

Christian-Muslim Understanding(s) in Medieval Spain

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In al-Andalus until the time of the Umayyad Caliphate in the tenth century, the indigenous population was accorded *dhimmī* status, that is to say that Christians and Jews were permitted to continue the practice of their respective religions, subject to the payment of the annual tax, the *jizya*. There was no obligation for those in rural communities, the majority of the population, to adopt Islam, and they remained barely aware of the presence of Islam in the Peninsula. Islam was confined to the cities, and made little impact elsewhere. Subsequently, Arabicization increased, irrespective of religion. The Mozarabs of Toledo were Arabicized and were regarded as suspect co-religionaries, notably by Archbishop Rodrigo in the thirteenth century; they worked together with Muslims to facilitate the transmission of learning that later led to the Renaissance in Europe. Religious affiliation among Christians, Muslims, and Jews did not impinge on the translating process. In the sixteenth century, at the grass-roots level, *moriscos* had a different way of life from the *viejos cristianos*, but co-existed, and posed no threat. It was the prevailing political situation that made the continuation of the *moriscos* in the Peninsula impossible.

My aim is to tackle a subject which, almost throughout my academic career, resided in the backwaters of scholarship, but which since my retirement has achieved international prominence, chiefly, perhaps, because of current political concerns. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam have co-existed since the foundation of Islam by Muhammad in the seventh century, and a consideration of aspects of the early centuries of this co-existence may provide a perspective for today's seemingly insuperable tensions. On other occasions, I have talked about relations and relationships; the choice of 'understanding(s)' is intended to suggest a narrower focus, for what I have in mind are those tacit, unwritten, informal agreements, which allow for a *modus*

vivendi between groups. To say that there is an understanding between two or more sets of peoples implies the existence of some form of special arrangement that functions effectively irrespective of obstacles. I shall be considering first the nature of Andalusí society until the establishment of the Caliphate in the tenth century, in order to cast some light on how Christians understood Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula. In the second phase, this understanding changed after the conquest of Toledo in 1085, when social and political relations became tense and uncertain. Castilians occupied newly conquered territory and had to come to terms with coreligionaries with whom they could not communicate, Arabicized Christians (the Mozarabs). This prefigures the situation in my third phase when, in the sixteenth century, Moriscos, those Muslims who had undergone a form of Christian baptism in order to remain in Spain, and who were therefore classified as 'cristianos nuevos', strove to perpetuate their traditional way of life in circumstances far removed from those of their forebears.

Using 'Spain' in the title is something that I have purposely avoided in recent years, because, *per se*, as the name for a recognizable country in the medieval epoch, it is singularly inappropriate. 'Muslim Spain', now recognized as a misnomer, was al-Andalus, that area of the Iberian Peninsula at any one time in the control of Muslims. 'Christian Spain' is likewise used unadvisedly, as the kingdoms in the north of the Peninsula were continually at war with one another, virtually until the fifteenth century, and arguably beyond that. There were four recognizable states in the Peninsula after the thirteenth century, Portugal, Castile, Aragon, and Nasrid Granada, independently governing their respective peoples, so that an outsider could not characterize the country as Spain until the political unification of Castile and Aragon under the Catholic Monarchs in the 1470s. I prefer, as many others now do, to employ the neutral term 'Iberian Peninsula'; the Muslims in the centre and south of the Peninsula lived in al-Andalus; the Christians in the north inhabited Galicia, León, Castile, Barcelona, and so on, named kingdoms or counties depending on the epoch.

When the Muslims invaded the Iberian Peninsula in AD 711 and settled in its principal cities, they brought with them what might be called a code of governance. This affected all aspects of law, politics, and society. In so far as the indigenous population was concerned, nominally at least, it was required to conform to a certain standard of behaviour that would not bring it into conflict with the Islamic regime. In practice, the extent to which all the new regulations and conventions impinged on the former subjects of the Visigothic state depended on whether they lived in urban communities or in rural areas. The information we have for both these distinct groups is patchy, and far less forthcoming for those, the majority of the population, who lived in regions remote from the major urban centres — and the Iberian Peninsula is, it is worth reminding ourselves, a vast expanse of land.

In summarizing what is known of the condition and attitudes of subject populations in the early centuries of Islam, I am indebted to accredited interpreters such as T. W. Arnold, Ignaz Goldziher, Reuben Levy, and W. Montgomery Watt. Arnold, for example, writing in the late nineteenth century, observed that 'it was probably their [the Muslims'] tolerant attitude towards the Christian religion that facilitated the rapid acquisition of the country' (1965: 136) — in other words, and this is my gloss on what Arnold wrote, to enable political goals to be achieved more readily.

Furthermore, he wrote: 'the toleration of the Muhammadan government towards its Christian subjects in Spain and the freedom of exchange [intercourse] between the adherents of the two religions brought about a certain amount of assimilation in the two communities.' This is uncontroversial, relatively speaking, and may be given substance by what Levy said in the 1950s: 'It must not be understood that even in Northern territories there was unremitting conflict between Spaniard and Moor. Friendship between them was common, often leading to intermarriage, and before the power of the Church began to assert itself many a Christian knight adopted Islam out of motives of policy or economy, since being a Muslim meant comparative freedom from the burdens of taxation' (1965: 29). One of the many perceptive questions with which Watt punctuated his writings was: 'Was there any genuine spiritual vitality, or was the Islamic religion merely the framework of a largely secular way of life?' (1962: 133). He asked this in the context of a discussion on 'Theology and Philosophy in the Islamic West', and therefore quite clearly had al-Andalus in mind.

