ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOKS

Routledge Handbook of Muslim Iberia

Edited by Maribel Fierro

THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF MUSLIM IBERIA

This handbook offers an overview of the main issues regarding the political, economic, social, religious, intellectual and artistic history of the Iberian Peninsula during the period of Muslim rule (eighth–fifteenth centuries). A comprehensive list of primary and secondary sources attests the vitality of the academic study of al-Andalus (= Muslim Iberia) and its place in present-day discussions about the past and the present.

The contributors are all specialists with diverse backgrounds providing different perspectives and approaches. The volume includes chapters dealing with the destiny of the Muslim population after the Christian conquest and with the posterity of al-Andalus in art, literature and different historiographical traditions. The chapters are organized in the following sections:

- Political history, concentrating on rulers and armies
- Social, religious and economic groups
- Intellectual and cultural developments
- Legacy and memory of al-Andalus

Offering a synthetic and updated academic treatment of the history and society of Muslim Iberia, this comprehensive and up-to-date collection provides an authoritative and interdisciplinary guide. It is a valuable resource for both specialists and the general public interested in the history of the Iberian Peninsula, Islamic and Medieval studies.

Maribel Fierro is a research professor at the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Instituto de Lenguas y Culturas del Mediterráneo-CSIC), Spain. Her research focuses on the political, religious and intellectual history of al-Andalus and the Maghrib, Islamic law, the construction of orthodoxy and the persecution of heresies, and violence and its representation in Medieval Arabic sources. Among her publications: *The Almohad Revolution: Politics and religion in the Islamic West during the twelfth–thirteenth centuries* (2012), and *Abd al-Rahman III: The first Cordoban caliph* (2005). In 2014 she was the recipient of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's Anneliese Maier award.

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To María Luisa Ávila, Manuela Marín and Luis Molina, the best possible colleagues in Andalusi matters, and also friends

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TRANSLITERATION AND DATES

Transliteration of the Arabic alphabet follows the *IJMES* chart (www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-file-manager/file/57d83390f6ea5a022234b400/TransChart.pdf).

Words such as Andalusi and Maliki are not transliterated given their frequent use throughout this volume. Andalusi refers to al-Andalus, and Andalusian to modern-day Andalucía.

Dates are given first according to the Islamic calendar followed by those of the Gregorian calendar. When dates related to events outside the Islamic world are not mentioned in Arabic sources, only the Gregorian dates are recorded.

INTRODUCTION

Languages, academic traditions and disciplinary backgrounds in the study of al-Andalus

Maribel Fierro

Among the monuments built by the Muslims during the time they ruled in the Iberian Peninsula, the tower of the former mosque of Seville was kept by the Christian conquerors of the town and transformed into that of the cathedral that replaced the Islamic building. Known as the Giralda, it has inspired – like other iconic buildings such as the mosque of Cordoba and the Alhambra in Granada – architects all over the world, such as those responsible for the Wrigley Building in Chicago. The Giralda and the Wrigley tower have been selected for the cover of this book devoted not only to the history of al-Andalus[1] (or Muslim Iberia) but also to that of its aftermath.

This collective volume aims, first, at offering to readers not necessarily specialists on the topic an overview of the different dynasties that ruled in al-Andalus and how they succeeded or failed in maintaining their power through their armies and the legitimacy they claimed and that was reflected, among other means, in their coins. Then, it moves to deal with the most important components of the societies over which those rulers exercised their power, and of the cultural and intellectual developments that took place in them. Parts I–III are thus devoted to Rulers, Society and Culture,[2] respectively, while Part IV addresses the aftermath of al-Andalus, from the Mudejars and Moriscos to the memory of al-Andalus in the Islamic world, in Spain, the Americas and 'the West', as well as its mythification and use for political and ideological contemporary purposes. This structure aims at facilitating the non-specialized readers to grasp the most relevant data and interpretations, while the specialist or those who want to become specialists will find updated materials and discussions by scholars all of whom are involved in research on the topic they deal with. Fifty boxes are devoted to certain figures, towns, texts, objects or topics that highlight different aspects of the history and cultural production of al-Andalus and its impact. Maps, dynastic tables and

illustrations, as well as a glossary of technical terms, have been also included while the general bibliography documents the vitality of the modern study of al-Andalus. Scholars are now able to approach such study with instruments that our predecessors did not have. One is the collective enterprise that led to the publication of the *Biblioteca de al-Andalus* by the Fundación Ibn Tufayl thanks to the vision of Jorge Lirola and José Miguel Puerta Vílchez, a reference work of great value that hopefully one day will be available in digitized form to become even more useful. Two similar resources that can be consulted online and with free access are the *Prosopography of the 'Ulamā' of al-Andalus* (*PUA*), directed by María Luisa Ávila (Escuela de Estudios Árabes, CSIC-Granada), and the *History of the Authors and Transmitters of al-Andalus (HATA)* that I direct, that allow easy access to the wealth of information found in the biographical and bio-bibliographical dictionaries as well as in other sources. In the next few decades, the significant number of printed Arabic books related to the history of al-Andalus that have been digitized and are increasingly fully searchable will allow new approaches not only in terms of saving time in our research (this is already happening) but in the questions asked from the sources and in the possible answers obtained from machine-readable corpora in areas such as inter-textuality that will allow us to refine our grasp of the sources.

I am grateful to Routledge for having approached me to carry out this collective enterprise that inevitably reflects in some ways my own perspective on how to study and understand al-Andalus, but in which I have also tried to have represented the most important scholarly debates and points of view. Nevertheless, the study of al-Andalus includes more than is found in this volume, both at the scholarly and non-scholarly levels, the latter having been especially active in the last two decades as we live in an age in which the past – and specifically the medieval past – is again being heavily mobilized to talk about present concerns. Such mobilization is an interesting object of study in itself, and apparently especially attractive to those who approach it from a geographical or academic distance. But it loses any possible appeal for those who have to suffer its implications in terms of domestic policies or the scholarly training of new generations. This book hopes to move the reader to look for more on the topic and, hopefully, if in her or his search that reader encounters approaches that aim to consciously manipulate, distort or falsify what is historically well established – according to the rules of scholarly research – she or he will be able to draw his or her own conclusions.

A collective volume like this represents – with limitations as we shall see – the outlooks, styles and aims of different traditions and disciplines in the Western academic world, while also reflecting some of the problems posed by the pluri-lingual scholarship dealing with al-Andalus.

Of the thirty scholars who have contributed to this *Handbook*, there is a gender balance (sixteen men, fourteen women) that came out not because of quotas but because it is as easy to find good specialists who are men as those who are women: this is the reality of the field. In terms of geographical distribution, the lion's share goes to Spain with a total of seventeen scholars. This share reflects the amount of research on al-Andalus that is being produced inside the Iberian Peninsula, including Portugal, here represented by one scholar. As for the

Spaniards, together with two independent scholars, they come from institutions located all over the peninsula (Barcelona, Granada, Huelva, Jaén, Madrid, Salamanca, Vitoria). This shows that interest for al-Andalus in its many dimensions is well represented in the Spanish academic milieu, involving universities and the High Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) – a state organization with institutes all over the peninsula. All these institutions have strong local ties with the Autonomous Governments (Comunidades Autónomas) where they are located, a situation that often gives shape to the research produced there. The Spanish scholars have also different academic backgrounds, some having been trained as Arabists, i.e., their studies focused on the learning of the Arabic language and thus were trained in Faculties of Philology or Letters and Humanities, and some as Medievalists and Archaeologists who study in Faculties of History. Academic separation and difference in training have, for a long time, made it difficult to achieve a convergence between the two. In the past decades, there has been a slow and still minority interest on the part of some Medievalists to acquaint themselves with the knowledge of the Arabic language to a degree that allows them to have direct access to the Arabic sources. This has been a very salutary development that goes together with the acknowledgment on the part of those trained as Arabists that mastery of the language does not transform them automatically into historians or specialists in the study of literature, philosophy, the sciences and so on. A growing convergence in readings, training and methodologies is making conversation across disciplinary boundaries possible – a development that is to be expected to grow in the future given that public funding through Spanish and European institutions favours inter-disciplinarity and transversality. Another development to note regarding the Spanish contributors is that many of them are able to write their papers in English – even if revision is still needed. This indicates how the Spanish academic milieu has grown more 'global' since the advent of democracy in 1978 – the year in which the Spanish Constitution was voted during the so-called 'Transition' period that led from the dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939–1975) to a democratic political system and eventually to the integration of Spain into the European Community (1986). Moreover, three of the Spanish scholars included in this volume are presently located in academic institutions outside Spain. This is another sign of the changes that have taken place in the Spanish academic milieu, especially after the Socialist Party came to power in 1982, and even more after the approval of the 'Ley de la Ciencia' (The Law for Science) (1986) with the promotion of the internationalization of Spanish scholarship by supporting research stays of young and senior scholars in different institutions across the world, thus facilitating the acquisition of other languages, and strengthening the convergence of Spanish scholars in their outlooks and methodologies with those of the scholars from other Western countries. In more recent decades, a slow increase in the numbers of non-Spaniards integrated in Spanish academic institutions is perceptible, although this is a process that still encounters many internal resistances and obstacles. A final point to be made is that Spanish scholars tend to be inclusive in their bibliographical references, as they are aware that for a long time the more

stimulating approaches to their subject of study came from outside Spain: dictatorships are very bad for allowing the production of innovative research.

Scholars from academic institutions in the United States come second, six in total. This number is partly due to editorial policies, but the fact is that al-Andalus has long attracted the interest of North American scholars. This has much to do with the impact of the teaching of Américo Castro (1885–1972), a literary critic and cultural historian who had sided with the Spanish Republic and who left Spain when the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) started, teaching for the rest of his life in the universities of Wisconsin-Madison, Texas and Princeton. Citizens of Hispanic descent – easily recognizable by their family names – are well represented among the US scholars who specialize in the study of al-Andalus and related topics such as the history of the Muslim communities after the fall of al-Andalus, the history of Islamic North Africa and the impact of the Andalusi experience in the Spanish conquest and empire-building in America. This volume bears witness to this reality.

In Europe, the history of al-Andalus has long been conducted by French scholars who have greatly enriched our understanding of its political, economic, social and cultural developments, and who have combined the study of texts with archaeological work with fruitful results. A French academic institution located in Spain, the Casa de Velázquez, has been extremely influential in this regard. This French seminal scholarship is here represented by two scholars. One of them is the historian Pierre Guichard, whose work had a tremendous impact in modern approaches to the history of the Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula. The number of French scholars could have been higher, given that the study of al-Andalus and Islamic North Africa is still very much active across the Pyrenees with the particularity that they combine both (the history of al-Andalus and North Africa), something that is not always the case in Spain. But the trend to connect more and more al-Andalus and the Maghrib can be ascertained in a growing number of publications, in funded projects in both Spain and France, and in *The Spain and North Africa Project (SNAP)*, a scholarly initiative started by US scholars to encourage the study of the Iberian Peninsula and the Maghrib as a unified region.

One of the scholars in this volume is Italian, but was partly trained in France, representing the dynamics and dynamism of the Italian academic milieu that produces excellent scholars with a strong linguistic background and often an international profile, although is unable to incorporate all of them. This is also the case of Dutch universities. One of the two scholars located in Israel is, in fact, Dutch. The importance of the Jewish communities in Spanish medieval and early modern history explains a sustained interest in al-Andalus among Israeli, and Jewish scholars more generally, especially regarding intellectual developments, the plight of the Jews who were forced to convert and the resulting diaspora.

Great Britain and Germany, as well as other European countries and Japan, also count among their scholars some who have dealt with Andalusi issues and topics. Such scholars are numerous in the Arab and Islamic world, carrying out extremely valuable work producing many editions of Arabic texts while also producing myriad significant studies on almost every possible aspect. However, while scholars

from Western academic institutions often interact among themselves through emails, associations, participation in conferences, reviews, etc., this is regrettably most often not the case with non-Western scholars. Scholars who work in the universities of the Arab and Islamic world suffer from a number of shortcomings for which they are not responsible, such as lack of access to Western publications, often too expensive for the limited budgets of their libraries, and lack of funding for participating in international conferences. There are also linguistic barriers. The ability to read medieval Arabic sources does not always go together with the ability to speak it on the part of Western scholars. The predominance of English in the academic world can also be an obstacle for scholars who have been trained in a post-colonial setting that stressed Arabization. At a certain moment, it also stressed re-Islamization. It is difficult for Western scholars to have a conversation with scholars from the Islamic world who still conceive of the Muslim conquests as *fatḥ*, a religiously charged concept. To be fair, it is also difficult to have a conversation with scholars who conceive of the Christian conquest of al-Andalus as a 'Reconquista', an equally religiously charged concept, without acknowledging its ideological background. However, in this case other commonalities – the ability to communicate in the same language and the sharing of common references – seem to attenuate the difficulty and to elevate the degree of tolerance.

Spanish and Portuguese scholars, and those from the Arab and Islamic world, tend to produce detailed studies that concentrate in depth on certain topics, from the historical value of Andalusi poetry to the sanitary system in Andalusi towns, from the naming patterns of the local Muslim population to the irrigation practices of a specific locality. Western scholars from outside the Iberian Peninsula usually bring with them other types of interest and questions that put the Andalusi case in a wider perspective. However, there is still scarce integration of the historical knowledge gained about the Islamic societies that developed in al-Andalus and the Maghrib (the Islamic West) in the writing of the history of the Islamic world in general. This shortcoming is slowly diminishing and is likely to be further eroded in the near future, as interest in the region continues to increase especially on the part of archaeologists, given the present-day difficulty of conducting research in other areas of the Islamic world that have for long elicited much more interest. There is much to gain from this growing interest, but for those scholars whose main production is in languages other than English it comes also with a threat, that of seeing their research reduced to being quoted in footnotes in texts written in English that eventually become the standard works of reference.

When I started this project in 2015, I did not know that it was going to take five years to see it finished. Coordinating thirty contributors, each of whom had other commitments and their own priorities, proved to be very demanding and not always successful. There were also withdrawals in the process. I am particularly grateful to those who joined the project at a late stage and who were extremely generous with their time. My thanks to Víctor de Castro for his help and to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation that made it possible through the Anneliese Maier Award granted to me in 2014. Luis Molina as always has been there when I needed him. Francisco Vidal has been extremely generous with his

time and his resources. I wish also to thank Joe Whiting and Titanilla Panczel from Routledge for their support, as well as all those who have been involved in the publication of this book. Finally, my thanks to my son Andrés for his patience in those many days when, immersed in the preparation of this book, I only uttered monosyllables and he only saw my back while sitting for hours at the computer.

Notes

1 The origin of this name is still being debated. See on this Chapter 8, note 23.
2 The language situation in al-Andalus is mentioned in Chapters 9 and 10. No specific chapter has been devoted to this topic as there are two useful studies that offer an overview: D. J. Wasserstein, "The Language Situation in Al-Andalus." In *Studies on the Muwassah and the Kharja*, edited by A. Jones and R. Hitchcock, 1–15. Reading: Ithaca Press, 1991, and M. A. Gallego, "The Languages of Medieval Iberia and their Religious Dimension." *Medieval Encounters* 9 (2003): 107–139.

PART I

Rulers

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1

THE IBERIAN PENINSULA BEFORE THE MUSLIM* CONQUEST

Iñaki Martín Viso

The sudden collapse of the kingdom of Toledo in 711 after confronting the Muslim troops that had disembarked in the Iberian Peninsula has led to a negative assessment of the Visigothic monarchy. For many scholars, the collapse represents the final consequence of a gradual process of internal deterioration, a perspective influenced by credulous readings of the Asturian chronicles written in the late ninth century. Historiography has nurtured this idea for a long time. E. A. Thompson, in his influential book on the Goths in Spain, stated that "the Visigothic state machine was breaking down", which would explain the fast destruction of the kingdom.[1] Clear indications of this hypothesised breakdown would be the military laws established by the later kings and the legislation concerning fugitive servants. L. A. García Moreno provides a summary of the converging crises (economic, social, political and cultural) that afflicted the kingdom in the early eighth century, eventually leading to its destruction.[2] As recently as 2011, a renowned expert on the Islamic conquest affirmed that "Nobody disputes the fact that the kingdom of Toledo showed advanced signs of decay when the Muslim invasion took place. Decomposition on this scale affected political, economic, social and moral structures".[3]

Nevertheless, voices have been raised in recent years which aim to minimize the significance of the crisis as an explanatory factor, even going so far as to reject the idea of pre-711 crisis, indeed presenting the kingdom as a solid political structure in the context of the Post-Roman West.[4] An analysis of royal legislation,

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Map 1.1 Visigothic kingdom

the type of evidence most frequently used, shows that the laws should not be understood as straightforward indicators of disintegration. For example, late Visigothic military laws, far from being a consequence of centrifugal forces, must be understood as the adaptation of an army made up mainly of rural militias, which could be more effective in their nearby territories.[5] Ch. Wickham summarizes this perspective as follows: "In that period [the late seventh century] the Visigothic state was the strongest in the West".[6] The so called *Chronicle of 754*, the Hispanic Christian source closest to the events it narrates, describes the Muslim conquest as a tragedy that struck a stable kingdom that had ruled over Hispania for 140 years.[7] Thus, the story of the fall of the Visigothic kingdom is reinforced (indeed, dramatized) by its unexpected nature.

For a proper assessment of the Visigothic kingdom, it is necessary to integrate it into the context of Post-Roman political structures, which were characterized by the existence of a strong but small polity focused upon kings. These rulers engaged in patronage, even if at a much lower level than the late Roman emperors. And yet, at the same time, local societies enjoyed greater autonomy. G. Halsall has proposed that kingdoms could only be held together if people identified with them in the localities (that is, those areas that were politically peripheral), which only happened when such identification offered advantages.[8]

This means that early medieval kingdoms operated through a double mechanism of "penetration from above" and "investment from below". In very local political arenas, such "investment from below" could sometimes be a way for certain families to gain long-lasting authority, although there were also families whose local prominence was well secured and did not need to "invest" in a distant power source.[9] Accordingly, early medieval political structures generally appear to have manifested themselves as "thin" states, with scarce capacity to intervene at the local level. Consequently, local societies enjoyed a greater capacity for action, and their integration into higher political structures involved strong elements of negotiation.

