alfonso of León has performed against the rebellious king of Aragón, to which they reply in the affirmative. He then asks what they should do in the face of the Almoravid conquests, and decides to submit to Alfonso in exchange for his aid against the Almoravids. The assembled nobles accept and praise this suggestion, and Zafadola becomes a faithful ally and cherished friend of Alfonso. Though the chronicler does not specify whether Zafadola's wives in particular offer advice, his household and nobles are acknowledged as key parts of a kind of advisory body with which he makes major decisions. In this way, Zafadola is presented as a parallel to Alfonso himself, albeit a subordinate one. This depiction also mirrors what we see about the importance of royal women in political discussions in Muslim chronicles. Zaida's advice to her husband in the *Rawḍ* and the presence of Zafadola's wives among his counselors in the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* suggests

[112] Ibid., 162.

that, although it was not often mentioned, Muslims and Christians were aware that women of both religions played a role in political decision making. Their assessment of this participation, for women of either religion, was contingent on a variety of other factors.

The Leonese chronicle also emphasizes a shared understanding of gender roles between Muslims and Christians in an episode involving Berenguela, who has by that point assumed the title of empress. While Alfonso is away at Oreja, a coalition of Almoravids and Andalusis approach Toledo, where Berenguela is in residence, and attack watchtowers and destroy orchards and vineyards. The empress sends messengers to the Almoravid leader, reminding them that it is dishonorable to attack a woman and telling them to go to Alfonso at Oreja. The Muslim troops then see Berenguela, magnificently dressed, enthroned atop a high tower, and surrounded by "virtuous" women singing and playing music. In the face of such a vision, they withdraw in shame.[113] Throughout the chronicle, Berenguela and Sancha's presence takes on an almost ceremonial quality, whether at the council where Alfonso is proclaimed emperor or at his daughter Urraca's wedding to a king.[114] This episode highlights that ceremonial and advisory roles for women were not incompatible, with the decorative and even domestic aspects of this scene converted into trappings of the empress' power that are easily legible to Muslims, as are the gender roles that she calls upon them to respect. Berenguela's actions in this episode can be compared to those of Tāmāgūnt in al-Baydhaq's text and Yūsuf al-Fihrī's

[113] Ibid., 220.
[114] Ibid., 182, 191-193.

wife and daughters in Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's *History*, when they call upon powerful men to treat them as they deserve.

Women, war, and violence

Along with making political decisions, women like Berenguela are also visible in chroniclers' depiction of war and violence, both as actors and instigators and as victims and spoils. Though Berenguela successfully appeals to the honor of her Muslim attackers, most chronicles, including the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, speak with ease and relish about the capture of women of other religions in war, even as they mourn and censure the capture of women of their own religion.[115] Indeed, groups of unnamed, captive women constitute the most routine and frequent mention of women in both Muslim and Christian chroniclers from either side of the Strait. They are often listed as prizes of war, often along with children, men, livestock, orchards. The 1064 siege of Barbastro, for instance, is most often remembered for claims that Duke William VIII of Aquitaine captured great numbers of enslaved girls, women, and boys, along with other spoils.

The thirteenth-century *Kitāb al-mu'jib* of 'Abd al-Wāḥid provides stark images in celebration of the number of Christian women captured by Muslims, juxtaposed with laments about the amount of Muslim women taken by Christians. In his account of the military feats of the famed tenth-century chamberlain al-Manṣūr, known to Christians as

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[115] A contradiction noted in Maribel Fierro, "Violence against Women: Andalusi Sources," in *Violence in Islamic Thought from the Qur'ān to the Mongols*, ed. Robert Gleave and István Kristó Nagy (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 170-172.

Almanzor, ʻAbd al-Wāḥid says that "al-Andalus was filled with spoils and captives from the girls of the Rūm, and their children and their women." There were so many Christian girls on the market that their price was driven down, and Muslim families were forced to furnish their daughters lavishly with clothes, ornaments, and houses, "because otherwise no one would have married a free woman." Even the daughter of a Christian nobleman in Córdoba, of remarkable beauty, was valued at a shockingly low price.[116] While clearly reveling in the scale of the capture of Christian women and girls in this instance, the chronicler mourns a similarly massive capture of Muslim women by Alfonso VIII. In the aftermath of his decisive victory against the Almohads at Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, ʻAbd al-Wāḥid says the king went to Úbeda, where a number of Muslims had fled. Alfonso then sacked the city, capturing enough "women and youths to fill all the lands of the Rūm, which was more of a blow to the Muslims than the defeat."[117]

It was overwhelmingly the case that a woman's gender, combined with her status as a religious other, made her more likely to be mistreated and sold as a spoil of war, not less.[118] In this sense, Berenguela is very much exceptional. In another historical tradition that passed from Muslim to Christian chronicles surrounding the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia, women ascend to the walls of Murcia in order to protect it from being sacked by Muslim troops, but in this case their gender is strategically concealed.

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[116] ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 26; ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, *Kitāb al-Muʻŷib*, trans. Huici Miranda, 30.
[117] ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 237; ʻAbd al-Wāḥid, *Kitāb al-Muʻŷib*, trans. Huici Miranda, 268.
[118] For the early Almohads, even Muslim women were considered fair game as captives if their communities had not submitted to the Almohad doctrine: Empey, "The Mothers of the Caliph's Sons." This represented part of a broader sense on the part of the Almohads that those who had not submitted to them were not, in fact, Muslims: Amira K. Bennison, "Almohad *Tawḥīd* and its Implications for Religious Difference," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 2 (2010): 195–216.

The episode is an important one in narratives of the Islamic conquests, which were fairly piecemeal, taking place over several years and under shifting leadership. Cities were incorporated into the emerging polity of al-Andalus in a variety of ways, and those conquered by force were subjected to much harsher terms than cities which were able to negotiate their own terms of surrender. Murcia is a rather famous example of the latter, because the peace terms have been preserved as what is often referred to as the treaty of Tudmīr, an Arabization of name of the local Christian leader, Theodemir.[119]

Like so many aspects of the conquest narratives, the treaty of Tudmīr is mentioned briefly in the *Chronicle of 754*—though this section is believed to be a later interpolation—and was eventually the subject of more fanciful elaboration in Muslim and eventually Christian chronicles. The Latin chronicler praises Theodemir, saying that the caliph "found him to be more prudent than the rest" and treated him honorably, and that he also made a pact with the Andalusi governor ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz. The text mentions that Theodemir "returned to Spain rejoicing," suggesting that, like the sons of Witiza in Ibn al-Qūṭiyya's account, he travels perhaps as far as the caliphal court to secure the terms of his peace.[120] Later Arabic accounts, likely seeking to explain how Theodemir reached such a favorable settlement, begin to include a vivid tale of how Theodemir tricks the Muslim conquerors into agreeing to his terms instead of capturing the city by force.

The *Akhbār majmūʻa* says that when Theodemir initially clashes with Muslim troops headed for his city, which at that time is called Orihuela, he puts up a weak fight.

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[119] Nicola Clarke, *The Muslim Conquest of Iberia: Medieval Arabic Narratives* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 20-21.

[120] López Pereira, ed. and trans., *Crónica Mozárabe de 754*, 114-155; Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 151.

The remains of his army are forced to retreat to Orihuela, where there are "neither reserves nor weapons."[121] But because Theodemir is "experienced and very intelligent," he orders the women to cut their hair, giving them canes and stationing them atop the city walls along with what remains of his men to achieve "the appearance of an army."[122] He is then able to leave the city, pretending to be a messenger, and negotiate a peace in which he is able to retain his wealth and his people are not to be subjected to further violence. While this is not a complete reversal of gender roles and appearances, it is noteworthy that Theodemir's scheme involves making the women seem more masculine and threatening, while he himself works to conceal his identity and status. When he reveals his identity to the Muslims and they enter the city only to realize that no one is truly armed, they regret having made such concessions but hold to their word. As in the tale of Berenguela defending Toledo, the honor of the would-be besiegers is at stake, but in this case it is their agreement with Theodemir that dictates their behavior, rather than the idea that it would be shameful to attack vulnerable women. The fourteenth-century *Bayān al-mughrib* of Ibn ʻIdhārī gives largely the same account.[123]

The tale of Theodemir and the women of Murcia also made its way into the Latin and Castilian chronicle tradition in Iberia. The twelfth-century *Chronicle of Pseudo-Isidore*, which draws on a variety of Arabic sources, likewise says that when Theodemir reached Murcia after the massacre of his troops, he cut the hair of the women he found there and placed them on the walls of the city, armed and in men's clothing. In this

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[121] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʻa*, 22; James, trans., *A History of Early al-*Andalus, 53.
[122] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʻa*, 22.
[123] Ibn ʻIdhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, ed. Lévi-Provençal and Colin, vol. 2, 11.

account, Theodemir does not disguise himself to negotiate for peace and he deals directly with Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād, but the outcome is the same.[124] The episode comes very near the end of the chronicle—afterwards, Ṭāriq captures Toledo and takes Julian's advice to remain there in peace, sending his soldiers out to conquer the remaining territory on his behalf. The preceding episode tells of how Witiza's sons make a deal to support Ṭāriq in exchange for their privileges, including the retention of 3,700 villas, close to the 3,000 estates cited by Ibn al-Qūṭiyya.[125] Pseudo-Isidore offers a significantly abbreviated narrative of the Islamic conquests in Iberia, but at each stage emphasizes how various Iberians—including Julian, Witiza's sons, and Theodemir—negotiate with Ṭāriq to preserve their own interests, portraying the conquest as in many ways collaborative.

The episode with Theodemir and the women of Murcia in the thirteenth-century *Historia Gothica* of Jiménez de Rada closely resembles the narrative provided in the *Akhbār* and the *Bayān*. The archbishop adds that the canes given to the women are intended to look like lances from a distance. Theodemir, though not named, disguises himself to negotiate the peace, and in this case no mention is made of his own wealth. And, as in the Arabic accounts, the Muslims keep their word.[126] The Castilian *Estoria de España* borrows the passage from Jiménez de Rada largely without alteration.[127] Regardless of their religious and linguistic backgrounds, therefore, all chroniclers who relate this episode highlight Theodemir's intelligence and resourcefulness in a dire

[124] Fernando González Muñoz, ed. and trans., *La Chronica Gothorum Pseudo-Isidoriana (ms. Paris BN 6113)* (A Coruña: Toxosoutos, 2000), 188-189.
[125] Ibid., 186-187.
[126] Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, ed. Fernández Valverde, 111.
[127] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), VPE: 570, 3-9 <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/27/2021].

situation, and the women are really only included to facilitate this impression. Their physical and emotional contributions to securing peace, in cutting their hair and occupying a vulnerable and exposed position, function only to make the tale more shocking and memorable. The women's reactions to Theodemir's orders are not recorded, and they are not given space in the narrative to either refuse or consent—they might as well be scarecrows atop the city walls.

Although neither Theodemir nor his chroniclers appear to have considered the potential of the women of Murcia to actually participate in military action, some chronicles do narrate a military role for women. While this is quite rare in Christian Iberian histories, it is more common in Muslim chronicles, which tend to portray Muslim women, often from Berber communities, engaging in military action. As with women exercising political power, chroniclers' assessments of such actions vary depending on the context.

The *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, for instance, says that in 1279 Muslim men and women in Algeciras take part in looting, killing, and capturing Christian troops that have been encamped outside the city for months. Algeciras is initially under the control of the Marinid emir Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn 'Abd al-Haqq, but upon his return to the Maghrib Alfonso X of Castile besieges and blockades the city, breaking a negotiated peace. Algeciras is so completely blocked off that its starving residents, who fear that their children will be forced to convert should Alfonso succeed, are only able to communicate

by sending messenger pigeons to Gibraltar.[128] The emir gathers forces to lift the siege, and so many citizens of Ceuta volunteer to help that the only people who remain in the city are “the women, the ill, the aged who lacked strength, and the boys who had not reached puberty.”[129] An epic naval battle ensues and the Christians end up fleeing, many jumping into the sea. Marinid forces enter Algeciras, and the Christians camped outside abandon their supplies and attempt to flee, but “the people of Algeciras, men and women…spread among their camps, wandering through their tents, killing and plundering.”[130]

In this case, the participation of women in fighting appears entirely spontaneous. These are not warrior women, but merely residents of a city pushed to the edge of hunger and fear who take the opportunity to exact revenge on their besiegers. Though the *Rawḍ* specifies that the women of Ceuta remain behind, never considered as having the potential to take part in formal combat, the killing spree of the women of Algeciras reflects how dire the situation had become, and how fully the citizens rejected and feared Christian rule. They are not criticized for this action, but it adds to the utter and humiliating defeat suffered by Alfonso’s forces, who could not even succeed in fleeing without being bested by untrained civilians, including women. Unlike the tale of the women of Murcia, this episode in the *Rawḍ* acknowledges that women, like men, could be moved to violence in defense of their city.

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[128] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 432; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 622.
[129] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 433; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 623.
[130] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 436; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 628.

Individual women also take part in military action in Muslim chronicles. They are often either North African or of North African descent. This trend may reflect real cultural differences or perhaps merely the perception that Berber women transgressed gender norms—likely both.[131] The Kāhina, for example, is portrayed as commanding her troops in battle in the same way as her opponents, who are men. Ibn ʻAbd al-Ḥakam and Ibn ʻIdhārī both use active verbs to describe her conquest and rule of Ifrīqiya and her defeat of Ḥassān's army, making no mention of other commanders. But whereas the Kāhina was not Muslim, other women warriors in the Arabic chronicle tradition were. Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, for instance, makes a brief mention of a woman named Jamla (often called Jamīla in other texts) who, along with her brother Maḥmūd, rebels against the emir ʻAbd al-Raḥmān II ibn al-Ḥakam. Their uprising constitutes part of a broader ethnic conflict in al-Andalus between various Berber groups and *muwallad*s, whose families had converted to Islam after the eighth-century conquests. Ibn al-Qūṭiyya says that at some point the siblings come into conflict with one another, with Jamla calling for submission and Maḥmūd for further division and rebellion. God intervenes with Maḥmūd's death.[132]

This passage is quite brief and lacks many details, so it is difficult to determine what Ibn al-Qūṭiyya may have thought about the relationship between Jamla's gender and her part in the rebellion. He offers no explicit words of condemnation or praise of her actions, but he clearly does not support the rebellion itself and it is possible that he mentions Jamla's role to further underline that the uprising was an inversion of the

[131] De Felipe, "Doblemente invisibles," 219-220.
[132] Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Tārīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, ed. al-Abyārī, 83; Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Early Islamic Spain*, trans. James, 102.

natural order. It is also possible that her Berber background is at play. That she wishes to submit when her brother does not might also be gendered, but I am inclined to think not, since there are plenty of examples of women encouraging men to war in the chronicle tradition. Regardless, Ibn al-Qūṭiyya portrays Jamla as an individual whose opinions and actions, right or wrong, are not determined by the men around her. Later accounts are more expansive, and in the eleventh century Ibn Ḥazm praises Jamla's courage and skill at horsemanship and combat. Ibn Ḥayyān's account of Jamla's participation in the uprising resembles the tale of Theodemir and the women of Murcia. He says that to deceive their enemies into believing their forces greater than they were, Maḥmūd orders women to dress as men and arm themselves, and Jamla heads their mounted "squadron."[133] Here too, women as a whole are not seen as useful in armed combat, but Jamla is represented both as an individual and an exception to this.

It is also worth noting that while Maḥmūd appears in two ninth-century Asturian histories, the *Chronicle of Albelda* and the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, neither mentions Jamla, though one imagines the anonymous authors were aware of her as well.[134] According to Ibn Ḥayyān, after her brother's death Jamla was married to a Christian noble, and their son eventually became the bishop of Santiago of Compostela.[135] It is perhaps because of this intermarriage that the Asturian chronicles remain silent about Jamla and her participation in rebellion and military actions.

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[133] Marín, *Mujeres*, 703; Viguera Molíns, "Una andalusí en Galicia."
[134] Ann Christys, "Crossing the Frontier of Ninth-Century Hispania," in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 40-43.
[135] De Felipe, "Doblemente invisibles," 220.

Another Berber woman who is actively praised for her participation in combat is Fānnū bint ʻUmar ibn Yīntān. The twelfth-century Almohad chronicler al-Baydhaq, who aside from Tāmāgūnt tends to speak of Almoravid women mostly as captives whose immoral and immodest behavior warrants their enslavement, has no ill words for Fānnū's conduct or her character. He says that during their attack on the Almoravid capital of Marrakesh in 1147, the Almohads cannot take the fortress (*qaṣr*) until the death of Fānnū, who "had been fighting the Almohads that day, in the guise of a man." Al-Baydhaq adds that the Almohads "were amazed by her combat and the intense courage God had given her—and she was a virgin."[136] Her association with men and her taking up arms does not, therefore, render her immoral or dishonorable in the eyes of God or the Almohads.

It is not until her death that the Almohads are able to enter the fortress and become aware that she is a woman. Fānnū is not censured in any way, and al-Baydhaq likely specifies that the Almohads are unaware of her gender until her death in order to exculpate them of potential charges of mistreating a woman. The confusion around her gender based on her appearance should also, however, be read in the context of an earlier episode involving the Almoravid emir ʻAlī ibn Yūsuf. When the Almohad founder and spiritual leader Ibn Tūmart encounters ʻAlī at a mosque in Marrakesh, he famously claims that he cannot identify the emir because he only sees "veiled slave girls" (*jawārī munaqqibāt*).[137] The emir is veiled according to Almoravid custom, of which Almohads were quite disparaging. Just as Ibn Tūmart cannot identify ʻAlī as a man or as a leader

[136] Lévi-Provençal, ed. and trans., *Documents inédits*, 103, 170.
[137] Ibid., 68, 108.

until he removes his veil, the Almohad forces cannot not identify Fānnū as a woman until her death. This can be understood as a critique of Almoravid men without being a critique of Fānnū herself—because Almoravid men dress as women, gender roles are reversed, so the fate of Marrakesh comes to rest on a warrior woman dressed as a man. And even though Fānnū acquits herself well, using her God-given skills to fight fiercely and bravely in defense of her people, she is not sufficiently aided in this by Almoravid men, so she ultimately fails.

Though this kind of direct participation in war and violence appears even less in Christian chronicles, there are hints that by the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century Christians were aware of the participation of North African women in warfare, whether as a trope, a historical reality, or both. A redacted version of the *Estoria de España* of Alfonso X, likely produced under his successor Sancho IV (d. 1295) or by the monks of Cardeña, mentions black African women who serve as archers in the late eleventh century.[138] Three hundred Muslim women (*moras*), who in some versions are further described as black, arrive in Iberia in the company of the Muslim ruler of Tunis to take part in a battle outside Valencia a few days after the death of its famous leader, the Cid, which is concealed by his companions.[139] Their commander is a black Muslim woman (*mora negra*) called "Nujeymath turquia," which the text explains means "star of the

[138] Alberto Montaner and Francisco Rico, eds., *Cantar de Mío Cid* (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2007), cccxvii-cccxxii; Diego Catalán, *El Cid en la historia y sus inventores* (Madrid: Fundación Ramón Menéndez Pidal, 2002), 255-276.
[139] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), E_2: 968, 2 (251v) <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/18/2021].

archers of Turkey."[140] The chronicle says the women shave their heads, leaving only a tuft of hair at the top, and that they are on pilgrimage seeking pardon (*vinien en Romeria et commo a perdon*).[141]

The king of Tunis orders them to pitch their tents closest to Valencia, so Nujeymath and her women are the first to be attacked by the Christians when they exit the city quietly before sunrise. One hundred of the women are killed before they manage to arm themselves and mount their horses. But because Nujeymath is "so astute and so masterful at Turkish archery that it was a marvel,"[142] she is the first to successfully mount her horse and inflicts "much damage" on the Cid's army with her remaining companions.[143] Nonetheless, "because women by nature fear death more than men," Nujeymath is the first to die, which causes the women under her command to flee among the tents. This apparently makes such a great racket that the rest of the army is mostly unable to arm themselves, and those who can flee towards the sea.[144]

In an article that is dated in a number of ways but nonetheless continues to be cited widely, L.P. Harvey attempts to find a grain of historicity in the tale, but is apparently only able to do so by dismissing the gender and racial identity of the black women, asking rhetorically "Who can seriously believe that a Muslim army ever

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[140] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), E_2: 969, 31 (252r-252v) <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/18/2021].
[141] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), E_2: 968, 3-4 (251v) <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/18/2021].
[142] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), E_2: 969, 30 (252r) <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/18/2021].
[143] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), E_2: 969, 32 (252v) <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/18/2021].
[144] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), E_2: 969, 33 (252v) <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/18/2021].

contained a regiment of women, however monstrous?"[145] He suggests that the chroniclers of this episode may have misinterpreted Nujeymath's name, and that what they believed was "turquia" was in fact from the Arabic word for Tuareg. Harvey further speculates that the archers were in fact Tuareg men and that Christian observers must have misinterpreted their gender and skin color because of their custom of wearing veils and dyeing their skin indigo. Elena Lourie's more lucid assessment points out a number of flaws in Harvey's refusal to accept that they could possibly have been black women. She also suggests that the source for the episode is likely Muslim, because of its emphasis on archery and the timidity of women.[146]

I am inclined to agree that the tale probably draws on Muslim sources, if not with the assertion that such sources would have invariably described women as timid. Andalusi and Maghribi authors provide glowing portrayals of various Muslim warrior women, who are praised for their bravery rather than criticized for their fearfulness. Whether the *Estoria* addition's assessment of Nujeymath and her company of women archers reflects a Muslim writer's opinion or is the interpretation of Christian chroniclers cannot be determined with any certainty. I suspect, however, that the praise of Nujeymath may owe more to the Arabic tradition and the attribution of her troops' timidity to their gender more to the Latin and Ibero-Romance tradition. The description of Nujeymath's skills resembles that of Jamla in Ibn Ḥazm and Fānnū in al-Baydhaq, and like Fānnū she succeeds in inflicting damage on the Christian forces before she is apparently overcome

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[145] L.P. Harvey, "Nugeymath Turquia: Primera Cronica General, Chapter 956," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 13, no. 2 (1968): 232–40.
[146] Elena Lourie, "Black Women Warriors in the Muslim Army Besieging Valencia and the Cid's Victory: A Problem of Interpretation," *Traditio* 55 (2000), 185-190.

by existential dread. Also like Fānnū, after Nujeymath's death her remaining companions, regardless of their gender, are incapable of mounting or maintaining any kind of defense.

But whereas Fānnū is not ultimately faulted for the outcome of the battle, Nujeymath is. The sentence about women's fearful nature feels somewhat out of place, coming as it does right after the description of the famed Nujeymath's marvelous skill and her initial success against the Cid's army. It is possible that it was added by a Christian chronicler after material drawn from Arabic sources in an attempt to downplay Nujeymath's accomplishments, acknowledging her skill but suggesting that it was useless in the face of her natural fearfulness. The details given before the praise of her skills are certainly of Christian origin, and they add to the sense that it may have been Christian compilers who were so scornful of women's emotional capacity to participate in combat. The *Estoria* addition lists the number and order of troops who exit Valencia the morning before the battle. The last group consists of six hundred cavalry to guard doña Jimena, the Cid's widow.[147] The difference between Nujeymath and Jimena is clear—whereas the Christian troops protect their women, keeping them at the back, the ruler of Tunis forces Nujeymath and her company to camp closest to Valencia, which results in their death and the defeat of the army as a whole. Here, though, the criticism is not born by Nujeymath and her archers alone, but by the Muslim leader as well. Nujeymath can also, in a sense, be understood as a foil for the Cid in this passage, in a way that similarly casts a negative

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[147] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), E_2: 969, 25 (252r) <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/18/2021].

light on her companions, men and women alike. The Cid's death is a devastating blow, but his companions nonetheless manage to keep their wits about them and do what needs to be done to defeat the Muslim troops camped outside Valencia. Neither the black women archers nor the Muslim forces more generally, however, are able to recover from Nujeymath's death.

Though Harvey tries to explain it away, the blackness of Nujeymath and her women is significant for the chroniclers and compilers of this passage. It is contrasted with the description of the Cid's army, "sixty thousand horsemen, all whiter than snow, led by one whiter than all the rest." This figure is clearly understood to be the apostle Saint James, or Santiago, often associated with battles against Muslims.[148] María Jesús Viguera Molíns notes this use of color imagery and suggests that the description of the black women's hairstyles was likewise intended to highlight their strangeness.[149] The negative associations of Nujeymath's race could originate in either Muslim sources or the *Estoria*'s Christian redactors, since historians from both religious traditions proved willing to dehumanize people based on their skin color at various points—but the juxtaposition of the image of the black Nujeymath with Santiago and the blindingly white army is clearly of Christian origins.

It was also possible for black women in Muslim chronicles to be associated with violence in positive ways that upheld the rule of righteous Muslim men. Both the *Fatḥ al-Andalus* and the *Akhbār majmūʻa*, for example, include an anecdote in which an enslaved

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[148] Aengus Ward, ed., Estoria de Espanna Digital v.1.1 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2020), E_2: 969, 37-38 (252v) <estoria.bham.ac.uk/edition> [02/18/2021].
[149] Viguera Molíns, "A Borrowed Space," 172-173; Viguera Molíns, "Reflejos cronísticos," 840.

black woman aids the Andalusi emir ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I in killing a rebel. The *Akhbār* says that when ʿAbd al-Raḥmān censures the rebel in a private meeting, the rebel threatens him, so the emir calls for "a black slave woman (*jāriya*) from Madina, who was the guardian (*qayyima*) who organized the care of the slave women for him, and was in charge of elevating them to his standards of courtliness (*adab*) and approval."[150] The *qayyima* brings the emir a dagger, and when the rebel begins to shake and raises a hand towards him, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān stabs him in the throat, at which point his eunuchs (*fityān*) finish the rebel off. The *Fatḥ*'s account is quite similar, if somewhat more brief. It says that "a black slave girl (*ama*) aided [the emir] in his endeavor, and she was the *qayyima* of his slave women (*jawārīhi*), and she was bold (*shahma*)."[151]

The emir experiences no negative repercussions for murdering the rebel, which is portrayed as justified, nor are the *qayyima*'s conduct or the character criticized. Though she is unnamed, her title is indicative of her high rank within the emir's household. The *Akhbār*'s description of her ensuring that the enslaved women meet ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's standards for *adab*, a word which could refer to both courtly manners as well as the literary contents of a courtly education, may even suggest that she was charged with educating them, most likely in poetry. Her association with the holy city of Madina would also have had positive connotations for a Muslim audience. And *shahma*, the word the *Fatḥ* uses to describe the *qayyima*, can mean "astute," "noble," and "energetic," as

[150] Al-Abyārī, ed., *Akhbār majmūʿa*, 97; James, trans., *A History of Early al-*Andalus, 104.
[151] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 101; Penelas, trans., *La conquista*, 86.

well as bold—though the Spanish translator has chosen to render it as *robusta*, a word which has more to do with physical vigor than personality.