The evolution of Hispania between the fifth and sixth centuries, with the proliferation of local powers and the late assertion of Visigothic central power, implemented under Leovigild's rule (569–585), made the consolidation of strong local structures easier, so that those who "invested" in the *regnum* became members of very strong and small socio-political groups. The result was that only a reduced number of families was directly concerned with the kingdom's affairs, while most of the population, even regional aristocracies, felt little to no effect from the "policies" that emanated from Toledo.

A noteworthy aspect is that the Visigothic monarchy remained elective, although no clear criteria on the manner of election of the king were ever established, which caused successions to become breeding grounds for factional conflicts.[10] This elective and hardly formalized nature of the monarchical succession could be regarded as conducive to instability, although it was not a specific trait of the kingdom of Toledo, since the Lombard kingdom maintained the election of kings and managed to survive for two hundred years. Neither was the second half of the seventh century a phase of acute tensions: between 642 and 710, no succession to the throne involved murder or armed conflict within the Visigothic kingdom, which stands in contrast to the serious problems endured by the Merovingian dynasty.[11] Indeed, factionalism and violence were part of political practice throughout the entire Post-Roman West. The kingdom of Toledo was not an exception, even though the degree of violence and instability it suffered was far less than that observed in other kingdoms. Likewise, this elective nature would have facilitated the existence of some groups that could have access to the throne and were therefore interested in the preservation of the kingdom, while it also prevented excessive concentration of power in the hands of a single family. In this way, it contributed to the perception of the kingdom as a matter that affected and involved the entirety of the *gens Gothorum*, the recipients of political sovereignty.

This led to what has been regarded as a dual system between king and aristocracy, whereby the former held the crown as a representative of the *gens*, understood as a cultural and political entity. The key to stability would be in the distribution of tax revenues and resources that belonged to the *gens* as a whole, and not exclusively to the king. Throughout the seventh century, certain kings (e.g. Chindaswinth, Recceswinth, Egica) sought to strengthen their position by using a confiscation mechanism aimed at obtaining new resources to share among

their faction's members.[12] Far from being weak rulers, the late seventh-century kings established new bases for exercising their power, supplemented by consolidated ideological praxis, most obviously apparent in royal anointing. Revolts, such as the one headed by *dux* Paulus in the early days of Wamba's reign, were not aimed at changing political relations nor at eliminating the figure of the king, but at rebalancing power in favour of groups that were distant from royal sponsorship. This would explain the support obtained in the region of *Septimania*, north of the Pyrenees, home to a large number of late sixth- and early seventh-century Visigothic kings, whose aristocracy had been excluded from the crown since the times of Chindaswinth (642–653). In any case, only a few families had access to the throne and played an active role in this policy.

On the other hand, the characterization of Visigothic Spain as a slave-based society does not correspond with reality. Even though there is scarce private documentation, the reality it portrays differs greatly from the parameters of this model. Vincent of Asan's will, dated back to the mid-sixth century, conveys the description of a large property that was mostly worked by dependent peasants, some of them identified as *coloni*.[13] Visigothic slate tablets from between the sixth and seventh centuries also contribute explicit evidence. An analysis of these documents reveals the existence of a large free peasantry that was subject to tax payment, although it also bears testimony of the presence of slaves (*mancipia*) and freemen. Still, the use of the term *mancipia* does not imply servile status, since one of the tablets mentions the need for these individuals to swear that they would conduct their work properly, a form of small-scale pact hardly likely to be offered to slaves.[14] The hagiographies of the period do not reveal evidence of widespread slavery either, and even the legislation of the time emphasizes the relevance of such free peasantry, which made up the *conuentus publicum uicinorum* and was required to pay taxes.

The idea of a slave-based society is associated with the models corresponding to the transition from Antiquity to Feudalism conceived within a Marxist framework in the 1960s and 70s.[15] Yet, this type of society never existed in the Late and Post-Roman West.[16] While there were, indeed, slaves, there was never a slave-based society. How, then, should the legislation against the flight of *servi* toward the end of the reign be understood? A recent analysis of Egica's 702 law interprets it as a way of securing the support of very specific aristocratic circles, namely those based in the province of *Baetica* (the valley of the Guadalquivir river) and, more specifically, in the city of Cordoba. It was also aimed at conveying an image of the monarch as a strong king, reiterating the provisions of the late Roman emperors.[17] There was a strong ideological aspect to the legislation, and it should not be overlooked, since it need not imply the large-scale flight of *servi*, which was likely confined to very specific cases. At any rate, the data available do not support the idea of a slave-based society or of a widespread social crisis.

The supposed economic crisis of the late seventh-century Visigothic kingdom is related by its proponents to the alleged deterioration of the slave-based society and the problems associated with state resources. The clearest symptom would be the progressive loss of purity of the gold coinage issued by the kings. During the

last decades of the kingdom, the amount of gold in the coins became smaller, evidencing economic difficulties.[18] Nevertheless, this situation is not specific to the Visigothic kingdom, but affects the entire Post-Roman West. After the strong presence of gold in the fourth-century economy, post-imperial kings aspired to preserve a monetary policy of prestige, maintaining a circulation pattern based on gold. However, the role of taxation, which was the main way to obtain gold, diminished to the point of even disappearing in certain kingdoms. At the same time, this gold drained out to other areas such as the Eastern Mediterranean or, later, the Islamic world. This scarcity of gold hampered the continuity of a policy aimed at the minting of gold coins as a means of propaganda and legitimization.[19] The only solution was to lower the coins' purity. Increased minting in times of Egica and Witiza could have answered to the assertion of the royalty's ideological mechanisms, even though it was necessary to reduce the amount of gold in the alloy of the pieces. But gold was marginal to most economic activity; indeed, in some areas, monetary transaction in gold might have been uncommon.

Currency depreciation and the growing regionalization of economic activity were both part of a more general context. Pottery, the best indicator of exchange, reveals a strong tendency to regional production and circulation in the seventh century, a century in which imported pieces that evidenced the connection of certain places with Mediterranean trading networks disappeared from the records.[20] This situation has its correlate throughout the whole Post-Roman West and is related to a transformation triggered by the collapse of major trade routes, although there is also, nevertheless, an emergence of new trade centres (*emporia*), a commercial and productive rearrangement that led to changes at the local level, such as an increase in farming activity.[21]

Nevertheless, seventh-century Hispania consisted of a miscellaneous assortment of regions, which included areas such as the hinterlands of Toledo, with a strong presence of state-associated aristocracies who would have owned important rural holdings. Likewise, there were also newly created village networks where a peasant population, linked in a certain way to such elites, lived,[22] a situation that is comparable to that suggested for the area around the city of *Elo* (El Tolmo de Minateda, Hellín).[23] There were other areas, such as the valley of the river Duero (a large plateau), where aristocracies appear to have been confined to a more local and rural level, interspersed with areas where peasants enjoyed strong agency, the presence of the royal apparatus being little more than a token.[24] Galicia, in the north-western corner of Hispania, also included certain local elites, with very little connection to the power centre in Toledo, who began to invest in the building of churches in the mid-seventh century to secure their social authority.[25] The dominant groups of *Emerita* also engaged in this policy, while at the same time maintaining a complex rural landscape where aristocratic properties intermingled with peasant settlements.[26]

There were more examples that support the idea of a strongly regionalized world that gave way to a large diversity of landscapes, even within the regions themselves.[27] But the Visigothic kingdom always defined itself as a city-based political structure, just as the Roman Empire had done. Cities were the place

where bishops lived and they played a prominent role as political actors. After the Third Council of Toledo, the kingdom accepted Catholicism as the main ideological resource for their legitimization. Councils of bishops held in Toledo became the kingdom's main political assemblies and the scenario for conflicts and agreements.[28] However, not all cities were the same, nor did such offices involve equal degrees of economic and demographic relevance. Regionalization was once again the norm: while in areas such as *Baetica*, the middle valley of the Tagus, or the vicinity of Mérida, cities were the social, political and, probably, economic axes, in areas such as the basin of the river Duero or Galicia, they played only a minor role in relation to other centres of power.[29]

This is the backdrop of the political crisis triggered by the death of Witiza in 710. Roderic, *dux* of *Baetica*, seized the throne, after an interregnum, in a quite irregular manner, such that it met some considerable resistance.[30] Achila-Akhila proclaimed himself king in the north-eastern part of the kingdom (Provinces of *Tarraconensis* and *Narbonensis*) and minted gold coins bearing his name. His claim was probably supported by the aristocracies settled in the Ebro valley and in *Septimania*, who had been marginalized for decades in the fight for control over the kingdom. Likewise, Sunifred might have also ruled from Toledo, where he minted coinage.[31] Struggles for the throne, and even the presence of several claimants, were nothing new.

The problem became more complicated when a new actor entered the scene: Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād seems to have been quite well informed of the situation in *Hispania* and used such information to his advantage. Although there had already been a few Muslim raids, the Visigothic army had managed to repel them.[32] However, Witiza's death marked the beginning of one of the cyclical moments of instability that led to brief periods of political weakness.[33] A couple of military battles and the king's death were enough to cause the collapse of the Visigothic kingdom. Even though Achila, succeeded by Ardo, remained powerful in the north-east, it was to be but a short-lived episode and, in subsequent years, their entire territory would fall to the Muslim armies. The downfall of the kingdom of Toledo was not an isolated case, since there were other Post-Roman kingdoms that also vanished as quickly, such as the Vandal and Lombard ones. The key was the kingdoms' political power structures themselves, arrangements by which the participation of local societies was insufficient to ensure stability once the centre had fallen. Thus, a single military defeat could suffice to cause the entire political centre to crumble. The difference with other cases is that the kingdom of Toledo was overthrown by an Islamic army, which would mark the beginning of completely new socio-economic and political dynamics.

Notes

1 Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, 317.
2 García Moreno, *El fin del reino visigodo de Toledo*.
3 Chalmeta, "La transición: de Hispania a al-Andalus".

4 Martin, *La géographie du pouvoir dans l'Espagne visigothique*; Besga Marroquín, "Consideraciones sobre el fin del reino visigodo de Toledo"; Collins, *Visigothic Spain*; Díaz Martínez, "La dinámica del poder"; Díaz and Poveda, "*Qui patrie excidium intulerunt*".
5 Díaz, "La dinámica", 190–199.
6 Wickham, *The Inheritance of Rome*, 139.
7 López Pereira, ed. *Continuatio Isidoriana Hispana*, 8, 52 (p. 224).
8 Halsall, *Barbarian migrations and the Roman West*, 517.
9 Halsall, *Warfare and society in the Barbarian West*, 21.
10 Martin, "Des fins de régne incertaines".
11 Collins, *La conquista árabe*, 16; Besga Marroquín, "Consideraciones", 14–17.
12 Díaz, "La dinámica"; Díaz and Poveda, "*Qui patrie excidium intulerunt*"; Díaz, "Confiscations in the Visigothic reign of Toledo"; Castellanos, "The Political Nature of Taxation in Visigothic Spain".
13 Díaz, "El testamento de Vicente".
14 Martín Viso, "La sociedad rural en el suroeste de la meseta del Duero".
15 Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism*.
16 Vera, "Le forme del lavoro rurale".
17 Poveda Arias, "Relectura de la supuesta crisis del reino visigodo de Toledo".
18 Castro Priego, "La circulación monetaria de los siglos VII–VIII". On Visigothic coinage, see Pliego Vázquez, *La moneda visigoda*.
19 Naismith, "Gold Coinage and Its Use in the Post-Roman West".
20 Fernández Fernández, *El comercio tardoantiguo s. IV–VII*.
21 Palet Martínez, *Estudi territorial del Pla de Barcelona*.
22 Vigil-Escalera Guirado, "El poblamiento rural del Sur de Madrid".
23 Sarabia Bautista, "La transformación del paisaje rural".
24 Quirós Castillo, "Early Medieval Landscapes in North-West Spain".
25 Sánchez Pardo, "Power and Rural Landscapes in Early Medieval Galicia".
26 Cordero Ruiz, *El territorio emeritense durante la Antigüedad Tardía*.
27 Olmo Enciso, "The Materiality of Complex Landscapes"; Ariño, "El hábitat rural en la península ibérica".
28 Valverde Castro, *Ideología, simbolismo y ejercicio del poder real*; Castellanos, *Los godos y la cruz*.
29 Martínez Jiménez and Tejerizo García, "Central Places in the Post-Roman Mediterranean".
30 Collins, *La conquista*, 32–33; García Moreno, "Los últimos tiempos del reino visigodo", 430–431 and 440; Isla, "Conflictos internos y externos en el fin del reino visigodo", 622–623.
31 García Moreno, *España 702–719*, 145–173; Pliego Vázquez, "El *tremís* de los últimos años del reino visigodo".
32 Collins, *La conquista*, 35; García Moreno, "Los últimos tiempos", 434.
33 Díaz Martínez, "La dinámica", 201–202.

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2

THE CONQUERORS AND THE FORMATION OF AL-ANDALUS*

Jesús Lorenzo Jiménez

The background of the conquest

Precedents

Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam tells that in Dhū 'l-Ḥijja of the year 18/December of 639 ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ was at the gates of Egypt ready to conquer the Nile region, known among the Arabs as *al-Miṣr*. However, he needed Caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb's permission to conduct this campaign, so he dispatched a courier to request it. The caliph's order was that if he had not yet entered Egypt, he should abandon the conquest and return. Sensing that the caliph's advice would err on the side of caution, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ refrained from opening the missive containing the answer until he had entered Egyptian territory. The expansion of Islam toward the West began at that very moment, and it did not stop until, decades later, it reached the Atlantic coast and, soon after, the Pyrenees.

The conquest of Egypt took place very rapidly: the fall of the fortress of Babylon (located at the southern tip of the Nile delta, where ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ had erected his capital, Fusṭāṭ) took place in Rabīʿ II of the year 20/April of 641. From there he launched the conquest of Alexandria, which fell in November of the same year, and then went to the nearest areas, such as *Barqa*, in the region of *Antabulūs*, the Arab name for the Greek term *Pentapolis* by which the Libyan region of Cyrenaica was known. During the following years, several attempts were made from Egypt to take Tripoli, across the Gulf of Sirte, in the Byzantine exarchate of Africa, although they were all unsuccessful.[1]

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The political ups and downs of the Islamic state in the 860s brought the military campaigns in the West to a halt.[2] Having overcome internal disputes with the victory of the Umayyad side, specifically, by Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān (41/661–60/680), new campaigns were undertaken toward the West, in which a figure around whom a mythical aura was placed in the texts would take centre stage: ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ al-Fihrī.

Wrapped in the prestige conferred on him as a Companion of the Prophet, ʿUqba undertook the conquest of the Maghrib in 50/670. He founded the city of Qayrawān, some tens of kilometres from the Tunisian coast, where he would establish the physical base of Islamic political power in the region, dependent on al-Fusṭāṭ. Jaded with political disputes, chroniclers say that in 60/680 he made the decision to commit to jihad in the West and dedicate his life to this task. The texts exaggerate his expedition, endowing it with a mythical character: accompanied by a handful of Muslim faithful moved by the same religious zeal, they crossed the mountainous region of Aurès in Algeria and from there they advanced toward the West, until they reached the Atlantic. In their wake, chroniclers say, they conquered lands for Islam and mosques were erected. In the year 63/683 he finally achieved martyrdom in the Aurès range at the hands of Berber tribes. Despite the dramatic accounts of his campaigns, his conquests were fleeting and new expeditions had to be organised in successive years to consolidate Islamic power in the region.[3]

The advance toward the Atlantic stopped again as a result of the Civil War or *fitna* in which Caliph Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, and later his son and successor, ʿAbd al-Malik, fought with Ibn al-Zubayr, also a pretender to the caliph's seat.[4] The war lasted for eight years, until in 73/692 the Marwānid side defeated the rival's army and killed the aspirant. Once the rival was terminated, the authority of Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik was strengthened. His rule lasted until his death in 86/705, a long period of 20 years which the new caliph used to transform the Islamic state that he had inherited.[5]

Born in 26/646, ʿAbd al-Malik did not know the period of Muḥammad's rule or even the time of the great conquests of Caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Perhaps because he belonged to the second generation of Muslims, according to C. F. Robinson, he perceived the need to adapt the structures of the Islamic state to the new circumstances of 65/685, with a vast territory to control and a population where not only Arabs, but even Muslims, constituted only a small minority, even though they had become the ruling class.[6] Helped by his brothers, Bishr, governor of Iraq from 65/685 until his death in 74/694, and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, governor of Egypt until his death in 86/705, Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik undertook a series of profound transformations in order to adapt the Islamic state apparatus to the circumstances of the period.

The ultimate goal of his reforms was to achieve the cohesion of a state where myriad peoples, with different languages and religious creeds, lived. To achieve this cohesion the new caliph would promote political centralisation, as well as the predominance of Arab elements in the social sphere, and the hegemony of Islam on the religious plane. Centralisation was manifested primarily in the appointment

by the caliph of provincial governors from within his own family, such as ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz in Egypt and Bishr in Iraq, or from among people that he fully trusted, such as the famous al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, who succeeded Bishr in the government of Iraq.[7] The first steps were also taken to create a professional army, which coexisted at that time with the *ajnād* or tribal armies. Arabic was prescribed as the only administrative language throughout the Islamic territory, to the detriment of the multitude of languages spoken in the different regions under Islamic rule. In religious matters, Islam rose as a hegemonic religion over all others, while some of its dogmas became fully developed and were captured in emblematic monuments such as the Dome of the Rock and the inscriptions on the coins.[8]

The creation of an effective and efficient tax system made it possible to raise the money needed to achieve these objectives. The efficiency of tax collection remained in the hands of the governors, whose collection zeal was amply shown in the texts included in Egyptian papyri.[9] Efficiency was ensured by preparing detailed and updated censuses that recorded the names and details of taxpayers and the amounts that they were required to pay. As a consequence, monetary reform became possible, the main indicator of which was the minting of currency in gold, a prerogative until then solely reserved for the emperor of Byzantium.[10]

In short, after the reforms made by ʿAbd al-Malik, from the year 92/711 onwards, the Islamic state apparatus differed greatly from its rudimentary state during the earliest conquests at the time of Muḥammad and Caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. As C. F. Robinson pointed out, while the Islamic state had been characterised by being *laissez-faire* about the conquered territories until the arrival of the Marwānids, from that moment on, the state that emerged from ʿAbd al-Malik's reforms subjected these territories to a rigid control in all areas. In this context of reforms and implementation of a centralised, Arabised, and Islamicate state, a figure that would later play a leading role in the conquest of al-Andalus was forged in the shadow of the Marwānid Umayyads: Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr.

Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr: the Marwānids' man in the West.

Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr's origins did not arouse the interest of the compilers, and only the few brushstrokes offered by his father, Nuṣayr, could shed some light on them. Nuṣayr was originally from the Arab city of ʿAyn al-Tamr, located on the right bank of the Euphrates, which was under Sassanid rule until 12/634, when it was conquered by an army of Muslim neophytes led by Khālid ibn Walīd. Nuṣayr was captured in a church where he was held hostage studying the Scriptures with other companions. Despite their initial captive status, many of them, and their descendants, reached important positions in the Umayyad army and administration in the following decades.

Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr was born in the Syrian village of Kafr Mary in the year 19/640. The sources are silent about him until he was already in his 40s, although the later reports suggest that during those decades Mūsā had been able to make a good place for himself close to the Marwānid Umayyads, with whom he had a relationship of

clientship (*walā'*).[11] It was not until the year 64/684 that accounts were collected about him that showed him fighting in Egypt alongside the Marwānids against the supporters of the *anti-Caliph* ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr.[12]

In the year 73/692, coinciding with the defeat and death of Ibn al-Zubayr, ʿAbd al-Malik named his brother Bishr first governor of Kufa and Basra. Bishr took Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr with him to hold some office related to the collection of taxes. Bishr died in the year 75/694–5[13] and was replaced as governor by the famous al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, who immediately accused Mūsā of having kept part of the tax collections, provoking the wrath of ʿAbd al-Malik. It was then that another brother of the caliph, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, governor of Egypt, interceded in his favour and released him from the punishments that the caliph had threatened him with. He took Mūsā to Egypt with him. Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr resumed his roles in the government and administration.

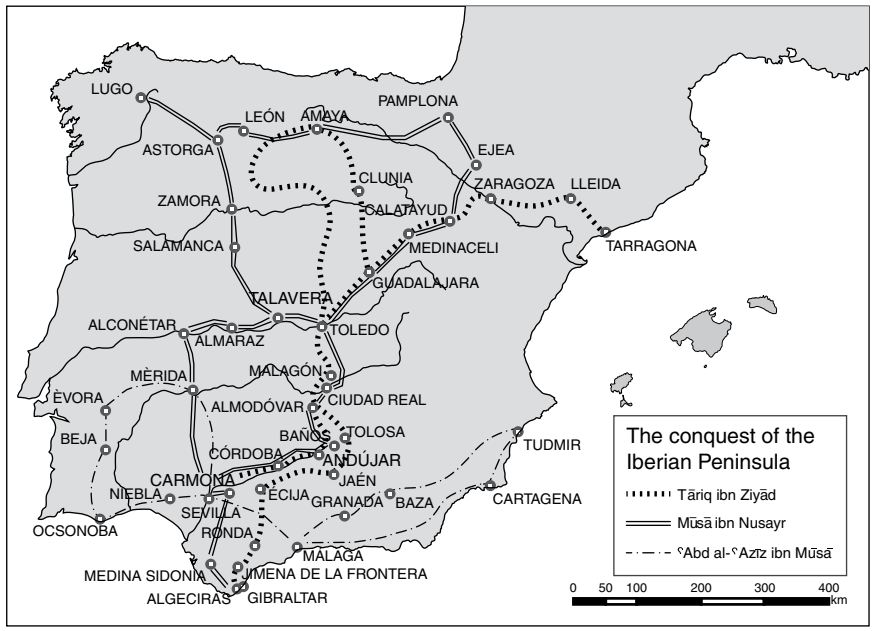
There is hardly any record of his activity there, although a note on a papyrus shows him leading expeditions against the Mediterranean islands.[14] A few years later, sometime between 79/698 and 89/708, according to informants, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, or perhaps Caliph al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, appointed him governor of Ifrīqiya based in Qayrawān, as a subordinate of the governor of Egypt, which seems to have been in acknowledgement for his previous work.[15]

The texts barely conceal Mūsā's intention to emulate his predecessor, the mythical ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ.[16] Like him, Mūsā entered the Aurès and reached the Atlantic, taking an enormous amount of booty and prisoners if the compilers' accounts are to be believed. His conquests, unlike those of ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ, proved to be enduring, which demonstrates his ability as an administrator. The conquered enclaves included the city of Tangier, of high strategic interest because it was off the coast of the Iberian Peninsula. After the conquest, Mūsā appointed a man who was his *mawlā*, whom he trusted completely, as governor of the city. He was called to play a fundamental role in the conquest of al-Andalus: Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād.

If the information on Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr prior to the conquest of al-Andalus was meagre, that on Ṭāriq is practically non-existent: it is only known that he was Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr's *mawlā*.[17] The fact that he was chosen for the post of Governor of Tangier, ahead of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr's sons, shows the high regard Mūsā had for his *mawlā*. From his seat in Tangier, Ṭāriq would begin to set in motion the campaign that would make history: the conquest of al-Andalus in the year 92/711.

The conquest of al-Andalus

The literary sources present the conquest of al-Andalus as a relatively rapid process, reminiscent of the overwhelming successes achieved in the period of Caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. The chroniclers echoed the collaboration of outstanding figures of the *Regnum Gothorum* with the conquerors. The first of them was Yulīyān, better known in its Romance form as Julian.[18] The texts do not agree about the nature of this character, whom they attribute the rank



Map 2.1 The routes of the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula (92/711 – 96/715), according to P. Chalmeta (1994).

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of count or the status of a prominent man, but there is consensus as to the fact that he was a high-ranking individual based in Ceuta. Motivated by the desire for revenge against King Roderic, he suggested to Ṭāriq that they should conquer the Visigothic kingdom.[19] To this end, he made his own ships available to him, which the first conquerors used to cross the Strait. Once in the peninsula, Yulīyān accompanied Ṭāriq's army in several of their displacements, showing him which route to follow.

Ibn al-Qūṭiyya attributes a decisive role in the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula to Witiza's sons, who led Roderic's rival side.[20] Summoned by the king to fight the Muslim army, they reached a hidden agreement with Ṭāriq and fought on his side during the battle that the texts portray as decisive, when the bulk of the Visigothic army faced the Muslim troops. Although the pact was advantageous to them at first, only a few decades later their situation deteriorated significantly, to the extent that one of them begged the emir ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I to restore at least a part of the property of which they had been deprived, despite their ownership being guaranteed by the agreement.[21]

The accounts of anonymous individuals who collaborated with the conquerors were also not exceptional. The *Akhbār majmūʿa* contains reports about Christians

who showed Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr the best way to go. Mention is also made of Jews, a group no less autochthonous than the Visigoths, who remained in charge of several cities after the Muslim army had left.[22] In the face of this collaborationism, several texts emphasised the figure of Teodomir, a magnate from the south-east of the peninsula, who confronted the Muslims until he could extort an agreement from them. I will refer to this later.

The written sources offer disparate versions when they describe how the conquest of the peninsular territory took place. Thus, the *Mozarabic Chronicle* describes the conquest in apocalyptic terms, as successive assaults of cities that led to the conquest and sometimes atrocious deaths of the Christians. Among the Muslim chronicles, only the author of the *Imāma* presents the conquest as a series of linked military victories and cities taken by assault.[23] The remaining chronicles provide a sweetened version of the advance of the troops, presenting it as a succession of capitulation agreements that allowed the vanquished to maintain their life, property and status in return for the payment of a tax.[24] The exceptions in the texts constitute only a handful of cases, such as Mérida, Seville and Cordoba. The importance of one or another form of conquest is highly relevant: from the side of the *Mozarabic Chronicle*, it was ideological, but from the Muslim side the importance was mainly legal.[25]

Box 2.1 Seville

Alejandro García-Sanjuán

Seville, in Arabic Ishbīliya, was one of the main cities of al-Andalus and one of its major centres of economic and cultural activity.

According to the widely accepted historical tradition, Seville would have been founded by Julius Cesar and named as Colonia Romula Iulia Hispalis, the last part (Hispalis) being the Latinisation of local name Ispal, which has probably Phoenician origins. However, more recent scholarship has called into question this version, pointing out that Iulia' was actually never part of the Roman name of the city and must be considered a later creation of the well-known archbishop Isidore of Seville. Thus the real founder of the Roman city would have been the consul Gaius Asinius Pollio (first century BC). After Imperial administrative reorganisation, Hispalis was turned one of the four *conventus iuridici* of Baetica, a senatorial province whose capital was Corduba. It was later one of the main cities of the kingdom of Toledo during the seventh century, the seat of archbishopric which flourished with Isidore of Seville, widely regarded as the most important Visigothic author.

Regarding its conquest by the Muslims, and as in the case of other cities, there are two opposing versions of how it took place. The first one is attributed to al-Rāzī and is also recorded by later sources (the anonymous *Fatḥ al-Andalus* and Ibn al-Shabbāt). According to this version, Seville would have been taken by Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād after his victory over King Roderic through a capitulation pact in exchange of the payment of the poll-tax (*jizya*). The existence of two different lead seals

combining the name Ishbīliya with the Arabic words *muṣālaḥa* (pact) and *jizya* gives historical reliability to this tradition.

The second tradition comes from Ibn Ḥayyān and is later mentioned by other Arabic sources, both Andalusi (*Akhbār majmūʿa*, Ibn Abī 'l-Fayyād), Maghribi (Ibn ʿIdhārī) and Eastern (Ibn al-Athīr). According to this version, Seville would have been taken by Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr after his coming to Iberia in 712. In this case, the city would have been surrendered after being under siege over several months. A subsequent uprising of local population against the Muslim authorities would have required a new conquest of the city, in this case carried out by the son of Mūsā, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Mūsā.

The city played the role of administrative capital of a province (*qūra*) during the Umayyad period. During the fifth/eleventh century it became the centre of one of the largest Taifa kingdoms, ruled by the Banū ʿAbbād dynasty. From this time on, Seville overcame Cordoba as the main urban centre of al-Andalus, retaining that condition until its conquest by the Christians in 646/1248. Already in the Almoravid period, Ibn ʿAbdūn qualifies it as "huge city", while in the sixth/twelfth century Ibn al-Kharrāṭ states that it is "one of the largest cities of al-Andalus".

The city reached its greatest splendor when it became the Andalusi capital of the Almohad Caliphate in the middle of the sixth/twelfth century. This dynasty promoted the greatest urban renewal experienced by the city during the Middle Ages, including the construction of a new market (*qayṣariyya*), a new congregational mosque, as well as the completion of the walled enclosure, whose total area was about 300 hectares and which survived almost intact until 1868.

These dimensions are compatible with the Arab texts of the seventh/thirteenth century, which unanimously emphasise the relevance of the city. So it is indicated, for example, by al-Shaqundī, who died there in 629/1231–232, in his epistle in praise of al-Andalus. Similarly, the Maghribi chronicler ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī states that "Seville is the capital of al-Andalus at the present moment" (he finished his chronicle in the year 621/1224). We can add the testimony of an Eastern author such as Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), who in his extensive toponymic dictionary states that "today there is no greater city in al-Andalus than this" and that "there lies the seat of power".

The extended urban size of Ishbīliya explains that its conquest was the hardest and most difficult of all carried out by the Christians in Iberia during the Middle Ages. King Fernando III (r. 1217–1252) needed to mobilise an enormous military contingent, the most numerous until then formed in Iberia, that besieged the city for a year and a half, also the longest siege in Iberia until that moment. In the absence of effective external help and due to the terrible starvation caused by the siege, the city surrendered and was delivered to the Christians by a pact of capitulation on Shaʿbān 5, 646/November 23, 1248. According to this pact, the inhabitants had to abandon the city within one month, being allowed to take with them his personal belongings and real estates.

Today, Seville preserves one of the most important Islamic architectonic heritages of Iberia, including the Giralda tower – the old minaret of the new congregational mosque ordered to be built by the Almohads at the end of the sixth/twelfth century-, parts of the city walls, mainly in the North sector, next to the so-called Macarena gate, and the so-called Torre del Oro (Golden Tower), located next to the river Guadalquivir, also from the Almohad period (seventh/thirteenth century).

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Jurists from the second/eighth to the fourth/tenth centuries contemplated two basic forms of submission: conquest by arms and submission through peaceful covenant or agreement. In the first case, submission occurred by surrender after an armed confrontation. The consequences for the vanquished were very burdensome, since they were stripped of their property, taken away as booty, the men were killed and the children and women subjected to slavery.[26] The second form of submission was that which was achieved through a pact, no doubt more benevolent than the previous one, since the legal relationship was established in the provisions of the agreement. Compilations often included the provisions of treaties entered into with cities such as al-Ḥīra, Jerusalem and Alexandria, as well as with entire regions, such as Iraqi Sawād or Barqa, which is confused with *Antabulūs*.[27] They all contain evident similarities, a coincidence that can be attributed to the fact that clauses were formalised at the time of the conquests in the form of a template, but also to their re-drafting several centuries later, at the time the compilation was made.

The text of one of these covenants has also been preserved in al-Andalus: the pact of Tudmīr, which is how the Arab texts know the territory that was under the jurisdiction of Count Teodomir. Teodomir was the only aristocrat who is known to have been loyal to King Roderic. Previously he had confronted the Byzantines in the south-eastern region of the Iberian Peninsula, according to the *Mozarabic Chronicle*. Although initially he gave battle to the Muslims, he eventually decided to make a pact with them. Several versions have been preserved of the treaty allegedly signed by Teodomir in 94/713 with ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the son of Mūsā.[28] Like the texts of other treaties made in the East during the first conquests, this treaty revolved around two main axes: the obligation of the conquerors to protect the conquered, and the obligation of the latter to pay a personal tax, the *jizya*.

Box 2.2 Murcia

Susana Calvo Capilla

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II founded Madīnat Mursiya in 210/825, thus becoming the new capital of the *cora* or province of Tudmīr. Elo (*Iyyih* for the Arab authors), the seat of an important Visigothic bishopric in the seventh century, was probably the ancient capital of Tudmīr. Its archaeological remains, identified with the site called Tolmo de Minateda (Albacete), have contributed to better understand the slow process of Islamisation and Arabisation of this region. The kingdom of Ibn Mardanīsh in Murcia has a chapter of its own in the art history of this period, between the Almoravids and the Almohads, a period that extends from 542/1147 – 567/1172, date of the death of the king who gave the kingdom its name. Despite its small extension and its short duration, Ibn Mardanīsh promoted several construction projects in order to strengthen and bolster his power. There were several palaces, both inside and outside of the capital, Murcia. The only parts preserved from the Great Alcázar (*al-qaṣr al-kabīr*) of Murcia are some remains of the small palatine mosque and the royal necropolis (*rawḍa*), located under the current church of San Juan de Dios. In the oratory of the Alcázar of Murcia, originally dated between the end of the fifth/eleventh century and the middle of the sixth/twelfth century, caliphal forms are likely used as a mean of legitimizing the new ruler. The Friday mosque was next to the Alcázar, under the cathedral of Santa María. Some remains of that Islamic building have been found, probably corresponding to the enlargement carried out by the second Almoravid emir, ʿAlī ibn Yūsuf ibn Tāshfīn (r. 500/1106 – 537/1143), documented by written sources. The so-called *Dār al-Ṣughrā*, an estate or recreational residence, was built outside the city walls, and later became the Convent of Santa Clara. In both places were found fragments of carved and painted plasterworks of great quality and that share some similarities with the Taifa period paintings (vegetal motifs on geometric patterns and pearl-string ribbons) and the Almohad plasterworks, predicting Nasrid forms. The Palace of Pinohermoso in Xativa (Valencia), "El Castillejo" and the Castle of Monteagudo, in Murcia, were all constructed during this period following some architectural models spread across the North of Africa.

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As regards the first, the conquerors therefore undertook to guarantee the protection of the vanquished, hereinafter referred to as *dhimmis*. Their lives, properties and status were respected and the conquerors further undertook not to interfere with the practice of their rituals and not to destroy their churches. Although the letter of the treaties suggests a fixed and stable situation for the *dhimmis* over time, the truth is that their status underwent important modifications depending on which way the ruler of the day was inclined. This ranged from a close collaboration between both ecclesiastical and Islamic powers to restrictions, impositions and even the destruction of churches.[29]

As regards the second, the payment of the *jizya*, this was a personal tax imposed on each non-Muslim individual on the grounds that non-Muslims lived and worked on lands that now belonged to the Islamic community or *umma*. The Tudmīr's treaty, like so many others throughout the Islamic world, established a fixed amount in money and in kind for each individual, establishing only two categories: freemen and slaves. In the face of this simplicity that contemplated only two groups of individuals, Egyptian papyri drafted in this same period reflect a much broader casuistry, classification of individuals that went far beyond freemen and slaves. They established a whole series of factors that affected the amount payable by each individual depending on the area under cultivation, whether the land was irrigated or not, the type of crop, etc. All this complexity was reflected in the censuses, which were a fundamental part of the Marwānid administration.

Consistent with the rest of the Islamic world, in al-Andalus officials also rushed to carry out the censuses in order to guarantee efficient tax collection. This has been reflected in testimonies by Christian authors, particularly in the *Mozarabic Chronicle*. This anonymous author attributes the first censuses to the son of Mūsā, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. As he was originally from Egypt, like his father, he might have followed the models used at that time in the territories along the river Nile mentioned above. The same chronicler refers to a new census carried out a few years later on the initiative of the governor (*wālī*) al-Samḥ, which the chronicler limits to *Hispania Citerior*. According to several Muslim chroniclers, al-Samḥ had been appointed *wālī* of al-Andalus personally by Caliph ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, son of the aforementioned governor of Egypt, with an express mandate to organise the treasury. The third census mentioned by the Christian author was the one conducted under the government of ʿUqba ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Salūlī, of which no further information is provided, and finally, the one made by Yūsuf al-Fihrī in 129/747, the same year that he was appointed. According to the text, this new census sought to update the previous ones by erasing deceased Christians from them.[30]

Contrary to the black and white of legal texts, which clearly distinguish between conquest by arms and conquest by treaty, reality offers an infinite range of greys that has been captured in the reports of conquests in other latitudes. Some examples were the cases of Damascus, where there was no consensus among chroniclers, who provided contradictory and irreconcilable versions, and Alexandria, which first surrendered by treaty and later rebelled and was taken by arms.[31] In al-Andalus, there were cities that were said to have been subjugated by arms, such as Mérida, but also others that confronted

the conquerors and fought them, and then finally agreed to a treaty, such as the region of Tudmīr already mentioned. Others, such as Seville, first surrendered by means of a treaty, but later revolted, which forced a conquest by arms. Of other cities, such as Pamplona, we only know that they agreed a treaty with the conquerors.

In general, it is difficult to accept that the clauses contained in this and other treaties, and more specifically, the amounts mentioned in them, correspond to those actually agreed upon. The texts of the papyri, contemporaneous with these events, point to much more complex realities than the chronicles show in their amazing simplicity. It seems difficult to accept that the value of these references could go beyond being a mere illustration of the information they wanted to highlight; namely that certain territories were surrendered by treaties, and that the corresponding tax regulations would have applied to them from the point of view of a third/ninth-century author, in order to adapt them to the models prescribed in the compilations of the legal schools of the Abbasid period.

There is no doubt that many cities either were compelled by force or agreed to pay the taxes required. This is evidenced by a series of lead seals directly related to the payment of taxes derived from the surrender of cities. The words printed on the seals do not raise any doubts, as many of these seals bear the name of a city, including *Ishbīliya*, *Bāja*, *Shidūna*, *Ukshūniba* and *Narbūna*, together with the words *jizya* or *ṣulḥ*, preceded by the expression *bi-ismi Allāh*. Other cities, by contrast, were plundered and the seals showed that "… seals showed that the fifth of the money taken as booty was given to the state", such as those in Ruscino. Sometimes seals had the name of a governor of al-Andalus, such as al-Ḥurr, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Malik (probably al-Samḥ), ʿAnbasa ibn Suḥayn, and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiya, which has allowed dating of each of the lead seals.[32] Although the archaeological context of these seals is unknown, their documentary value is enormous, since they bear witness to, and unquestionably date, the payment of taxes for the *jizya* and the delivery of the *fay'*.[33]

One of the ways in which the conquerors related to the conquered was the establishment of patronage by means of conversion (*walā' al-islām*), that is, those who converted to Islam became clients of the Arabs at whose hands they had converted. This form of *walā'* was used profusely in the time of the conquests, according to the Eastern chronicles, but already in the third/ninth century it had fallen into disuse, at least for most of the jurists, as they had come to believe that converts could not be clients of individuals but only of the Muslim community.[34] The great utility of this institution during the conquests is that it became a way of integrating non-Arabs, first, into an Arab lineage, through adoption, but also and not least, into the Islamic community, since it required the subject to convert.

The sources use the formula "to be converted at the hands of somebody", which implies the integration into two structures: one that was family-based, that is to say, the lineage of the sponsor, through adoption; and a political-religious one, based on the *umma* or Islamic community, through conversion. The reverse side of the relationship was the obligations to which the adoptee was subjected, which included providing troops and money to the campaigns of the adopting

party. In this way, the converts' destiny was bound to that of their sponsor, and they participated in their sponsor's triumphs and failures. The greater the rank of this sponsor, the better the position acquired by the adoptee within the social system implemented by the conquerors.

It has already been pointed out that Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr belonged to the *mawālī* of the Marwānids, on whose side he fought in Egypt against the pretender to the caliph's chair, and how his participation led him to take government positions initially in Iraq, then in Egypt, and finally in Ifrīqiya and al-Andalus. His condition of *mawlā* was not an impediment to him having a large number of *mawālī*, as well as Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād, in addition to those he made in the Maghrib throughout his military campaigns. The compilers do not say anything about him having made any *mawālī* in al-Andalus, which led Crone to deny the existence of Andalusi *mawālī* during the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula.[35]

There is a single, somewhat belated text by Ibn Ḥazm which mentions that *walā'* links were formalised at the time of the conquest between an individual native to the peninsula and someone of Arabic lineage.[36] According to the information collected by Ibn Ḥazm:

> Qasiyu (Qasī) was Count of the frontier (*thaghr*) in times of the Goths. When the Muslims conquered al-Andalus, he left for Damascus and converted to Islam at the hands of al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, and owed his ascent to [the caliph's] patronage (*walā'*) (…). The Banū Qasī (…) were part of the confederation of Muḍar.[37]

This information makes sense when it is connected to another account referred to by both Christian and Muslim authors: that of the procession that accompanied Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr on his return to Damascus in 96/715. The reason for this sudden departure lay in the misgivings of Caliph al-Walīd about the news of Mūsā's success in al-Andalus, which caused him to order Mūsā to appear before him. Mūsā obeyed the order, but instead of merely announcing himself, he wished to make an impression and to appear before the caliph at the head of a large procession formed by the many notables of al-Andalus and the Maghrib whom he had subdued, as well as an endless wealth of booty. The *Mozarabic Chronicle* indicates that "illustrious personages chosen in Spania from those who had escaped the sword" were part of the procession. In the version of this same report later collected by the *pseudo* Ibn Qutayba it is said that among these notables who took part in the spectacular cortège were "the sons of the Franks' kings". Ibn al-Qūṭiyya refers to them as "sons of the non-Arab kings" (*abnā' al-mulūk al-'ajam*), who numbered four hundred.[38]

None of these chroniclers expressly allude to count Casio, but by connecting this account to that of Ibn Ḥazm, it can be assumed that the count himself, or someone on his behalf, would have been one of the *abnā' mulūk al-Andalus* who went to Damascus in 96/715. Once there, he and the remaining members of the procession converted to Islam "at the hands of the Caliph al-Walīd", and became part of the *walā'* of the Marwānids. This bond with the Banū Marwān family would become

Table 2.1 List of governors of al-Andalus (93/712-138/756) compiled by Jesús Lorenzo Jiménez

List of governors of al-Andalus (93/712–138/756)
Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, 93/712–95/714
ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Mūsā, 95/714–97/716
Ayyūb ibn Ḥabīb al-Lakhmī, 97/716
al-Ḥurr ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Thaqafī, 97/716–100/719
al-Samḥ ibn Malik al-Khawlānī, 100/719–102/721
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghāfiqī, 102–3/721
ʿAnbasa ibn Suḥaym al-Kalbī, 103/721–107/726
ʿUdhra ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Fihrī, 107/726
Yaḥyā ibn Salama al-Kalbī, 107/726–110/728
Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Aḥwaṣ al-Qaysī, 110/728
ʿUthmān ibn Abī Nisʿa al-Khathʿawī, 110/728–111/729
al-Haytham ibn ʿUbayd al-Kilābī, 111/729–112/730
Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ashjaʿī, 112/730
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghāfiqī, 112/730–114/732
ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Qaṭan al-Fihrī, 114/732–116/734
ʿUqba ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Salūlī, 116/734–122/740
ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Qaṭan al-Fihrī, 122/740–124/742
Balj ibn Bishr al-Qushayrī, 124/742
Thaʿlaba ibn Salama al-ʿĀl-ma, 124/742–125/743
Abū l-Khaṭṭār al-Ḥusām ibn Ḍirār al-Kalbī, 125/743–127/745
Thuwāba ibn Salama al-Judhāmī, 127/745–129/746
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Kathīr al-Lakhmī, 129/746–747
Yūsuf ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Fihrī, 129/747–138/756

especially important when, after escaping from the Abbasid slaughter against the Umayyad family in 132/750, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil founded the neo-Umayyad emirate of al-Andalus. As Ibn Ḥazm pointed out regarding the Banū Qasī, the Marwānids of Cordoba would find military support from their old *mawālī* in their struggles throughout the eighth century. As late as the middle of the third/ninth century, when the *walā' al-islām* had ceased to interest Eastern jurists, an Umayyad emir from al-Andalus, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II, appealed to the links of *walā'* to claim military aid from the Banū Qasī).[39]

Conclusion

Without denying the geographical and historical peculiarities of the Iberian Peninsula, the conquest of al-Andalus can be seen only as one of the conquests of Islam in its initial territorial expansion, which led to the creation of a vast state that extended from the Indus to the Atlantic. Treating this event as being exceptional can only be understood from an anachronistic perspective of geopolitical space, which placed the borders in the Mediterranean, at a time (Late Antiquity) in which this sea was

conceived more as providing a bond than being a barrier. If the *Mare Nostrum* from Late Antiquity did not constitute a political frontier, much less was it a cultural frontier: Roman influence in *Africa Proconsular* had been even greater than on the Iberian Peninsula itself, not to speak of the strong implementation of Greco-Roman culture in Egypt.

The conquest of al-Andalus came at the height of the Marwānid policy, which was characterised by the centralisation of power and the effectiveness of the administration. Its major figure, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, had grown in the shadow of Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik's family, first, fighting at his side, and later performing government duties in Iraq, perhaps in Egypt and later in the Maghrib. Both his military victories in the Maghrib and his management of the conquered territories are to be highlighted. In 92/711, at the height of his career, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr undertook the conquest of the *Regnum Gothorum*.

The conquest was completed in a relatively short period of time. Despite the catastrophic scenario described by the *Mozarabic Chronicle*, and the mythical accounts of the *pseudo* Ibn Qutayba, everything seems to indicate that the military conquests were not the dominant element. First, because of the collaboration of the most preeminent subjects of the Visigothic administration, but also because of the policy of subordination agreed in exchange for the payment of taxes and recognition of Islamic sovereignty and the payment of taxes, in particular the *jizya*. The third form of conquest was the integration of autochthonous elements into the Islamic administration, by concluding *walā'* links before a subject's conversion to Islam. This instrument, barely mentioned in the texts about the conquest, was revealed as an effective means of peaceful conquest, but also of the Islamisation of society in the following decades, since it was not only binding for those who established it, but also for their descendants.

The establishment of an Islamic administration according to the guidelines instituted by Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik was practically immediate: the first census was documented in 97/715, under the authority of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the son of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr. The successive governors of al-Andalus would continue this task, carrying out and updating the existing censuses.

The arrival of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiya in 138/755 and his conquest of power in al-Andalus would bring with it the proclamation of the first of the independent emirates of the Abbasid Caliphate, to be followed by many others (in a more or less concealed manner) in the whole of North Africa. Unlike those, al-Andalus preserved the caliph's legitimacy of the Marwānids' family in its oral and written memory for centuries.

Centuries later, in Cordoba, a descendant of that ʿAbd al-Malik called ʿal- al-Raḥmān reclaimed his right to be called caliph. It was the year 316/929.

Notes

1 On the conquest of Egypt see Kaegi, "Egypt on the eve of the Muslim conquest"; Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests*, 139–168; Sijpesteijn, "The Arab Conquest of Egypt"; Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 17–36.

2 This was Islam's first civil war, which began after Caliph ʿUthmān was murdered in 35/656. It was a war between the Umayyads' supporters, led by Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān, and ʿAlī' ibn Abī Ṭālib's supporters. See Humphreys, *Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan*, 65–84; Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, 21–32. For the historiographic construction of the account of the civil war, see Petersen, *Ali and Mu'awiya in Early Arabic Tradition*.

3 On the conquest of the Maghrib, see Ṭāha, *The Muslim Conquest and Settlement of North Africa and Spain*, 55–83; Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests*, 200–224.

4 Robinson, *ʿAbd al-Malik*, 31–48; Micheau, *Les débuts de l'islam*, 167–172.

5 The figure of this caliph has been the subject of several studies in recent decades. These have emphasised his important role as the creator of the new Islamic state. See Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, 58–65, Robinson, *ʿAbd al-Malik*; Milwright, *The Dome of the Rock*; Micheau, *Les débuts de l'islam*, 185–211.

6 See the classic publication by Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period*. On the evolution of the number of Muslims in Palestine, G. Avni reached the conclusion, after a detailed study of the archaeological documentation within the territory of the current State of Israel, that "Christianity continued to prevail in large parts of Palestine and Jordan until the eleventh century, and Christians remained the largest religious community in the region" (Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine*, 337).

7 Both of them, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, illustrate the zeal that Umayyad rulers brought to the performance of their duties, particularly in the tax area. See Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, 66–70; Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*; Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 115–216.

8 On the inscriptions by ʿAbd al-Malik, see Milwright, *The Dome of the Rock*.

9 This is perceived in the missives sent by Qurra to those responsible for collecting taxes in Egypt (Abbott, *The Kurra Papyri from Aphrodito*). Qurra's forceful claims to the taxes payable by the *paǧarcas* has been studied by Reinfandt, "On Emotions in Early Muslim Administration".

10 On the census in the Umayyad period, see al-Qāḍī, "Population census and land surveys". On the monetary reform by ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, see Grierson, "The monetary reforms of ʿAbd al-Malik".

11 This term refers to the bond between a patron and a client and can be thus translated as both patronage and clientship.

12 al-Maqrizī (*Kitāb al-mawāʿiẓ*, vol. I, p. 387) referred to a conversation between Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam and his son ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, which could only have happened in 64/684, the year when he was proclaimed a caliph and also the year of his death.

13 The author of the *Imāma* noted that he acted as a vizier and advisor (*wazīr wa-mushīr*) (*Pseudo* Ibn Qutayba, *al-Imāma wa'l-siyāsa*, vol. II, 69) and Ibn ʿIdhārī that he was appointed as a collector of the *kharāj* in Basra by the caliph himself (Ibn ʿIdhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, 24).

14 A papyrus dated 710 mentions that he led a naval campaign against a Mediterranean island (Bell, ed., *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, vol. IV, no. 1350). This document is evidence of the historicity of this figure.

15 According to Chalmeta, he was the governor of Ifrīqiya at two different times (*Invasión e islamización*, 101–102).

16 The evocation of ʿUqba appears in *Pseudo* Ibn Qutayba, *al-Imāma wa'l-siyāsa*. ʿUqba's sons were part of the group that accompanied Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr when he was entrusted with the government of Ifrīqiya. See Thiry, *Le Sahara libyen*, 128; Ṭāha, *The Muslim Conquest*, 73.

17 Ṭāriq is largely unknown. He was only mentioned in the chronicles in connection with the accounts of the conquest of al-Andalus and the subsequent trial that Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik submitted him to, together with Mūsā. The compilers showed that there were several versions about his origin: some attributed a Berber origin to him, others, an Arabic origin, and others a Persian origin (or at least mentioned that he was originally from Persia). See, for example, the various different accounts by Ibn ʿIdhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, vol. I, 28, vol. II, 6).

18 On this figure, his historicity and the relationship of his account with other similar ones, see Clarke, *The Muslim Conquest of Iberia*, 108–111.
19 The chroniclers reduced the problem to Julian's thirst for vengeance against king Roderic, who had abused his daughter while she was in the king's court. See Ṭāha, *The Muslim Conquest*, 84 and the critical vision of Clarke, *The Muslim Conquest of Iberia*, 108–111.
20 Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Ta'rīkh Iftitāh al-Andalus*, 29–33.
21 Manzano Moreno, *Conquistadores, emires y califas*, 44–45; Lorenzo Jiménez, *La* dawla *de los Banū Qasī*, 90–91.
22 *Akhbār majmū'a*, 19, 21–22. On the alleged Jewish collaborationism see Bravo López, "'La traición de los judíos'".
23 *Mozarabic Chronicle*, pp. 224–231; *Pseudo* Ibn Qutayba, *al-Imāma wa'l-siyāsa*, 85–94.
24 See the development of the conquest according to the various sources in Ṭāha, *The Muslim Conquest*, 91–109. Chalmeta, *Invasión e islamización*, 206–211, also taking all available accounts, provided a list of the cities that were subjugated by a treaty.
25 Upon an initial consideration of the accounts on the forms of conquest in Arabic sources, the period of time elapsed between the events narrated, in 92/711, and the time when they were compiled, from the third/ninth century onwards needs to be taken into account. A crucial event took place between these two dates: Islamic legal doctrines were formalised and crystallised into several different schools. This determined how the accounts were written, as it was sought to adapt each report to the appropriate legal school, in the case of al-Andalus, the Maliki. This is why there have been doubts as to the historicity of the treaty, both in terms of its very existence and of its provisions. See Christys, *Christians in al-Andalus*, 175–176; Manzano Moreno, "La transmisión textual sobre Teodomiro". On the treaties and their authenticity, see Robinson, *Empire and Elites after the Muslim Conquest*, 6–15.
26 The texts establish that in times of war it is legitimate to kill all combatants. The imam could choose to forgive, kill, or turn captives into slaves; alternatively, the imam could opt for releasing them in exchange for ransom or giving them the status of dhimmi. However, the texts are not rigorous and mention numerous exceptions or constraints for this situation. See García-Sanjuán, "Formas de sumisión del territorio", 66–68; Robert, *La doctrine du butin de guerre*; Yousefi, Najm al-Din. "Confusion and Consent: Land Tax (Kharāj) and the Construction of Judicial Authority in the Early Islamic Empire (ca. 12–183 A.H./634–800 C. E.)". *Sociology of Islam* (online publication 2019): 1–39.
27 See the collection of treaties in Hill, *The Termination of Hostilities*.
28 Up to five versions of the pact have been preserved, with varying degrees of development (Carmona, "Una cuarta versión"). See the critique to the narrative of the defence of *Tudmīr* in Manzano Moreno, "La transmisión textual sobre Teodomiro", and Herrero, "De nuevo sobre los defensores de Teodomiro".
29 Again, the case of Egypt is a paradigmatic example of this fluctuating relationship. According to the account made by Sāwīris ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, there was a close collaboration between ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān, governor of Egypt between 65/685 and 86/705, and the two Christian Churches existing in Egypt at the time, the Coptic and the Melkite Churches. This led him to order the bishops of both congregations to build a church each in his capital in Halwān (Sāwīris ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, 1904, p. 139). On the contrary, his son Aṣbagh, who must have had a great influence on the government, imposed restrictive measures on the Christians (Sāwīris ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Kitāb siyar al-Abāʾ al-batārika*, 143–144). On the restrictions to the *dhimmis* see Fattal, *Le statut légal des non-musulmans*.
30 *Mozarabic Chronicle*, sec. 69, 69, 82, 91.
31 See Noth, "Futūḥ-History and Futūḥ-Historiography".
32 On the lead seals see Ibrahim, "Nuevos documentos sobre la Conquista Omeya" and Ortega, *La conquista islámica de la Península Ibérica*, 100–102.