In the *Akhbār* ʻAbd al-Raḥmān delivers the critical blow, knocking the rebel down, but members of his household are instrumental in the events immediately preceding and following. The *qayyima* brings a dagger when he calls, though it is not stated that he requested a weapon specifically, and it seems that she is able to intuit what is needed. The eunuchs then administer the death blow, again pointing to ways the harem could work as a unit to support a ruling man rather than undermining him with "intrigues." Neither the *qayyima*'s gender, race, or enslaved status are portrayed negatively in this episode, and she is instead described as essential to the emir's household and the defense of his person. For her to participate in violence in this context is not considered remotely inappropriate. In this sense, though she does not take part in combat, her depiction shares more in common with that of Jamla in Ibn Ḥazm and Fānnū in al-Baydhaq than with Nujeymath in the *Estoria* addition, again suggesting more of a willingness on the part of Muslim chroniclers to positively associate women with violence.

Even if similar depictions of Christian women engaging in war and violence are scarce in Latin and Ibero-Romance chronicles, they nonetheless play a key role in both the lead up to and aftermath of military endeavors, encouraging men to take action and tending to the dead. These roles too have a clear influence on the outcome of events and constitute one of the ways women are depicted as exercising power. In the thirteenth-century Catalán *Book of Deeds*, narrated by James I of Aragón, the king says the presence

of his wife and daughter—both named Yolanda—on the Valencian frontier simultaneously encourages his men and instills fear in Muslims. In planning his conquest of the Muslim city of Borriana, James declares that after the city is taken "we will have the queen our wife go there, so that the people understand that we are determined to stay there."[152] Following the disheartening death of a nobleman who played a key role in the effort to conquer Muslim Valencia, James worries that his men will flee, so he again invokes the physical presence of the queen as an indication of the seriousness of his intentions. In a speech to his men, the king swears not to leave the frontier until the conquest of Valencia has been completed, pledging to send for Yolanda and their daughter so that his troops can "appreciate the great determination we have to remain here and to conquer this kingdom, in the service of God."[153] These measures are successful in convincing his men to carry on with the conquest. According to James, another effect was that Zayyān, a Muslim ruler in Valencia, "knew that we had ordered our wife to come, and he was greatly afraid."[154]

Yolanda's presence in Valencia is so effective at assuring both his supporters and his enemies of James' commitment to the conquest that he grants her "some letters that would profit [her]." After her arrival in Borriana, he also makes a trip to "see the queen

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[152] James I, *Book of Deeds*, trans. Smith and Buffery, 140; "E, quan hajam presa Burriana, farem-hi venir la reyna, nostra muyler, per tal que entenen les gents que major con hi havem d'estar": James I, *Llibre dels fets*, ed. Bruguera, 130.

[153] James I, *Book of Deeds*, trans. Smith and Buffery, 207; 'Per ço que entenats que major volentat hinc havem d'aturar e de conquerre aquest regne, que sia a service de Déus': James I, *Llibre dels fets*, ed. Bruguera, 205.

[154] James I, *Book of Deeds*, trans. Smith and Buffery, 209; "E sabé Çahèn que nós aquesta cosa havíem tant en cor e sabé que nós havíem feyta venir nostra muyler e ague gran paor": James I, *Llibre dels fets*, ed. Bruguera, 208.

and to comfort her so that she would be very happy that she had come to the frontier."[155] Nor is this the end of the queen's movements—as the frontier gets pushed forward, Yolanda moves with it. When James takes the castle of Almenara, he summons Yolanda from Borriana immediately, not permitting her so much as a meal before departing, because it is essential to him that they enter the castle together and dine as a couple.[156] Though she does not take part in armed conflict directly, James clearly considers his queen a critical part of his efforts to cheer his men, cow Muslim leaders, and solidify his hold on new territory. And though Yolanda is very supportive, James does not take her participation for granted, making sure that she is well compensated and taking pains to ensure her happiness.

James depicts another woman even closer to the fray, as it were—the countess Aurembiaix, whom he aids in recovering the county of Urgell after it is usurped by one of her male cousins. The *Book of Deeds* says that Aurembiaix personally requests and receives the king's support. A resident of Urgell informs James that the countess should be present to request the surrender of various towns herself, "because of the *natural* relationship that they had with her."[157] When James relays this advice and tells Aurembiaix that she should mount the walls of Balaguer to speak to her people, she agrees immediately, asking only to be protected from arrows. She then reminds the residents of the city that they are under her lordship (*seynoria*) as their natural lady just as

[155] James I, *Book of Deeds*, trans. Smith and Buffery, 210; 'E nós anam a Burriana per veer la reyna e que la conortàssem, per ço con era venguda en la frontera, que fos ben alegra': James I, *Llibre dels fets*, ed. Bruguera, 209.
[156] James I, *Book of Deeds*, trans. Smith and Buffery, 213; James I, *Llibre dels fets*, ed. Bruguera, 212.
[157] "Per la naturalea que havien ab ela": James I, *Llibre dels fets*, ed. Bruguera, 50.

they had been the natural subjects of her father. Her appeal is successful, and she and the king go on to repeat this process in a number of other towns.

Aurembiaix is described on multiple occasions as a *dona natural*, or natural lady, a feminine version of the term used by James to refer to himself, and to express a status superior to that of other lords. The image of her atop the walls of Balaguer is in some ways reminiscent of Berenguela on the tower of Toledo, though her aim is different. As with Yolanda, Aurembiaix's physical presence is required to rally the troops and assure her people of her commitment to their effort, for her own benefit as much as the king's. The actions of both women also demonstrate that in the *Book of Deeds* fear is not a strictly gendered emotion, as it is in the Nujeymath addition to the *Estoria*. Though James' first wife, Eleanor, is criticized for cowardice when James requires her courage in order to maintain power, this is clearly not a reaction he associates with all women.

The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* too highlights the presence of women as a means to cement men's hold on newly conquered territory. A knight named Gaucelm asks the emperor for permission to rebuild the castle of Aceca, which was destroyed by Tāshufīn, the son of the Almoravid emir. Alfonso agrees, and Gaucelm goes to Aceca with "his sons, his wife, his sons-in-law and their wives, together with the commander of Toledo and a large army."[158] He brings in large numbers of knights and foot soldiers to defend the castle, which is rebuilt with high walls and strong towers and stocked with food. This is done so that "the people of Toledo could have a fortification against Oreja,

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[158] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 211; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 219.

where there were many Moabites [Almoravids] and Hagarenes [Andalusis], who waged a great war in the land of Toledo and throughout Extremadura." The residents of Aceca and Oreja are described as "frequently conquering and withdrawing in turns."[159] As with Yolanda, her eponymous daughter, and Aurembiaix, the point is explicitly to bring the women in Gaucelm's family to a place where violence is still possible and even likely, rather than to shield them from this violence. Unlike the Kāhina, Fānnū, Jamla, and the women of Algeciras, these Christian women are not on the battlefield, but they are on the frontier, suggesting that they were instrumental in attempts to transform temporary conquest to permanent occupation and rule.

Nor do women in the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* shy from the aftermath of battle. Following a great victory led by Muño Alfonso, who was appointed by the emperor as commander of Toledo, the heads of a number of Muslim leaders are removed and collected as trophies. They are then paraded on spears, first before the empress Berenguela and the archbishop of Toledo and then before the emperor Alfonso himself. This does not elicit any disgust or fear in Berenguela, but rather astonishment and joy. After the heads hang from the tower of Toledo for several days, however, the empress is "moved by a great compassion" and orders that they be taken down.[160] The heads are carefully scented and richly packed by Jewish and Muslim doctors before being sent to the dead leaders' wives in Córdoba. Berenguela is not averse to gruesome displays of

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[159] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 211-212.
[160] Ibid., 232.

violence and victory, but understands that there is a time for them, after which the dead should be cared for and sent to mourning loved ones.

A contrast to her merciful and honorable act appears a few passages later, when Muño Alfonso is ambushed with very little warning by Muslim forces and dies. The treatment of his body is reminiscent of the Philistines' treatment of Saul in 1 Samuel—the Muslim leader, Farax, cuts off the Toledan commander's head, along with his right arm and leg, and the heads of many of his Christian knights.[161] Muño Alfonso's arm and foot are attached to a high tower in Calatrava along with the heads of his men, and his head is sent on a kind of victory tour through Islamic lands, passing through Córdoba, Seville, and eventually across the Strait to the Almoravid emir. What remains of the men's bodies is buried by the residents of Toledo. Muño Alfonso's wife, her friends, and the widows of the other slain men visit the tomb many days in a row. Their lament, too, is modeled on David's for Saul and Jonathan:

> Just as a woman loves her only husband, so the city of Toledo loved you… Tell not the death of Muño Alfonso in Córdoba and in Seville, publish it not in the palace of King Tāshufīn, lest the daughters of the Moabites [Almoravids] rejoice, lest the daughters of the Hagarenes [Andalusis] triumph and the daughters of the Toledans be saddened.[162]

The chronicler then explains that Muño Alfonso died because he sinned greatly against God in killing his legitimate daughter, who "played with a certain young man," instead of being merciful towards her.[163] As penance, Muño Alfonso was ordered by the emperor

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[161] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 236; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 239.
[162] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 237; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 240.
[163] "Ludebat cum quodam iuuene": Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 237.

and the archbishop to make war on the Muslims. Similarly, towards the end of the *Book of Deeds*, James says that he makes war against Muslims in order to "free ourselves from mortal sin"—in this case, wishing to divorce his wife Teresa in favor of the young Berenguela Alfonso.[164]

Gender, honor, mercy, war, and death are tightly woven in the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* and the *Book of Deeds*. Whereas the empress Berenguela acts mercifully and honorably, eventually sending the heads of the slain Muslim leaders back to their widows, the Andalusi and Almoravid leaders do not extend the same courtesy to the Christian widows. Berenguela shames Muslim troops who would attack her when her husband is away. The presence of Christian women on the frontier is used to anchor Christian claims to territory in both chronicles. And though Muño Alfonso acts heroically in his encounters with Muslims until his death, it is as penance for his lack of compassion for and violence against his daughter. Though war between Muslims and Christians is justified, men and women of both religions have a responsibility to act honorably and mercifully towards one another, and to encourage one another towards proper action. Ultimately, women are shown to play a significant role in both the lead up to war and its aftermath.

This is also the case in Muslim chronicles. In an episode that appears in both the ninth-century *History* of Ibn Ḥabīb and the anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr uses the presence of his wives and daughters to spur his men to fight more

[164] James I, *Book of Deeds*, tr. Smith and Buffery, 311; "E nós dixem-li que ab aquela fe entraríem en la batayla, que exeríem de peccat mortal o per una guisa o per altra; que serviríem tant Déu en aquel dia e en aquela conquesta que·ns perdonaria": James I, *Llibre dels fets*, ed. Bruguera, 315.

fiercely. In the course of his travels throughout al-Andalus, Mūsā and his men encounter especially sharp resistance in their attempt to capture a particular fort. Mūsā orders that his women and daughters be brought out from their pavilion and performs a prayer, with the effect that "the Muslims kindled and battle blazed" and victory is secured. The *Fatḥ* further explains that Mūsā is in the habit of bringing "the people of his house" along with him on campaigns because he thinks it brings the answers to his prayers nearer.[165] Like James and Gaucelm, he does not appear concerned that the women in his family are in danger because of their proximity to violence—instead, they symbolize his intense commitment to the war effort and to pushing back the Muslim-Christian frontier. And though the women's own feelings about their exposure to enemies and supporters are not considered, it is notable that their highly visible and public role does not draw the censure of either Ibn Ḥabīb or the *Fatḥ* chronicler. Instead, the combination of prayer and the sight of the women pushes Mūsā's men to even greater military feats, which are granted by God.

The *Akhbār majmūʿa* includes another anecdote in which a Muslim woman moves a man to take up arms. The text says that the emir al-Ḥakam is approached by a man from the frontier region (*thughūr*) who tells him that when the enemy attacked, a woman screamed out for al-Ḥakam, beseeching his aid and accusing him of neglect. This prompts the emir to embark on a campaign in that region, conquering fortresses and taking captives. Al-Ḥakam then asks the man to take him to the place where he heard the woman, and he gifts her some of the captives to exchange for members of her own family

[165] Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus*, 33; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-taʾrīj*, ed. Aguadé, 142.

who were taken prisoner. He beheads the remaining captives in her presence. After all this, the emir asks the woman whether he has been helpful or neglectful, and she replies that he has indeed helped. Though she is prompted to verbally acknowledge the emir's aid and performatively recant her earlier words, they nonetheless have the desired effect. She is able to motivate al-Ḥakam to come to the frontier and perform his duty, attacking his enemies and protecting his people, and she is even able to reunite her family. Nor does she flinch at having executions performed right in front of her.

Overall, women in these chronicles do not have a single relationship to war and violence. They are sometimes warriors themselves—a state most often attributed to women of North African descent—and they quite often witness and incite violence, establish a visible presence on moving frontiers, and mourn and care for the dead. None of these actions are described as uniformly negative or detrimental to the rule of righteous men. More often, in fact, the participation of women in war and violence is portrayed as useful to these men. Only a very few women are labeled fearful, like Nujeymath and her company of archers in the *Estoria* addition and Eleanor in the *Book of Deeds*. In these cases their cowardice is actually detrimental to the ruling men they are supposed to support. As with the political realm, therefore, the military sphere was not depicted by chroniclers as the exclusive domain of men, but instead as a site of shared responsibility and negotiation between multiple partners of both genders. Men and women often played different roles, but both were critical, and women could and did participate positively in war and violence, as in politics.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Muslim and Christian chronicles from medieval Iberia and North Africa portrayed women, whether as literary tropes or historical figures, in fairly similar ways. In these texts, despite religious and cultural differences, ruling men's treatment of and interaction with women are indicative of their fitness to lead. Women play significant and varied roles in politics and military campaigns, both spheres of medieval power typically understood as largely or exclusively the domain of men. The most notable differences between the Muslim and Christian chronicle traditions in this regard seems to be that Muslims wrote more often about women participating in combat directly and Christians wrote more often about women ruling in their own right, but there are exceptions to each of these generalizations. Regionally, there is little difference in the way Iberian and North African authors speak about women's relationship to power, though writers from both sides of the Strait are more likely to describe North African women taking part in warfare.

Though I argue that Muslims and Christians spoke about women with similar frequency and in similar ways, they generally did not write about the same women. The women most likely to be translated across religious and linguistic lines were those who were most fully reduced to symbols—like Julian's daughter, Egilona, the women of Murcia under Theodemir—most of whom are unnamed and whose actions and/or identities seem to be ahistorical. They likewise tend to be associated with the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia, which, as the previous chapter showed, was a site of substantial dialogue and myth-making for historians across religious, linguistic, and

geopolitical boundaries. The persistence and importance of multiple women in conquest narratives highlights the legibility of tropes about women for authors and audiences from a variety of backgrounds. These included women whose violation required vengeance, women whose bad advice brought about their husbands' downfall, and women whose warm bodies represented a last-ditch attempt to avoid utter defeat.

But even named, individual women who only appear in Muslim or Christian chronicles are depicted similarly, often acting as advisors, influencing succession, and spurring men to war. Women, both historical and legendary, play substantial roles in the rise and fall of dynasties, as with Julian's daughter, Pelayo's sister, the Kāhina, Kanza, Zaynab, and Fānnū. In Christian and Muslim traditions alike, their actions could be portrayed positively, negatively, or neutrally, depending on a variety of other factors. That women did and should have a place in the political and even military sphere was rarely contested. How chroniclers understood the precise nature of this role, and their judgements about whether or not individual women exercised their power in acceptable ways, varied—as indeed was the case for men.

To be sure, powerful men and women are not held to the same standards in these chronicles—women were expected to be more family oriented, for example. It is precisely from these close domestic relationships that women derived their power, however, so even women prioritizing their relatives' welfare was not represented as a universal good, or as always yielding the best results. As we see with Ṭarūb and Ḥabāb, women in a position to influence the succession owed something not only to their family members, but also to the larger community. In the same way that ruling men were

charged with appointing officials who dealt fairly with the people, powerful women were expected to use their influence to benefit community more generally. I suggest that these expectations reflect the real power women wielded in many cases to affect politics in positive and negative ways. If a woman defended a man's succession and he was a just and legitimate ruler, like Adosinda's nephew, then she acted correctly. But if, like Ṭarūb and Ḥabāb, she supported an unworthy man or harmed the community in defending a man's succession, she acted incorrectly.

The generalization that women were expected to exercise and display their influence within the private sphere, while men acted publicly, does not hold up in either Muslim or Christian chronicles. Elite women were allowed and expected to have a relationship with the public and beyond their households, whether through public appearances in events like processions, charitable giving and patronage, or maintaining a visible presence on battlefields and frontiers. Women are in fact rarely criticized by chroniclers for acting too publicly or without sufficient modesty, but are often praised for speaking up to demand that they be treated with the respect due to them based on their gender, station, and kin.

And while it could be argued that the advice offered by women to men in their families constitutes private, domestic influence rather than a public exercise of power, men taking counsel from other men, even within their own family, is never considered in terms of the extent to which it is a public or private activity. I see no particular reason that men seeking the advice of women should be either. Both were an essential part of what it meant to rule. Good advisors were those who were well intentioned and offered

good advice, regardless of their gender, and good rulers were those who could discern good advisors from bad, regardless of their gender. It remains true that the women from whom men take advice in chronicles are almost exclusively ones to whom they are related through a familial or sexual bond, along with the occasional seeress, which is not the case of counsellors who are men. Women's exercise of power in medieval Muslim and Christian societies was typically determined by their relationship to a powerful man, but chronicles also make it clear that women influenced political and military events in a variety of ways, and that dependence and power were not unidirectional in these relationships.

Monarchies and lordships in Christian Iberia have increasingly been understood as partnerships that relied on the participation of multiple family members, men and women. Less acknowledged is that this was also the case for Muslim royal families and households in Iberia and North Africa, though they were structured differently. It is well past time that we move beyond derogatory dismissals of women's influence in medieval Muslim courts as mere palace intrigue. In both Muslim and Christian societies, wives, concubines, sisters, mothers, and daughters exercised power as advisors, patrons, and alliance makers between families. While the diversity with which chroniclers interpret the women's contributions to politics can be attributed in part to the chroniclers' own views on women in general and the particular women about which they write, it can also be understood to reflect a fairly simple fact—that medieval women, like men, exercised power to positive and negative effect. To be sure, they were each judged by gendered expectations, but there was space for women to influence men, and for men to be

influenced by women, without their femininity, masculinity, or ability to rule being called into question. Their power in this regard was sometimes reduced to mere symbolism in chronicles, offering a glimpse, if not a full rendering, of the societal influence they wielded in various spheres. If anything, it seems likely that Muslim and Christian chroniclers underrepresented women's exercise of power and influence on historical events.

Documentary evidence from Christian Iberia often shows that women were more involved in political, military, and religious events than is indicated by chroniclers. Frequently, when women are presented as advisors and patrons to ruling men in chronicles, they were also co-signing documents, controlling large inheritances, and creating and maintaining networks through kinship and patronage.[166] Though in many cases we lack these same kinds of sources in Arabic, there is no reason to think that this would not have been equally true of Muslims in the medieval western Mediterranean—and that, as is the case for Christians, the presentation of Muslim women exercising political and military power in Arabic chronicles constitutes only a hint of their activity beyond the page. The scarcity of documentary sources certainly does not prevent us from appreciating the scope of the power exercised by Muslim men. Nor are Arabic sources without their own advantages. The anecdotal nature of Muslim chronicles in fact lends itself fairly well to narrating women in relation to power in a variety of contexts. They also tend to include women from a wider range of social statuses than Christian chronicles and attribute direct speech to women (and men) more often. And in many

[166] Pick, *Her Father's Daughter*; Martin, *Mujeres y poderes*; Bowman, "Record, Chronicle and Oblivion."

Arabic chronicles, like those of Ibn Abī Zar‘ and ‘Abd al-Wāḥid, it is typical to provide available information about rulers' mothers, including their names, ethnic backgrounds, and whether they were enslaved or free.

Even if chroniclers were reluctant to portray powerful women to the same extent as powerful men, it seems likely that when they deigned to do so, it was because those women were too powerful to ignore or omit. Perceptions and priorities could also change over time—in some cases, as with Jamla and Zaynab, chroniclers seem to have been more willing to praise and detail their accomplishments as time went on. In other cases, as with Ṣubḥ and I‘timād, chroniclers like ‘Abd al-Wāḥid were able to omit them from their narratives because of the time elapsed since they had exerted power. In the case of women like Alfonso VI's sister and daughter, both named Urraca, later chroniclers felt more free to cast aspersions on their character, accusing them of immoral acts.

Ultimately, though their assessments were contingent on context, neither Muslim nor Christian chroniclers in the western Mediterranean could narrate their histories without speaking about women who influenced political and military events in a number of ways, and with varied outcomes. Episodes featuring women constituted part of the shared cultural archive, which focused especially on the role of women in multiple stages of the eighth-century Islamic conquests. The Nujemayth episode in the *Estoria de España* redaction and the mention of Urraca in the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* hint that in some cases other tropes about women, or narratives of particularly prominent women, made it across religious, linguistic, and geopolitical lines. And even when Muslim and Christian chroniclers wrote about different women, they did so in remarkably similar ways,

acknowledging their varied and substantial impacts on history and politics, and suggesting a shared understanding of the relationship between gender and power.

Chapter 4: Resurrecting Iberia(ns) and North Africa(ns)

Reconquista has been one of the most powerful and contested theoretical frameworks for understanding Christian Iberia in the Middle Ages. The implications of the "re" in *reconquista* are clear, suggesting that Iberia was to be taken back from foreign invaders and settlers, who were Muslim, and returned to its original rulers and occupants, who were Christian. The right to such a return was not really based on prior occupancy, however, but was rooted above all in religious identity. Many Iberian Muslims were descended from local Christian families who converted after the conquests and the collapse of the Visigothic state, but they were not considered rightful heirs to Iberian territory. Within the logic of *reconquista*, Muslims could never be true Iberians, though their presence and rule in the peninsula lasted for centuries and ultimately exceeded that of Christians before the conquests—and though the Visigoths were far from the original occupants of Iberia, but were instead part of the peninsula's longer history of successive waves of invaders and settlers.

In the traditional view, the drive for reconquest, including the restoration of Christian rule over a united peninsula and the expulsion of Muslims, originated in the northern kingdom of Asturias. The first Christian Iberian state to emerge after the Islamic conquests in the eighth century, Asturias was often in conflict with the Umayyad emirate of al-Andalus in the south. The reconquest effort was later continued by shifting conglomerations of Christian kingdoms until Iberia, minus Portugal, was finally reunited with the marriage of Isabel and Ferdinand in the fifteenth century. In this narrative, *reconquista* was closely associated with neo-Gothicism, the revival of politics and

religion as they had been (or were thought to have been) under the Visigoths. Though there is not much evidence for this neo-Gothic impulse until the second half of the ninth century, the narrative of *reconquista* upholds it as Christian rulers' constant goal from the moment of the kingdom's inception.

Scholars have pushed back against the idea that the *reconquista* was a consistent, dominant, or totalizing ideology for medieval Christians in Iberia. Martín F. Ríos Saloma shows that the term *reconquista* gained popularity only after the Middle Ages, with the emergence of early modern forms of nationalism and colonialism.[1] Many scholars have turned to *convivencia* as an alternative framework for understanding interfaith relations in medieval Iberia. *Convivencia*, meaning literally "living together," emphasizes that Iberian Muslims, Christians, and Jews lived, worked, and thought in ways that overlapped, intersected, and informed one another. Proponents of *convivencia* have been accused of viewing the past through rose-colored glasses and highlighting moments of cooperation and cultural exchange over instances of conflict and violence. Overall, though, it is the more flexible model, and its emphasis on togetherness in the physical sense of sharing space need not always be taken to mean togetherness in an ideological sense. *Convivencia*, much more than *reconquista*, makes room for medieval realities that included shifting alliances and priorities, acknowledging the importance of local and individual context.[2]

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[1] Martín F. Ríos Saloma, *La Reconquista: una construcción historiográfica (siglos XVI-XIX)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Ediciones de Historia, 2011). See also recent discussions in Carlos de Ayala Martínez, J. Santiago Palacios Ontalva, and Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes, eds., *La Reconquista: ideología y justificación de la Guerra Santa peninsular* (Madrid: La Ergástula, 2019).