33 The only place where they have been found in context was Ruscino. See Rébé, Raynaud and Sénac, *Le premier Moyen Age à Ruscino*, 277–288.

34 Crone, *Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law*, 37–40; Fierro, "*Mawālī* and *muwalladūn* in al-Andalus"; Lorenzo Jiménez, *La* dawla *de los Banū Qasī*. The expression *walā' al-islām* is used in legal texts drafted in the ʿAbbāsid period. In contrast, it does not appear in the chronicles and in the genealogical treatises, where the relationship was generally designated as *walā'* and the parties were referred to as *mawālī* (sg. *mawlā*).

35 Crone, "Mawlā".

36 Clarke (*The Muslim Conquest of Iberia*, 67–68) attributed the status of *mawlā* to Sara, the famous granddaughter of Witiza and ancestor of Ibn al-Qūṭiyya. However, there is nothing in the texts that can lead to such an assumption; on the contrary, her father belonged to the group of individuals who had been subjected by a treaty and preserved their religion (Lorenzo Jiménez, *La* dawla *de los Banū Qasī*, 90–91). There is no indication that she might have converted to Islam, which would not have been necessary for her to engender Muslim offspring, since the status of Muslim is only transmitted through the father, and Sara married ʿIsā ibn Muzāḥim, who was himself a *mawlā* of the Umayyads (Fierro, "La obra histórica de Ibn al-Qūṭiyya", 510).

37 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 502. The Umayyads belonged to the Muḍar's confederation. For another version of Qasī's conversion that did not involve the Umayyads see Fierro, "El conde Casio"; Lorenzo Jiménez, *La* dawla *de los Banū Qasī*; Manzano Moreno, "A vueltas con el conde Casio".

38 *Mozarabic Chronicle*, 230–231; *Pseudo* Ibn Qutayba, *al-Imāma wa'l-siyāsa*, 95; Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Ta'rīkh Iftitāh al-Andalus*, 36. The plural form *abnā'* is rarely found in western texts, where in general terms the form *banū* is used instead. Taking into account the Persian origin of the first chronicler who reported on these events, the *pseudo* Ibn Qutayba, it can be thought that the expression *abnā' al-mulūk* does not refer to kings' children or descendants, but takes on the meaning that this expression had in the Sassanid context, that is, a group of individuals who had a certain military rank, characterised by their non-Arab status. On this issue, see Zakeri, *Sāsānid Soldiers*, 265–289. Ibn ʿIdharī (*al-Bayān al-mughrib*, 45) says generically "kings (*mulūk*)".

39 Ibn al-Qūṭiyya reported this event in the context of the attack by the Vikings against the coasts of al-Andalus in 229/843. According to this chronicler, the emir ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II requested military help from count Casio's descendant, Mūsā, and reminded him of the old *walā'* links he had with his family. See Lorenzo Jiménez, *La* dawla *de los Banū Qasī*, 198–202.

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3

CENTRALIZATION AND CONSOLIDATION

The Cordoban Umayyads and the Amirids

Xavier Ballestín

During the period of the Cordoban Umayyads, almost three centuries long (138/756–400/1009), al-Andalus changed from being the westernmost and most isolated country in the Islamic *umma* to become a shining beacon in the West, with his own caliphate and a civilization where literature, science, diplomacy and prestige surpassed any other realm in Europe. A degree of rhetorical disguise should help the reader to come at the matter at hand, notwithstanding it, the achievements of the Umayyads in al-Andalus and the Maghrib, as well as their failure in the first quarter of the fifth/eleventh century, are a matter where rhetorical excess is, at least, difficult to avoid.

The first Umayyad, the falcon of Quraysh: ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil (138/756–172/788)[1]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiya ibn Hishām – a grandson of Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 104/723–125/743), the Umayyad caliph in Damascus whose rule can be labelled as the heyday of his dynasty – managed to survive the defeat of his family in the East at the hands of the Abbasids (132/750) and fled toward the West. The Umayyad refugee tried to settle as a ruler in Ifrīqiya and the Maghrib, but to no avail as he failed in rebuilding his dynasty in either area and was even on the verge of being jailed and killed. When despair started to take its toll, he received news that the situation in al-Andalus was ripe to attempt a takeover. On the one hand, the Arabic settlers were replaying the infighting between Qays and Yaman that ignited the demise of the Umayyads in the East, and on the other, the freedmen and clients – *mawālī* – of the Umayyads settled in al-Andalus were ready to give their support to a member of the dynasty.

Table 3.1 The Cordoban Umayyads Compiled by X. Ballestín

The Cordoban Umayyads/genealogical chart

A) Name with accession and death dates
B) Name and *laqab*
C) Name and ordinal number

The Umayyad *umarā'* (138–316/756–929)

A) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiyah ibn Hishām (138–172/756–788)
B) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ad-Dāḫil
C) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān I

A) Hishām ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān (172–180/788–796)
B) Hishām ar-Riḍā
C) Hishām I

A) Al-Ḥakam ibn Hishām (180–206/796–822)
B) Al-Ḥakam ar-Rabaḍī
C) Al-Ḥakam I

A) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥakam (206–238/822–852)
B) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Awsaṭ
C) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān II

A) Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān (238–273/852–886)
C) Muḥammad I

A) Al-Mundhir ibn Muḥammad (273–275/886–888)
C) Al-Mundhir I

A) ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad (275–300/888–912)
C) ʿAbd Allāh

The Umayyad caliphs (316–400/929–1009)

A) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh (300–350/912–961)
B) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān an-Nāṣir li-dīn Allāh
C) ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān III

A) Al-Ḥakam ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān (350–366/961–976)
B) Al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir bi-Llāh/
C) Al-Ḥakam II

A) Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam (366–399/976–1009)
B) Hishām al-Mu'ayyad bi-Llāh
C) Hishām II

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān decided eventually to cross the sea and land on the beach of Burriana, in the province of Málaga.[2] News of his landing arrived at Cordoba and the governor, Yūsuf al-Fihrī, counselled by his close adviser and grey eminence, al-Ṣumayl ibn Ḥātim – both belonging to Qays – sent a messenger to the Umayyad and showed their goodwill and their sense of *realpolitik* with an offer to share the rule of al-Andalus

with him. Nevertheless, the parleys were broken. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān prepared to battle against Yūsuf with the vindictive help of the Yaman Arabic settlers, incensed by Yūsuf and al-Ṣumayl's partisanship for their own kin and tribe, the Qays. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was also helped by the Umayyad *mawālī* in al-Andalus, the most faithful and loyal supporters of the recently arrived Umayyad, and by the Berber settlers, as the mother of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was a slave concubine (*jāriya*) belonging to the tribe of Nafza.

The battle ended with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān defeating the army of Yūsuf and being proclaimed *amīr* in the Cordoban mosque. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān had an eventful and troublesome rule fighting against the Arab settlers from Yaman, who realized that he was not ready to comply with them in crushing the Arab settlers from Qays, and also fighting the attempts of the Arab Qays settlers to depose him. Besides this, the Abbasids tried to overcome him, and Charles the Great launched his ill-fated expedition against Saragossa when the governor of the city agreed with the Frankish king and next-to-be emperor to open the city gates to a Frankish army. The venture ended with their defeat at Roncesvalles, in the Western Pyrenees, and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ended his rule unchallenged. No foe, internal or external, succeeded in defeating him and the token of his victory was the succession of his own son, Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, known as Hishām al-Riḍā.

It was not a meagre achievement for ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, nicknamed ad-Dākhil, that is, 'the one who entered'. Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, a seventh/thirteenth-century Maghribi scholar, who wrote *al-Bayān al-mughrib fi akhbār al-Andalus wa'l-Maghrib*, covered in this work the full list, arranged in a chronologically annalistic order, of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's forays, battles, and people defying his authority, including Arab settlers from Qays and Yaman, Berber settlers, and relatives of the ousted governor, Yūsuf al-Fihrī. The nature of the source, a compilation in which Ibn ʿIdhārī made a thorough and intensively abridged report of previous sources, most of them lost, does not allow for a detailed list, but a dry, short and cumbersome one. The most poignant data comes when the author points out that in the year 154/771 no expedition takes place, that is, excepting this single year the first Umayyad *amīr* spent his time quelling uprisings and engaging his foes in the battlefield or in sieges.[3]

Hishām al-Riḍā: the appointment of an heir apparent (172/788–180/796)

The Cordoban Umayyads received the attention of the most distinguished Andalusi historian, Ibn Ḥayyān, a man who lived in the age of the eventual destruction of the Umayyad dynasty and resented bitterly the radical changes brought upon his life and career by the upheavals of the *fitna* (dealt with in Chapter 4). Ibn Ḥayyān wrote an extensive work on al-Andalus history, *al-Muqtabis*, a full set of volumes written as a thorough compilation of previous and contemporary sources, where each Umayyad ruler receives due and detailed attention. Despite the editorial history of this compilation, which has sometimes been as hazardous and broken as Ibn Ḥayyān's life,[4] and the hypercritical approach to late Islamic medieval sources dealing with early Islam, *al-Muqtabis* is an invaluable source for the knowledge of

the political and cultural history of the Cordoban Umayyads. In fact, its usefulness goes well beyond the frontiers of dynastic history. The main problem is that the volumes dealing with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's rule, as well as Hishām's, his heir and second Umayyad *amīr*, are not extant.

Notwithstanding the loss of some of *al-Muqtabis* volumes, there are enough sources available to ascertain the main trends of Hishām's policies or, at least, his struggle in ruling the country against his brothers, ʿAbd Allāh and Sulaymān, who challenged him and viewed his proclamation as a treason. They fought him with the help of the Franks and with the help of the Berbers settled in Sharq al-Andalus (the eastern area of the Iberian Peninsula), always ready to defy Umayyad authority. The struggle between the brothers lasted until Hishām allowed Sulaymān, former governor of Toledo, to leave Tudmir, where he had been holding some strong points and cities, and to settle in the Maghrib with 60,000 *dīnār* delivered to him by his brother the emir (174/790).[5]

The main issue behind the fighting between the Umayyad brothers and the rightful *amīr*, Hishām al-Riḍā, was the appointment of an heir apparent (*walī 'l-ahd*), chosen of his own free will by the ruler. If a pattern should be remarked for the Umayyads in the East it was that power and kingship remained in the hands of brothers and nephews, but ʿAbd al-Raḥmān had only a single surviving brother, al-Walīd, who had managed to avoid capture and death by the Abbasids and was living in Cordoba. The *amīr* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān intended to have one of his sons as heir apparent. The main problem was to choose which one of them (Sulaymān, Hishām, ʿAbd Allāh) should be the new *amīr* and their father had not pronounced unambiguously which one of them should take his place as ruler in al-Andalus. Sulaymān and Hishām had received, respectively, the governorships of Toledo and Mérida when the news of their father's death were known, and both hurried toward Cordoba and the palace, where their brother ʿAbd Allāh had been instructed by the late ʿAbd al-Raḥmān to deliver the seal to the first arriving, and he was Hishām, who had outpaced his elder brother, Sulaymān, and received the oath of allegiance (*bayʿa*) from the people in the palace. The honorific surname (*laqab*) of Hishām was al-Riḍā, that is, "favoured by God", "satisfaction, contentment in", as if his accession to power had been a result of universal consent, and it was not. The appointment, accession and succession of an heir apparent would be, as it was for the Abbasids and Fatimids, the touchstone of dynastic power and rule. With the later Cordoban Umayyads, that is, the Cordoban caliphs, with their ability to rule unchecked and unhindered, there was no room for a replication of the situation developed at the death of the first Umayyad, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. But this was an achievement in the long run, as we shall see.

al-Ḥakam al-Rabaḍī, the town of Cordoba, the *ʿulamāʾ* and the Umayyad *dawla* (180/796–206/822)

Al-Ḥakam, Hishām's son, received the oath of allegiance after his father's death without trouble. His rule is covered in the first extant volume of *al-Muqtabis* (M II-1), where Ibn Ḥayyān offers a well-documented and minute explanation of al-Ḥakam's

rule from the beginning to the end. The wealth of the source affords details lacking for the rules of his father, Hishām, and his grandfather, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, and provides us with a thorough account of al-Ḥakam's life and policy. He was a hotly contested ruler and opposition against him emerged from various sources.

His uncles, Sulaymān and ʿAbd Allāh, living in the Maghrib after the deal with the late *amīr* Hishām, decided to cross the sea and fight his nephew and new Umayyad *amīr*. This challenge brought Sulaymān and al-Ḥakam, uncle and nephew, to a pitched battle in Quesada,[6] where Sulaymān was soundly beaten by the *amīr* and eventually captured. Al-Ḥakam showed no qualms when he punished Sulaymān with the death penalty, but he took under his protection the property and family of his dead uncle.

His uncle ʿAbd Allāh did not defy his nephew al-Ḥakam in the battlefield and proceeded instead to the north-eastern frontier, known as *al-thaghr al-aʿlā* (The Upper Frontier), in search of assistance against his nephew. This brought him to the maelstrom of intertribal infighting between the Arab settlers of Yaman, the new lineages of Christian-born or Jewish-born converts to Islam, known as *muwalladūn*, the Berber tribes in the frontier, and the Franks, bent on avenging their failure at Saragossa and ready to exploit any chance for breaking through the frontier, a goal that they eventually achieved.[7] Unable to make headway in the north-eastern frontier, and aware of his brother Sulaymān's death, ʿAbd Allāh retreated to Sharq al-Andalus, where he received the help of the Berbers settled around the countryside of Valencia and tried to reach an agreement with his nephew, who offered terms to him and acquiesced to give his uncle a monthly stipend if he remained in Balansiya.

Sulaymān and ʿAbd Allāh's attempts to wrest the reins of power from their nephew's hands finished with utter failure, but it was not inconceivable that things could have taken a wrong course for al-Ḥakam. His authority in the north-eastern frontier was very weak. Also, the city of Toledo remained a thorn in the *amīr*'s flesh as its inhabitants and the settlers in the city countryside never hesitated in breaking with the *amīr*'s rule. Al-Ḥakam duly sent against them punitive expeditions that ravaged the countryside and punished dissent, but in the end, he had to come to terms with the people of Toledo as it was the most impregnable city in the whole Iberian Peninsula, and there were many trouble spots that needed the *amīr*'s attention. Al-Ḥakam managed, with a mix of guile, ruse and deceit, to decimate the prominent people of Toledo, inviting them to a banquet in their own city and killing them as they proceeded unawares to the feast hall. As their corpses were thrown into a ditch, this day was known as the Day of the Ditch (182/798).[8]

In fact, the worst crisis for al-Ḥakam's rule was brewing in his own city, Cordoba, where the inhabitants of the Secunda suburb (*rabāḍ*; *raval* in Catalan; *arrabal* in Spanish), helped by people of other suburbs, rose up suddenly and attacked al-Ḥakam in his own palace, where he felt so dangerously threatened that he commanded a servant to bring him a civet flask (202/818). In case of defeat and death, he expected to be beheaded and he needed to be reassured that his

head and long hair, soaked with the strong civet fragrance, would be clearly recognized.[9]

Al-Ḥakam managed to crush the uprising, to expel the survivors and to raze to the ground the suburb of Secunda. All this explains his nickname al-Rabaḍī, that is, "al-Ḥakam of the suburb" Al-Ḥakam banished the construction of new buildings in the suburb area and took the necessary measures to ensure the departure from Secunda of its surviving dwellers, numbered around 15,000 people. Some of them took shelter in Toledo, another group crossed the sea in Almería and arrived in Fes, where they settled in the *ʿudwat al-andalusiyyīn*, and the most resourceful took to the sea, journeying to Alexandria and conquering Crete.[10]

Al-Ḥakam's policies, even if they appear clouded by his unending struggle against rebels, encompass an articulated set of measures intended to strengthen the rule of the Umayyad Cordobans in al-Andalus and to ensure a smooth power transition, untroubled by contesting Umayyad claimants.

First, he endeavoured to appoint his sons, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and al-Mughīra, as rulers and left a written will, where all provisions for the new *amīr* accession were clearly stated, that is, no room for contingencies or unpreparedness, even if the designation of an heir apparent (*walī'l-ʿahd*) was, and would be, a matter of contention for the Umayyad family.

Second, al-Ḥakam resolved to make the necessary arrangements for building a professional salaried full-time army, paid with the proceeds of taxation and recruited from expensive purchases in the slave market, a slow and costly process. But it allowed the *amīr* to have an efficient, compliant and faithful army, whose soldiers had neither links with nor affection toward al-Ḥakam's subjects, either Arabs, Berbers or *muwalladūn*. These men allowed him to resist and eventually quell the uprising of the suburb and their value as soldiers, as well as his loyalty, was beyond doubt. Their foreign origin, even as some of them were reportedly Christian captives, made it impossible for the Cordoban citizens to address them and to get an answer, therefore, the members of al-Ḥakam's army were known as *al-khurs* (the dumb/mute ones). It would take a long time to replace the levies of Andalusi soldiers, Berbers, Arabs and *muwalladūn*, and the bulk of the Cordoban Umayyads army was provided by the Arabs belonging to the *jund*, who received money and allowances from the *amīr* and fought for three months under the leadership of an Arab chieftain of their own kin. But this system would not last for a long time.

Third, al-Ḥakam increased the taxes with the goal to finance the expenditures incurred by his bodyguard of salaried soldiers of servile origin. New taxes were levied; the tax liability was assessed according to more stringent criteria; even fodder and meadowland were taxed. Dhimmis and Muslims alike were outraged by this policy and hated the official in charge of censuses and the poll-tax payment on the part of those subject to the *dhimma* status, a man known as the *comes* Rabīʿ, son of Theodulf, who combined an uncanny ability to extract revenue with a rather unpleasant inclination to embezzle money. As al-Ḥakam was nearing the end of his life he instructed his son and *walī'l-ʿahd* to lay the

death penalty on Rabīʿ, who was crucified upside down to the cheers and relief of Cordoban citizens.[11]

Fourth, al-Ḥakam had to reach a *modus vivendi* with the *fuqahāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ* in al-Andalus, who considered his fiscal policy, mainly articulated in the inception of new and non-canonical taxes – assessed and levied with no regard toward Islamic law – as fully unlawful. It was not an easy matter and the unrest behind the *rabāḍ* uprising was duly fuelled by conspiracies articulated around the *fuqahāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ* in Cordoba; men like Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā al-Laythī, ʿĪsā ibn Dīnār al-Ghāfiqī and Ṭālūt ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-Maʿāfirī.[12] Even if a good number of *fuqahāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ* claimed that collaboration and service to the ruler was a grave sin, al-Ḥakam nonetheless restored some kind of balance with them in the last years of his rule.

Fifth, al-Ḥakam increasingly relied on men whose loyalty toward him was unquestionable, regardless of their backgrounds or ethnic affiliation. The paramount instance of this confidence was the career of ʿAmrūs ibn Yūsuf, a *muwallad* appointed governor of Toledo and the Upper Frontier (*al-thaghr al-aʿlā*), who succeeded in restoring the *amīr*'s authority in two areas where the hold of the Cordoban Umayyads was not strong. Besides this, ancient war captives who had become clients – *mawālī* – like Ḥudayr Abū Mūsā al-Madhbūḥ and Bazīʿ, enjoyed the full confidence of the *amīr*.

Appointment and public designation of an heir apparent (*walī'l-ʿahd*), recruitment of an increasingly professional and salaried army, implementation of a sound, comprehensive and powerful fiscal machinery, the tug-of-war between the requirements of Islamic law and the day-to-day intricacies of rule and taxes, and the reliance upon men directly linked to the ruler, all these features figure prominently in the policy of al-Ḥakam and their ultimate goal was the strengthening of the authority and power of the Cordoban Umayyad that ruled the country. As happened with the case of Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander, known as the Great, the son reaped the benefits of the policies of his father. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, son of al-Ḥakam, harvested the fruits of his father's rule, as will be seen.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Awsaṭ (206/822–238/852)[13]

The new ruler's accession was untroubled, but ʿAbd Allāh, the uncle of the late *amīr* al-Ḥakam, who had opposed the proclamation of the second and the third Umayyad Cordoban emirs, left Valencia and proceeded toward Cordoba. The threat to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ended when ʿAbd Allāh suffered a stroke and died shortly after in Tudmir (Murcia), the farthest point in his attempt to reach Cordoba.

Before being appointed heir apparent (*walī'l-ʿahd*) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān led the armies in forays against rebels in the frontiers and prevented the Frankish army of Louis the Pious from taking Tortosa, a deed achieved with the help of the frontier army, headed by ʿAmrūs ibn Yūsuf with local levies (*ḥashd*) and volunteers (*muṭṭawwiʿa*) (193/809).[14] Notwithstanding the *amīr*'s army success, the loss of Barcelona, conquered by Luis the Pious in 185/801, was irretrievable despite the

campaigns and ravages brought about by Umayyad armies in the area during the rule of al-Ḥakam and his son ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

Peacefulness, security and good order were the hallmarks of the situation in the frontier during the rule of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, even if these trends cannot be understood in absolute terms. In Ibn Ḥayyān's *al-Muqtabis* there is an outline of a letter sent by the governor (*ʿāmil*) of Tortosa, ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā, to the *amīr* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān himself.[15] The text offers the reader a minute account of expenses met by the governor with the tax income of cultivated land owned by Muslims (*ʿushūr* – tithes) and the revenue of the poll-tax required from the non-Muslim subjects (dhimmis) (*jazāʾ*), a term also applied in some instances to other taxes. This money was spent in ransoming captives, in the maintenance and upkeep of military strongholds, in providing horses for the ablest men, and the strengthening of the frontier. Besides this, there are fiscal assignments (*qaṭāʾiʿ*) for a detachment of the salaried professional army belonging directly to the bodyguard of the *amīr* – the so-called *al-khurs*, 'the mute', as they were non-Arabs and initially could not speak Arabic – sent by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān himself. These men, all of them on horseback, had their wages (*al-rawātib*), their cash expenses (*al-nafaqāt*) and their provisions (*ʿulūfāt*) paid with these assignments. At the end of the letter, it can be read that the fiscal agents (*ʿummāl*) of ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā each had a monthly wage of 100 gold coins, paid in silver coins (100 *dīnār darāhim*) and the governor received an annual fixed stipend of 1,000 gold coins (*yanhaḍu maʿrūfahu li'l-ʿām alf dīnār*), every payment coming from the tax income. The governor had written the letter to the *amīr* because the latter had previously sent to the frontier a detachment of his bodyguard (*khurs*) and ʿUbayd Allāh explained that he had with him his own detachment, 100 men strong, all of them young militarily trained people (*ghilmān*) as well as his clients (*mawālīhi*), faithful and reliable.

The data contained in this letter give invaluable information about the condition of the frontier, but we do not have other documents to check and compare with this one, a not unusual feature of Arabic sources like *al-Muqtabis* or *al-Bayān al-mughrib*. The statements given here about tax revenue, money and wages should not allow us to infer that the arrangements described could be ranked as a real and duly verified account of fiscal administration in the frontier and in the whole al-Andalus, but the lack of archival data for this age and the variety and richness of the language used enables us to consider that this letter reflected, at least for the Upper Frontier, a complex fiscal structure, which would not have worked in isolation, and required regular censuses, officials in charge of tax liability and tribute allotment, and, last but not least, coinage. In fact, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II's first measure upon his accession was the purchase of his brother's shares in the foreign slaves bought by his father, known as *al-khurs* (*an abtāʿa anṣibāʾa ikhwatihi mim al-mamālik al-ʿajam*), 3,000 horsemen and 2,000 infantrymen.[16] At least, he had enough available bodyguards for sending detachments to the frontier and his ability to buy them implies, at least, a regular payment of wages, horses, clothes, food and weapons.

The contrast between al-Ḥakam, who fought in dire straits for his own life in Cordoba, seat and headquarters of the Umayyad family, and his son ʿAbd al-Raḥmān,

who had a quite untroubled rule, cannot be sharper. The Banū Qasī, who later became a source of turmoil and dissidence for the Umayyads, did not cause trouble in the Upper Frontier and when the *amīr* found himself attacked by an unexpected and powerful foe coming out of the blue he did not hesitate in asking for their help. The call was answered by Lubb ibn Mūsā ibn Mūsā (d. 262/876) who left the frontier in order to fight the *majūs*, i.e., the Vikings, who had landed unexpectedly and followed the Guadalquivir river, ravaging the countryside of Seville and the city itself (229–230/844). This Viking onslaught receives due attention in Arabic sources and the *amīr*, who succeeded in defeating the invaders after a set of pitched battles, invested new resources in the building of a regular war fleet and a network of coastal defences and watchtowers, whose usefulness was fully revealed during the rule of his son Muḥammad. When the Vikings returned in force (244/858), there was no landing in the Guadalquivir mouth as they found the shore duly protected and a fleet ready to engage them.[17]

To ask if ʿAbd al-Raḥmān should have taken the necessary steps for putting a fleet to sea if the Vikings had not landed in al-Andalus is a pointless question. The building, manning and maintenance of a war fleet are a luxury that only a powerful state with huge revenue, that is, a substantial tax income, can afford. With ʿAbd al-Raḥmān we discover that the Umayyad Cordobans fulfilled this condition: *al-Muqtabis*, and other sources as well, explain with delight how ʿAbd al-Raḥmān undertook the building of a mint in Cordoba (*dār al-sikka*) and started to mint gold coins (*dīnār*) and silver coins (*dirham*), together with the construction of workshops for the production of embroidered silk and luxurious fabrics (*ṭirāz*) and the building of a treasure (*khizāna*).[18] In addition to these measures, he appointed a new official in care of the city market, the *ṣāḥib al-sūq*. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's rule witnessed the arrival of Ziryāb, a skilled and proficient musician, poet and knowledgeable man in the culture, traditions, etiquette, literature, politesse and good taste practised in the Abbasid court at Baghdad. Ziryāb had received al-Ḥakam's official request to come and settle in al-Andalus, but at his arrival the *amīr* was already dead. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān encouraged him to stay in al-Andalus, becoming the close confidant of the new *amīr* and opening a new and golden age of culture in al-Andalus.

As could be expected, Muḥammad, the heir apparent, became the new *amīr* upon his father death, despite the opposition of his brother ʿAbd Allāh.

The start of the *fitna*: Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (238/852–273/886)[19] and al-Mundhir ibn Muḥammad (273/886–275/888)

The trend toward increasing centralization was straightforwardly clear and the consolidation of the Umayyad Cordobans' power progressed unabated and at a good pace during the rule of Muḥammad. The centralization and consolidation of the authority, wealth and rule of the Umayyads took place in the framework of the conversion to Islam of people who were neither Arab nor Berber.

The conversion process must not be conceived as a one-sided set of changes affecting exclusively the new convert, but a two-sided process, where, on the converting side, the community losing its members to a new faith needed to adapt to new changes as the number of converts to Islam grew. On the side of Islam, the flow of new converts became a real challenge, as all of them brought to the new faith, even as they converted, a new background, a new experience and myriad personal approaches to faith, worship and communal life, depending on the convert age, gender, cultural background and social position. These are the main issues associated with a conversion process from the individual stance of the new faithful, but it must be taken into account that conversion was also a community matter, as whole groups, families, and tribes changed their previous faith to Islam.[20]

The age of the *amīr* Muḥammad witnessed a sharp rise in the number of rebellions and uprisings in the frontiers with an active participation of lineages of *muwallad* stock. These allied with the northern Christian kings, aristocrats and warlords to break with the *amīr*'s authority, a pattern of alliances that changed as the strength of Cordoba increased and the *muwallad* lineages sought to be accepted into the *amīr*'s obedience and forgiveness. The giving of hostages, the reimbursement of tax arrears, the stationing of detachments of the *amīr*'s army as garrisons in strongholds and cities, and the help provided by the submitting *muwallad* leaders in expeditions against the Christians, that is, *al-jihād fī sabīl Allāh*, were the token of his acceptance of Cordoba's rule, which was recorded in the surrender covenant (*amān*) with a detailed account of duties to be fulfilled.[21] This pattern repeats itself uninterrupted during the rule of the *amīr* Muḥammad and his son al-Mundhir. The main players were the *muwalladūn* of Mérida and its hinterland, close to the frontier, led by Ibn Marwān al-Jilliqī, and the *muwalladūn* of the Upper Frontier, where the Banū Qasī fought enthusiastically against the *amīr* and against other Arab and *muwallad* lineages. Also, the inhabitants of Toledo and surrounding areas, where there was no number superiority for either *muwalladūn*, Arab or Berber, fought among themselves and against the *amīr*. The *muwallad* activity in some areas was not a novelty, but the increasing pace, intensity and frequency of their struggle showed that the strength and cohesiveness of the new converts was a matter for concern, a problem aggravated by shortfalls and failure in tax collecting that went hand in hand with tax arrears and grievous assessing of tax liability. In fact, the main issue to be solved was the conflict between an increasingly and efficiently exacting tax machinery, pervading every level of society and extremely thorough, and the interest of the *muwalladūn*, Arabs and Berbers, all of them Muslims, in evading the sway of taxes, tributes and contributions, a goal that they managed to achieve as their numbers, and specifically of the *muwalladūn*, were growing. Scholars such as M. Acién Almansa and E. Manzano have correctly subsumed this growing conflict under the conflicting ways of wealth appropriation inherent to the duality tax-rent (i.e. wealth appropiation taking place through the state as tribute or the landlord class exacting payments from peasants as rent, paid in produce, coin or work). But this explanatory framework could be enriched by also taking into account the contentious issues of power transmission among the Cordoban Umayyads, which continued to plague the dynasty; the increasing number of new converts to Islam

with the subsequent decrease in tax returns for the Umayyad's treasure as they did not have to pay the poll-tax (*jizya*) required by Islamic law on Jews and Christians and the converts yearning for a better life; and, last but not least, the lines of tribal and communal affiliation that divided the community of the faithful (*umma*) in al-Andalus.[22] A reading of the sources shows a situation of unending strife, general unrest, Sisyphean and unfruitful Umayyad efforts to restore order and, eventually, Muslims fighting Muslims, Arabs against non-Arabs, that is, Berber and *muwalladūn*, and against the Umayyads themselves. This was an age of turmoil, unlawfulness and violence, where the survival of the community of the faithful was in severe danger, that is the age of *fitna*, with Christian kings and counts beyond the frontier breaking the frontier almost unpunished. This drama was not lacking in players, and the main character was ʿUmar ibn Ḥafṣūn.

ʿUmar ibn Ḥafṣūn, the *muwallad*, and Hāshim ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the Umayyad *mawlā*: two sides of the same coin

Both men were contemporaries, and both had ability, courage, strength, shrewdnessand ambition, a set of qualities allowing them to follow a political career in the administration of the Umayyad Cordobans, and everywhere. Both tried to fulfil this goal, one of them met with failure, the other became successful. The main explanation lies in the family background of ʿUmar ibn Ḥafṣūn, the *muwallad*, and Hāshim ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the Umayyad client (*mawlā*). The former had no link with the Umayyad ruling house besides his condition as a Muslim, the latter was the scion of a family of Umayyad clients, faithful followers and loyal supporters of the dynasty, who provided them with wealth and prestige. Hāshim ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, and like him the overwhelming majority of Umayyad clients (*mawālī*), was not intent on sharing this situation with other people. And, of course, he was not ready to accept even the presence of ʿUmar ibn Ḥafṣūn, a *muwallad* parvenu without previous service to the Cordoban Umayyads, in the *amīr*'s palace. Both men met there. The able and recently arrived Ibn Ḥafṣūn was bent on making a political career. Hāshim ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, with a display of haughtiness, and as had happened before with other *muwallad* strongmen, earned the enmity of ʿUmar ibn Ḥafṣūn, who decided to break with Umayyad rule altogether and to hoist his standard in Bobastro. Neither the *amīr* Muḥammad nor his son, heir apparent and next *amīr*, al-Mundhir, managed to stop him. In fact, al-Mundhir died, injured by a stray arrow when he besieged Bobastro, Ibn Ḥafṣūn's stronghold and rallying point for the struggle against the Umayyads.[23]

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad, the *fitna* and the Umayyad family (275/888–300/912)[24]

ʿAbd Allāh, al-Mundhir's brother, was the right man in the right place. Upon al-Mundhir's death, according to some sources by a stray arrow in Bobastro, according to some others owing to poison administered by his own brother ʿAbd

Allāh, the Umayyad army lifted the siege stealthily and withdrew to Cordoba, where ʿAbd Allāh received the oath of allegiance.

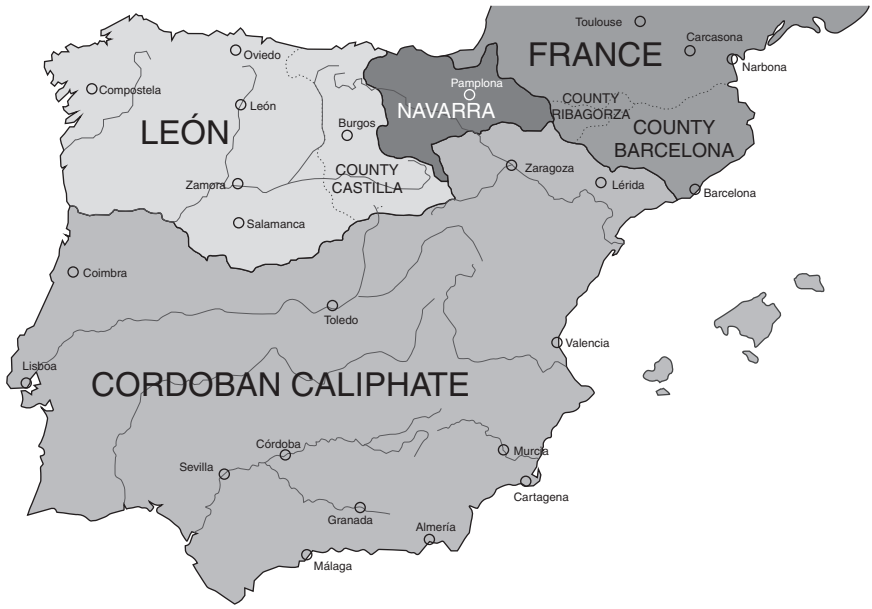
The extant volume of *al-Muqtabis* covering the rule of the *amīr* ʿAbd Allāh is a huge patchwork of the chieftains, urban and rural, Arab, Berber, and *muwallad*, who fought among them in a web of changing alliances, sudden betrayal and contested legitimacy, which developed along lines of tribal affiliation. Notwithstanding it, the Umayyad *amīr* practised a policy of wait-and-see and was ready to give his consent to the communities that required him to ratify the rulers chosen by them, as happened in Pechina, or to appoint a governor when a request was sent to him, as was the case in Tortosa. In both cases, ʿAbd Allāh had no choice but to accept what should be called a *fait accompli* in the case of Pechina and to satisfy graciously a demand of Tortosa's people, who were in need of a governor. In fact, ʿAbd Allāh, even if he had no part in the governors' appointment, understood that the people in Tortosa and Pechina had turned to him in order to achieve his blessing and to invest their *de facto* autonomous rule with legitimacy.[25]

ʿAbd Allāh was a very suspicious, mean, religious and cautious man, perhaps this was his nature, but perhaps the scenario of the *fitna* did not allow him to proceed otherwise. In fact, distrust and close surveillance toward his own family assured his survival, as the Umayyads, living at the lowest ebb of their political career in al-Andalus, could have viewed a change of ruler as a key to improve their situation. The lack of munificence attributed to ʿAbd Allāh might not have been a trait of his character but could have been motivated by the fact that most areas in al-Andalus had stopped sending taxes to Cordoba. Thus, the *amīr* needed to exert a tight, minute, even suffocating, control over expenditure and income, even if he retained the control of the province of Cordoba. The relationship of ʿAbd Allāh with the *fuqahāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ* was very close as he needed the legitimacy provided by their support: to break with them would have been straightforward foolishness. The cautiousness and prudence of the *amīr* ʿAbd Allāh bring to us the image of, at least, a fearful man. He was a middle-aged man, he had not the training of a warrior but, when the need arose, he led the army against Ibn Ḥafṣūn at Poley (277–278/891), where the *muwallad* suffered a defeat.