[2] Ryan Szpiech, "The Convivencia Wars: Decoding Historiography's Polemic with Philology," in *A Sea of Languages: Rethinking the Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History*, ed. Susan Akbari and Karla Malette

Within the framework of *convivencia* one can recognize that at various times—but not consistently or uniformly—Christians in medieval Iberia asserted that they alone were divinely entitled to rule and inhabit the peninsula. This chapter examines the use of such rhetoric to justify conquest and violence not as a one-sided reaction to the coexistence of Muslims and Christians in the peninsula, but as a co-produced means of writing this coexistence into a broader historical framework that was influenced and invoked by chroniclers of both religions. I begin with its apparent origins in the Asturian chronicles of the late ninth century, demonstrating that their neo-Gothic emphasis on restoration and rebirth was not only intended to address Muslim-Christian relations, but in fact commented on the past and future of the relationship between Iberia and North Africa. I also show that these texts deployed a narrative cycle of corruption, elimination, and ultimate rebirth to situate the Islamic conquests in the context of what the Asturians projected as a subsequent Muslim defeat and final Christian victory. In this construction, the Visigoths are depicted as having strayed from the path of righteousness and as the subsequent object of a divine scourge sent by God in the form of Muslim conquerors. With the establishment of the kingdom of Asturias, however, the chroniclers indicate that Iberian Christians are again worthy of divine favor. This enables them to destroy and depopulate Muslim territory, which they then resettle with Christians, restoring the natural order.

(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013); S.J. Pearce, "The Myth of the Myth of the Andalusian Paradise: The Extreme Right and the American Revision of the History and Historiography of Medieval Spain," in *Far-Right Revisionism and the End of History: Alt/Histories*, ed. Louie Dean Valencia-García (Routledge, 2020), 29–67.

Though this narrative cycle seems, at first blush, to match traditional formulations of the *reconquista*, I argue that it was adopted not only by later Christian Iberian chronicles, but was also eventually translated and transformed by Muslim chroniclers in Iberia and North Africa. With the emergence of the reformist Almohad dynasty in North Africa and its conquest of significant portions of Iberia, the same rhetoric of religiously-based decline, violence, and renewal—with the script flipped so that Muslims assumed the role of righteous conquerors and restorers who eliminated Christians—became legible and useful for Muslims on both sides of the Strait. I refer to this narrative cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth as the logic of resurrection, giving a name to one of the narrative strategies chroniclers employed to structure and interpret past and future relationships between Muslims and Christians in the western Mediterranean.

In the logic of resurrection, Iberia and North Africa were depicted, at various points, as either already empty or in need of being made empty and then revived by a particular dynasty, always divinely inspired and supported. Such emptying involved the elimination of entire populations and their replacement with another population, conceived of as having a superior claim to the land or to government. These claims were legitimized through what was understood as more correct religious doctrine and practice, and at times by of assertions of prior occupancy. They relied on an implicit reordering of native and foreign status, creating insider and outsider identities that were constituted through a combination of ethnic, geopolitical, and religious categories and labels like those discussed in Chapter 1. By means of such narrative strategies, which presented contested territory as a slate to be wiped clean and written upon anew, the mutual

ideological problem of competing claims to power over the same space was conceptually resolved. Along with the construction of gender roles in relation to conquest and rule examined in Chapter 3, the logic of resurrection thus constitutes part of the shared cultural archive elaborated in Chapter 2.

I close the chapter by proposing that the logic of resurrection as it appears in Muslim and Christian chronicles from medieval Iberia and North Africa contains elements recognizable in modern settler colonial states, and that we can productively analyze the two phenomena together. As Patrick Wolfe has observed in the modern context, "Territoriality is settler colonialism's specific, irreducible element… Negatively, it strives for the dissolution of native societies. Positively, it erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base…invasion is a structure not an event."[3] Wolfe refers to efforts to dissolve native societies as a "logic of elimination." My logic of resurrection attempts to encompass both the positive and negative—which is to say productive and destructive, rather than good and bad—efforts of invasion and conquest as a colonial structure, arguing for its presence in various medieval Iberian and North African chronicles.

Acknowledging that the logic of resurrection was employed as a colonial tool by both Christians and Muslims across the Strait during the Middle Ages also pushes back against common popular and scholarly portrayals of North Africa as politically and culturally dominated by Iberia.[4] In fact, in the Middle Ages, North African troops and

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[3] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006), 388.
[4] See discussion in Allen Fromherz, *The Almohads: The Rise of an Islamic Empire* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 10.

rulers controlled more territory and exerted more political influence in Iberia than Iberians did in North Africa. Depictions of medieval North Africans being civilized by the very populations they conquered are neither coincidental nor benign, but are instead the legacy of colonialisms both medieval and modern. A comparative approach to historical chronicles from medieval Iberia and North Africa, on the contrary, shows that historians across the Strait engaged in a reciprocal construction of a common theoretical framework through which they understood the past.

I argue that at various times and in specific contexts—as with the logic of resurrection—this co-produced framework was mutually colonizing, and both North Africans and Iberians drew on a shared construction of the past to argue for their own claims to political and cultural primacy across the Strait. In this, I follow Eric Calderwood's proposal, in the modern context, that instead of ignoring the slippage between traditional binaries of colonizer and colonized, Iberian and North African, and Christian and Muslim, we examine the possibility of "discourses built on the multidirectional use of a shared past."[5] To the extent that medieval chroniclers on both sides of the Strait forecast a unified future for the western Mediterranean, whether under Christianity or Islam, they simultaneously drew upon and constructed a kind of shared past for the region and its peoples.

Extending the frame of *convivencia* across the Strait of Gibraltar shows how Iberian exceptionalism and Eurocentrism have elided the role of broader regional

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[5] Eric Calderwood, *Colonial al-Andalus: Spain and the Making of Modern Moroccan Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2018), 19.

networks and identities in shaping medieval interfaith relations. Moving away from *reconquista* need not mean ignoring the ways that these texts did, at specific times and in specific contexts, embrace a rhetoric of divine right to land that justified the total elimination of enemy populations. On the contrary, it allows us to observe that this narrative approach was not exclusive to Christians or Iberians, but in fact became part of the larger history of how people on opposite shores of the Strait lived, wrote, and thought together.[6]

Tracing the logic of resurrection over time

The earliest substantial Iberian account of the eighth-century Islamic conquests is the Latin *Chronicle of 754*. Its anonymous Christian author openly mourns the conquests but falls short of explicitly suggesting the possibility of any kind of renewed Christian dominance in the peninsula, likely wishing to avoid offending Muslim rulers.[7] Just over a century later, however, the Christian kingdom of Asturias in the north produced a series of anonymous Latin chronicles which were much bolder in their presentation of this history and its relationship to the peninsula's future. These were the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the almost exactly contemporary *Chronicle of Albelda* and its continuation,

[6] The question of a kind of Muslim counter-*reconquista* is also thoughtfully considered in Javier Albarrán, "Una reconquista de la reconquista: la reacción ideológica islámica al avance cristiano (ss. XI-XIII)," in *La Reconquista*, ed. Ayala Martínez, Palacios Ontalva, and Ferreira Fernandes, 233–58.

[7] Lucy Pick and Alexander Pierre Bronisch disagree on the extent to which fear of Muslim reprisal may have played into the chronicler's choices, but agree that the text implicitly situates the conquests, and conflicts between Muslims and Christians, within a larger eschatological framework: Lucy Pick, "Islam Concealed and Revealed: The Chronicle of 754 and Beatus of Liébana's Commentary on the Apocalypse," in *Beyond the* Reconquista*: New Directions in the History of Medieval Iberia (711-1085)*, ed. Simon Barton and Robert Portass (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 257–282; Alexander Pierre Bronisch, *Reconquista y guerra santa: La concepción de la guerra en la España cristiana desde los visigodos hasta comienzos del siglo XII* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2007).

known as the *Prophetic Chronicle*, all of which were composed in the early 880s. The Asturian texts introduce a number of elements not present in the earlier chronicle's account of the Islamic conquests of Spain—corruption, elimination, and rebirth. Each of these elements figured as a stage in the logic of resurrection, respectively explaining the conquests as a punishment for corrupt Visigothic kings, justifying extreme levels of Asturian violence against al-Andalus, and predicting the ultimate defeat and expulsion of Muslims from the peninsula by the Asturians, cast as a revived Visigothic state. All three stages also came to be associated with later conceptions of the *reconquista*.

The Asturian chronicles from the 880s seem to mark the beginning of a long tradition in Christian Iberian texts of attributing blame for the Islamic conquests to corrupt Visigothic kings. This represented a significant departure from the *Chronicle of 754*. The earlier text assigns blame covertly for the Islamic conquests, but responsibility is mostly removed from Iberia. The *Chronicle of 754* implies that the pride of the Byzantine emperor Heraclius led to the Islamic conquests, first in the east and then in the west. The Muslim invaders are portrayed as a kind of scourge upon Christians.[8] It might seem counterintuitive for the Asturians to assign *more* blame for the conquests to the very monarchy whose legacy they claimed to be reviving. But the failures of the Visigothic kings in fact constitute a kind of entry point into what has traditionally been thought of as the *reconquista* narrative—a way to account for the loss of Spain to Muslims while also implying that if peninsular Christian leaders acted justly once again, they would be able

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[8] Kenneth Baxter Wolf, ed. and trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, 2nd ed. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 30.

to regain their lost territory and position, to which they had prior and superior claims. If corruption manifested itself locally, it could be rectified locally as well, and redemption and restoration moved within reach for the Asturian kings.[9]

The Asturian chronicles do not, however, exculpate the Byzantine empire. On the contrary, Byzantines, along with other non-Iberians, are closely associated with corruption. The same is true of the second stage of the logic of resurrection, elimination, with the removal of foreigners from the peninsula marking the imminence of the rebirth stage. In the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, for example, Byzantines are portrayed as the source of the Visigothic monarchy's corruption, and the beginning of its decline and fall from divine favor. Muslims then appear in the narrative as a kind of punishing scourge sent from God. Once Iberian Christians had redeemed themselves, however, there was no further need for a Muslim presence in the peninsula, and the Asturians began the process of eliminating them. The final portion of this chapter returns to this association of corruption with outsiders and foreigners, offering a reading of these texts through a settler colonial lens.

The elimination of Muslim populations, as aspiration or reality, is also absent from the *Chronicle of 754*, and constitutes a novel feature of the Asturian chronicles that has often been used to bolster nationalist ideas about a medieval *reconquista*. It is no surprise that Asturian writers who lived under a Christian monarchy a century and a half after the conquests were bolder than the anonymous chronicler of 754 in asserting the

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[9] Thomas Deswarte, *De la destruction à la restauration: L'idéologie dans le royaume d'Oviedo-Léon (VIIIe-XIe siècles)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004).

ability of Christians to challenge Muslim rule. But this challenge could conceivably have been narrated without recourse to wholesale destruction and depopulation. Within the Asturian logic of resurrection, however, full redemption required the complete elimination and removal of the corrupting influence, understood as a foreign incursion, rather than its mere assimilation. Conquest alone was not sufficient to make room for the rebirth of the Visigothic order as it had been pre-corruption.

The Asturian chronicles did not claim that either elimination or rebirth were fully realized at the time of their composition, but they did present these stages as inevitable and in progress. One of the most contested features of these chronicles, in fact, is their repeated reference to Asturian kings depopulating Muslim territory. The so-called depopulation of the Duero river valley by Alfonso I and its subsequent resettlement by Alfonso III form the basis of one of the greatest historiographical debates among nineteenth-century scholars of medieval Iberia. Most adamantly championed by Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz, the depopulation theory held that a series of raids led by Alfonso I in the eighth century created a kind of depopulated buffer zone between Asturias and al-Andalus. This same territory is supposed to have been repopulated by Christian settlers under Alfonso III in the late ninth century. The current consensus is that this territory was never emptied of Muslims or fully resettled by Christians and that references to depopulation and repopulation in Asturian chronicles and charters were either rhetorical or have been misinterpreted by modern readers.[10] Nonetheless, the depopulation theory

[10] Julio Escalona and Iñaki Martín Viso, "The Life and Death of an Historiographical Folly: The Early Medieval Depopulation and Repopulation of the Duero Basin," in *Beyond the Reconquista: New Directions in the History of Medieval Iberia (711-1085)*, ed. Simon Barton and Robert Portass (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 21–51; José María Monsalvo Antón, "Espacios y fronteras en el discurso territorial del reino de Asturias

still looms large in the popular imagination and remains a significant component of modern *reconquista* narratives.

The Asturian rhetoric of depopulation and resettlement should instead be understood as a key component of the monarchy's neo-Gothic program, part and parcel of the logic of resurrection. Asturian chroniclers were not promoting a vision of the future in which they defeated Muslims and then ruled over them as subjects. Instead, their claims and aspirations were focused on the wholesale elimination of Muslims from the peninsula. This is one of the major identifying features of the logic of resurrection, though such a goal was not explicitly stated or shared by all or even most later Christian chroniclers in medieval Iberia. On the contrary, even chroniclers in the thirteenth century who portrayed Castilian kings as successors to the Visigothic legacy generally did not employ such an extreme rhetoric of removal and elimination. Instead, they identified their victory as the conquest and defeat of Muslims, from whom they extracted money, labor, and knowledge.

Even more than their depiction of corruption as the cause of the Islamic conquests, the Asturian chronicles of the 880s depict an elimination that is entirely absent from the *Chronicle of 754*. The earlier text makes no mention of the fledgling kingdom of Asturias or of Alfonso I, who would have been the author's contemporary. Instead, the Christians shown to be most successful against the Islamic conquests are the Franks. The

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(del Cantábrico al Duero en las 'Crónicas Asturianas')," *Studia historica. Historia medieval*, no. 23 (2005): 43–87; Amancio Isla Frez, "Los astures: el *populus* y la *populatio*," in *La época de la Monarquía Asturiana: actas del Simposio celebrado en Covadonga, 8-10 de octubre de 2001* (Oviedo: Real Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 2002), 17–42; Ramón Menéndez Pidal, "Repoblación y tradición en la cuenca del Duero," in *Enciclopedia Lingüística Hispánica*, ed. M. Alvar et al., vol. 1 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1960), 29–57.

754 chronicler depicts scant internal Iberian resistance to Muslim rule, let alone an opposition aimed at the elimination of Muslims from the peninsula. Nor is there any explicit claim for a possible revival of the Visigothic legacy, or hint of reconquest. Instead, the eighth-century chronicler foregrounds a despairing and hopeless vision, saying that the Muslim governor of Spain:

> found it, despite all it had been through, to be abundant in every good thing and, even after all its suffering, to be filled with beauty, so that you could say it was like a pomegranate in August. But he treated it so harshly…that little by little it was ruined, cut off from its neighbours. His judges, seized with cupidity, so defiled Spain with their deceit that not only did it begin to decline from that time on as if moribund, but it remained…completely without hope of recovery.[11]

Asturian chroniclers and their successors made radically different use of nature imagery, depicting the Asturians transplanting the revived root of the Visigoths. They also made frequent use of the Latin verb *restaurare*, "to restore," again in relation to the Visigothic legacy.

Though the Asturian chronicles drew upon and adapted elements of the *Chronicle of 754*, therefore, the three stages of the logic of resurrection were either limited or entirely absent in the earlier text. Their appearance in the Asturian chronicles of the 880s is the product of a new political and ideological landscape.[12] With the death of Alfonso III in the early tenth century, the kingdom of Asturias was divided among his sons, and

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[11] Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 146.

[12] This is not to suggest that the logic of resurrection was exclusive to Iberia in the Middle Ages, or that it never appeared in peninsular literature before the Islamic conquests. Iberia experienced multiple waves of invasion and settlement that divided populations along religious, political, and cultural lines in the centuries before the Islamic conquests, which historians could and at times did narrate as a cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth. In the sixth and seventh centuries, for instance, both John of Biclaro and Isidore of Seville drew on elements of this cycle to relate the transition from Roman to Visigothic Spain. For more on how sixth-century Iberian chroniclers approached this transition, see Erica Buchberger, *Shifting Ethnic Identities in Spain and Gaul, 500-700: From Romans to Goths and Franks* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 37-66.

eventually reconstituted as part of León, and later Castile. But the logic of resurrection and its cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth continued to serve chroniclers from a variety of backgrounds as they narrated relationships between Muslims and Christians in Iberia and North Africa.

Perhaps one of the most faithful continuations of the Asturian model for the logic of resurrection was the anonymous Latin *Historia Silense*, which appears to have been compiled in the early twelfth century by a Christian ecclesiastic in the kingdom of León. In order to accommodate a longer history of shifts in the balance of power between Muslims and Christians in Iberia than was required of the Asturian chronicles, the *Silense* chronicler describes multiple cycles of corruption and destruction before the realization of an ultimate rebirth. The logic of resurrection also appears in another twelfth-century Leonese history, the anonymous *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, which narrates the reign of Alfonso VII until 1147. The emperor's allies included Muslims and his enemies included Christians. While enemies were often eliminated through expulsion and death, Alfonso's imperial ambitions meant that they were also incorporated into his empire, depicted as submitting and repenting to his mercy.

Not long after the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, the logic of resurrection appears in an adapted form in the work of a Muslim Iberian author, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, who served the Almohad caliphate as a scribe. In the early twelfth century, Ibn Tūmart, the founder of the Almohad movement, had sought to return Islam to a state of original purity and drawn on earlier North African precedents calling for the revival of Islamic

tradition (*iḥyā' al-sunna*) in the Maghrib.[13] His successor, 'Abd al-Mu'min, claimed the title of caliph, just as the first caliph Abū Bakr succeeded the prophet Muḥammad. Along with such attempts to mirror the politics and religion of early Islam, the Almohads aimed to distinguish themselves from the preceding Almoravid dynasty in every respect, using religious renewal in the face of corruption to justify waging holy war against all who opposed them, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. Ruling principally from Marrakesh while also moving between regional capitals in al-Andalus and Ifrīqiya, the Almohads consolidated the largest medieval Islamic empire in the western Mediterranean.

As a scribe for the Almohads, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt accompanied the caliphs across the Strait of Gibraltar on various campaigns. His *Mann bi-l-imāma* chronicles the reigns of the first and second Almohad caliphs. Though written in support of North African Muslims, rather than Iberian Christians, the *Mann bi-l-imāma*'s narrative cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth shares a number of similarities with the logic of resurrection in earlier Asturian and Leonese chronicles. In both cases, corruption is ascribed to the chronicler's own religious group as well as to adherents of other religions, elimination involves utter destruction and depopulation, and the restoration of a previous religious and political order is the ultimate narrative and ideological goal. As with the Asturian chronicles, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt's use of the logic of resurrection reflects the religious and political context of the time. Almohad ideology was premised on religious and political reforms intended to return Islamic societies to a state of original purity.

[13] Ignacio Sánchez, "Ethnic Disaffection and Dynastic Legitimacy in the Early Almohad Period: Ibn Tūmart's Translatio Studii et Imperii," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 2 (2010), 182-183.

Although the Asturian and Almohad chronicles were produced several centuries apart, in different languages, and under different dominant religions, they are all triumphalist narratives written in support of the reigning dynasty, and arguably at the peak of that dynasty's political power and literary production. And just as the logic of resurrection in the Asturian chronicles represents a significant departure from the *Chronicle of 754*, the *Mann bi-l-imāma* goes beyond the precedent set by earlier Almohad chronicles in its depiction of a cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth.

For example, the so-called "Memoirs" of al-Baydhaq, a North African contemporary and close companion of the Almohad founder Ibn Tūmart, served as a significant source for Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt. Al-Baydhaq's chronicle exists only in a single partial copy, which details the early preaching and military campaigns of Ibn Tūmart and his successor 'Abd al-Mu'min. The text exhibits a sort of emergent logic of resurrection and various parts of al-Baydhaq's narrative emphasize elements of corruption and elimination. Corruption often takes the form of practices considered contrary to Islam, in Ibn Tūmart's view, such as the playing of musical instruments, the mixing of men and women in public, and the consumption of wine. Al-Baydhaq describes elimination in the form of purges of various rebellious and disbelieving tribes. These purges were referred to with the word *tamyīz*, meaning separation or dividing out. The first *tamyīz* recorded by al-Baydhaq took forty days, during which multiple tribes are said to have been wiped out in their entirety, separating the unbelievers from the Almohads and "doubling" the faith

of the latter.[14] He does not, however, detail the revival of populations and cities in the same explicit terms as the *Mann bi-l-imāma* or earlier Christian texts, though he says that Ibn Tūmart rebuilds and restores a number of mosques.

Nor was a logic of resurrection fully taken up by North African chroniclers like ʻAbd al-Wāḥid and Ibn al-Qaṭṭān, who wrote under and about the Almohads in the century following al-Baydhaq and Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt. The *Kitāb al-muʻjib* by ʻAbd al-Wāḥid in the 1220s chronicles the rise of the Almohads as a chapter in the longer history of al-Andalus and the Maghrib.[15] While ʻAbd al-Wāḥid speaks positively of the Almohads, he does not portray them as superior to previous Islamic dynasties in the region, or as the authors of elimination and rebirth in al-Andalus. The only surviving volume of the mid-thirteenth-century *Naẓm al-jumān* of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān focuses much more closely on the early Almohads. He speaks of the Almohads rescuing territories from corruption and injustice[16] and describes the elimination of both Muslims and Christians with some frequency.[17] While Ibn al-Qaṭṭān includes more references to Almohad revival than does al-Baydhaq, however, they are entirely abstract mentions of reviving religious principles and truth, rather than the rebirth of specific places and populations, as we see in Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt.[18]

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[14] Evariste Lévi-Provençal, ed. and trans., *Documents inédits d'histoire almohade: fragments manuscrits du "legajo" 1919 du fonds arabe de l'Escurial* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1928), 78, 126. On the role of the *tamyīz* in the early Almohad movement, see Fromherz, *The Almohads*, 96-100.
[15] ʻAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Histoire des Almohades*, ed. Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1881); ʻAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *Kitāb al-Muʻŷib fī Taljiṣ Ajbār al Magrib: Lo admirable en el resumen de las noticias del Magrib*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda (Tetuán: Editora Marroquí, 1955).
[16] Ibn al-Qaṭṭān al-Marrākushī, *Naẓm al-jumān li-tartīb mā salafa min akhbār al-zamān*, ed. Maḥmūd ʻAlī Makki (Beirut: Dār al-gharb al-Islāmī, 1990), 77.
[17] Ibid., 70, 75, 137-140, 148, 156, 224.
[18] Ibid., 72, 114, 187, 213, 221.

The *Mann bi-l-imāma* is more or less alone among Almohad chronicles in employing the logic of resurrection to narrate relationships between Iberians and North Africans. In light of this, it is worth considering Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt's text in conversation with earlier Asturian and Leonese works that employ the same narrative cycle in favor of Christians. Perhaps Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt read or knew of these texts, or perhaps not. Either way, his Iberian origins make it likely that he would have been aware of Christian neo-Gothicism in a political context, and perhaps encountered the logic of resurrection in a literary context as well. That we do not see evidence of this in Andalusi Muslim chronicles before the Almohads, despite significant literary and cultural exchange, may be because the Almohad program of religious and political reform made the logic of resurrection a more natural and appealing narrative choice for Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, who built on the foundation of al-Baydhaq but wrote more explicitly for audiences on both sides of the Strait. Of course, the lives and experiences of later Almohad chroniclers also spanned the Strait. 'Abd al-Wāḥid traveled and studied in al-Andalus, and Ibn al-Qaṭṭān's family was of Andalusi origin. So while they too may have been familiar with Christian uses of the logic of resurrection, and Ibn al-Qaṭṭān was informed by Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt's chronicle, they pursued different narrative avenues, as did many Christian historians after the Asturian chronicles of the 880s.

The development of the logic of resurrection in a specifically Iberian context also helps to explain what would otherwise be a surprising feature of the *Mann bi-l-imāma*, which is that it makes almost no reference to revival (*iḥyā'*) in a North African context, even when Almohad conquest and elimination are described on the southern shores of the

Strait. The only mention of *iḥyā’* in North Africa occurs when Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt quotes a poem by the famous philosopher and physician Ibn Ṭufayl calling upon the Arab tribes of Ifrīqiya to join the Almohads in waging jihad in al-Andalus. Ibn Ṭufayl emphasizes that these tribes ought to revive the virtues of their fabled Qaysi ancestors and follow the Almohad caliph just as their predecessors had followed the prophet Muhammad.[19] But there is no *iḥyā’ al-Maghrib* or *iḥyā’ Ifrīqiya* to match the *iḥyā’ al-Andalus* so often invoked by Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt and the poets he quotes, perhaps indicating that the chronicler viewed the role of the Almohads in these regions differently.

The logic of resurrection appears to varying degrees, however, in texts from several successor dynasties that gained power in North Africa with the decline and eventual dissolution of the Almohads in the mid to late thirteenth century. These included the Marinid dynasty in the Maghrib and the Hafsid dynasty in Ifrīqiya. In the early fourteenth century, Ibn Abī Zar‘ produced a pro-Marinid history of the Maghrib beginning with its first Islamic dynasty, the Idrisids. In his *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, Ibn Abī Zar‘ cites Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt as a source and appropriates elements of Almohad self-representation in favor of the Marinids, portraying the rulers as bringers of light and restorers. He depicts the Almohads themselves as corrupt, painting a striking picture of physical depopulation as a significant element in the dynasty’s decline. This depopulation is often effected by Iberian Christians, who figure as a kind of scourge body in the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* in the same way that Muslim conquerors do in Asturian and Leonese chronicles.

[19] “فقوموا بما قامت أوالكم به/ولا تغفلوا إحياء تلك المناقب”: Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 326. On the political implications of this poem, see Emilio García Gómez, “Una qasida política inédita de Ibn Tufayl,” *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos* 1 (1953): 21–28.

The Marinids, on the other hand, are shown to revive the greatness of Fes as the historical capital of the Maghrib under Islam, renewing the legacy of the Idrisid dynasty. It seems that it is precisely because Ibn Abī Zar‘ sought to legitimize the Marinids as the revivers of the Maghrib after the imposition of Almohad politics and religious reforms that it employs a logic a resurrection—which, transplanted to a new geopolitical and religious context, becomes neo-Idrisid rather than neo-Gothic.