Notwithstanding the prevailing conditions and the dangers threatening ʿAbd Allāh in his own palace, he succeeded in taking the unavoidable steps to ensure a smooth succession for an heir apparent carefully chosen and groomed. He was not one of his sons, cousins, uncles or brothers; he was his grandson, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who was duly proclaimed as *amīr* upon the death of his grandfather and received the oath of allegiance.[26] A very difficult task awaited him, but he proved to be ready and, eventually, successful.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, from *amīr* to *amīr al-muʾminīn* (300/912–350/961)[27]

The proclamation of the Umayyad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh (300/912–350/961) as commander of the faithful (*amīr al-mu'minīn*) in the year 316/929 was the end of the turmoil of the infighting (*fitna*) that ravaged in al-Andalus from *circa* 261/875 and reached its culmination during the reign of his



Map 3.1 The Cordoban Umayyad Caliphate

grandfather and predecessor, ʿAbd Allāh, when the country was torn apart by northern marauding Christians and by fiercely contending Arabs, Berbers and converts to Islam who opposed the Umayyads of Cordoba. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān took the caliphal titles of al-Nāṣir li-dīn Allāh and al-Qa'im bi-amr Allāh and proclaimed his purpose of extending his authority to the whole community of believers. This led him to wage war in the Maghrib against the Umayyad's arch foe, the Fatimid Caliphate of al-Mahdiyya (296/909–358/969), ruling in the Eastern and Central Maghrib (Tunisia and Algeria), and against the Idrissids (179/789–375/985) of the Western Maghrib (Morocco). He conquered Ceuta (319/931) across the Strait and sent money, weapons, luxurious presents and pieces of silk brocade (*ṭirāz*) to the Banū Khazar of the Zanāta and to the Banū Abī'l-ʿĀfiya of the Miknasa, and to every Berber tribal chieftain ready to leave the Fatimid fold. As the head of the community of believers 'Abd al-Raḥmān renewed the *jihād fī sabīl Allāh*, brought the Caliphate armies against the Christian counts and kings beyond the frontiers and succeeded in restoring the integrity of al-Andalus. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III's campaigns recovered to some extent the lands conquered by the Christians during the disorders of ʿAbd Allāh's rule (275/888–300/912), and that in spite of the defeat inflicted on ʿAbd al-Raḥmān in Simancas-Alhándega (939) by Ramiro II, king of Leon, where the caliph was routed and almost captured by the defection of some frontier contingents of his army.

After this defeat, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān focused on the last stage of the construction of his new palace-complex city, al-Madīna al-Zahrāʾ (The most shining city), lying five kilometres north-west of Cordoba, where architecture, space

arrangements and the full structure of the palatial city conveyed a message of unity, order, prosperity, conceived and developed in detail by the caliph and his heir apparent, al-Ḥakam.[28] The caliph's full attention in the building of al-Madīna al-Zahrāʾ did not divert him from learning the lessons of his defeat at Simancas-Alhándega, which prompted him to take the necessary measures for avoiding a new disaster and to restore the confidence and readiness of the army. He decided, after a long life of campaigns, sieges and battles, neither to lead in person another foray nor to wage war with large armies, but to harass the frontiers with a set of continuous incursions, staged from Cordoba, carefully planned in advance, and led by men that enjoyed the trust of the caliph, most of them Umayyad *mawālī*, closely linked with the dynasty before the landing of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil in Burriana (138/756). These men received the help and guidance of the garrisons and governors deployed on the border, who had life-long experience of fighting counts and Christian kings and were under ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's close surveillance. This new approach to war eventually brought peace to the frontier and the caliph was able to benefit from dynastic troubles in the Christian kingdoms of Leon and Navarra, allowing him to intervene in their internal policies, as they sought the caliph's alliance and help.[29]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir succeeded in redressing the defeat of Simancas-Alhándega and proceeded to introduce changes in the army, which were not new and can be traced back to al-Ḥakam al-Rabaḍī. Both Umayyads distinguished themselves for their concern in building a professional salaried full-time army and Caliph al-Nāṣir invested a huge amount of money in buying slaves to replenish the army ranks, to provide it with fully reliable military commanders and, eventually, to dispense with the Arab soldiers enrolled and registered in the *jund*. These slaves were known as *ṣaqāliba* (sing. *ṣiqlabī*), a name related to their origin, that is, the Slavic communities of the Balkans and Eastern Europe, even if this name has been used as a generic denomination for slaves bought in Eurasia, neither African nor Turks. The caliphal guard at al-Madīna al-Zahrāʾ amounted to 3,950 *ṣaqāliba* and the eunuchs in charge of al-Nāṣir's *ḥuram*, that is, the women of his extended family, all belonged to the *ṣaqāliba*, to whom the caliph entrusted high dignities and bestowed largesse. The caliph's upper hand in his dealings with the Christian kingdoms and counties can be explained by the above-mentioned changes in the strategic approach in war. Nevertheless, it would have been fruitless without a careful and active diplomacy policy that encompassed the whole Iberian Peninsula, the post-Carolingian world, the Mediterranean basin, the Maghrib and Byzantium.

Box 3.1 Hasdai ibn Shaprut (ca. 900–910–ca. 970)

David J. Wasserstein

Of a Jewish family originally from Jaén, Hasdai b. Isaac b. Ezra ibn Shaprut worked for ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III al-Nāṣir and al-Ḥakam II al-Mustanṣir, rising to become a senior official in the customs. The prototype of the court Jew, he used his medical knowledge to treat a royal invalid in northern Spain, strengthening Cordoban influence there as

a result. His multilingual abilities enabled him to persuade an envoy from the Holy Roman Emperor Otto to obtain a revised, and much more respectful, letter from his sovereign to Cordoba. And he helped in the local revision of the Arabic version of the *Materia Medica* of Dioscorides sent by the Byzantine emperor as a gift to 'Abd al-Raḥmān III. His success in all these roles gave him the position and the means to protect and further the interests of the Jews of al-Andalus. He deepened existing contacts between Jews in al-Andalus and the Jewish academies (*yeshivot*) in Iraq, Sura and Pumbedita, to which he sent financial support. Exploiting his contacts with the Byzantine rulers, he also corresponded with the Jewish kingdom of the Khazars beyond Byzantium. The surviving remnants of the correspondence are valuable sources for our knowledge of the Khazars, by his time declining almost to disappearance. His greater significance in Jewish history (which also contributed to early scholarly interest in his life and career) derives, however, from his support for a major Jewish cultural renaissance at home. He not only imported manuscripts of Jewish texts from the East but offered patronage to religious scholars, grammarians and poets, from al-Andalus itself and abroad. In consequence, the period from around 950 saw a remarkable florescence of Jewish cultural activity in Cordoba. His activity in the Jewish sphere parallels that of al-Ḥakam II al-Mustanṣir in the Islamic both in fertilizing intellectual and cultural richness and, still more, in making what looks (and in the Middle Ages looked) like a deliberate attempt to break the earlier Andalusi dependence on the religious centres and cultural models of the East and create a major new focus for Jewish culture in the West, in al-Andalus. Whether this would have occurred without the impetus given by his support has recently been questioned – Jewish cultural revivals took place elsewhere in the Islamic world in the Middle Ages too – but the Iberian revival stands out both for its quality and for the sheer bulk of what was produced; and the chronological coincidence of the Jewish renaissance there with the Islamic supports the ideas both of a calculated policy, unlike in other areas, and of the significance of Hasdai himself as patron of the renaissance.

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In 337/948 the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitos sent an embassy to Cordoba and the caliph was presented with the gift of the *Historia adversos paganos* by Paulus Orosius and the Greek original of Dioscorides' *Materia medica*, which prompted him to ask the Eastern Roman emperor for a man able to help in the translation of the Greek text. The request was fulfilled with the arrival in 340/951–952 at Cordoba of the monk Nicholas, a scholar proficient in Greek and Latin, who remained in al-Andalus for ten years and worked closely with Hasdai ibn Shaprut, the leader of the Cordoban Jewish community who worked

in the caliphal administration. The embassies between Byzantium and al-Andalus continued in the age of al-Ḥakam, heir and successor of Caliph ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, and Romanos, heir and successor of Constantine.[30] Otto I, the Holy Roman emperor, decided to send to Cordoba in 342/953 a delegation with the monk John of Gorze, a pious man dearly committed to achieve the caliph's conversion to Christianity and ready to bring abuse on him if he refused. The goal of the delegation was to ask the caliph to put an end to the activities of Muslim freebooters, settled near Fraxinetum/Farakhshinīṭ – la Garde Freinet[31] – roaming at will and preying unchecked on Christian shipping and sea lanes.[32] The main question underlying the legation of Otto I in 342/953, as well as the previous arrival for the first time in Cordoba, in 330/March 942, of Amalfitan merchants bringing luxurious merchandise and settling in the city,[33] and the subsequent presence of Amalfitan merchants with the messenger of the lord of Sardinia[34] in 330/August 942, was the high profile of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir's policy against the Fatimids, which required the mastery of seafaring, trade networks, shipping lanes, and the building of a powerful war fleet with safe anchorages, shipyards, trained sailors, weaponry, and skilled admirals.[35] Al-Nāṣir managed to achieve these goals and his accomplishment brought to Cordoba all concerned with the results of trade, shipping and seafaring, three areas where the merchants of Amalfi excelled, besides other cities and polities engaged in trade around the Western Mediterranean basin.

If a late report should be given credence, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir had only fourteen days of full happiness during his forty-nine years of rule. Nevertheless, he left behind a rich, peaceful, prosperous country, united under a single ruler who, for the first time, managed to appoint his heir apparent with no trouble at all.

Al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir bi'llāh, the caliph scholar (350/961–366/976)[36]

Al-Ḥakam was the eldest son of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir li-dīn Allāh, who decided to appoint him heir apparent and to rule in close partnership with him. This measure was intended to make al-Ḥakam a knowledgeable ruler in the matters of power exercise and a man able to cope with the hard and ungrateful load of governance. Al-Ḥakam, who became caliph when he was forty-six years old, had had enough experience and chances to hone his skills as a ruler, in fact, he ruled al-Andalus with fairness, protected the frontiers and his age became the Golden Age of Islamic culture in al-Andalus. Caliph al-Ḥakam, who had followed the same learning path as all the young men belonging to elite families, excelled in the critical analysis of the sayings of the Prophet (*ḥadīth*), knew the most ensnaring and taxing issues of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and had a deep love for books, libraries, culture, literature, rhymed prose and poetry. There is no doubt that al-Ḥakam had an outstanding record as a scholar, but if this trend would qualify him as a wise ruler, he was nonetheless a very uncommon Umayyad ruler. That is, his father, Caliph ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, left behind twelve sons and ten daughters, a not very high figure if we consider the Umayyad *amīr* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II (206/822–237/852) and his

hundred children, fifty boys and fifty girls, even if a degree of hyperbole can be accepted. Al-Ḥakam had only two children with a woman, the slave-singer Ṣubḥ: the first, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, died very young, and the second, Hishām, was born in 354/965, when his father was fifty years old and survived his deceased brother ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. The advanced age of al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir and the very young age of his surviving son, Hishām, would have been an issue, but the ruling Umayyad family in al-Andalus and his relatives numbered 469 people, and here there is no hyperbole at all. There were plenty of Umayyad people, male and adult, able to rule, who could be chosen as heir apparent. The matter was not a lack of available Umayyads, but al-Ḥakam's unassailable conviction that notwithstanding, on the one hand, Hishām's age, on the other, the ailing caliph's health, the third Umayyad caliph in al-Andalus was to be Hishām, son of al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir and grandson of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir, no matter his age when his father died or the presence of other adult Umayyad males, brothers and relatives of the caliph scholar.

Ṣubḥ al-bashkunsiyya, slave-singer (*jāriya*), childbearing mother (*umm walad*) and The Great Lady (*al-sayyida al-kubrā*)

The mother of Hishām was a slave-girl trained for singing, for making and reciting poetry, ready to indulge in very polite and fashionable conversation during literary gatherings with the caliph himself and with courtiers in the inner circle of the Umayyad palace in Cordoba or in al-Madīna al-Zahrāʾ, all of them keen on showing their proficiency and mastery in poetry, Arabic language and culture. Orientalism used to see slave-girls in Islamic palaces as no better than unpaid prostitutes, but Gender Studies and a more unbiased approach to the hidden world of the *ḥaram* have changed this view, at least from the scholarly viewpoint. From this vantage point, Ṣubḥ, born in the northern half of the Iberian Peninsula or in the Frankish world, bought in the slave market and brought to Cordoba, was a woman with the knowledge, touch and skill to gain al-Ḥakam's affection with her training as a slave-singer girl. There are some hints about the relationship between al-Ḥakam, the caliph-*faqīh*-scholar-bibliophile, and Ṣubḥ, the mother of the late ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and the surviving Hishām. Al-Ḥakam loved her passionately and she bore him two sons despite his mature age, a gift that the caliph repaid by showing the utmost care toward the slave-girl, who attained the category of *umm walad* – literally, mother of a child – and eventually, the title of *Al-sayyida al-kubrā*, The Great Lady. Besides love, affection, nightly poetry sessions or scholarly discussions about difficult Arabic words, a very strong and common bond linked al-Ḥakam and Ṣubḥ: to ensure that their only surviving son, Hishām, could become the new caliph.

Jaʿfar ibn ʿUthmān al-Muṣḥafī, close friend, ancient teacher and faithful servant

An Umayyad caliph, a Fatimid Imam-caliph, an Abbasid caliph, that is, any powerful Muslim ruler, or man invested with political authority, was used to

see, to speak, to command and deal with quite a high number of people, a relationship marked, of course, by hierarchy, precedence, status and etiquette. Even so, these rulers relied on an inner circle of advisers and officials to alleviate them from day-to-day tasks and to discuss capital matters of policy. The closest person to al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir, and his trusted friend and confidant, was Jaʿfar ibn ʿUthmān al-Muṣḥafī, also known as al-Muṣḥafī (d. 372/983). His father, ʿUthmān ibn Naṣr, had taught al-Ḥakam when he was heir apparent, and Islamic scholarship gives a place of honour to teachers, prophetic tradition transmitters and people involved in the search of knowledge. Al-Ḥakam acknowledged his debt toward ʿUṯmān ibn Naṣr's teachings, putting his trust in his teacher's son. Al-Muṣḥafī became personal secretary of al-Ḥakam before his accession to the caliphate and received, in his colleague and friend's last years, the dignity of *ḥājib* (lit. the man in charge of the veil), the highest civil authority in al-Andalus, just behind the caliph himself.

Al-Muṣḥafī knew the most intimate and dearest wishes of his friend, Caliph al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir, who suffered a bout of hemiplegia in the last years of his life. As al-Ḥakam's ailing health and late age were bringing him to a slow and painful death, al-Muṣḥafī did his best to assure him that Hishām, al-Ḥakam's only son and heir, could be proclaimed caliph, despite being a child at the time of his father's death and against the wishes of the late caliph's Umayyad relatives, all of them adult, male and sound, but unused to the daily tasks of rule. Al-Muṣḥafī succeeded in a very difficult undertaking. The person who helped him to overcome the court parties and to fulfil the dearest wish of al-Ḥakam was a young man in his thirties, Muḥammad ibn Abī ʿĀmir, who will be known by his honorific name, or *laqab*, al-Manṣūr, which means "the victorious".

Box 3.2 Almanzor

Xavier Ballestín

His full name was Abū ʿĀmir Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik al-Maʿāfirī, known by the honorific title al-Manṣūr (325/938–392/1002) which means "the victorious". This title appears in Spanish, Catalan and Latin chronicles as Almanzor/Almansor.

Almanzor, or Muḥammad ibn Abī ʿĀmir, belonged to a southern tribe, Maʿāfir, and was born in a family settled in the Iberian Peninsula from 92/711 onwards: that is, the first member of the Almanzor family to settle in al-Andalus arrived there with the army of Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād. His life and career are a clear instance of astonishing success, a fact stressed in the Arabic sources, and grudgingly acknowledged in the Latin sources, even if some Muslim scholars, in al-Andalus and al-Maghrib, writing with the benefit of hindsight, viewed the roots of the eventual collapse of Umayyad power and political unity in al-Andalus in his policies toward the Umayyads, the incumbent caliph, the army and the Arabs in al-Andalus.

He led around fifty-two campaigns against Christian kingdoms and counties in the northern half of the Iberian Peninsula, storming the main cities and defeating the Christian armies everywhere between 366/976 and 392/1002, bearing in mind that it was not an age of pitched battles. His campaigns also brought the Umayyad armies to the Maghrib. From the viewpoint of classical Islamic jurisprudence, al-Manṣūr was paramount in the practice of *jihād fī sabīl Allāh*, striving in the path of God to protect the community of the faithful and to bring humiliation and defeat to the unbelievers.

The young al-Manṣūr started his career following in the steps of his own father, a renowned pious and ascetic Islamic scholar, who died in Tripoli (Libya) or in Raqqada, near Qayrawan, on his way back from the pilgrimage to Mecca, around 349/961. In order to achieve this goal, like most male youngsters in well-to-do Muslim families, he studied Islamic law to become a jurist, heard the sayings of the Prophet from renowned traditionists and acquired a deep knowledge of the Arabic language, culture and literature. There is nothing unusual in the young al-Manṣūr's training: all elite families took pains to provide their sons with this kind of knowledge.

But this knowledge eventually brought him to exert the full authority associated with the caliphal dignity, on behalf of the caliph himself. Hishām al-Muʾayyad conferred to al-Manṣūr in a formal declaration, read aloud in the mosques of al-Andalus, the rule in his name. After al-Manṣūr's death, his two sons, al-Muẓaffar and al-Nāṣir, were granted the same powers. While the first continued his father's policies of being the *de facto* ruler while maintaining the caliph as the head of the community of the faithful, the second opened the gates for the civil war (*fitna*) and the fall of the caliphate when he replaced Hishām.