And of course the most prominent use of a historical-narrative cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth in the medieval western Mediterranean is that of Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406). Ibn Khaldūn spent much of his life in Ifrīqiya, where he worked closely with the Hafsid dynasty for a time. His monumental *Muqaddima* elaborates his cyclical model of the rise and decline of dynasties as an introduction to his *Kitāb al-‘ibar*, a universal history. Ibn Khaldūn's model is far more complex and explicit than the logic of resurrection as it appears in earlier Muslim and Christian chronicles from Iberia and North Africa. He places a great deal of emphasis on the dialectic between urban and rural, highlighting *‘aṣabiyya* (group feeling or solidarity) as the feature that allows rural and nomadic groups to eliminate corrupted and decadent urban dynasties, reinvigorating religion and politics. What is reborn in Ibn Khaldūn's model is not any particular dynastic legacy, therefore, but *‘aṣabiyya*.

Ibn Khaldūn says that Andalusis lost their Arab *‘aṣabiyya* and so their nation was destroyed. This resulted from the erosion of the very tribal ties that had made North African dynasties like the Almoravids and Almohads so successful. He says that Andalusi rulers viewed their power as independent of *‘aṣabiyya* because they forgot their

own origins, but that God's will and adherence to his religion create *'aṣabiyya*, uniting groups in the support of a dynasty.[20] Ramzi Rouighi emphasizes the importance of the scholar's Andalusi heritage in his work, arguing that a sense of Andalusi superiority pervades his writing and that according to Ibn Khaldūn "the disappearance of Arab tribes from al-Andalus…made Andalusis more purely urban and civilized, and thus qualified them to civilize at the exclusion of all others."[21] Ibn Khaldūn's attention to the corrupting role of urban and sedentary life, along with his assertions of the close relationship between *'aṣabiyya* and the divine right to rule outlined above, however, complicate this assessment. Like the Asturian chroniclers of the 880s, Ibn Khaldūn highlights the close relationship between Iberia and North Africa over the centuries. He likewise seems to suggest that dynasties from one region were superior to dynasties from the other, with their *'aṣabiyya* springing from both religious and ethnocultural ties and creating insider and outsider identities that were divinely determined and manifested as a cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth.

The logic of resurrection thus served both Muslims and Christians across the Strait of Gibraltar in the Middle Ages. The longevity and versatility of the logic of resurrection reflect its usefulness to Iberians and North Africans over time as they articulated and interpreted their shared past, present, and future. The history of its transmission also highlights the role of the Almohad program of religious and political

[20] Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddima*, ed. Abdesselam Cheddadi, vol. 1, 3 vols. (Casablanca: Khizānat Ibn Khaldūn, Bayt al-Funūn wa-l-'Ulūm wa-l-Ādāb, 2005), 259-263; 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 3 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 313-317.
[21] Ramzi Rouighi, *The Making of a Mediterranean Emirate: Ifrīqiyā and Its Andalusis, 1200-1400* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 156.

reform in giving the logic of resurrection currency and meaning in a North African context. While Almohad history has long been acknowledged as one of the inspirations for Ibn Khaldūn's model, this connection points to the influence of Almohad historiography and its broader western Mediterranean orientation.

Though the logic of resurrection as a means of narrating relationships between Muslims and Christians in the region appears to have originated in Iberia and been translated to North Africa later, North Africans were by no means dependent on Iberian Christian intellectual or cultural models. As discussed in Chapter 2, key elements of Arabic and North African accounts of the eighth-century Islamic conquests of Iberia were adopted and adapted by Christian writers during and after the Middle Ages, serving a variety of religious and political agendas. Though elements of the shared cultural archive spanning the Strait often had northward or southward trajectories, they made up a dialogue rather than a monologue. While Almohad writers like Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt flipped the logic of resurrection on its head and weaponized it against Iberian claims, Marinid writers like Ibn Abī Zar' invoked it mostly against other North Africans, excising much of its original Iberian context. The cycle's emphasis on elimination, destruction, and depopulation of the opposition likewise demonstrates that chroniclers across the Strait deployed this historical framework for aims that were mutually colonizing. And, as I will argue, it indicates that settler colonial strategies like those encompassed by Wolfe's logic of elimination have a history extending beyond Europe and modernity.

Having given a sense of the chronological development of the logic of resurrection, I will now turn to a closer and more thematic examination of each of its

three stages, comparing their appearance and use in Muslim and Christian chronicles from Iberia and North Africa over time.

Stage 1: Corruption

Corruption, the first stage of the logic of resurrection, was constituted in a variety of ways but was always religiously based. Corruption was the result and reflection of religious deviance or error. Depending on the chronicler's perspective, corruption was portrayed as internal and/or external. Narratively, it was used to explain the changed circumstances of conquered populations and present a possible solution, as well as to justify the conquest and pillaging of conquering populations. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, internal corruption as the cause of conquest was so powerful and productive that for centuries both Muslim and Christian chroniclers invoked it to account for the success of the eighth-century Islamic invasions of Iberia. External corruption was often used as a scapegoat in support of a nativist agenda, while both internal and external corruption were shown to trigger divine punishment in the form of a conquering body. Conquerors were portrayed either as scourges and naturally wicked populations that would be removed once the initially corrupted population had redeemed itself, or as righteous invaders and restorers of religious and political order whose presence would be permanent, depending on the chronicler's positionality. Both corrupted and punishing populations, therefore, were coded with insider or outsider identities that were religiously rather than geographically based and which determined their long-term right to rule and reside in the region in question, whether Iberia, North Africa, or both.

The early twelfth-century Leonese *Historia Silense* takes a fairly top-down approach to corruption. The anonymous chronicler says that "the hand of God had withdrawn from Spain on account of the prolonged wickedness of its kings."[22] The penultimate Visigothic king, Witiza, is responsible for turning his people towards wantonness and pride.[23] Along with major sins like compelling clerical marriage, the king blinds a man with a superior claim to the throne, an action that has direct consequences for the Visigothic state and ultimately brings about the Islamic conquests. Upon Witiza's death, he is succeeded by Roderic, the son of the man he blinded. Roderic exiles Witiza's sons to North Africa, where they encounter count Julian, who had been loyal to Witiza and whose daughter had been ruined when Roderic took her as a concubine. Together, Julian and the sons of Witiza guide Muslim forces through Spain and aid in the conquests as an act of vengeance.[24]

The *Historia Silense* thus portrays corruption as internal to the peninsula, though God's punishment arrives from across the Strait. The Latin chronicle emphasizes that corrupted rulers lead their subjects to betray them, expanding internal cycles of vengeance beyond the Visigothic kingdom and the Iberian peninsula. This makes it a fairly simple narrative matter, later, for rulers to regain their righteousness and the trust of their subjects, and to expel their Muslim and North African enemies whence they came.[25]

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[22] "Sed postquam Iuliani fides per omnem Africam declaratur, Muza exercitus Africani regis princeps, cum infinita multitudine equitum peditumque, ad Yspaniam dirigitur… Receserat enim manus Domini ob inueteratam regum malitiam ab Ispania": Justo Pérez de Urbel and Atilano González Ruiz-Zorrilla, eds., *Historia Silense* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1959), 128-129.
[23] Ibid., 125.
[24] Ibid., 118.
[25] To the extent that, later in the chronicle, Vermudo II (982-999) is described as a good king, whereas the presence of "a huge multitude of Saracens" is attributed to "the sins of the Christian people": Ibid., 172.

The foreign origins of the invaders renders their eventual removal an inevitable and natural occurrence.

Another anonymous Latin chronicle written in support of the Leonese monarchy in the twelfth century, the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, likewise portrays religious corruption and internal failures of leadership which allow for elimination at the hands of external enemies who are later eliminated themselves. Christians are described as being defeated by Muslims on account of their sins.[26] Ultimately, however, they are understood as largely wicked and foreign to the Iberian peninsula and are thus the object of eventual and rightful elimination. In the unfinished *Poem of Almería* appended to the chronicle, the Muslims are referred to as an "evil pestilence" who "cannot submerge themselves in the deep nor raise themselves upwards into the clouds above, for their life was wicked, and thus they were defeated."[27] This is not uniformly the case, however, and room is made for Muslims loyal to the titular emperor Alfonso VII, like his friend and ally Zafadola. In the chronicle, loyalty to Alfonso, who is cast as a Christ-like figure dispensing mercy and justice in equal measure, is the determining factor in whether or not a person is corrupt and/or an outsider. This is emphasized through continual references to even Christian Iberians outside of Castile-León as foreign (*alienigenus*/*alienus*).[28]

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[26] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 203, 209; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 212, 217.
[27] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 255; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 150.
[28] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 162, 171, 203; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 175, 183, 212.

The correct performance of gender roles is also a key aspect of what determines a corrupt or just leader in the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*. Alfonso VII inherited the throne through his mother Urraca, who ruled in her own right from 1109 to 1126 following the death of her father, Alfonso VI.[29] The chronicle is not overtly critical of Urraca and speaks positively of powerful women in other capacities, as discussed in the previous chapter.[30] All the same, Urraca's reign is described as a time of destruction and conquest at the hands of the Almoravids and Alfonso I of Aragón, who fill her with fear.[31] Alfonso VII, on the other hand, is portrayed as restoring and expanding the empire of his grandfather.[32] It is heavily implied that the sole rule of Urraca, who fails to prevent the entry of both Iberian and North African enemies into León-Castile, represents an interruption and corruption of the rule of her father and son, Alfonso VI and Alfonso VII, who both claimed the title of emperor.

This highlights the importance of gender as well as religion in the text's formulation of the logic of resurrection. The mistreatment of women is often cited as a sign of corruption in other chronicles, as with the seduction or rape of Julian's

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[29] On Urraca, see Therese Martin, *Queen as King: Politics and Architectural Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain*, The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World 30 (Boston: Brill, 2006); Therese Martin, "The Art of a Reigning Queen as Dynastic Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain," *Speculum* 80, no. 4 (2005): 1134–1171; Janna Bianchini, "A Mirror for a Queen? Constructions of Queenship in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century León-Castile," *Journal of Medieval History* 45, no. 4 (2019): 432–456; Jitske Jasperse, "Manly Minds in Female Bodies: Three Women and Their Power through Coins and Seals," *Arenal: Revista de historia de las mujeres* 25, no. 2 (2018): 296–321.

[30] Georges Martin, "Valoración de la mujer en la *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*," *e-Spania* 15 (2013), https://doi.org/10.4000/e-spania.22311.

[31] Emma Falque, Juan Gil, and Antonio Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII Pars I*, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Medievalis LXXI (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990), 153, 201; Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher, trans., *The World of El Cid: Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 166, 209.

[32] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 162, 183; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 175, 194.

daughter—though women are also frequently listed among the legitimate victims of elimination, subject to captivity and death at the hands of righteous conquerors. In the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, however, it is not the mistreatment of women but the inversion of gender roles within the royal family which allows for the incursion of external enemies. This situation is rectified when Alfonso VII assumes the throne after Urraca's death and his wife Berenguela performs her role as queen and empress appropriately, acting as his advisor. Berenguela weaponizes gender roles against Almoravid forces as well, shaming them into halting an attack on Toledo on the grounds that it would be dishonorable while she is present and the emperor is elsewhere.[33] In her role as wife and partner to Alfonso, therefore, Berenguela is depicted as repelling external forces where Urraca had failed to do so, correctly performing her own gender role and shaming the Almoravid army into doing the same. The inversion of gender roles is also used to indicate corruption in anti-Almoravid texts by Muslim authors, who refer disparagingly of the Almoravid tradition of men, rather than women, wearing veils.

The early fourteenth-century *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* of Ibn Abī Zar‘ highlights the corruption of rulers through the incursion of external forces as well as the mistreatment of women. Like the *Silense* chronicler, Ibn Abī Zar‘ faced the task of narrating multiple iterations of the cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth. He portrays the eleventh-century triumph of the Almoravids over the Banū Ifran and the Banū Maghrāwī as a result of the two tribes' corruption. The Ifranīs and Maghrāwīs respond to a great famine

[33] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 220; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 226-227.

by breaking into people's homes in Fes to steal their food, "exposing" their women and children. God then transfers their power to the Almoravids.[34]

Eventually, internal divisions cause the Almoravids to neglect their duty to wage jihad in al-Andalus and they focus instead on unsuccessfully fending off the Almohads.[35] This transfer of power and description of corruption is substantially less harsh than that accorded to other failed dynasties, perhaps because Ibn Abī Zar' is so critical of the first Almohad *mahdī*, Ibn Tūmart. While he is willing to praise some of the early caliphs, however, he shows how in the early thirteenth century the Almohads too came to be corrupted. For the Almohad caliph al-Nāṣir, as for Witiza, pride triggers the downfall of his people and his dynasty, and al-Nāṣir's vanity over the size of his army contributes to his crushing defeat at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212.[36] He is succeeded by a minor son, who devotes himself to wine and other pleasures, leaving the affairs of government to others. Corruption (*fusād*) thus prevails under the initially resolute and religious Almohads.[37]

Corruption then spreads to their relationship with Iberians and Christians as the Almohads shift from waging jihad to making significant concessions. The early thirteenth-century caliph al-Ma'mūn even goes so far as to declare Jesus the sole *mahdī*

[34] 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Zar' al-Fāsī, *al-Anīs al-muṭrib bi-rawḍ al-qirṭās fī akhbār mulūk al-Maghrib wa-tārīkh madīnat Fās*, ed. 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Manṣūr, 2nd ed. (Rabat: al-Maṭba'a al-malikiyya, 1999), 144; 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Zar' al-Fāsī, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Ambrosio Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Valencia, 1964), 217.
[35] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 216; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 333-334.
[36] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 308; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 456.
[37] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 368; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 537.

(rightly guided one), a title with messianic connotations that had been taken by every previous Almohad leader.[38] In so doing, he abrogates a key component of Almohad doctrine, a move comparable to Witiza forcing clergy under his rule to marry. Though Jesus is recognized as a prophet in Islam, such an elevation was unprecedented. It is heavily implied that this is a kind of bizarre appeal to the caliph's Christian Iberian allies, to whom al-Ma'mūn owes his rule. Ibn Abī Zar' says that in exchange for the aid Christian mercenaries in taking power in the Maghrib, al-Ma'mūn concedes to a number of demands from the king of Castile. The king is allowed to select ten forts on Castile's frontier, while the caliph agrees to oversee the construction of a church in the heart of the Almohad capital and to guarantee that his Christian subjects will not be allowed to convert to Islam but that Muslims can convert to Christianity. Ibn Abī Zar' also emphasizes that al-Ma'mūn is the first caliph to bring Christian troops to the Maghrib in his service and that this was done during the holy month of Ramadan.[39] Al-Ma'mūn's concessions and the entry of Christian mercenaries simultaneously violate sacred time and the space of the Maghrib, which had been dominated by Muslims since the Idrisids. The chronicler suggests that this corruption and the presence of Christian soldiers persist until the end of the Almohad caliphate, despite the restoration of the doctrine of the infallible *mahdī* by the caliph al-Murtaḍā.[40] Like the *Historia Silense* and the *Chronicle*

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[38] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 330; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 487.

[39] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 329; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 486.

[40] For more on the role of Christian mercenaries and soldier in Almohad armies, see Michael Lower, "The Papacy and Christian Mercenaries of Thirteenth-Century North Africa," *Speculum* 89, no. 3 (2014): 601–631; Eva Lapiedra Gutiérrez, "Christian Participation in Almohad Armies and Personal Guards," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 2 (2010): 235–50.

of Alfonso the Emperor, the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* depicts corruption as initially internal, stemming from the ruler, and inviting its own destruction at the hands of external sources who were themselves corrupt and the object of later elimination.

The ninth-century Asturian *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, on the other hand, traces all corruption to origins external to Iberia. Towards the beginning of the text, immediately after the late seventh-century Visigothic king Wamba repels an attack from some 270 Muslim ships, we are introduced to a likely fictional figure named Ardabast.[41] After being exiled from "Greece" by the Byzantine emperor, Ardabast arrives in Spain, where he marries the king's niece. Their son Ervig becomes the next monarch, ushering in several generations of corrupt rulers who drive the kingdom into ruin. One version of the manuscript tradition ties the figures of Ardabast and Ervig to the Islamic conquests, saying, "And so that the cause of the invasion of the Saracens in Spain might be fully known to you, we relate the origins of King Ervig."[42]

In attempting to interpret this statement, scholars have suggested that Ardabast's foreign imposition into the Visigothic royal line would have been seen as problematic, either because it transmitted the royal line through women rather than men,[43] or perhaps due to a connection between Ervig's "oriental background and the Arabic invasion."[44] I

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[41] Juan Gil Fernández and Juan Ignacio Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III (Rotense y "A Sebastián"); Crónica Albeldense (y "Profética")*, trans. José-Luis Moralejo (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), 116-117.
[42] Ibid., 117, 197.
[43] Miquel Barceló, "Semen Regio. Comentarios sobre un texto de la versión 'ovetense' de la Crónica de Alfonso III," in *Historia social, pensamiento historiográfico y Edad Media: homenaje al Prof. Abilio Barbero de Aguilera*, ed. María Isabel Loring García (Madrid: Ediciones del Orto, 1997), 25–31; Lucy K. Pick, *Her Father's Daughter: Gender, Power, and Religion in the Early Spanish Kingdoms* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017), 52-55.
[44] Francis X. Murphy, "Julian of Toledo and the Fall of the Visigothic Kingdom in Spain," *Speculum* 27, no. 1 (1952), 11.

propose, however, that we examine the implication that Ardabast's Greek/Byzantine associations, specifically, were considered a source of corruption.[45] The Asturian chronicle holds Byzantium responsible for the Islamic conquests by connecting Ardabast's arrival and his insertion into the royal line with future kings' inability to combat Muslim threats like the one easily defeated by Wamba. This is only rectified when the fledgling Asturian monarchy and the pre-Ardabast Visigothic line are united in the figure of Alfonso I. The anonymous chronicler takes care to point out that Alfonso I is descended from the Visigothic kings Leovigild and Recceswinth, both of whom predate Ervig, effectively removing the line of Ardabast from power.[46] I will speculate further on the reasons for this anti-Byzantine sentiment later in the chapter, but here it suffices to observe that the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* casts both the Muslim conquerors and the Byzantine corruption that made way for them as foreign to the Iberian peninsula. Furthermore, the same manuscript tradition holds that the sons of Witiza turned to Muslims in North Africa for aid in their rebellion against Roderic—so the descendants of an outcast Byzantine turn to other foreigners, resulting in political upheaval and the fall of the dynasty.[47] Just as the line of Ardabast is excised from the Christian monarchy, the text seems to suggest, so too must the North African Muslims be expelled from Iberia. Removing corruption and expelling foreigners are thus conflated in this text.

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[45] Though I mostly use the word "Byzantine" for clarity, it is worth noting that the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* exclusively uses the term "Greek," rather than "Roman" when referring to the eastern empire and its subjects. This usage not only diverged from Byzantine self-identification, but also carried a derogatory valence and an association with paganism: Buchberger, *Shifting Ethnic Identities*, 55.

[46] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 131.

[47] Ibid., 121.

In the late twelfth-century *Mann bi-l-imāma* of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, on the other hand, many Iberians are portrayed as corrupt regardless of religion, while the Almohads are figured as a righteous punishing body. The *Mann* often applies words like infidels (*kāfirūn*) and hypocrites (*munāfiqūn*) to Muslim, Christian, and Jewish enemies alike, describing interfaith collaborations in Iberia with disdain. Such alliances brought about a state of *fitna* (religious and civil strife), which is used throughout the chronicle to signal internal divisions and corruption that needed to be eliminated by the Almohads. Corruption in this text is internal to Iberia, and salvation external. Almohad claims to Iberia were rooted in the idea of a religious rebirth similar to that invoked by Asturian and Leonese chronicles, but for the Almohads this was sufficient to legitimize their rule in Iberia on its own, and they did not attempt to portray themselves as geographical insiders.

The Almohads sought to return Islam to a state of original purity and saw themselves as replicating the religion and politics of early Islam. The *Mann* contains various favorable references to early Islamic figures that act as precedents ripe for renewal by the Almohads. These include the first Rashidūn caliphs of the seventh century,[48] the Umayyad caliphs in al-Andalus,[49] and Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād, the North African leader of the troops that first conquered parts of Iberia for Islam in the eighth century.[50] Though Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt acknowledges these precedents as important, he is careful to emphasize that the Almohads not only mirrored them, but in fact surpassed them. They

[48] ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *Mann bi-l-imāma: tārīkh bilād al-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus fī ʻahd al-Muwaḥḥidīn*, ed. ʻAbd al-Hādī Tāzī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1987), 260, 272.
[49] Ibid., 138.
[50] Ibid., 84, 166.

were also particularly scornful of their immediate predecessors, the Almoravids, whom they claimed had deviated from Islam in a number of ways, including by levying unjust taxes and inverting traditional gender roles. While Almohad claims to Iberia were based in part on the historical occupancy of the peninsula by Muslims, therefore, they made it clear that not just any Muslims were entitled to rule it, regardless of how long their families had resided there.

This meant that, for the Almohads, other Muslims could not only be corrupted but could also be worthy of elimination.[51] This was a feature shared by the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, which depicts the depopulation of entire cities and armies as a result of Almohad negligence and corruption. By contrast, in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the *Historia Silense* corruption is attributed to Christians but only on a fairly individual basis, highlighting the role of rulers and figures like Ardabast. The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* likewise tends to focus on rulers and nobles when describing the corruption and elimination of Iberian Christians, and is more interested in describing them as eventually submitting to the emperor whenever possible. While chroniclers of both religions portray their co-religionists as corruptible, therefore, the results of this corruption differ. Christian texts focus on the elimination of Muslims after Christian rulers are shown to have redeemed themselves, or even emphasize this elimination of Muslims as one of the means by which corrupted Christians could redeem themselves. Muslim texts, on the other hand, are much more willing to depict the elimination of corrupted Muslim

[51] Amira K. Bennison, "Almohad *tawḥīd* and its Implications for Religious Difference," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 2 (2010): 195–216.

populations, along with Christian and Jewish populations, by other righteous Muslims. This was also the case for Ibn Khaldūn, who was generally more concerned with cycles of Islamic dynasties. In his *Muqaddima*, the insider and outsider identities established in the corruption stage are even less attached to any specific geographical belonging or identity than in the *Mann*. Instead, they are more closely attached to tribal and rural identities and the *ʻaṣabiyya* (group feeling) they nurtured in a variety of places.

Stage 2: Elimination

Elimination constituted the second stage in the logic of resurrection. While partial destruction and reduction of enemy populations was by far the more common narrative in medieval texts, this chapter focuses on chronicles that describe a more complete or total destruction and elimination of enemy populations. This could be enacted by a variety of bodies and was often accompanied by substantial destruction of agriculture and infrastructure.

A first stage of elimination was generally effected by the corrupted populations themselves, serving as a further indicator of their corrupted state. Internal conflicts were often held up as a source of self-destruction. The *Mann bi-l-imāma* of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, for example, uses terms like *qafr*, denoting desolation and ruin, to describe the state to which Iberians of all religions were reduced through their own error and greed. Córdoba, the former capital of al-Andalus, was perhaps the most dramatic example of this. The city had apparently been largely abandoned by its residents in the course of a siege by the Andalusi rebel leader Ibn Mardanīsh. Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt tells us that only eighty-two men

native to Córdoba remained in the city when Almohad officials arrived to reclaim it for the caliph in 1162.[52] Similarly, the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* of Ibn Abī Zar‘ describes the Maghrib upon the arrival of the Marinids as virtually depopulated due to famine and *fitna* (civil and religious strife) under the Almohads.[53]

After initial internal destruction brought about by corrupted rulers and populations themselves, a second stage of elimination was often wrought by an external group. For internal religious and moral corruption to be followed by elimination at the hands of external forces often meant that such narratives operated within the familiar framework of divine scourge. The idea of a God-given punishment was a powerful one for both Muslims and Christians, and it was employed in narratives of conquerors and conquered alike. In chronicles written by the population on the receiving end of such treatment, the punishing scourge population was thought to be sent by God, but was not inherently righteous. It would logically be followed by a final stage of elimination, enacted by the initially corrupted and newly reformed population upon the scourge entity, which was seen as wicked by nature. On the other hand, chronicles written by supporters of the group enacting destruction upon a population understood as corrupted viewed it as a cleansing wave—an inherently righteous one which would not need to be followed by any further elimination.

So, for example, the *Mann bi-l-imāma* recounts the destruction and depopulation of Muslim communities in al-Andalus at the hands of Christians. Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt says

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[52] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 140.
[53] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 49; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 80.

that the Christian leader of Ávila “left desolate the cultivated lands of the believers with his raids,”[54] and that it was necessary for the caliph Abū Ya‘qūb Yūsuf to have “repopulated the deserted borderlands against the greed of the Christians (*al-Naṣārā*).”[55] This destruction and desertion are emphasized as a kind of death. Christian forces who abandon a siege on the city of Cuenca after learning of the imminent arrival of the Almohads are said to leave the city’s sick and starving residents “as if parting from a shroud and leaving a grave.”[56] The arrival of the Almohads acts as a scourge on both Iberian Christians and corrupted Andalusi Muslims, and the Almohad caliph is described as healing what had become a diseased religion.[57] In these examples, the sickness of corruption is rendered literal, underlining the inability of Christians to rule in ways that benefited a Muslim populace.

The *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* of Ibn Abī Zar‘ likewise emphasizes multiple waves of elimination and destruction. When relating the end of Ifranī and Maghrāwī power and the rise of the Almoravids in the Maghrib, the chronicler tells us that because the ruling tribes abused their subjects, “God stripped them of their command and withdrew his blessing from them…and gave power over them to the Almoravids, so they eliminated their command, scattering their assembly and killing them and expelling them from the lands of the Maghrib.”[58] Though the Almoravids themselves were eventually overcome by the

[54] “ويقفز بغاراته عمارة المؤمنين” (read يقفر for يقفز): Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 428.
[55] “وأسكن الثغور القفرة من كلب النصارى عليها”: Ibid., 167.
[56] “وتركهم كأنهم قد نشروا من كفن وخرجوا من جدث”: Ibid., 416.
[57] Ibid., 103.
[58] “فلما فعلوا ذلك، سلبهم الله ملكهم، وغير نعمته لديهم...فسلط الله عليهم المرابطين، فأزالوا ملكهم وشتتوا جمعهم وقتلوهم وأخرجوهم عن بلاد المغرب”: Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 144; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 217.

Almohads, Ibn Abī Zar‘ depicts them as a temporary corrective and scourge on the corrupt Banū Ifran and Banū Maghrāwī—who were not merely defeated but removed from the Maghrib entirely.

Christian chroniclers from Asturias and León write even more explicitly within a scourge paradigm, calling Muslim conquerors pagans, Chaldeans, Amorites, Assyrians, and Moabites. The use of such labels does double work, declaring that Muslims are foreign to Christianity as well as to the peninsula. It places Muslims within an earlier Biblical temporality, in which their wickedness and ultimate defeat are already predetermined. Their capacity to destroy is not disputed, but it is not permanent, nor does it stem from righteousness. In other cases, Muslims are further dehumanized and compared to divine disasters, emphasizing their destructive power within a scourge paradigm and denying their coevalness. Along with descriptions of Muslims devastating Iberia with iron and flame, destroying churches, and depopulating provinces, the *Historia Silense* makes direct and indirect comparisons between the Islamic invasions and the flood of Genesis.[59] In its opening lines, it says that Spain was "inundated with the strength of the barbarians," causing study and learning, once so abundant, to vanish.[60] Not long after, the text is more explicit, explaining that "in the manner of the time of Noah, divine providence allowed barbarian peoples to occupy Spain, sparing few Christians, as the flood had the earth."[61]

[59] Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 129.
[60] "Innundata barbarorum fortitudine": Ibid., 113.
[61] "Diuina prouidentia…more temporum Noe ut diluvium terram paucis christianorum reseruatis, barbaras gentes Yspaniam ocupare permisit": Ibid., 118.

In the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, on the other hand, both Muslim and Christian armies are repeatedly described as floods or locusts.[62] The same image of spreading locusts (*jarād muntashir*) would later be adopted by Ibn Khaldūn in his description of the Banū Hilāl in the *Kitāb al-ʿibar*. Michael Brett argues that this phrase held an apocalyptic valence, pointing to its appearance in Qur'ān 54:7 immediately preceding the story of the flood of Noah.[63] While its more frequent and indiscriminate use in the *Rawḍ* suggests that it was not intended apocalyptically, it is significant that this allusion to the plagues of Egypt and the scriptural flood was repeatedly connected to military conquest. In this way, Ibn Abī Zarʿ presents both Muslim and Christian armies as scourge bodies who enacted elimination in cycles, each responding to and taking advantage of corruption in the other. The *Chronicle of the Emperor Alfonso* also compares an army made up of Christians and Muslims under the command of Alfonso VII to locusts, drawing on a description from the Book of Judith.[64]

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[62] For instance, during the 1086 battle of Zallāqa/Sagrajas, the Christian army is described as descending on the Almoravids like spreading locusts (Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 186; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 284); in the early twelfth century a Christian army from "the parties of the Franks" is compared to ants and locusts (Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 206; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 317); when the Almohad caliph arrived in al-Andalus for jihad in 1211 his troops descended upon the land like spreading locusts, but only a year later at the infamous battle of Las Navas de Tolosa he was defeated by Christian troops described in the same terms (Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 308, 314; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 456, 465); the Marinids initially enter the Maghrib, devastated by the mismanagement of the Almohads, like a flood or a moonlit night and like ants or spreading locusts (Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 370; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 539); and during a Marinid emir's expedition to al-Andalus for jihad in 1275, his army is described as descending upon the Guadalquivir like a massive flood or spreading locusts (Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 596; Ibn Abī Zarʿ, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 412).

[63] Michael Brett, "The Way of the Nomad," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 58, no. 2 (1995): 251–269.

[64] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 166; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 179.

As with the scriptural flood, Astur-Leonese chronicles often narrate the *near* total destruction of the corrupted Christian Iberian population, in which that which is corrupted beyond redemption is destroyed and that which is worth preserving is given space to begin anew. This constitutes the first stage of rebirth, but not the final one, because the scourge population has yet to be eliminated. To this end, Astur-Leonese texts employ plant and nature imagery focused on regrowth to narrate the translation of Gothic power and lineage after the conquests. The *Historia Silense* says, "And so, after such ruin to the Spains, it is worth mentioning how divine piety, which wounds and heals, populated, with renewed efforts and as if from a revived root, the fallen branch of the Gothic people."[65] Pelayo further proclaims, in a speech given to his men in a mountain cave, his intention "to germinate the people of the Goths from a few, just as many sprang from a mustard seed."[66] The mustard seed is likewise invoked by Pelayo in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, where he continues, "Through this little mountain…the well-being of Spain and the army of the Gothic people will be restored."[67] Pelayo and the Visigothic soldiers gathered with him in the cave at the "root" of Mount Auseba, "naturally fortified," are therefore the seeds of what will become the kingdom of Asturias.[68] As swordbearer to the last Visigothic kings, Pelayo is able to revive the military and political power of the fallen Christian monarchy. This is conveyed more explicitly at the end of

[65] "Igitur, post tantam Yspaniarum ruynam, opere pretium est referre qualiter diuina pietas, que percutit et sanat, velud ex rediuiua radice virgultum, gentem Gotorum resumptis viribus pullulare fecerit": Ibid., 131.
[66] "Gentem Gotorum de paucis, velud plurima sata ex grano sinapis, germinare credimus": Ibid., 133.
[67] "Per istum modicum monticulum…sit Spanie salus et Gotorum gentis exercitus reparatus" and "ab isto modico monticulo…sit Yspanie salus et Gotorum gentis exercitus reparatus": Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 126-127.
[68] "Ad radicem cuius montis rupis quedam, natura non artificis opere munita, in inmensum tendens, claudit speluncam": Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 131.

the *Silense*'s section on Pelayo, which states that "the remaining people of the Goths, as if emerging from sleep, gradually became accustomed to having order, to follow signs in battle, to observe legitimate authority in the kingdom, to devoutly restore churches and their ornaments in peace."[69]

Sleeping Goths, salvaged roots, mustard seeds, the few faithful preserved on Noah's ark—these images and allusions emphasize that the destruction wrought by the scourge population is severe but not total. In Astur-Leonese chronicles, this near totality is very much tied up with a neo-Gothic ideology, marking a shift from the *Chronicle of 754*'s description of Spain as a pomegranate in August, which the Muslim conquest and rule destroyed beyond hope of revival. In later Astur-Leonese chronicles, on the other hand, the Visigothic legacy is temporarily and temporally suspended before its descendants can reattain, and perhaps exceed, their previous heights. They are also displaced geographically, and continuous references are made to the translation of political power from the old capital, Toledo, to a new one, Oviedo.[70]

In the *Mann bi-l-imāma*, the Almohads are depicted as righteous agents of elimination, bringing divine punishment not as a temporary scourge but as a permanent correcting force. As a result, we see less emphasis on near total destruction and more room for complete elimination. Iberia is continually referred to as an empty, desolated

[69] "Ceterum Gotorum gens, velud a sompno surgens, ordines habere paulatim consuefacit sciliced in bello sequi signa, in regno legitimum obseruare inperium, in pace eclesias et eorundem deuota ornamenta restaurare": Ibid., 135-136.

[70] The *Crónica Albeldense* makes explicit the translation of Gothic religion and politics alike to the new kingdom of Asturias, saying that Alfonso II "established the entire order of the Goths in Oviedo, just as it had been in Toledo, as much in the church as in the palace" ("Omnemque Gotorum ordinem, sicuti Toledo fuerat, tam in ecclesia quam palatio in Ouetao cuncta statuit"): Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 174.

wasteland in need of repopulation. In the text's closing lines, for instance, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt reiterates that seeing to "the repopulation of the desolated lands of this island" is a desire dear to the caliph's heart.[71] He also describes an 1162 battle in Granada in which the opposing forces are blinded by a divine dust storm and driven into the river, where their bodies disintegrate and disappear entirely, after which the city needs to be revived and repopulated.[72] In cases where Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt makes it clear that preexisting populations remain, he does so mainly in order to demonstrate how dramatically they have been reduced, as with the case of the eighty-two men in Córdoba.

The *Mann* also portrays the Almohads as righteous agents of elimination by describing their devastation of the land as a kind of sacrifice. Such is the case when Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt describes an 1165 victory against Ibn Mardanīsh and the sacking of territory around his capital, Murcia. He says the Almohads raid and raze the gardens around the city as part of their celebrations. These festivities begin with the observation of *'īd al-aḍḥā*, the festival of the sacrifice, and last for many days.[73] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt records a letter to the caliph that conveys the importance of this victory by declaring simply, "This is the conquest of al-Andalus"—something of an overstatement, considering that Ibn Mardanīsh would not be completely defeated until his death seven years later. Notwithstanding this, the letter emphasizes the fruitfulness of the land around Murcia, depicting it as a kind of paradise and saying that God "joined multiple holidays

[71] "كان في نفس أمير المؤمنين بن أمير المؤمنين رضي الله عنه من إسكان البلاد القفرة في هذه الجزيرة": Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 436.
[72] Ibid., 133-134.
[73] Ibid., 200.

into one for [the Almohads]."[74] There are precedents in the western Mediterranean for using the feast of the sacrifice to celebrate a triumph over enemies of the state.[75] Whether or not Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt had these in mind, he seems to present the Almohad conquest as a kind of ritual sacrifice, a military destruction and devastation that precedes the spiritual purification and physical revival of al-Andalus and its people. A similar episode appears in the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* when an early Marinid emir is described as celebrating the feast of the sacrifice after having successfully routed an enemy and razed the countryside around Tlemcen.[76]

In the multi-stage elimination of the Christian chronicles, there is an initial near total destruction by an external force, which is later removed by a redeemed and reformed Christian power. In the later stage, there is much more emphasis on total elimination and depopulation. This is reflected in the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*'s division into two books, the first of which deals largely with Christian rebellions, while the second is more focused on campaigns against Muslims. Earlier Astur-Leonese texts emphasize depopulation and repopulation campaigns. According to the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, cities held by Muslims in the Duero and upper Ebro valleys are supposed to

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[74] "وقد جمع الله لهم الأعياد في عيد...فهو فتح الأندلس": Ibid., 207.

[75] The Fatimid caliph-imams marked the holiday by carrying out the ritual sacrifice of an animal themselves, and the open-air hall in which this ceremony was performed has been interpreted as a "symbolic battlefield where the *imām* confronted his enemies." Additionally, an Andalusi Umayyad caliph is said to have executed his own son in place of the sacrificial animal in 940. A year earlier, also on the feast of the sacrifice, the same caliph executed soldiers that had betrayed him. Maribel Fierro, "Plants, Mary the Copt, Abraham, Donkeys and Knowledge: Again on Batinism during the Umayyad Caliphate in Al-Andalus," in *Differenz und Dynamik im Islam. Festschrift Für Heinz Halm Zum 70. Geburtstag* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2012), 128, 138-139, 141.

[76] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 406; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 588.

have been depopulated in attacks led by Alfonso I.[77] The *Chronicle of Albelda* likewise says that Alfonso I "made a wasteland of (*eremauit*) that which they call the Campos Góticos to the Duero river, and extended the kingdom of the Christians."[78] In the *Silense*, Alfonso's brother, Fruela, takes land from the sacrilegious dominion of the "barbarians" extending from the maritime borders of Asturias and Galicia to the river Duero, including all the cities and castles contained therein. He also "extinguished all the Ishmaelites there by sword and gave their possessions over to the law of the Christians."[79] In the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, Ordoño I destroys the city of Albelda "down to its foundations," killing its entire garrison of Muslim soldiers. The text notes Ordoño's practice of selling civilian populations, including women and children, into slavery.[80] This description is mirrored in the *Historia Silense*.[81] In the *Chronicle of Albelda*, Alfonso III "devastated (*heremauit*) and destroyed" Coria, Idanha, and other cities in Lusitania,[82] and "made a wasteland (*eremauit*) of Coimbra and populated it with Galicians."[83] According to the *Historia Silense*, when Ordoño II was in charge of Galicia before he became king, he took an army to the "province of Baetica" in the south. The anachronistic use of the ancient Roman place name obfuscates Muslim political control and displaces al-Andalus temporally. After devastating all the surrounding fields and burning all the villages, Ordoño II took

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[77] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 132-133.
[78] "Campos quem dicunt Goticos usque ad flumen Dorium eremauit et X̃pianorum regnum extendit": Ibid., 173.
[79] "Omnes quoque Ysmaelitas gladio extinguens, eorumdem possessiones iuri christianorum mancipauit": Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 141-142.
[80] "Ispam uero ciuitatem usque ad fundamenta dextruxit": Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 148-149.
[81] Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 148.
[82] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 177.
[83] "Antezam pace adquisit, Conimbriam ab inimicis possessam eremauit et Gellecis postea populauit": Ibid., 176.

the city of Regel, "which of all the western cities of the barbarians was considered the strongest and most opulent." He then "consumed all the Chaldean fighters by sword, with the maximum number of captives and spoils."[84] Later, Ordoño went beyond Mérida, and having devastated the province, invaded the castle of Culebra, killing all the "barbarians" and capturing women and children, along with their gold, silver, and silk ornaments.[85] He likewise burned the suburbs of the city of Elbora.[86]

Similarly, in the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* accounts of Marinid expeditions in al-Andalus devolve into an almost mind-numbing list of places where they burned crops and orchards, and tallies of captured women and livestock. The same is true of the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*'s descriptions of the campaigns of Alfonso VII and his commanders. Whether or not it is exaggerated, this kind of violent emptying is painstakingly detailed in the Christian and Muslim chronicles under consideration. The use of the word *(h)eremauit* at multiple points in the *Chronicle of Albelda*, evoking wilderness and wastelands, is comparable to the use of words like *qafr* in the *Mann bi-l-imāma*. Such violence makes way for rebirth, restoration, and resurrection. The *Silense* says that after one battle, "there was such a slaughter that if an astrologer attempted to count so many thousands of Moors, surely the number of corpses would be beyond him, on account of the multitude." The chronicler continues, "The limbs of the Amorites

[84] "Dein vastatis circumquaque agris et villis incensis, primo inpetu Regel ciuitatem, que inter omnes occidentales barbarorum vrbes fortior opulentiorque videbatur…omnesque bellatores Caldeos gladio consumens, cum maximo captiuorum spoliorumque": Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 154.
[85] Ibid., 155.
[86] Ibid., 156.

covered all the mountains and hills, the forests and fields."[87] Such a description removes Muslims from the Iberian landscape as dramatically as they had been inserted centuries earlier, a flood of limbs as evidence of the receding tide of the "flood of barbarians." It also reinforces the contrast set up between the Muslim and Christian relationship to Iberian land in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the *Historia Silense*. Both contain an episode in which tens of thousands of Muslim forces that attempted to rout Pelayo from his mountain refuge are forced to flee onto another mountaintop, which quakes and throws them into a river below, in which traces of their deaths are still visible centuries later when the river overflows.[88] Whereas Pelayo and his followers are able to take refuge in the earth, to spring from it and restore it, the land is shown to reject Muslims, leaving grisly and enduring records of their defeat.

Despite these triumphs, the *Historia Silense* describes multiple cycles of corruption and destruction before the realization of an ultimate rebirth, accommodating a longer history of shifts in the balance of power than was required of the Asturian chronicles. We are told that in the time of Sancho I, "due to the wickedness of those who had ruled…divine permission allowed the Moors to once again dominate the Spains, just as it had the Israelites, on account of various shameful acts."[89] The chronicle presents total elimination and depopulation as a primary goal of Muslims as well as Christians,

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[87] "Tantam namque ex eis stragem fecisse fertur, quod, si quis astrorum investigator tot milia Maurorum computare conaretur, profecto pre multitudine, cadauerum modum numerus excederet… omnes montes et colles, siluas et agros examines Amorreorum artus tegebant": Ibid., 157-158.
[88] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 128-129; Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 134-135.
[89] "Pro quorundam iniquitate que regnauerant, quia expulerant alii socios regno, alii efoderant, vt pater istius, fratribus occulos, sicuti gentes pro diuersis flagitiis ysrraelitico populo, Mauros Ispaniis diuina permissio dominari rursus permisit": Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 173.

saying that along with destroying many churches and sacred places, “the barbarians strove to depopulate Castile by iron and fire.”[90] The famous Muslim *ḥājib* (chamberlain), al-Manṣūr/Almanzor, is depicted as devastating cities and depopulating the land.[91] He is even able to cross the Duero river, which the chronicler identifies as an important border between Muslim and Christian territory. A timely blizzard holds al-Manṣūr off for a year, but afterwards “divine vengeance” grants him successful invasions for the next twelve years, until his death, and he takes León along with other cities.[92] The magnitude of these losses is demonstrated by the statement that “truly in that time the whole of the divine cult in Spain perished.” This statement parallels the beginning of the text, which laments that study and learning vanished from Iberia entirely following the Islamic invasions.[93]

The backslide into corruption and complacency is rectified by Vermudo II, who diligently continues the task of expelling Muslims.[94] Though al-Manṣūr gains so much ground that he manages to approach the tomb of Saint James in Galicia with the intention of destroying it, he then flees out of fear. Despite the churches, monasteries, and palaces that the *ḥājib* burns in his wake, Vermudo II is able to restore the saint’s tomb.[95] The king is portrayed as a kind of second Pelayo, pushing back Muslims from the northwest corner of Iberia atop his horse, Pelayuelo.[96] Fernando I likewise continues the work of

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[90] “Barbari Castella ferro et igne depopulare niterentur”: Ibid., 150.
[91] Ibid., 172.
[92] Ibid., 174-175.
[93] “Eadem uero tenpestate in Yspania omnis diuinus cultus periit, omnis christicolarum gloria decidit”: Ibid., 175.
[94] Ibid., 176.
[95] Ibid., 172.
[96] Ibid., 182.

expelling Muslims.[97] Immediately after being anointed he invades Muslim territory and begins to depopulate it—perhaps too quickly, since he has not yet put down internal rebellions.[98] Nonetheless, after sixteen years, having finally gotten his affairs in order, he resumes his efforts. We are told that throughout his life, Fernando finishes all that he undertakes, which "terrified the barbarians like seeing a snake." He depopulates many Muslim villages and castles and wins numerous cities whose churches had been in "sacrilegious hands."[99] We also see, however, that Fernando uses depopulation and the burning of villages as a negotiation tactic to achieve temporary peace when dealing with Muslim leaders, not solely as a means of eliminating them.[100] And despite his best efforts, Fernando does in fact leave the work of expulsion and depopulation incomplete, cut off by illness in his campaign against Celtiberia (another archaism) and the city of Valencia.[101] Presumably Alfonso VI, whose reign was the ultimate, if never realized, narrative goal of the *Silense* chronicler, would have been depicted as working towards more total elimination.

In the Asturian chronicles, on the other hand, we see more confidence that destruction by Muslims has come to an end and that Christians are ascendant. The *Prophetic Chronicle* predicts the imminent demise of Muslim rule in Iberia. The *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, while not quite apocalyptic in its triumphalism, nonetheless makes it clear that Christian Iberia's time as the object of scourges is at an end. At the

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[97] Ibid., 173.
[98] Ibid., 183-184.
[99] "Velud viso serpente, corda barbarorum perterrefecerat… sacrilegis manibus": Ibid., 189.
[100] Ibid., 198.
[101] Ibid., 206-207.

end of the chronicle we are told that a new scourge in the form of the "pagan" Vikings, having been successfully repelled from Asturias, proceeds to terrorize Muslims in Iberia and North Africa before moving on to Greece.[102] Muslims become objects of a scourge themselves, along with Byzantium, which is a source of corruption throughout the chronicle.

The disparagement of Greek Christians and the elimination of Muslims are also connected in the *Historia Silense*. Before Fernando attempts to conquer Coimbra, he visits the tomb of Saint James. His subsequent victory is heralded by a divine vision in Compostela, though our chronicler maligns the recipient of this good news—a pilgrim from Jerusalem who is believed to be Greek, "poor of spirit and of works."[103] The pilgrim prays at the door of the church day and night, learning the local language bit by bit. In this way, he hears the locals (*indigenas*) entering the church regularly and calling the apostle "a good knight," a description the pilgrim cannot credit.[104] That night he has an ecstatic vision of Saint Jacob, who holds keys in his hand and chides the pilgrim for deriding those who call him a knight. A huge shining horse approaches the doors, and the saint mounts it and shows the keys to the pilgrim, who had no previous knowledge of the king's campaign, so that he might know that Fernando will take Coimbra the next day. "And so," we are told, "the madness of the Moors was expelled from Portugal."[105] The episode and its baseless suggestion that non-Iberian Christians cannot comprehend the

[102] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 148-149.
[103] "Et spiritu et opibus pauper": Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 191-192.
[104] "Bonum militem": Ibid., 192.
[105] "Expulsa itaque de Portugale Maurorum rabie": Ibid., 193.

peninsular conflation of a saint and a warrior again pairs the idea that neither Byzantines nor Muslims truly belong in Iberia.

The chronicle also displays a fair amount of anti-Frankish sentiment. The first instance of elimination on the part of a righteous Christian king in the *Historia Silense* occurs when Wamba razes the city of Nimes, which the rebellious duke Paul held with the aid of the Franks.[106] In this way, the chronicler establishes the right of Visigothic kings to rule in a region that was at various points claimed by the Franks. Rather than being portrayed as natural allies against Islam, Franks are understood as enemies of Christian Iberians. Again following the nativist and anti-Frankish spirit of the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, the *Silense*'s author assures us that Spain's redemption must come from within. We are told that "no foreign people" are known to have saved Iberia from such ruin, not even Charlemagne, "whom the Franks falsely assert took several cities from the hands of the pagans below the Pyrenees."[107] On the contrary, the chronicler suggests that Charlemagne was "corrupted by gold, in the manner of the Franks," more interested in gaining riches from alliances with Muslims and the conquest of Iberian cities than freeing the church from "barbarians."[108] The *Silense* takes this stance while consciously drawing on Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne* and Thegan of Trier's *Deeds of Emperor Louis*,

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[106] "Auxilio Francorum fretus apud Nemausum rebelauit…ex parte ad solum usque destruxit": Ibid., 117. This episode also occurs in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*: Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 116-117.

[107] "Ceterum a tanta ruyna…nemo exterarum gentium Ispaniam subleuase cognoscitur. Sed neque Carolus, quem infra Pireneos montes quasdam ciuitates a minibus paganorum eripuisse Franci falso asserunt": Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 129.

[108] "More Francorum auro corruptus": Ibid., 130. Similar aspersions are cast upon the Franks later in the chronicle as well: 145-146.

adopting Frankish models of imperial biography while refusing to praise their subjects.[109] The negative depiction of the Carolingians was not universal, and the twelfth-century *Poem of Almería* appended to the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* explicitly and positively compares the Leonese and Carolingian emperors, calling them equals.[110] The *Historia Silense*, however, followed the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, with the Franks as the objects of Visigothic campaigns and defeat at the hands of *muwallad*s, from whom they accepted gifts.[111]

*Muwallad*s were Iberians who converted to Islam after the conquests. Like the Franks and Byzantines, they were the target of narrative disparagement and elimination in many Christian chronicles. Both the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the *Historia Silense* tell of a *muwallad* named Mūsā, "a Goth by nation but a Mohammetan by rite" who defeats the Franks, conquerw a great deal of Iberian territory, and declarew himself the third king of Spain along with the Asturian and Umayyad rulers.[112] In response, Ordoño I destroys his newly built city of Albelda "to its foundation."[113] The *Silense* actually praises Mūsā, saying that though he was duped and lured away from Christianity, he "did not abandon the magnanimity of his origins."[114] Due to his ancestry, which is superior to that of the "barbarians," he is stronger in arms as well. We are thus able to delineate a

[109] Juan A. Estévez Sola, ed., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII, Pars III: Historia Silensis*, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, Vol. 71B (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 92.
[110] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 255.
[111] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 118-119, 146-149.
[112] "Natione Gotus sed ritu Mamentiano": Ibid., 144.
[113] "Ipsam uero ciuitatem usque ad fundamenta dextruxit": Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 148-149; "Usque ad fundamentum destruxit": Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 148.
[114] Ibid., 146.

kind of hierarchy, in which those without Gothic ancestry ranked the lowest, followed by those with Gothic ancestry but who had betrayed the Christian religion, and topped by Gothic Christians. It was important within a neo-Gothic framework to maintain the inherent (and inherited) superiority of Goths as a kin group. Christianity, however, was an equally critical ingredient for ultimate success. Franks, as non-Goths, therefore fell into the same category as foreign Muslims and could be subject to defeat at their hands.

However they may be praised and however much they may accomplish, permanent success or political control is never ascribed to *muwallad*s in these chronicles, and they are ultimately eliminated. Their ability and willingness to betray both Muslims and Christians is emphasized. In the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, for example, a *muwallad* (Latin *mollitus*) from Mérida, Muḥammad, rebels against the caliph, fighting him in many battles. Eventually Muhammad is forced out of al-Andalus and turns to the king of Asturias for help. He is received with honor and lives in Galicia with his followers for seven years, at which point he conspires against the king. Alfonso gathers an army and surrounds the fortress occupied by Muḥammad. He decapitates the *muwallad* and kills more than 50,000 Muslims from al-Andalus who came to Muḥammad's aid.[115] *Muwallad*s are thus depicted as traitors with no place in the political order, disloyal to both Muslim and Christian leaders in the peninsula, and they are always captured or killed by Asturian kings. In this way, Christian chronicles acknowledged the Iberian origins of *muwallad*s, but denied them any future claims on land or leadership.

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[115] Wolf, trans., *Conquerors and Chroniclers*, 174; "Plus quam qiunquaginta milia Sarracenorum, qui ad eum ex prouinciis Spanie aduenerant": Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 140-142.