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The career and background of Muḥammad ibn Abī ʿĀmir, known as al-Manṣūr

Al-Manṣūr (325–392/938–1002) was born in a family whose ancestor, ʿAbd al-Malik, an Arab man belonging to the Maʿāfir tribe of the Qaḥṭān confederation, arrived with the overwhelmingly Berber army of Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād, who landed in Algeciras bay in 92/711, near the mountain that will be known as the mountain of Ṭāriq – Jabal Ṭāriq (Gibraltar).[37] ʿAbd al-Malik lived in Carteya and in Torrox, where al-Manṣūr was born. Like most male youngsters in well-to-do Muslim families, he acquired in Cordoba the learning that would enable him to become an Islamic scholar (*faqīh*) with a deep knowledge of jurisprudence, prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*), Arabic language, culture and literature. There was nothing in his early years or in his training as a *faqīh* that could be singled out as a main

source or driving force behind his political career, in fact, Islamic scholars tried to avoid close relationship with the trappings of power. The common trend in all sources, pointed out by all historians and ever present in al-Manṣūr's life, was the excellence achieved in his studies, which made him a very able and competent official, to whom the most demanding and difficult tasks were entrusted and fulfilled with full effectiveness.

His first appointment in the administration of the Umayyads of Cordoba was the stewardship and property management (*wakāla*) of the new-born first son of Caliph al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir and his slave-singer-poet-lover (*jāriya*), a child called ʿAbd al-Raḥmān like his grandfather. This first designation and his full career as an official allowed him to establish a wide network of alliances, a working knowledge of the administration, and to enjoy the full confidence of Ṣubḥ and al-Muṣḥafī, the two power brokers behind the caliph.

Hishām al-Muʾayyad bi'llāh (366/976–399/1009) and *al-dawla al-ʿāmiriyya* (371/981–399/1009)

Al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir entrusted al-Muṣḥafī and al-Manṣūr with holding the oath of allegiance to his son and heir before his own death, a pledge duly renewed on al-Ḥakam's death, shortly after a failed conspiracy to proclaim al-Mughīra ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, al-Ḥakam's brother and Hishām's uncle, as caliph. Al-Muṣḥafī had no qualms when he sent al-Manṣūr to kill the Umayyad al-Mughīra, as he understood that the position of *ḥājib* was eventually conferred on him by the late caliph to ensure Hishām's rule. But there was a radical change. The death of al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir (366/976) ended altogether the power of the Cordoban Umayyads. That is, the *dawla marwāniyya*, the age when the Umayyads ruled in their own right and possessed both the caliphal legitimacy and the ability to command and to forbid, had finished.[38] The authority, the political power, the waging of war, the striving in the path of God and to enforce good and forbid evil, in a word, the *sulṭān* of the legitimate Umayyad caliph, was in the hands of al-Manṣūr, also known as Ibn Abī ʿĀmir, and this new *dawla* would be known as *dawla ʿāmiriyya*, that is, the age where the progeny of ʿĀmir exerted full political power in the name of the incumbent caliph. Al-Manṣūr attained this goal after a pitched battle at the tower of San Vicente, where he crushed the army of Ghālib ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, a freedman from the *ṣaqāliba* of the first caliph, and his Christian allies from the county of Castile (371/981). After that, no one managed to overthrow al-Manṣūr, who decided to give himself that surname, "the victorious". He felt secure and confident in the new palatial city that he had started to build in the outskirts of Cordoba, al-Madīna al-Zāhira, "The shining city". Al-Manṣūr's rule remained unchecked, even if there was no lack of conspiracies and attempts to overthrow him and replace Caliph Hishām with another Umayyad. The only real threat during his successful career came when Ṣubḥ, Hishām's mother, tried to urge her son to rule by himself and, eventually, dismiss al-Manṣūr, a dismissal tantamount to death for the man whose career had started under the acquiescence of the mother's caliph. Despite Ṣubḥ's planning, which included the stealthy removal of silver and gold from al-

Madīna al-Zahrāʾ, and the appearance of a Berber chief of the Zanāta in the Maghrib, Zīrī ibn ʿAṭiyya, who denounced al-Manṣūr for preventing the caliph from the exercise of power, al-Manṣūr eventually surmounted the threats. He then required the caliph himself to issue a formal declaration (c. 997–998), read aloud in the mosques of al-Andalus, conferring on al-Manṣūr's sons, 'Abd al-Malik (392/1002–399/1008) and 'Abd al-Raḥmān (399/1008–1009), the title of *ḥājib* and the legitimizing caliphal approval as rulers of al-Andalus and the Maghrib upon their father's death. Al-Manṣūr died in the north-eastern frontier, near Castile, in 392/1002, and was buried in Medinaceli. His son ʿAbd al-Malik left the place for Cordoba and brought the news of his father's death to Caliph Hishām, who appointed him *ḥājib* and entrusted him with the government and the day-to-day tasks of rule. ʿAbd al-Malik (392/1002–399/1008), a courageous warrior who had already fought pitched battles in the northern frontier and in the Maghrib, followed the path of his father, and after his fifth incursion against the Christians (398/1007) he asked the caliph to give him an honorific surname (*laqab*). Hishām acquiesced and gave him al-Muẓaffar, "the supported and triumphant", and ʿAbd al-Malik al-Muẓaffar managed to rule al-Andalus in the name of the caliph. Nevertheless, a man who had enjoyed previously the full confidence of al-Manṣūr and belonged to the inner circle of al-Muẓaffar, ʿĪsā ibn Saʿīd al-Yaḥṣubī, attempted to oust al-Muẓaffar and to replace Hishām with another Umayyad, a man called Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir. ʿĪsā ibn Saʿīd's coup backfired and al-Muẓaffar killed him and Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār in 397/1006. The last years of al-Muẓaffar's life were spent in the daily routine of rule and *jihād*, till he died, like his father, during an incursion against the Christians, which ended before the army arrived at the frontier (399/1008).

Caliph Hishām received the news of al-Muẓaffar's death from the latter's brother, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who was invested with the dignity of *ḥājib* and received the honorific surnames of al-Nāṣir and al-Maʾmūn, "the faithful". The appointment of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and the smooth transference of power and authority showed the strength of the *dawla ʿāmiriyya*, but the deeds of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (399/1008–1009) were to prove the undoing of the family and the outbreak of the *fitna*.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was the son of al-Manṣūr and of ʿAbda, the daughter of king Sancho Garcés of Navarra, and the boy was known by the nickname of Sanjūl, that is, Sanchuelo, a name that has been related to his maternal grandfather, Sancho Garcés. Some sources explicitly state that the real meaning of Sanjūl was "the stupid one" and the word *sancho* means also "swine", that is, Sanjūl meant also "piglet". Those are not flattering nickames, of course, but the Arabic sources did not mince unpleasant words for Sanjūl. What did he do to deserve the almost universal damnation of scholars, historians and men of knowledge? Besides his personal life and values, distorted in the sources, he convinced Caliph Hishām al-Mu'ayyad, childless and already in his middle age, to appoint him heir apparent. Neither al-Manṣūr nor al-Muẓaffar would have dared to take this unprecedented step, as their real power rested on Hishām's acquiescence for them to rule in his name. But Sanjūl, who ruled in the name of the caliph, threatened and pressured Hishām into producing a document, duly written by the Cordoban judge Ibn

Dhakwān, where Caliph Hishām declared that Sanjūl, that is, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir al-Maʾmūn, had to be the next caliph after his death. The document amounted to depriving the Umayyads of the caliphate that had been theirs since the age of al-Nāṣir, and before that, since the age of Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān. A radical, sudden and unexpected change, that rallied the Umayyads against Sanchuelo, but the *dawla ʿāmiriyya* was strong, the army stayed behind them, and the Umayyads remained powerless. But things would change completely.

If a woman, Ṣubḥ, had helped al-Manṣūr in the first stage of his successful political career, which brought about the *dawla ʿāmiriyya*, another woman, al-Dhalfāʾ, mother of al-Muẓaffar and suspicious that Sanjūl was responsible for her son's illness and death, brought the *dawla ʿāmiriyya* to an end. Al-Dhalfāʾ provided the Umayyads with money, help and accurate intelligence. On the one hand, they had been dispossessed of the caliphate by Sanjūl, who was neither Umayyad nor Qurashi, on the other hand, Muḥammad ibn Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār, the surviving son of the man killed by al Muẓaffar together with ʿĪsā ibn Saʿīd, was ready to act. This Umayyad – who will be known as Muḥammad al-Mahdī – killed Sanjūl, deposed Hishām, and proclaimed himself caliph (400/1009). He destroyed the *dawla ʿāmiriyya* and started the *fitna*. Al-Madīna al-Zāhira, the palatial city of al-Manṣūr, was burned, sacked and utterly destroyed. Cordoba was besieged and stormed. The golden age of al-Andalus ended.

Notes

1 For a comprehensive view of the surnames and honorific titles given to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān see Meouak, "Notes sur les titres", 353–370, 362–363, 363.
2 Martínez Enamorado, "Y al-Dājil arribó a al-Andalus".
3 Ibn 'Idhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, vol. II, 57.
4 Marín, "El *Halcón Maltés* del arabismo español". P. Chalmeta has pointed out the remarkably Hollywood flavour in 'Abd al-Rahman's life, which deserved a blockbuster movie: Chalmeta, *Invasión e islamización*, 349.
5 Manzano Moreno, *Conquistadores, emires y califas*, 195, 531 endnote 6; Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane*, vol. I, 139–141; Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, 38–39. Ibn 'Idhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, vol. II, p. 63.
6 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 89r-91r; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 16–28. Quesada is in Jaén, near the Sierra de Cazorla. Ibn Ḥayyān collects all the available sources reporting the war between al-Ḥakam and his uncles. The accounts about Sulaymān's attempt to overthrow al-Ḥakam differ on how many pitched battles were held between uncle and nephew, where these engagements took place and how Sulaymān was captured and executed, but there is no disagreement around the main lines of the facts, the eventual defeat of Sulaymān, who bore the brunt of defeat in each engagement, and al-Ḥakam's interest in giving his protection to his uncle's family, settled in Cordoba after Sulaymān's death. This wealth of accurate detail and thorough source compilation is the trademark of the extant volumes of *al-Muqtabis*.
7 The name *muwallad* (Spanish *muladí*) was used to identify new converts to Islam who were neither Arabs nor Berbers. They converted in the framework of a patronage relationship (*walāʾ*), which brought them to Islam as clients (*mawlā*, pl. *mawālī*) of a Muslim Arab and members of the Arab tribe to which their Arab patron, also called *mawlā*, belonged. It was not the only way to become a Muslim, even converted *mawālī* could have *mawālī* of their own and not all the *muwallad*s in al-Andalus took true interest in following suit with their

Arabic patrons. The political relevance of *muwallad*, Berber and Arab (either Yaman or Qays) lineages in the Upper March was paralleled in other areas of al-Andalus, like the countryside around Mérida (The Lower March, *al-thaghr al-adnā*), Toledo (the Middle March, *al-thaghr al-awsaṭ*), Algarve (*Gharb al-Andalus*), the Mediterranean coast (Sharq al-Andalus) and Andalucía itself. For a thorough analysis of the *muwallad* lineage of the Banū Qasī and his policy see Lorenzo, *La* dawla *de los Banū Qasī*. The meaning and interpretation of the term *muwallad* have been dealt by Fierro, "*Mawālī* and *muwalladūn* in al-Andalus" and this subject receives due attention in Chapter 9.

8 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 92v-95r; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 28–35. There is a word in the chapter title devoted to this matter in *al-Muqtabis*, which gives an almost graphic idea about the events: 'hecatomb'. Ibn Ḥayyān sources do not agree in the figures.

9 The story of the civet flask and the cold courage of al-Ḥakam when the people of Secunda were on the brink of victory can be found and read in detail in *al-Muqtabis*: Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 111v; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 79, where Ibn Ḥayyān expanded on the Secunda suburb rebellion, which almost managed to end altogether Umayyad power in al-Andalus: Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 103v-110r; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 55–75. In fact, the Secunda uprising, unexpected, massive and sudden, was the last, and unsuccessful, attempt to oust al-Ḥakam from Cordoba.

10 For the seafaring activities of the Secunda survivors see Lirola, *El poder naval de al-Andalus*, 99–105.

11 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 115r-115v, transl. 89–91; Acién and Manzano, "Organización social y administración política", 341–342.

12 Fierro, "Sobre el *Muqtabis*", 212–215. The relationship between *fuqahāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ* understanding of fairness and virtuous rule on behalf of Islamic law (*sharīʿa*) and the real exercise of power in Islamic dynasties had always been a controversial matter, which will receive due attention in Chapter 14.

13 The first years of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's rule are covered in the first extant volume of *al-Muqtabis*: Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1 and vol. II-2.

14 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 100r-100v; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 48; Ibn 'Idhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, vol. II-1, 74–75. For a detailed study of the Frankish attempt and eventual failure see Suñé, "Indicios de participación dimmī o muladí".

15 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-2, 190r-190v.

16 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 144v, transl. 185.

17 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 185v-188v, transl. 312/325. See, for a detailed account with bibliography and sources, Lirola, *El poder naval de al-Andalus*, 111–117. The help of Lubb ibn Mūsā is thoroughly discussed by Lorenzo, *La* dawla *de los Banū Qasī*, 198–202. The second Viking raid brought them to Algeciras and Tudmir.

18 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 142v-143v, transl. 178–182.

19 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-2. For the last years of Muḥammad and the rule of his son al-Mundhir there are no extant volumes of *al-Muqtabis*, and the chronological sequence is retaken with the *amīr* ʿAbd Allāh: Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. III.

20 This approach to the conversion to Islam can be found and developed in the seminal work by Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam*. For an appraisal of the shortcomings and advantages in Bulliet's approach and method see Penelas, "Some remarks on conversion" and Wasserstein, "Where have all the converts gone?" The conversion process and the intercommunity life in al-Andalus are dealt with in Chapters 9 and 10.

21 Herrero, *El perdón del gobernante*, 60–225.

22 The efficiency of the tax machinery can be ascertained in Barceló, "Un estudio sobre la estructura fiscal". Here a text belonging to al-ʿUdhrī, *Tarṣīʿ al-akhbār* is thoroughly analyzed and provides a detailed account of the districts (*iqlīm*, pl. *aqālīm*) in the province of Cordoba (*kūra Qurṭuba*), most of them inhabited by Muslims, which tributes were paid, and the amount paid by each district. The troubles met by the *amīr* Muḥammad in tax collecting have received due attention in Manzano, *Conquistadores, emires y califas*,

342–344, who shows how governors, promoted under the auspices of Hāshim ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, embezzled half the tax revenue: Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Taʾrīkh iftitāḥ al-Andalus*, transl. James, 123.

23 The breaking point in the knowledge and analysis of ʿUmar ibn Ḥafṣūn is Acién's groundbreaking book *Entre el feudalismo y el Islam*, where the policies of the *muwallad* and those of the Cordoban Umayyads are seen in light of the struggle associated to the duality tax-rent. See also Fierro, "Cuatro preguntas en torno a Ibn Ḥafṣūn", and Martínez Enamorado, *Umar ibn Ḥafṣūn*, where the political career of Ibn Ḥafṣūn is viewed in the framework of a long search for political legitimacy and power exercise. For a thorough discussion about the duality tax-rent and their development in the High Middle Ages see Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*.

24 The rule of ʿAbd Allāh is partially covered in Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. III.

25 The governor of Tortosa was ʿAbd al-Ḥakam ibn Saʿīd ibn ʿAbd al-Salām. See Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. III, p. 52; Ballestín, "Prosopografia dels *fuqahāʿ* i *ʿulamāʾ*", 69–72. The last governor of Pechina chosen by the community and acknowledged by the Umayyad *amīr*, in this case ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, grandson and heir to ʿAbd Allāh, was ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muṭarrif ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Aṣbagh al-Ṭāʾī. See al-Ḥimyarī, *Kitāb al-Rawḍ al-miʿṭār*, 80; Lirola, *El poder naval de al-Andalus*, 390–392. The request of a governor forwarded to the *amīr* by the people of Tortosa should be understood in the framework of competing lineages and communities in the area, unable to settle their scores and seeking for an alien person, with no links with Tortosa, to rule them. See Guichard, *Les musulmans de Valence* vol. 2, 282.

26 Fierro, "Por qué ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III sucedió a su abuelo".

27 The rule of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *amīr* and *amīr al-muʾminīn*, is partially covered in Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. V. A terse and comprehensive account in English of his life and deeds can be found in Fierro, *Abd al-Rahman III*.

28 For a comprehensive assessment of archaeological research and restoration in al-Madīna al-Zahrāʾ see Vallejo, *La ciudad califal de Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ*. The complex relationship between buildings, residences, space arrangement, and dynastic legitimacy has been dealt also by Vallejo, "El heredero designado y el califa".

29 Collins, *Caliphs and Kings: Spain, 796–1031*, 148, 150, 153–154.

30 Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain*, 305–306; Signes, "Bizancio y al-Andalus".

31 Located in the Var departament in the Côte d'Azur area in south-eastern France.

32 Barceló, "The earliest sketch" has given due attention to the difficulties met by John of Gorze's delegation and the framework of diplomatic contacts between the caliphate and the Holy Roman Empire. See Paz y Meliá "Fuentes para la Historia de Córdoba", where the Latin text of Gorze's travel and stay at Cordoba has been translated. See Lirola, *El poder naval*, 150–153, 157, 232–236, 244, 295 where the seafaring activities of the Muslim freeboteers in Farakhshinīṭ receive well-deserved attention. See also Versteegh, "The Arab presence in France".

33 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol V, 322; Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi and its Diaspora*, 235–245.

34 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol V, 327; Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi and its Diaspora*, 235–245.

35 Al-Nāṣir's achievements in fleet building and control of the Mediterranean sea lanes and seafaring have received due attention in Lirola, *El poder naval*. The stepping stone for what would be called Umayyad thalasocracy can be found already in the age of the *fitna*, when ʿIṣām al-Khawlānī, a merchant coming back from the pilgrimage, landed in Majorca and after a short stay in the island encouraged the *amīr* ʿAbd Allāh to give his consent to conquer and settle there, a deed dated around 290/903. See also Lirola, *El poder naval*, 156–157 and Ibn Khaldūn, vol. IV, 210. In addition to this, al-Nāṣir succeeded in bringing to Umayyad authority the community of seafarers in Pechina (see n. 25), whose skills, seafaring abilities and knowledge of the sea underpinned the building of Almería, on the south-eastern coast of al-Andalus, known as the shipyard of