Elimination in Muslim and Christian chronicles from Iberia and North Africa thus took a variety of forms. It could be inflicted by a corrupt population upon itself, by a wicked scourge population that would in turn be an eventual object of elimination, or by a righteous scourge body that would then usher in the final rebirth stage. Along with the captivity and death of enemy populations, cities and crops were routinely described as utterly destroyed, emphasizing the totality of the elimination and the need for rebirth. Chroniclers across the Strait invoked scriptural floods, plagues, and scourges, imbuing elimination with spiritual as well as secular purpose. While Muslim and Christian chroniclers justified elimination on a religious basis, Christians were far more likely to connect religious deviance and corruption to foreign origins, denying their enemies any historical or inherited right to reside or rule in Iberia. For Muslims, on the other hand, religious orthodoxy exceeded claims to prior residency, whether in Iberia or North Africa.

Stage 3: Rebirth

After sufficient elimination of corruption and enemy populations had occurred, the path was cleared for the rebirth stage of the logic of resurrection. Rebirth was both physical and spiritual and, like corruption, tended to center on a ruler or dynasty. Chronicles employing the logic of resurrection tended to speak of the rebirth of people and specific places, rather than merely the revival of more abstract or intangible concepts, like truth or law. Chroniclers often described the resurrection of people's souls, hopes, or adherence to religion, emphasizing the rebirth of a specific dynasty as a metonym for all

the people under its rule. They also detailed the reconstruction of religious, military, and civil infrastructure, along with renewed agricultural abundance and infusions of new inhabitants as a result of resettlement efforts.

While Latin chronicles tend to speak of restoration, the *Mann bi-l-imāma* employs language of revival (*iḥyā'*), renewal (*tajdīd*), and resurrection (*nashr*). In particular, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt and the poets he quotes make repeated use of variations of the verb *aḥyā*, meaning to revive or bring to life, to describe the Almohad intervention and the actions of the caliph in the Iberian peninsula.[116] Caliphal expeditions to al-Andalus are often spoken of in terms of jihad and revival.[117] The idea of revival is invoked multiple times to refer to the Almohad capture of Badajoz and is associated with the expulsion of Christians from the city.[118] In the wake of the near depopulation of Córdoba, the chronicler offers praise "to he who gave them life (*aḥyāhum*) after their death." He adds that Córdoba "dawned" with the arrival of the Almohad *sayyid*s, and people returned from the countryside to the city.[119] We are told that poets congratulate the caliph for "the victory that had brought life to the island of al-Andalus,"[120] and a poet quoted by Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt praises the Almohad caliph for reviving and resurrecting (*aḥyā wa-anshara*) those who were dead of hope in al-Andalus.[121]

[116] This may also function as an allusion to the *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* (*The Revival of the Religious Sciences*), the famous work of al-Ghazālī, who Ibn Tūmart is supposed to have met during his travels in the east. The work had been burned on several occasions by the Almoravids.
[117] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 323, 349.
[118] Ibid., 314-315.
[119] "فسبحان من أحياهم بعد ذلك مماتهم...وأصبحت بهم قرطبة": Ibid., 140-141.
[120] "هذا الفتح الذي أحيى جزيرة الأندلس": Ibid., 142.
[121] "أحيى وأنشر فيها ميت الامل": Ibid., 99.

Likewise, after the Almohads retook Granada, we hear that the city is improved and God turns to pacifying and settling it.[122] On a practical level, this probably refers both to the fact that many of the city's residents were killed in the fighting and that additional Almohad troops and officials would need to be settled there to secure it. More symbolically, however, the idea that the city was empty and needed to be rebuilt, both spiritually and physically, is an important one. We are told that the caliph's efforts to provision the city and attack its rebellious neighbors "revived [Granada] after its death… until [the Almohads] returned its wasteland to a flourishing place, and its ruins were populated and safe."[123] Along with restoring cities like Córdoba and Granada, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt also describes major construction projects, including massive fortifications on Gibraltar and the founding of Rabat.

Astur-Leonese chronicles present a similar vision of the rebirth stage, pairing the physical and spiritual revival of the church with the restoration of municipal and military infrastructure. The *Chronicle of Alfonso III* says that following the death of a Muslim prefect in northern Iberia, "the *patria* was populated and the church was restored."[124] Some cities, like the Asturian capital of Oviedo, were newly built. Others, after having been long deserted, were revived and resettled by those who had lived in Asturias for several generations, as well as by Christians continuing to migrate northwards out of Muslim Spain.[125] The corruption brought to Spain by Ardabast, which led to Islamic

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[122] Ibid., 136.
[123] "فحييت بعد موتها بهذا النظر الجميل...حتى عاد قفرها عامراً، وخرابها ساكناً آمناً": Ibid., 137.
[124] "Tunc populatur patria, restauratur eclesia": Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 130-131.
[125] Ibid., 144-147.

conquest and rule, had been overcome spiritually and destroyed physically, replaced with a revived Christian Iberian monarchy. The *Chronicle of Albelda* likewise says that under Alfonso III "all the temples of the Lord were restored, and a city with royal palaces was built in Oviedo."[126] Ordoño I populated and fortified various cities, several of which the chronicler tells us had been successfully invaded by Alfonso I.[127] The *Historia Silense* suggests that these towns had been long abandoned before the rebuilding campaigns of Ordoño I.[128] The *Chronicle of Alfonso III* provides a list of the cities populated by the text's namesake, without any explicit indication that they were destroyed beforehand.[129] The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, while focused on more recent events, casts Alfonso VII as a salvific figure, restoring serfs and estates to the church, repopulating lands and villages destroyed in war, and planting vines and trees.[130] It devotes a great deal of time to the emperor's efforts to retain and protect Toledo, the historical capital of the Visigoths, which had been conquered from the Muslims by his grandfather Alfonso VI.

The *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* also emphasizes the connection between physical rebuilding and spiritual renewal. Though Ibn Abī Zar‘ addresses developments throughout North Africa and Iberia, the history of Fes is at the heart of his narrative. Significant space at the beginning of the text is devoted to the establishment of the city under the Idrisids in

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[126] "Ab hoc principe omnia temple Domini restaurantur et ciuitas in Ouetao cum regias aulas hedificantur": Ibid., 177-178.
[127] Ibid., 173, 175.
[128] Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 145.
[129] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 176-177.
[130] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 183; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 194.

the late eighth century. Ibn Abī Zar‘ relates an anecdote that Fes was built on the site of an ancient city named Sāf, which happens to be Fes spelled backwards in Arabic. After Sāf was destroyed, it was foretold that the city would be renewed and revived by a man named Idrīs.[131] The *Rawḍ* follows the city through a series of ups and downs in the centuries that followed, but the destruction and depopulation it suffered under the Almohads and its subsequent revival under the Marinids are mentioned multiple times throughout the chronicle. The Marinid restoration of Fes, which is presumed to be final, thus serves as a microcosm of their renewal of the Idrisid legacy in the Maghrib more generally.

Though the *Historia Silense* is unfinished, never reaching its ultimate stated purpose of describing the deeds of emperor Alfonso VI, the chronicle is brought full circle with the translation of Saint Isidore's body from Muslim Seville to Christian León.[132] The text's opening line laments the death of study and learning in the peninsula following the eighth-century Islamic invasions. In one of the chronicle's last episodes, the body of Visigothic Spain's most heralded scholar, who "by his words and works decorated all of Spain," is returned to the kingdom that still identifies as Gothic.[133] Christians are not alone in their recognition of Isidore's achievements and importance, and a Muslim leader adorns the saint's coffin with a magnificent cloth before it is moved from Seville.[134] That the body must be translated, since Seville remains in Muslim hands,

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[131] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 46; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 73.
[132] Pérez de Urbel and González Ruiz-Zorilla, eds., *Historia Silense*, 200.
[133] "Totam Yspaniam suo opera decorauit et verbo": Ibid., 201.
[134] Ibid., 202.

is only a partial victory, perhaps further diminished by the fact that the Christian delegation initially came to the city to recover the body of an entirely different saint. Nonetheless, the episode signals a symbolic return of pre-Islamic Spain's intellectual and religious heritage. The anonymous chronicler positions himself as part of this renewal by composing the kind of account of the deeds of the Spanish which, at the beginning of the text, he states was no longer possible after the Islamic conquests. The translation of Isidore, a prolific history writer, was therefore part of a broader return to the Visigothic chronicle tradition, and of deeds worth chronicling.

If revival in the *Historia Silense* is evidenced by the return of scholarship, it is even more closely associated with the power of literature in the *Mann bi-l-imāma*. In the Almohad text, revival is expressed and effected via the caliph's use of the written and spoken word. Effective communication of news and caliphal decrees was especially critical given the widespread and itinerant nature of the caliphate.[135] Though officially based in Marrakesh, Almohad caliphs were often away on military campaigns for years at a time. Seville became a regional capital under the second caliph, Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf, and the Almohads took great care to assure populations on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar of their continued attention and power. One of the ways they did this was by strictly regulating the content and delivery of the *khuṭba*, or Friday sermon.[136] Along with formulae extolling the virtues of the *mahdī* and praising the caliphs, carefully crafted

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[135] Manuela Marín, "El califa almohade: una presencia activa y benéfica," in *Los almohades: problemas y perspectivas*, ed. Patrice Cressier, Maribel Fierro, and Luis Molina, vol. 2 (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2005), 451–73.

[136] "For the *khaṭīb* did not merely represent the caliph, he *rendered him present* through the invocation of his name and titles in the *khuṭba*": Linda G. Jones, "The Preaching of the Almohads: Loyalty and Resistance across the Strait of Gibraltar," *Medieval Encounters* 19, no. 1–2 (2013), 95.

taqādīm were sent for proclamation along with the *khuṭba* to announce the appointment of new officials by the central government.[137] *Khuṭba*s and praise poetry were also delivered after military victories as a means of honoring the Almohad caliphs and highlighting the divine support they received. It was often ordered that news of such victories and other caliphal accomplishments be pronounced throughout the empire. All such communications are noted and frequently recorded in their entirety in the *Mann*.

By incorporating them into his chronicle and describing the miraculous revival that resulted, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt perpetuates a kind of Almohad imperial wordscape in which language not only communicates Almohad power but also embodies and effects it. In his account, written and spoken expressions of Almohad success are rendered almost more influential than the deeds themselves, a productive force to overcome a destructive one. Almohad enemies are destroyed by the sword, while those loyal to them are revived by the word. As a scribe himself, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt respected the power of words as a tool of legitimation. That his account also mirrors much of what we know about Almohad administrative practices suggests that the self-referential wordscape is not merely a rhetorical device in his text, but a key component of the Almohad imperial program. Though the public reading of political propaganda in times of war was hardly an innovation, the intense focus of Almohad chroniclers on this communication is worthy of note.[138] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt refers to such oral and written communications from and about

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[137] Pascal Buresi and Hicham El Aallaoui, *Governing the Empire: Provincial Administration in the Almohad Caliphate (1224-1269) Critical Edition, Translation, and Study of Manuscript 4752 of the Hasaniyya Library in Rabat Containing 77 Taqadim ("appointments")*, trans. Travis Bruce (Boston: Brill, 2013).
[138] Marín, "El califa almohade," 456.

the caliphs in reverent and even supernatural terms, praising their eloquence and effectiveness. Letters from the caliphs are often referred to with the phrase *kitāb karīm* (noble letter), which appears in the Qur'an to describe the letter King Solomon sent to the Queen of Sheba urging her to convert.[139] This allusion may have been intended to compare the power of the Almohads and their message to that of Solomon, who controlled men, birds, and *jinn*.

The same *sūra* also makes reference to unbelievers dismissing clear signs from God as mere *siḥr*, or sorcery.[140] The *Mann bi-l-imāma* invokes *siḥr* to describe the power of caliphal communications on several occasions, but specifies that it is *siḥr ḥalāl*, permissible enchantment. This phrase was often used to refer to Arabic poetry in the Middle Ages. It evokes pre-Islamic associations of poetry with prophecy and the supernatural while emphasizing that the enchantment brought about by the recitation of poetry was, in fact, licit. Interestingly, however, Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt uses the phrase to describe caliphal correspondence and *khuṭba*s more often than poetry.[141] Far from devaluing the potential impact of poetry as a tool of the state, he quotes dozens of praise poems in their entirety. By using the phrase *siḥr ḥalāl* to refer to *khuṭba*s and caliphal correspondence, however, he stresses the miraculous renewing power of imperial communications, elevating prose and imbuing it with the same supernatural qualities long associated with poetry. Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt explains, for instance, how two letters from the caliph ʻAbd al-Mu'min bolstered the hopes of his supporters in al-Andalus, who were

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[139] Qur'ān 27:29.
[140] Qur'ān 27:13.
[141] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 95, 187; Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bil-imāma*, trans. Huici Miranda, 27, 73.

under attack by the rebel Ibn Mardanīsh and his Christian allies. The letters describe the Almohad conquest of the North African city of Mahdiyya. Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt says that when they were recited, the missives "stunned the listeners and filled the land with permissible enchantment."[142] Moreover, when they arrived, "the souls [of the people] were led away from the disease of *fitna*, and [the letters] revived [them] with the wholesome air of victory."[143] In this way, he illustrates the miraculous power of caliphal communications, which conveyed news of Almohad elimination campaigns, to root out corruption and effect rebirth.

The rebirth stage thus encompassed the physical and spiritual revival of people and places at the hands of caliphs, kings, emperors, and emirs. The *Mann bi-l-imāma* goes the furthest, even invoking language of resurrection. Both Muslim and Christian chroniclers, however, focused on the importance and needfulness of repopulating territory from which corrupt populations had been eliminated, and settlement campaigns were generally accompanied by rebuilding efforts. Rebirth marked the culmination of the logic of resurrection, an undoing of the elimination of people and destruction of land and infrastructure that had come before, both of which were replaced by dynasties and populations seen as having a superior claim to rule, own, and occupy the territory in question.

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[142] "أعجز الأسماء، وملأ بالسحر الحلال الرقاع": Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 72; Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bil-imāma*, trans. Huici Miranda, 16.

[143] "كتاب أقبل والنفوس من علل الفتنة تسوق، وأحيى بريح طيبة الظفر": Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 72; Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bil-imāma*, trans. Huici Miranda, 15.

The logic of resurrection, settler colonialism, and the Middle Ages

Previous chapters detailed how Muslim and Christian chroniclers across the Strait drew upon and elaborated a shared cultural archive legible to regional audiences in order to stake territorial claims for certain groups. Along with a logic of resurrection, entries or elements of this archive included scriptural identifiers that temporally and geographically displaced rival claimants to power and territory, shared legends surrounding the eighth-century Islamic conquests, common invocations of apocalyptic prophecy forecasting the end of opponents' political power, and mobilizations of femininity and masculinity to legitimize rulership, regional belonging, and ownership of land. Though I do not suggest that the shared intellectual and cultural framework within which these chroniclers wrote was used solely to justify conquest and oppression, rather than to find common ground and comfortably coexist, I have emphasized instances of the former in an attempt to belie the apparent incongruity of cultural exchange, conquest, and oppression in the Middle Ages. In this sense, these chronicles can be compared to the work of polemicists who immersed themselves in the languages and texts of the very people whose religion they sought to refute so stridently. Rather than ignoring the interconnectedness of Iberia and North Africa or of the Abrahamic religions, historians and polemicists alike drew on their shared past to make a case for a future in which one group dominated and perhaps even eliminated others.

Given the context of intermittent conquest and settlement efforts by Muslims and Christians across the Strait over the course of the Middle Ages, chroniclers' use of the shared cultural archive is often recognizably colonial. While this could be argued of the

examples presented in each chapter, here I would like to explore the connection between the logic of resurrection and settler colonial rhetoric in particular. Colonialism and its settler forms are not always easily or cleanly separated, but several generalizations can be made about their differences. Whereas colonies remain deeply and explicitly connected to a metropole, and colonists often move back and forth between the two, settler colonial societies eventually cut ties with the motherland, establishing their own sovereignty and identity. In so doing, settler colonies operate within the traditional dialectic between colonizer and colonized, while also creating multiple alterities. As settlers begin to attach their identities to the land in question more than to their metropolitan origins, pre-settlement populations are cast as indigenous others, while metropolitans and competing foreign nationals are cast as exogenous others,[144] a state of suspension "between 'mother' and 'other.'"[145] Settler colonial enterprises work to mobilize existing populations, eliminating and replacing them through a variety of transfers including death, relocation, and assimilation, whereas colonial systems work to immobilize native populations in order to exploit them economically.[146] Settler sovereignty is also characterized by "the conviction that the settler colonial setting is charged with a special regenerative nature."[147]

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[144] Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 16-17.
[145] Alan Lawson, "Postcolonial Theory and the 'Settler' Subject," *Essays on Canadian Writing*, no. 56 (1995), 25.
[146] "In the end, while the suppression of indigenous and exogenous alterities characterises both colonial and settler colonial formations, the former can be summarised as domination for the purpose of exploitation, the latter as domination for the purpose of transfer": Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 34.
[147] Ibid., 54.

The right to eliminate and the power to regenerate, characteristic of settler colonialism, are likewise central to the logic of resurrection. While I would label many of the political contexts that produced the chronicles that employed the logic of resurrection as colonial, however, I would not identify them as settler states. The Andalusi Umayyads are perhaps the best example of settler colonists from the medieval western Mediterranean. After their declaration of a caliphate in the early tenth century, they gave neither real nor symbolic obedience to a metropole. Andalusi chronicles written under the Umayyads pay close attention to the complex dynamics of indigenous and exogenous alterities that resulted from multiple waves of settlement from the Middle East and North Africa, and to the gradual conversion of many Christians to Islam. These chronicles do not, however, employ a logic of resurrection. While they often describe extreme violence, they do not depict the wholesale elimination of populations. The transplantation and "rebirth" of the Umayyads is naturally emphasized, but is portrayed as achievable without the complete removal or assimilation of Christian and Jewish communities.

The Christian and Muslim dynasties under which chroniclers employed a logic of resurrection, on the other hand, did not result in separate settler states, although they were undeniably colonial and often produced both coordinated and spontaneous settlement. Many of these dynasties distinguished themselves religiously, ethnoculturally, and/or linguistically from one or more of the groups they conquered. Members of conquered groups were at times given official roles by the ruler, were often subject to separate legal standards, and were frequently exploited for their value as taxpayers and laborers. Sometimes languages were imposed or outlawed, and conquered peoples could be

relocated to specific neighborhoods and regions or be expelled entirely. Forts were garrisoned with external troops, explicit resettlement campaigns were undertaken, and rulers traveled regularly between their capitals and frontiers.[148] North African-based empires in particular tended to govern conquered territories as distinct political units in which officials were appointed by the central ruler.[149] The logic of resurrection thus supported and declared the sovereignty of the central government, rather than legitimizing the emergence of a new state that distinguished itself both from the land's previous occupants and from its originating metropole. The rebirth stage tends to emphasize the renewal of earlier dynastic legacies and religious ideals, rather than the creation of something altogether new.

It is useful to acknowledge these states as colonial, and some of their rhetoric and strategies of legitimation as reminiscent of settler colonialism, for several reasons. It clarifies our understanding of the relationship between medieval and modern coloniality, while also illuminating how medieval states represented their relationships to subject populations and to the past. Medievalists and modernists alike, however, have expressed discomfort at the idea of applying such theoretical frameworks to the premodern, arguing that they are inherently anachronistic. Indeed, to many modernists, the Middle Ages exist mostly as an alterity against which to define and distinguish a radically different

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[148] Maribel Fierro, "Algunas reflexiones sobre el poder itinerante almohade," *e-Spania*, December 18, 2009, http://journals.openedition.org/e-spania/18653; Manuela Marín, "El califa almohade: una presencia activa y benéfica," in *Los almohades: problemas y perspectivas*, ed. Patrice Cressier, Maribel Fierro, and Luis Molina, vol. 2 (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2005), 451–73.
[149] Buresi and El Aallaoui, *Governing the Empire*, trans. Bruce; Emile Fricaud, "Les *ṭalaba* dans la société almohade (Le temps d´Averroès)," *al-Qantara: Revista de Estudios Árabes* 18, no. 2 (1997): 331–87.

modernity.[150] Medievalists too cling to the idea of a fundamental break between medieval and modern, often under the guise of historical specificity, arguing that "the instrumental use of analogies drawn from current theory and events make fidelity to medieval categories of thought and experience virtually impossible to sustain."[151]

As the field of postcolonial medievalism has shown, however, postcolonial analyses of the Middle Ages permit a more critical and nuanced understanding of the relationship between past and present, yielding new insights for both.[152] Postcolonial medievalists emphasize that far from adopting medieval modes of thought and experience to analyze the premodern past, the scholarship of recent decades and centuries has always carried the baggage and assumptions of the present. Along with nationalist agendas, medieval history has been used and distorted to further modern colonial objectives.[153] Simultaneously, the Middle Ages have been rendered a kind of temporal colony, and the

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[150] For example, Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985). For an intelligent rebuttal of this general premise, see Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).
[151] Gabrielle M. Spiegel, "Épater les Médiévistes," *History and Theory* 39, no. 2 (2000), 247.
[152] For example: Nadia Altschul, "Postcolonialism and the Study of the Middle Ages," *History Compass* 6, no. 2 (2008): 588–606; Kathleen Biddick, *The Shock of Medievalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, ed., *The Postcolonial Middle Ages* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); Patricia Clare Ingham and Michelle Warren, eds., *Postcolonial Moves: Medieval through Modern* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Sylvia Huot, *Postcolonial Fictions in the Roman de Perceforest: Cultural Identities and Hybridities* (Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2007); Sharon Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries: Rethinking Difference in Old French Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Barbara Lalla, *Postcolonialisms: Caribbean Rereading of Medieval English Discourse* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2008); Lisa Lampert, *Medieval Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010); Michelle Warren, *History on the Edge: Excalibur and the Borders of Britain, 1100-1300* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); Michael A. Faletra, *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination: The Matters of Britain in the Twelfth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
[153] Nadia Altschul, *Politics of Temporalization: Medievalism and Orientalism in Nineteenth-Century South America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020) Michelle Warren, *Creole Medievalism: Colonial France and Joseph Bédier's Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Carol Symes, "The Middle Ages between Nationalism and Colonialism," *French Historical Studies* 34, no. 1 (2011): 37–46.

medievalist "a minor colonial official whose job depends on maintaining the subaltern status of the population under scrutiny."[154] Small wonder, then, that medieval studies has been largely reluctant to recognize the colonial features of medieval societies in and beyond Europe. To do so would constitute a violation of the perceived line separating premodern and modern, giving medieval actors the power that modern scholars have assigned themselves. In addition to accepting that medieval people acted in modern ways, it also requires acknowledging that as modern people we continue to act in medieval ways. Applying modern vocabulary and theory to the Middle Ages helps to elucidate the mutual connectedness of these temporalities. In the context of race, for instance, Geraldine Heng has made the powerful and compelling argument that:

> the use of the term *race* continues to bear witness to important strategic, epistemological, and political commitments not adequately served by the invocation of categories of greater generality (such as *otherness* or *difference*) or greater benignity in our understanding of human culture and society. *Not* to use the term *race* would be to sustain the reproduction of a certain kind of past, while keeping the door shut to tools, analyses, and resources that can name the past differently… The refusal of race destigmatizes the impacts and consequences of certain laws, acts, practices, and institutions in the medieval period, so that we cannot name them for what they are, and makes it impossible to bear adequate witness to the full meaning of the manifestations and phenomena they installed.[155]

Without eliding differences, therefore, we must be able to name things for what they are.

The word colonial has occasionally been applied to various configurations of Spanish kingdoms, especially from the thirteenth century, as Castile-León and Aragón

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[154] Carol Symes, "When We Talk about Modernity," *The American Historical Review* 116, no. 3 (2011), 717. See also: Kathleen Davis, "Sovereign Subjects, Feudal Law, and the Writing of History," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 36, no. 2 (2006): 223–261.

[155] Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 4. For another study of connections between modern racism and medieval race-making in England, see Cord J. Whitaker, *Black Metaphors: How Modern Racism Emerged from Medieval Race-Thinking* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

made increasing conquests of Muslim territories.[156] Connections are also made to the Spanish colonial expansion into the Atlantic and the Americas.[157] North African dynasties like the Almoravids and Almohads, on the other hand, have more often been referred to an empires—and, as Michael Gomez notes, in this they are still an exception to the general tendency to ignore medieval African empires.[158] While these Muslim and Christian states certainly differed in a number of respects, the only meaningful difference in labelling them colonial or imperial seems to be that scholars are more accustomed to viewing Christian Spanish powers as colonizing, given their later history. The application of the term imperial to the premodern, as opposed to colonial, has interesting implications on multiple levels, which are worth interrogating. First, the terms have been used to draw a sharp line between premodern and modern, with empires largely relegated to the distant past and colonies to the more recent past, despite the ancient etymology and existence of

[156] For example: Robert I. Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders: Colonial Survival in the Thirteenth-Century Kingdom of Valencia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973); Robert I. Burns, *Medieval Colonialism: Postcrusade Exploitation of Islamic Valencia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); David Hanlon, "Islam and Stereotypical Discourse in Medieval Castile and León," *The Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30, no. 3 (2000): 479–504; David Wacks, *Framing Iberia: Maqamat and Frametale Narratives in Medieval Spain* (
Boston: Brill, 2007); David Wacks, "Conflicted Identity and Colonial Adaptation in Petrus Alfonsi's *Dialogus Contra Judaeos* and *Disciplina Clericalis*," in *Marginal Voices*, ed. Amy Aronson-Friedman and Gregory B. Kaplan (Boston: Brill, 2012), 69-89; David Wacks, "Reconquest Colonialism and Andalusī Narrative Practice in the 'Conde Lucanor,'" *Diacritics* 36, no. 3/4 (2006): 87–103.

[157] Thomas F. Glick et al., eds., *From al-Andalus to the Americas (13th-17th Centuries): Destruction and Construction of Societies* (Boston: Brill, 2018); Andrew Devereux, *The Other Side of Empire: Just War in the Mediterranean and the Rise of Early Modern Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020).

[158] "A developing cognate of world history is the study of empire, chiefly distinguished from the former in its preoccupation with more recent history (though with some attention to antecedent periods) that involves sweeping vistas and expansive, transregional landscapes… imperial histories are in instances quite sophisticated in their analyses, but even so, they share world history's apparent disdain for empire as envisioned and engendered by Africans themselves, as none of the texts go beyond a cursory mention of such formations as Mali or Songhay—if they are mentioned at all. What therefore unites world and imperial histories, at least for the purposes of this study, is their consistent omission, their collective silence on early and medieval Africa, of saying anything of substance about it, with the exception of Egypt, Nubia, and North Africa": Michael A. Gomez, *African Dominion: A New History of Empire in Early and Medieval West Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 12.

both.[159] Second, the premodern states labeled colonial by scholars are generally European. This usage therefore obscures both the long and varied history of colonialism and settler colonialism, suggesting that they were only practiced by modern Europeans and their descendants.

As I argue, however, non-European and non-Christian dynasties in the medieval period acted in colonial ways, including the Umayyads, the Almoravids, and the Almohads. Some of these produced settler states, a connection that has been obscured by the use of the term successor states. The crusades and the Islamic conquests alike resulted in multiple settler states, which are worth analyzing as such, in conversation with one another and with modern parallels. Acknowledging this history does not imply that colonialism and settler colonialism are any more acceptable, palatable, or inevitable for having been practiced by premodern and non-European states. Instead, it positions us to better appreciate the enormity and complexity of what it means to work towards decolonization in the present. It also suggests that delineating different modes of coloniality may be more interesting and productive than distinguishing between imperial and colonial, modern and premodern, or European and non-European.

Settler colonialism has scarcely been uttered in the context of medieval studies, though Adam Miyashiro's insightful 2019 article, "Our Deeper Past: Race, Settler Colonialism, and Medieval Heritage Politics," represents an important exception. Miyashiro briefly identifies the Frankish crusader states as settler colonial. He then shows

[159] Lorenzo Veracini, "Where Does Colonialism Come From?," *Rethinking History* 22, no. 2 (2018): 184–202.

how modern attempts by scholars to draw connections between the Americas and medieval Europe through the racialization of the term Anglo-Saxon and descriptions of colonial land tenure in South America and the Pacific as feudal are related to "indigenous erasure, elimination, and ultimately the long history of genocide."[160] Finally, Miyashiro puts this scholarly discourse into conversation with the use of medievalisms by white supremacists outside academia. As he concludes, "the intersections between settler colonialism, Islamophobia, and 'white heritage' politics are tightly bound up with engagements with a medieval past that serves as a mythical template upon which white identity movements are fashioned and weaponized."[161] Along similar lines, Matthew Vernon shows that African American writers in the United States have long understood the connections between narratives of medieval Europe as exclusively white and justifications of racial oppression and global colonization.[162]

It is essential to understand how the Middle Ages have been mobilized by scholars and the public alike to promote and normalize colonialism, including its settler forms, in the more recent past. This calls for work on multiple levels. First, we must take seriously and engage deeply with the work of scholars of "modern" topics like settler colonialism. This allows us to recognize when and how oppressive structures and assumptions are at play in our own work. Even if such categories were irrelevant to the Middle Ages, they impact our interactions with past and present, and as such require our

[160] Adam Miyashiro, "Our Deeper Past: Race, Settler Colonialism, and Medieval Heritage Politics," *Literature Compass* 16 (2019), 5.
[161] Ibid., 9.
[162] Matthew X. Vernon, *The Black Middle Ages: Race and the Construction of the Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 20.

closest attention. To ignore them is to permit their continuation. From there, I suggest we can begin to examine more openly and productively if such theoretical frameworks are, in fact, irrelevant to the premodern. In this we can follow Michel-Rolph Trouillot's observation that "historical authenticity resides not in the fidelity to an alleged past but in an honesty vis-à-vis the present as it re-presents the past."[163]

Comparing aspects of the logic of resurrection to modern settler colonial rhetoric provides a number of useful insights. It highlights the complexity and contingency of language of extreme violence and elimination against members of other religions in medieval Iberia and North Africa. While chroniclers who employed a logic of resurrection emphasized the elimination and replacement of conquered populations, others chose to depict their continued inclusion in the post-conquest community in a variety of ways, including assimilation, marginalization, and exploitation. As discussed above, the former seems to have been invoked only in societies that were colonial but not settler colonial, whereas the latter was favored by chroniclers of the Andalusi Umayyad caliphate, which can be understood as a settler state. Nor were such narrative approaches to claiming the right to own and govern territory mutually exclusive. In the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, for example, Ibn Abī Zar' describes violent elimination to legitimize the Marinids, but also relates various instances in which land for cities was purchased directly and peacefully from local tribes.[164] The repeated mention of such treaties and purchases, as well as the close association of the establishment of Fes and its founder Idrīs with an ax

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[163] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 148.

[164] Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 39, 175; Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 62, 267.

(*fās*), are reminiscent of strategies employed in modern settler states like the United States, which have focused on the acquisition of land through purchase and associated settlers with tools like the spade and the plough.[165]

Such complexity also holds in the modern period. Pushing back against the claims of scholars like Patrick Wolfe, María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo argues that acknowledging Mexico as an example of white settler colonialism explicitly premised on *mestizaje* rather than elimination "moves us toward a much more complex understanding of the relationship between colonizer and colonized…than that of genocidal elimination and absorption." She explains that the tendency to exclude Latin America from settler colonial paradigms is an act of occlusion, and "the effect of privileging one racial geography above all others."[166] The failure to understand the colonial and settler colonial characteristics and rhetorical strategies of premodern states and writers, especially beyond Europe, is likewise an occlusion and privileging of narratives of modern exceptionalism and Eurocentrism. Saldaña-Portillo reminds us not to unequivocally connect elimination and settler colonialism, whether in the modern or the premodern. Just as colonial but non-settler states can invoke elimination as a response to indigenous and exogenous others that exist even without separation from the metropole, settler states can address the presence of indigenous others without recourse to physical elimination in the form of death or removal. With this in mind, I would like to call attention in more detail to similarities between settler colonial strategies and the logic of resurrection in medieval

[165] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 66.
[166] María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, *Indian Given: Racial Geographies across Mexico and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 31.

chronicles, again organizing my examination by moving through the stages of corruption, elimination, and rebirth.

Corruption through a settler colonial lens

The attribution of corruption undermined the right of certain populations to occupy and rule a given territory, assigning insider and outsider identities. The *Prophetic Chronicle*, for example, makes this connection explicit, saying of the Goths, "God abandoned them so that they might not possess the desirable land…and they were reduced to nothing."[167] Such a setup also allowed, later, for the descendants of the Visigoths to be redeemed and once again entitled to full control of the land. Though temporarily corrupt, the Visigoths were represented as indigenous and permanent. They were geographical and temporal insiders, having lived in Iberia prior to the arrival of the punishing scourge population, and their divine right to the land would be renewed once they redeemed themselves. The past and the future of the land were theirs, if not the present.

Not all populations were considered redeemable, however, and the strategies used to portray them as corrupt, and the effect of such corruption on their ability to control territory, bear comparison to modern settler logics by which people were stripped of their rights to land. Accusations of corruption cast populations as indigenous or exogenous others, highlighting their alterity regardless of their history in and relationship to a given

[167] "Dereliquid illos Dominus ne possiderent desiderauilem terram… ad nicilum sunt redacti": Juan Gil Fernández and Juan Ignacio Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III (Rotense y "A Sebastián"); Crónica Albeldense (y "Profética")*, trans. José-Luis Moralejo (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), 183. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

territory. Muslims in the *Prophetic Chronicle*, as well as other Astur-Leonese chronicles, are figured as exogenous others. Although they act as a divinely mandated scourge on corrupt populations, and this work is seen as righteous, Muslims cannot be redeemed, so their presence in the peninsula is understood as temporary. The *Prophetic Chronicle*'s description of the final battle in which Christians would triumph and Muslims would be defeated is thus located in North Africa, suggesting both a return of the conquerors to their perceived place of origin and a reversal in the directionality of colonization and conquest across the Strait of Gibraltar.

The Almohads and Marinids, on the other hand, focused on casting many conquered Iberians as indigenous others on the basis of religious error. Though the Almohads drew on the long history of Muslim presence in Iberia, they did not present themselves as having claims that predated those of Christians to validate their right to occupy and rule. Nor was indigenous other status imposed only upon Christians and Jews. Both the *Mann bi-l-imāma* of Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt and the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* of Ibn Abī Zar' detail the corruption of Iberians of all religions, including Muslims, casting those who opposed them as fairly undifferentiated indigenous others who were systematically defeated and eliminated.

Similarly, both works attribute corruption to Muslim populations and dynasties in North Africa, which served as the basis for their elimination. For the Almohads and Marinids, both their Arab and Berber heritages were closely intertwined with and imbedded in their political legitimacy, and neither tended to be spoken of disparagingly or as indicative of otherness. One exception was some of the tribes of the Banū Hilāl,

who in the mid eleventh century were forced to move west into Ifrīqiya by the Fatimids, wreaking havoc as they went and sacking Qayrawan in 1057. Some of the Banū Hilāl united against the Almohads, while others were eventually incorporated into the empire and resettled in the Maghrib by the caliph, as Ibn Abī Zar‘ relates.[168] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Salāt speaks of the Banū Riyāḥ, a division of the Hilālīs, pledging loyalty to and aiding the caliph.[169] In general, the outsider status of the Hilālīs was registered, but their presence was not seen as inherently negative, and they were only described as corrupt when acting against the interests of the reigning dynasty.[170] This distinction was even noted by the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, which refers to such tribes in North Africa as Arabs, whereas Andalusis are called Hagarenes and Almoravids labeled Moabites.[171] There was also a long tradition in Arabic chronicles, invoked by Ibn Abī Zar‘ and dating from at least the late ninth century, of tracing Berber origins to the Arabian peninsula and even to Noah, which precluded Arabs from being othered solely on the basis of their external origins.[172]

[168] Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 261; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 2, 397.
[169] Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bi-l-imāma*, ed. al-Tāzī, 90, 330; Ibn Ṣāḥib al-Ṣalāt, *al-Mann bil-imāma*, trans. Huici Miranda, 24, 165.
[170] For more on the relationship between the Banū Hilāl and North African dynasties, see Amar S. Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)* (Boston: Brill, 2015).
[171] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 175, 195, 197; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 187, 204, 206.
[172] Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Conquête de l’Afrique du Nord et de l’Espagne*, ed. and trans. Albert Gateau, 2nd ed. (Alger: Éditions Carbonel, 1948), 34-35; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, ed. ibn Manṣūr, 151; Ibn Abī Zar‘, *Rawd al-qirtās*, trans. Huici Miranda, vol. 1, 226-227; ‘Abd al-Wāḥid, *Histoire*, ed. Dozy, 254; ‘Abd al-Wāḥid, *Kitāb al-Mu‘ŷib*, trans. Huici Miranda, 287; Helena de Felipe, “Leyendas árabes sobre el origen de los beréberes,” *Al-Qantara* 11, no. 2 (1990): 379–96.

Byzantines, in contrast, are cast as exogenous others in Christian Iberian chronicles that employ a logic of resurrection. This is the case with the representation of Byzantium as an external corruptor in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and the negative portrayal of Greek Christianity in the *Historia Silense*. Aside from providing a convenient scapegoat, such an approach makes sense within a settler colonial framework. Constantinople was, in some ways, a former metropole. As the "second Rome," it represented part of a long legacy of external imperial dominion over Iberia. The emperor Justinian invoked this very legacy to legitimize his Iberian campaigns in the mid-sixth century, and Byzantine rule in the southern province of Spania persisted until the 620s. A number of diplomatic and economic ties connected Visigothic and Byzantine Iberia, and there is evidence of a substantial population of Greek speakers in towns like Mérida.[173] Instead of acknowledging past Byzantine supremacy over Iberia, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* and *Historia Silense* place Byzantines and Muslims on a level morally, humbling and dismissing the two most powerful groups other than the Visigoths to establish states in the peninsula in the early Middle Ages.

Byzantium's historical control of both Iberian and North African territory made it a natural comparison to the Muslim conquerors, many of whom initially came from North Africa. The *Prophetic Chronicle*'s location of the final apocalyptic battle between Muslims and Christians in North Africa suggests that the author may have had hopes for

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[173] Jamie Wood, "Defending Byzantine Spain: Frontiers and Diplomacy," *Early Medieval Europe* 18, no. 3 (2010): 292–319; Jaime Vizcaíno Sánchez, *La presencia bizantina en Hispania, siglos VI-VII: la documentación arqueológica* (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 2009); for a general overview of the historiography on the topic, see Bonch Reeves, *Visions of Unity*, 80-86; see also various chapters in Inmaculada Pérez Martín and Pedro Bádenas de la Peña, eds., *Bizancio y la península ibérica: de la antigüedad tardía a la edad moderna* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2004).

extending Asturian sovereignty across the Strait, bringing Iberia and North Africa once again under common rule. It certainly diverts the apocalyptic expectation, common to both Christianity and Islam in this period, that the final battle would be centered in the eastern Mediterranean. In this way, Asturias assumes the mantle of savior of Christendom that might otherwise have been expected of the biggest Christian power in conflict with Islam. While Asturias likely did not perceive Constantinople as an immediate threat to its sovereignty, the two were nonetheless competitors for political and moral primacy within Christendom. Chroniclers' reduction of the history of Byzantine rule in Iberia to a mere corrupting influence thus did important work, clarifying who belonged in and was entitled to rule the peninsula and diverting the geography of salvation to the west.

Muslims and Christians in the western Mediterranean dealt differently with the historical legacies of former metropoles, though neither represented a significant political or military threat. Muslims in Iberia and North Africa tended to acknowledge and highlight cultural and genealogical connections with the Middle East, and continued to view themselves as wholly or partially Arab, even to the point of fabricating genealogies. The Almoravids nominally acknowledged 'Abbasid authority and chose not to claim the caliphate for themselves. Even dynasties that drew a great deal of legitimacy from asserting a local Berber identity, like the Almohads, who preached and wrote in "the western tongue" as well as Arabic, emphasized their Arab lineage and descent from the Prophet. Iberian Christians, on the other hand, continued to invoke the legacy of Rome but no longer considered themselves or the Byzantines, who they referred to as Greek, to be truly Roman. Nonetheless, even as they continued to identify as Arab, multiple

Muslim dynasties in Iberia and North Africa asserted their primacy within the *dār al-Islām*. By claiming the caliphate, the Umayyads and the Almohads too attempted to relocate the political and religious center of the Islamic world to the western Mediterranean. This is consistent with modern settlers' embrace of a variety of diasporic identities and can be compared to the anti-Byzantine stance of the Asturians, as well as the claims of later Leonese and Castilian rulers to the title of emperor and aspirations to head the Holy Roman Empire.[174]

Though Iberia did not have the same historical relationship with the Franks as it did with Byzantium, Franks too are treated as exogenous others in many Christian chronicles that employ a logic of resurrection. The Visigothic state at its height included substantial territory in southwestern France, which was later incorporated into the Carolingian empire. Even after the Asturian and Carolingian dynasties, Christian rulers in Iberia and Francia alike continued to engage in territorial disputes and to assert their religious superiority by proclaiming themselves defenders of Christendom against Islam. Given this rivalry, it makes sense that Frankish leaders are often described as corrupt and worthy of elimination by both Christians and Muslims in Astur-Leonese chronicles, and understood as inherently foreign despite being co-religionists.

Another group whose claim to full belonging in Iberia was narratively erased in Christian chronicles was the *muwallad*s, Iberians who converted to Islam after the conquests. Nonetheless, the Visigothic and thus superior heritage of *muwallad*s like Mūsā was recognized by the *Silense* chronicler as making him stronger in arms than other

[174] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 21.

Muslims and capable of defeating the Franks in battle. Though *muwallad*s in Astur-Leonese chronicles are always ultimately defeated by Iberian Christians, their abandonment of Christianity overriding their historical presence in the peninsula and negating their right to continue to inhabit it, they were nonetheless understood as indigenous, rather than exogenous, others.

The *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* takes a somewhat different approach to both indigenous and exogenous others. The Franks are not especially reviled, and more emphasis is actually placed on labeling Iberian Christians outside of Castile-León foreigners (*alienigenus*/*alienus*) who, when they acted against the emperor, were subject to elimination.[175] When they submitted to the merciful emperor, however, they were brought back into the fold as subordinate insiders—a favor that was even extended to loyal Muslims like Zafadola. Alfonso VII's imperial and colonial aspirations were explicitly premised as much on assimilation and absorption as elimination. Rivals were cast exogenous others to undermine their claims to rule in the peninsula, but this was intended to force their acceptance and support of the emperor's sovereignty, rather than to remove them entirely.

This also seems to factor into the chronicle's implied reproach of the Almohads for killing Andalusi Jews.[176] The text stresses that the Jews "had been there since ancient times," suggesting that the Almohad persecution of them was especially unjust because

[175] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 162, 171, 203; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 175, 183, 212.
[176] David Corcos, "The Nature of the Almohad Rulers' Treatment of the Jews," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 2 (2010): 259–285; Amira K. Bennison, "Almohad Tawḥīd and Its Implications for Religious Difference," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 2 (2010): 195–216.

of their insider status.[177] Just as *muwallad*s in Christian chronicles often ranked above Franks and other Muslims because of their Christian heritage, Iberian Jews in the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor* rank above the North African Almohads because of their long presence in the peninsula. For the Almohads to kill them en masse is a subversion of the natural order and a sign of their corruption. Many of the same strategies that medieval chroniclers employed to depict populations as corrupt, foreign, and/or religiously deviant were therefore explicitly connected to their right, or not, to inhabit and rule contested territory.

Elimination through a settler colonial lens

Once inherent corruption was established and indigenous or exogenous alterities applied to various populations, their elimination became just and necessary. The elimination stage of the logic of resurrection constituted various efforts to physically and rhetorically empty the land of these corrupt populations. At times, it was suggested that they had wiped themselves out as a result of their own corruption, in ways that recall modern settler colonial narratives of indigenous erasure. Internal conflicts and continual warfare, for example, are often cited by medieval chronicles like the *Rawḍ al-qirṭās*, as is widespread illness, figured as both an emptying agent and as a divine expression of inferior character.[178]

[177] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 247-248; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 249.
[178] Cristobal Silva, *Miraculous Plagues: An Epidemiology of Early New England Narrative* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Much of the elimination in medieval chronicles, however, comes in the form of the destruction and removal of corrupted populations by military intervention. As such, my understanding of elimination in these chronicles is based largely on what Saldaña-Portillo refers to as genocidal elimination and absorption and what Veracini terms necropolitical transfer.[179] Many Muslim and Christian chronicles proclaimed such actions, reporting that entire cities and towns were emptied of people and often physically destroyed, allowing for resettlement and rebuilding. We should not necessarily take chroniclers at their word in such instances, or uncritically understand such rhetoric as reflective of medieval policy or practice. Real consideration should be given, however, to the intent behind such literary effacement and its material and psychic impacts on the lives of medieval people, as well as the impacts of such practices being even partial. The impulse to mitigate hateful, inflammatory, and hyperbolic words with debates about the extent to which they are realistic, possible, or mainstream is one that we experience in relation to modern and medieval statements alike. While it is important to delineate between policy and practice, and rhetoric and action, dismissing extremist sentiments as exaggerated or unrepresentative does not diminish their power to negatively impact the lives of people who lack the privilege and protection to write them off as abstract or unrealized. We must take seriously statements that attempt to justify violence and elimination, and doing so in relation to the past can make us more adept at doing so in the present.

[179] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35.

Given the inclination of medieval chroniclers towards hyperbole, one might assume that they commonly claimed the total annihilation of an enemy population, but this is not the case. Instead, most chronicles preferred to state that a large number of people were killed. There would seem to be a difference, therefore, between the logic of resurrection and the tendency of Muslim and Christian chroniclers alike to cite eye-popping figures for the number of enemy troops killed in a given encounter. When the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* says that 63,000 soldiers were killed in a day, these troops are not tied to a specific location in the same way that the residents of a town or city, by nature, are. Though it is significant for medieval writers to narrate a devastating defeat that wipes out all or most of a hostile army, this is still a military defeat, impacting the military capacity of the opposing side. Women and children are not mentioned, nor are men who remained at home. Armies were generally pulled from throughout a given polity, so the loss would have had a wider geographical distribution. It meant something vastly different, narratively and socially, for an army to be wiped out, or nearly so, than for a series of towns to be obliterated.

Chroniclers sometimes also described the use of extreme violence only against individual troublemakers, rather than representing an entire population as an enemy. Texts like the anonymous Arabic *Fatḥ al-Andalus* contain rather stunning amounts of violence against individuals and rampant desecration of specific corpses for the purpose of punishment and humiliation.[180] Sovereignty and ownership are at stake in these

[180] Luis Molina, ed., *Fatḥ al-Andalus (La conquista de al-Andalus)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994); Mayte Penelas, *La conquista de al-Andalus* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2002).

actions, and Umayyad rights are proclaimed through their narration. Nonetheless, the intention and effect of this kind of violence, both physical and narrative, differs from the elimination and rebirth I have highlighted in other texts. The enemies being graphically beheaded and crucified in the *Fatḥ al-Andalus* are specific, personal enemies of the emirs and caliphs. Even when entire towns are said to be in rebellion against the Umayyads, they are not punished as a unit, but instead through their rulers and representatives. This cannot be explained by the fact that they are co-religionists because, as I have shown, both Christian and Muslim chroniclers portray rulers razing and massacring entire towns filled with members of their own religion. The *Fatḥ al-Andalus* employs a logic of vengeance, rather than a logic of resurrection— in this chronicle and others like it, the garden needs to be weeded, but the fields need not be burned.

In the logics of resurrection and elimination, a great deal of importance is placed on the idea that what (or, more ominously and more often, who) is being removed to make way for a new society. What is implied is more revolutionary than military conquest and the establishment of a new government; it is the wholesale remaking of a social order. This is not, I think, what is suggested by chroniclers when they depict gruesome deaths and armies of tens of thousands being wiped out. Beyond the immediate act of death and defeat, little is required, narratively, of the rulers. There is nothing to revive or resurrect—the enemy has been defeated so that the victor can maintain the status quo, not so that they can enact radical change. The slate is not being wiped clean so much as touched up. A focus on when and why chronicles depict elimination in the form

of necropolitical transfer helps delineate between the varied uses and purposes of medieval narratives of violence.

The elimination stage did not always mean death, and often involved removal in the form of captivity or forced resettlement. In both the Muslim and Christian chronicles considered in this chapter, men, women, and children are sold into slavery after military defeat. This had the effect of physically relocating the captives and repositioning them socially and legally.[181] Though this occurs less in the chronicles under discussion, it was also the case in the later Middle Ages that when Muslim cities were conquered by Christians, Muslims and Jews were often relegated to a specific part of town, called *morerías* and *juderías*.[182] These examples align with what Veracini terms ethnic transfer, "when indigenous communities are forcibly deported, either within or without the territory claimed or controlled by the settler entity."[183]

At times, Christian chronicles preferred to narrate rebirth in places that are described as having long been empty or abandoned before they were repopulated, the origins of the depopulation theory touched on at the beginning of this chapter. The word *populare* was used in Latin chronicles and charters to describe actions taken by Christian kings in various towns. Some of these towns had been conquered by Muslims, while

[181] Mark D. Meyerson, "Slavery and the Social Order: Mudejars and Christians in the Kingdom of Valencia," *Medieval Encounters* 1, no. 1 (1995): 144–173; Russell Hopley, "The Ransoming of Prisoners in Medieval North Africa and Andalusia: An Analysis of the Legal Framework," *Medieval Encounters* 15, no. 2–4 (2009): 337–354.

[182] Manuel Vicente Febrer Romaguera, ed., *Cartas pueblas de las morerías valencianas y documentación complementaria* (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1991); Raquel Martínez Peñín, "La judería altomedieval de la ciudad de León: fuentes documentales y datos arqueológicos," *Miscelánea medieval murciana*, no. 31 (2007): 123–38; Verónica Paños Cubillo and Esther Andreu Mediero, "Nuevas propuestas de ubicación espacial de la judería medieval de Madrid: evidencias arqueológicas," *Revista historia autónoma*, no. 1 (2012): 53–72.

[183] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35.

others had remained in Christian hands but long resisted incorporation into the Visigothic and Asturian kingdoms. Ramón Menéndez Pidal, among others, argued that *populare* in such cases should not be taken literally. He suggested that it referred to the imposition of an administrative structure in a place that had previously been politically disorganized.[184] Rather than a word focused on the placement of new bodies, Menéndez Pidal read it as exerting formal control over bodies already present in a newly organized space. While this may be the case, the literal sense of the word *populare* nonetheless did significant ideological work, establishing and deepening Christian royal power over Iberian urban centers by drawing on its implications of elimination and rebirth rather than employing a clearer or more precise term. To medieval readers as well as modern ones, it would have evoked the movement of new bodies into empty space, even if this was not always what it indicated in practice. Furthermore, Menéndez Pidal notes that the prevalence with which variations of the Ibero-Romance root for "populate" occurred in Iberian toponyms is not mirrored in Italy or France.[185] This suggests that such an emphasis may have been a relatively local phenomenon and that even as other royal and imperial powers attempted to consolidate control over territory, they were not necessarily employing the same language of populating and settling, and did not make use of a logic of resurrection.

The use of the term *populare* to erase the presence of preexisting populations can be understood in relation to what Veracini refers to as perception transfer, in which "indigenous peoples are disavowed in a variety of ways and their actual presence is not

[184] Menéndez Pidal, "Repoblación y tradición," 30.
[185] Ibid., 31.

registered" and there is "a systematic propensity to 'empty' the landscape of its original inhabitants."[186] The medieval Asturian practice of granting charters and *fueros* for people to "populate" a given place is worth comparing to the legal and commercial rights to indigenous lands granted to settlers and colonists in more recent centuries. *Poblar*, the Castilian form of *populare*, was used by eighteenth-century colonists in New Spain to refer to the act of controlling land already populated by indigenous peoples.[187] In this context, Saldaña-Portillo demonstrates that "to poblar was not to eliminate the indigenous but to imbue the spatial relation between Spanish and Indian pueblos with an appropriate hierarchical meaning," a description which resonates with Menéndez Pidal's understanding of *populare*.[188] Furthermore, as Saldaña-Portillo points out, the sheer number and variety of indigenous groups acknowledged in Spanish texts belies the idea that colonists may simply have viewed the land as sparsely populated. In both medieval and more modern cases, it is more often the case that previous inhabitants outnumber settlers and colonists, and yet the arrival of the latter, however small, is inherently understood as an act of population.[189] Such language in medieval texts is therefore reminiscent of settler colonial strategies for claiming land. It implies an emptiness and lack of population not based in reality, permitting the imposition of new populations and administrative structures without regard to the autonomy, wishes, or needs of the people already in residence.

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[186] Ibid., 37.
[187] Saldaña-Portillo, *Indian Given*, 70-71.
[188] Ibid., 77.
[189] Ibid., 67-68.

This kind of rhetorical work was often aimed at Muslim towns, but it was also used for regions already occupied by Christians. Especially in Asturian texts, which focus on the translation of Visigothic political power from Toledo to Oviedo and make multiple references to the importance of the landscape in preserving and fostering the new kingdom, very little mention is made of previous populations. Though the neo-Gothic monarchs saw themselves as having a natural right to the land in the north of the peninsula, the Asturians and Basques had long resisted Visigothic rule.[190] Their territories were understood as peripheral and semi-wild, populated but not entirely politically organized, and therefore natural candidates for perception transfer. Little mention is made in the Asturian chronicles of the region's population before the Islamic conquests and Pelayo's flight to the north. He and his followers proclaim sovereignty from within vast mountain caves, as if springing out of the land. Though Pelayo's daughter Ermesinda is said to have married a local leader, Alfonso, son of the Cantabrian duke, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* emphasizes that Alfonso was of the royal line, with some versions specifying the Visigothic kings from whom he was descended. Local Asturians, therefore, are largely ignored in the depiction of the transfer of Visigothic power to the north, and perception transfer is enacted upon co-religionists as well as those of other religions.

The insistence of Muslims and Christians on referring to one another by names that they did not use for themselves, as elaborated in Chapter 1, can be understood as

[190] Francisco Javier Fernández Conde, *Estudios sobre la monarquía asturiana* (Gijón: Ediciones Trea, 2015), 43-49.

examples of what Veracini terms transfer by name confiscation.[191] The *Historia Silense*'s use of *barbarus* to refer to Muslims, even after they had inhabited Iberia for centuries, indicates their continued status as exogenous others. The term drew upon the classical Greco-Latin tradition of referring to foreigners as barbarous and uncivilized, while also recalling the term *barbar* (Berber), used by Arabic speakers to refer to the native populations of North Africa, and which was itself derived from the Greco-Latin usage. Forms of *barbar*(*us*) thus emphasized both temporal and geographical displacement. Similarly, in New Spain, colonists referred to certain native groups interchangeably as *indios bárbaros* and *Chichimecas*, a Náhuatl term with similar associations of nomadic and uncivilized peoples, used to refer to northern tribes outside the Aztec empire.[192] Saldaña-Portillo observes that the result of such usage was that "the indios bárbaros of northern Mexico congealed into a fixed idea of barbarism at once *spatially inside* the national boundaries of both countries, but *temporally outside* the historical time of nationhood."[193] In both the modern and medieval periods, insider and outsider labels were used not only to confiscate the names by which groups referred to themselves, but also to displace them temporally and geographically.

Depictions of elimination in medieval chronicles thus recall a variety of modern settler strategies of removal and erasure. Both emphasize the corrupt, destructive, and unworthy natures of certain populations, which in turn legitimize and necessitate usurping their rights to land and eliminating them either literally or rhetorically. It is

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[191] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 47.
[192] Saldaña-Portillo, *Indian Given*, 109.
[193] Ibid., 110.

often claimed that modern settler states work to disavow and conceal this foundational violence and that "settler colonialism obscures the conditions of its own production."[194] Alan Lawson explains that "empty land can be settled, but occupied land can only be invaded. So the land must be emptied so that it can be filled, in turn, with both discourse and cattle."[195] This would seem to be markedly different from the medieval logic of resurrection, in which colonial violence is celebrated to the point of exaggeration. Once again, however, Saldaña-Portillo provides an important counterpoint to mainstream analyses of settler colonial elimination, observing that in modern Mexico "the violence and suffering of indigenous people in the conquest is constantly, reiteratively affirmed and projected onto landscape." Modern Mexicans are cast as descendants of both conqueror and conquered, with injury and culpability equally dispersed, in order to delegitimize claims for indigenous autonomy.[196] Modern settler logic can privilege an "already-empty" narrative over a "newly and violently emptied" one, but it can also merge indigenous and settler identities to the extent that violence is acknowledged but erasure is not.

Medieval chronicles, on the other hand, were often willing to recognize death as a prerequisite of resurrection and revival, and were therefore more immediately

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[194] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 14. Though Veracini acknowledges to some extent that it is not possible for modern settler states to disavow violence entirely: "Only a sustained disavowal of *any* founding violence allows a seamless process of settler territorialisation. True, at times, settler political traditions cannot possibly lay claim to a 'quiet land', and a celebration of frontier violence becomes a feature of national mythologies. In these instances, however, a quiet and peaceful idyll and disavowal re-emerge *after* the 'closing' of the troubled frontier, the cessation of hostility, and *after* the establishment of a purportedly settled/settler order": 80.

[195] Lawson, "Postcolonial Theory and the 'Settler' Subject," 25.

[196] Saldaña-Portillo, *Indian Given*, 12.

comfortable with the violence and erasure that modern settlers may prefer to obscure. This is so much the case that modern scholars often assume as a matter of course that medieval texts are hyperbolic in their descriptions of violence, at least quantitatively if not always qualitatively. Regardless, the willingness and even eagerness of multiple medieval chroniclers to describe mass violence to the point of elimination is significant. The logic of resurrection they employed contained its own justification for violence and erasure that went beyond the familiar concepts of just holy war in Christianity and jihad in the *dār al-ḥarb* (domain of war) in Islam. Since corruption represented a departure from religion, elimination was justified and divinely mandated, ultimately allowing for rebirth.

Rebirth through a settler colonial lens

The close relationship between elimination and rebirth also prevails in modern settler logic, and as Deborah Bird Rose observes:

> The metaphor of right and left hands is useful for describing life during this explosive moment. The right hand of conquest can be conceptualised as beneficent in its claims: productivity, growth, and civilisation are announced as beneficial action in places where these purportedly had not existed before. The left hand, by contrast, has the task of erasing specific life. Indigenous peoples, their cultures, their practices of time, their sources of power, and their systems of ecological knowledge and responsibility will all be wiped out, and most of the erasure will be literal, not metaphorical. The left hand creates the *tabula rasa* upon which the right hand will inscribe its civilisation.[197]

[197] Deborah Bird Rose, *Reports from a Wild Country: Ethics for Decolonisation* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2004), 61-62.

The left hand eliminates and then the right hand revives. While the new society established by settlers is understood as in some ways new, it is also, importantly, a return and a rebirth of something old, whether a political legacy or a way of life. This semi-cyclical structure, premised on some kind of return, challenges sweeping distinctions between medieval and modern constructions of historical time. It has been generalized that modern people have a secularized, linear, and homogenous view of time, focused on narratives of progress and forward movement, whereas premodern people, rooted in scripture and eschatology, viewed time as cyclical, privileging continuity over change.[198] As Gabrielle Spiegel and Kathleen Davis have shown, however, medieval writers displayed various conceptions of historical time.[199] When events parallel and repeat each other in medieval chronicles employing a logic of resurrection, therefore, this represents a conscious choice to imbue the past with meaning for the present and future based on scriptural and eschatological models, rather than a mindless adherence to sacred time.

Similarly, backward as well as forward motion through time and place are critical to modern settler colonialism, and "settlers construe their very movement forward as a 'return' to something that was irretrievably lost: a return to the land, but also a return to an Edenic condition."[200] Concepts of historical time invoked in modern settler contexts remain very much influenced by scriptural models, invoking ideas of improvement and fulfillment.[201] Narratives of progress and perfection are not, ultimately, so different from

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[198] Koselleck, *Futures Past*; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991).
[199] Gabrielle Spiegel, "Structures of Time in Medieval Historiography," *The Medieval History Journal* 19, no. 1 (2016): 21–33; Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty*.
[200] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 98-99.
[201] Rose, *Reports from a Wild Country*, 53-61.

the cycles of corruption, punishment, and redemption characteristic of the logic of resurrection and medieval apocalypticism and prophetic history. Residents of modern settler states consciously inscribe both scriptural and apocalyptic rhetoric into their geographies, as in the 1889 description of the United States as "bounded on the north by the North Pole; on the South by the Antarctic Region; on the east by the first chapter of the Book of Genesis and on the west by the Day of Judgement."[202] And as Veracini observes:

> Ultimately, the settler narrative form is especially foundational and powerful in a multiplicity of contexts because it responds, reproduces and engages with one of the fundamental Western stories: Exodus. The basic narrative of journeying to the Promised Land involves promise, servitude, liberation, migration, and the establishment of a new homeland; all tropes that specifically inform settler colonial projects on a multiplicity of levels.[203]

Whether or not progress and perfection are conceived of as scripturally or eschatologically based—and they often are—they undeniably form part of many modern settler states' programs of legitimation, indicating shared understandings of historical time and the importance of some kind of return, whether geographical, religious, or moral.

Modern Spanish efforts to colonize Morocco invoked return and rebirth as a justification for conquest and colonization outside of an explicitly scriptural and eschatological framework. Spanish officials relied on a rhetoric of reviving and resurrecting al-Andalus, specifically an Umayyad legacy of religious coexistence and prosperity, to justify their presence in Morocco, even in parts of the country with no

[202] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 100.
[203] Ibid., 102.

history of Iberian rule or sovereignty.[204] They proclaimed a historical brotherhood which they claimed made them better suited to colonizing Morocco than the French, drawing on the Muslim history of Iberia and the flight of non-Christian Andalusis to North Africa following their expulsion from a newly united Spain.[205] Such a formulation, of course, ignored that many Iberian Muslims and Jews migrated to the Maghrib only as a result of expulsion and persecution. In this use of the rhetoric of rebirth, then, erasure is not enacted upon contemporary populations but on the history of violence against their ancestors by the very state claiming the right to colonize them. Like the Almohads and Marinids, modern Spanish colonists cited proximity and a shared history, bolstered by religious and moral claims, to justify extending their sovereignty across the Strait of Gibraltar. In both the medieval and modern periods, therefore, the idea of a return to a previous and superior state of being legitimized claims to land, regardless of whether the conquering and settling population had previously occupied it.

Similarly, in both modern and premodern contexts, return and rebirth are often marked by ceremonies of possession. Patricia Seed demonstrates the variety of such ceremonies in European conquests of the Americas, which could take the form of speeches, planting, mapping, or other rituals and performance of possession. Seed emphasizes their importance in signaling political authority over goods, lands, and people.[206] Veracini likewise notes the ritual and performative functions of acts like

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[204] Calderwood, *Colonial al-Andalus*, 178.
[205] Calderwood, *Colonial al-Andalus*; Susan Martin-Márquez, *Disorientations: Spanish Colonialism in Africa and the Performance of Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
[206] Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

surveying, ploughing, transforming landscapes, and familial rites like weddings and funerals performed in religious buildings.[207] Many of these acts appear in medieval chronicles as part of the rebirth stage of the logic of resurrection. In the *Mann bi-l-imāma*, depictions of Almohad conquests as ritual sacrifices and of caliphal communications as *siḥr ḥalāl* constitute a repeated, ritual performance of Almohad possession and renewal after elimination. The use of *populare* in Asturian and Leonese texts embraced both literal and symbolic meanings to perform a ritual renewal and conversion upon the land to which it referred. The *Mann*'s attention to the systematic Almohad construction of new cities and fortresses, along with their maintenance of previously neglected infrastructure, serves the same function. The *Rawḍ al-qirṭās* and the Astur-Leonese chronicles include similar descriptions of infrastructure projects. The ostentatious cleansing and conversion of religious buildings was another means by which Muslims and Christians marked the conquest of each other's territory. Following the Muslim surrender of Coria to Christian forces in the *Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor*, for example, both the town and its "temple" are said to have been cleansed of "pollution" and "filth." A church was then dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and a bishop ordained.[208] Though the majority of the passage is lost, the chronicle also describes the construction of a church dedicated to John the Baptist on the former site of a mosque, which it refers to as a "synagogue to Satan."[209]

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[207] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 66.
[208] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 225; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 231.
[209] Falque, Gil, and Maya, eds., *Chronica Hispana Saeculi*, 246; Barton and Fletcher, trans., *World of El Cid*, 247.

The corruption, elimination, and rebirth stages of the logic of resurrection all, therefore, have parallels with aspects of modern settler strategies. Corruption in medieval chronicles was used to establish insider and outsider identities, including indigenous and exogenous alterities, that justified the elimination of populations despite their long histories in a given territory. Medieval chroniclers were perhaps more willing than modern settlers to detail and glorify violent and lethal elimination, even to the point of exaggeration, but they also eliminated populations, identities, and histories with a variety of other tactics common in the modern period. Finally, the ritual and return aspects of settler sovereignty are present in medieval chronicles that employ a logic of resurrection. These similarities are suggestive, highlighting the enduring and varied history of such strategies to legitimize conquest, violence, and removal, which were employed by North Africans as well as Europeans, and by Muslims as well as Christians. Furthermore, they indicate that while modern setter states have increasingly moved towards rhetoric of secularized civilization and morality, they still operate within recognizably religious frameworks and sacred temporalities.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to highlight connections and continuity in the use of historical narratives to justify conquest and colonization across time and space, proposing a logic of resurrection to examine how Muslim and Christian chroniclers across the Strait viewed their historical connections to one another. Even as chroniclers from different religions, polities, and linguistic backgrounds wrote to undermine rival claims to territory

and sovereignty, they seem to have adopted common strategies to bolster their efforts, working within a shared and mutually colonizing intellectual framework. This insight, in turn, suggests the value of making comparisons between medieval and modern modes of coloniality, and of examining the logic of resurrection specifically in the context of settler colonial rhetoric. This evidence suggests that colonialism, in a variety of forms and expressions, is not the invention of the European enlightenment. Though this chapter takes the medieval western Mediterranean as a case study, there is ample room for expanding such analysis to other regions and periods.

My conception of the logic of resurrection acknowledges that elements of the traditional *reconquista* narrative are present in ninth-century Asturian chronicles written in support of the monarchy and a vision of the revival of the Visigothic legacy. These included the use of an extreme rhetoric of violence and elimination of Muslims from the peninsula. The logic of resurrection breaks from the model of *reconquista* in several important ways, however. First, while the cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth was adopted by some later Christian chroniclers in Iberia, this was by no means universally or continuously the case. Nor is the logic of resurrection in its fullest form, with its goal of the wholesale removal of Muslims from Iberia, employed by all or most Christian chroniclers, for whom the various narratives and strategies described in previous chapters sufficed.

Second, even before its appearance in Muslim and North African chronicles, Christian chroniclers who used the logic of resurrection to focus primarily on the recovery of Iberian territory were deeply invested in the relevance of broader regional

networks and relationships across the Strait. Iberia and North Africa had both been subject to Roman and Byzantine rule, an imperial history often recalled in Christian chronicles. North Africa, as much if not more than the Middle East, was understood as the immediate source of the Muslims who conquered Iberia, and the *Chronicle of Albelda* and the *Prophetic Chronicle* even say that the prophet Muḥammad preached in Africa.[210] The semi-regular influx of North African troops and dynasties in the following centuries served as continual fodder for the idea that Muslims came not from a vague and distant "outside," but from just across the Strait of Gibraltar. Christian Iberians who wrote within a logic of resurrection (and many of those who did not) included North Africa as an integral and dynamic part of the peninsula's past, present, and future. The logic of resurrection, like the Julian episode elaborated in Chapter 2, underlines that Christian Iberian geopolitical imaginaries were just as concerned with the Strait of Gibraltar as with the Duero River. Though the logic of resurrection predictably emphasizes religious identity as a determining factor in one's right to occupy and rule Iberian territory, therefore, it differs from traditional understandings of *reconquista* in its attention to broader regional and historical identities.

Finally, the logic of resurrection as an expression and interpretation of the relationships between Muslims and Christians in Iberia and North Africa was not limited to the Christian Iberian tradition, as the concept of *reconquista* is generally understood to have been. On the contrary, the narrative cycle of corruption, elimination, and rebirth was legible and useful to Muslims across the Strait, and thus constitutes one piece of a larger

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[210] Gil Fernández and Ruiz de la Peña, eds., *Crónicas asturianas*, 169, 185.

shared cultural archive that was used to relate and interpret histories that transcended religious, linguistic, and geopolitical boundaries. As with Christian Iberians, the logic of resurrection was employed by some but not all North African chroniclers and formed part of a larger preoccupation with making meaning of regional connectivity in the western Mediterranean.

While the use of the logic of resurrection was undeniably contingent on a variety of historical specificities, its transportability is equally noteworthy. Reading it through a settler colonial lens shows that colonial rhetoric and strategies too have proven remarkably transportable over centuries and continents, and that a postcolonial reckoning must likewise include our assessment of both the Middle Ages and North Africa. A recognition that Muslim and Christian writers on both sides of the Strait employed such strategies is in and of itself a significant step towards decolonizing this history. It challenges the idea that modern Europe "invented" colonialism in a way that is meaningfully distinct from the multitude of premodern trans-continental Mediterranean empires which were just as likely to be centered in the Middle East or North Africa as in Europe.

It also pushes against the tendency, even in modern fields of study oriented towards regional and transregional connectivity, to depict North Africa as a site of perpetual colonization and peripheral cultural and political importance. In MENA studies, North Africa is literally appended to the Middle East, and the periods of its history which attract the most attention coincide with its colonization by Middle Eastern and European powers. Likewise, in Mediterranean Studies, North Africa is much more likely to be

included in discussion of the ancient or the modern periods—when it was colonized by European powers—than of the Middle Ages, when it produced colonizing dynasties who were arguably among the first to promote a cohesive ideological-geographical construct of the "west," which affected both Muslim and Christian worldviews.[211] Medieval North African states are still rarely considered in the same detailed and nuanced way as European or Middle Eastern ones. Until quite recently, the Almoravids and Almohads were largely portrayed as violent and overzealous barbarians who brought an end to the Umayyad legacy of *convivencia* and the cultural efflorescence of the *ṭā'ifa* period following the caliphate, though they too were prolific builders, thinkers, and patrons. This scholarly bias is not detached from more recent colonial legacies, as the idealization of Umayyad al-Andalus in defense of the Spanish colonization of Morocco reminds us.[212] In contrast, this chapter has aimed to complicate the image of North Africa as perpetually colonized by European and Middle Eastern powers by arguing that medieval North Africans used identifiably colonial and settler colonial strategies and rhetoric in their interactions with Iberians. Iberians, in turn, understood the historically colonial nature of their relationship with North Africa, which was one they projected into the future even as they sought to reverse its directionality.

None of this is meant to dismiss the many ways that people from different religious, linguistic, and geopolitical backgrounds interacted cooperatively and

[211] Fabio López Lázaro, "The Rise and Global Significance of the First 'West': The Medieval Islamic Maghrib," *Journal of World History* 24, no. 2 (2013): 259–307; Ramzi Rouighi, "A Mediterranean of Relations for the Medieval Maghrib: Historiography in Question," *Al-Masāq* 29, no. 3 (2017): 201–20.
[212] Alejandro García Sanjuán, "Nubes de langosta africana. Prejuicios historiográficos sobre las dinastías beréberes (almorávides, almohades y meriníes)," *En la España Medieval* 43 (2020): 27–49.

productively in the western Mediterranean in the Middle Ages. The logic of resurrection is not an overarching model of medieval interfaith relations, but rather a way to describe a set of colonial narratives, strategies, and ideologies that were invoked in specific times and places. It is not a counter to the model of *convivencia*, which has come to emphasize both the cooperation and the conflict that resulted from the "living together" of multiple religious and ethnocultural groups.[213] Instead, I would suggest that the logic of resurrection fits under the umbrella of *convivencia*, and that both are tightly bound with premodern and modern colonialities. The concept of *convivencia* itself can be understood, in some ways, as a product of modern settler discomfort. It is championed primarily by North American scholars, like myself, for whom "emphasising complex traditions of settler-indigenous partnership" may be "easier than insisting on the need to decolonise settler colonial sovereignties and radically reform the settler colonial polities."[214] Indeed, while proponents of *convivencia* are generally starkly opposed to the nationalist and Islamophobic uses of *reconquista* rhetoric, both ultimately defend a kind of Iberian exceptionalism that rarely makes room for the role of North Africans, either as historical actors or as part of the historical consciousness and geopolitical imaginaries of Iberians.[215]

The rootedness of the logic of resurrection in the broader context of the western Mediterranean, as well as its legibility and persuasiveness to both Muslims and Christians in Iberia and North Africa over the course of multiple centuries, reinforce the prevalence

[213] Szpiech, "The Convivencia Wars."
[214] Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 112.
[215] I refer to the use of *reconquista* rhetoric by the extreme-right Spanish party Vox, and to the invocation of Pelayo by the perpetrator of the Christchurch massacre in 2019.

and power of intellectual and cultural exchange across ideological and physical boundaries. This in turn centers a decolonizing agenda by extending our understanding of *convivencia* across the Strait and pointing to the long and varied histories of colonialism beyond modern Europe. Finally, attention to the logic of resurrection nuances our understanding of the dynamics of conflict and cooperation in medieval interfaith relations, reminding us that the same textual tradition which proclaimed the unified history of Iberia and North Africa, citing a legendary bridge across the Strait of Gibraltar, also envisioned a future unity made possible through the elimination or subjugation of entire populations.

Conclusion

The preceding chapters have sought to highlight a number of similarities in the corpus of historical chronicles produced by Muslims and Christians living in Iberia and North Africa between the eighth and fourteenth centuries. Some of these commonalities—like narratives of the Islamic conquests, apocalyptic prophecies, and the logic of resurrection—were the product of active reading and exchange across religious, linguistic, and geopolitical lines. Others—like the scriptural and Greco-Latin labels applied to religious and ethnocultural others, geographical imaginaries, and depictions of women's exercise of power—seem to be more passive indicators of a shared cultural context. From the micro-level of the words they used to describe one another to the macro-level of how they imagined their shared history fitting into a divinely ordained temporality, Muslims and Christians across the Strait were integral to one another's view of the past. I conceptualize this lived and literary connectivity as a shared cultural archive, into which these chapters represent only initial forays and, I hope, invite further study.

The chronicles I examine tend to center the relationship both between Christianity and Islam and between North Africa and Iberia. While scholars have been quite attentive to the former, the latter suggests a regional framework with a great deal of relevance to medieval writers that has nonetheless taken a backseat in modern scholarship on interfaith relations, even within Mediterranean studies. This can be explained in part by the persistence of colonial attitudes towards North Africa. My project has argued that North Africans were equal partners in the making and writing of history across the Strait,

showcasing some of the ways North African chroniclers played a critical role in constructing and disseminating narratives of this regional history. I have also argued that North African dynasties like the Almohads acted colonially in Iberia, using Islam and language of rebirth to bridge geographical and historical divisions across the Strait. Christian chroniclers in Iberia were likewise deeply invested and interested in their shared history with North Africa and made recourse to similar colonial strategies in their narratives, often collapsing Muslim and North African identity to suggest that both were inherently foreign to the peninsula and had no sustainable claim to live and rule there. Recognizing the mutually colonizing aspects of medieval Iberian and North African chronicles presents a challenge to modern understandings of colonialism, the role of North Africa in the Middle Ages, and the interconnectedness of historical imaginaries across the Strait.

And indeed the chronicle genre, too, has been neglected in discussions of interfaith relations and *convivencia*. Certainly individual chronicles have been used as sources, with some comparisons made across religious and linguistic traditions, but the relationship between Muslim and Christian histories in the longer term has received no serious study. Though this can be explained to some extent by traditional academic divisions which until fairly recently have tended to preclude training in in both Arabic and Latin/Ibero-Romance, this is not the only reason. It can be attributed in part to a sense that medieval chronicles are neither quite works of literature, to be valued for their artistic qualities, or works of philosophy or science, to be valued for their intellectual contributions. Chroniclers' propensity to focus more on moments of interreligious

violence and conflict has also played a role in their omission from discussions about a shared literary culture. In contrast, this dissertation has argued for the importance of analyzing Muslim and Christian chronicles together, arguing that their authors were deeply engaged in one another's work, along with other literary forms and genres which were themselves sites of cross-cultural dialogue and exchange. They often narrated even moments of violence and conflict in very similar ways, such that chronicles can be understood as products of cross-cultural exchange and sites of *convivencia*.

My project thus bridges traditional geographical, temporal, and methodological boundaries to explore the relationship of regional identity and belonging to discourses of power and conquest in medieval Iberia and North Africa—historical questions that remain essential to modern debates about large-scale migration in the Mediterranean. I highlight the enduring and reciprocal ties across the Strait of Gibraltar, examining the impact of religious, linguistic, and geopolitical boundaries on medieval identity formation, coloniality, and historical imaginaries in the western Mediterranean. Ultimately, I hope to have shown that Muslim and Christian chroniclers across the Strait were informed about one another in the present, aware of how they narrated their common past, and invested in the question of what the future would look like for themselves and one another.

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