There are two important pointers here that underpin my own view, namely that conflict within the Iberian Peninsula was motivated not by religious but rather by territorial considerations, at least not until the second half of the eleventh century when the religious climate in Europe was inexorably altered as a consequence of the crusading initiatives, and secondly, that there was no incentive, at least until the mid-tenth century in al-Andalus, for the indigenous population to adopt Islam, and no campaign on the part of the Muslims, anxious to conserve the income from taxation, to encourage conversion. For the first two and a half centuries of the presence of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula, the ruling Muslims were content to foster the *dhimmī* status among the indigenous population, as laid out in the Qur'ān, whereby Christians and Jews retained their respective religious practices, subject to the payment of an annual tax, the *jizya*. Furthermore, all the four schools of law, the *madhhab*, which were the legal conduits through which all legislation in early Islam was channelled, agreed that worship in existing temples and synagogues was permitted. The Maliki law school, which was the one that prevailed in al-Andalus under the Umayyads (756–976), decreed that it was lawful for dilapidated churches and synagogues to be restored 'provided that the ground on which the building stands was in the first place granted freely by the Muslim conqueror' (Levy 1965: 185). One of the law schools, though not the one associated with the legislation of the Umayyads in al-Andalus, sanctioned 'the erection of churches and synagogues, though at a distance of at least a mile from the outer walls of towns and villages' (Levy 1965: 185). Christianity and Judaism were permitted these external demonstrations of their faiths, and there is ample evidence of the presence of Christian places of worship, churches and monasteries, within a short radius of Córdoba.

There was no policy of eradication of rival beliefs, but rather one which put in place politically expedient measures acceptable to all the communities. The small number of practising Christians who resided within the city walls of Córdoba, for example, would soon have adapted to the conditions of life as *dhimmīs* in an Islamic state. The counterpart of these Christians, one could speculate, would be a similar minority of Muslims. By this, I mean, following Watt's conjectural question, that it is conceivable that the definably religious element in the practice of Islam in principal Andalusī cities such as Córdoba was minimal. To put forward the

possibility of a secular basis to Islamic society in al-Andalus as Watt does, is to challenge the orthodoxy that has held sway for centuries. To extend it to include Christian society as well is to court further excoriation. To be sure, mosques and churches existed, certainly in the major cities of al-Andalus, but they were frequented by practising Muslims and Christians, in short those whose business it was so to do. Observance of legal codes was incumbent upon all subjects, but these codes would have been recognized for what they were, the legislation of the state in which they lived, the statutes of which they were therefore required to obey. To break the law was to incur civil punishment. In providing an example from the so-called martyrdom movement in Córdoba in the ninth century, it may be thought that I run the risk of disproving these claims, but the reverse may be true. Between AD 850 and 859, fifty-one Christians blasphemed against the prophet Muhammad in public, thus transgressing the agreement made with those subject peoples who enjoyed *dhimmī* status and incurring the death penalty. One of the reasons why this episode has attracted so much attention is that extensive accounts survive in Latin, one written by the chief protagonist and final martyr, Eulogius. There are no corroborating narratives in Arabic. I therefore believe that it has received attention incommensurate to the events it describes. When one of the accused is brought in front of the judge, and repeats his denunciation of Muhammad, he is sentenced according to the prescriptions of Islamic law, a civil crime incurring a civil punishment. According to ash-Shāfiʿī (AD 767–820), writing in the Islamic east, 'If anyone speaks improperly of Muhammad, the Book of God, or of His religion, he forfeits the protection (that is to say the *dhimma*), of God, of the Commander of the Faithful, and of all the Muslims; he has contravened the conditions upon which he was given his safe-conduct; his property and his life are at the disposal of the Commander of the Faithful' (*Kitāb al-umm*, in Lewis 1979: 220). The actions and words of those who became martyrs broke the terms of the *dhimma*, but they were also acted upon because of the potential political repercussions. It is quite understandable that Eulogius, in his memorial on the Saints (his term for those who had died), should put a religious slant on the juridical actions of the Muslims. He was evidently *parti pris*, and therefore saw the punishment inflicted by the Muslim authorities as religious persecution. My point here is not to enter into the multi-furrowed debate concerning the 'martyrs of Córdoba', but simply to point out the absence of any systematic anti-Christian or anti-Muslim policy on the part of the Umayyads of Córdoba, and the need to uphold the law in the face of flagrant breaches of the conventions which enabled adherents of the three religions to co-exist in an ambience of mutual tolerance.

To recur to my title, it was tacitly understood that Christians did not insult Muslims; if they did so, then their actions would inevitably incur punishment. This hypothesis may be shown to be valid for urban communities, where it is known that there were at least some practising Muslims and Christians. Away from the cities, in rural communities, peppered with small villages, where the local tax centre was in the largest town, most of what went on in Córdoba, Seville, Toledo, Saragossa, and other principal Islamic centres in the Peninsula would have been totally irrelevant to their way of life. An annual tax was levied upon them, but farmers and those reliant on the country for their living had had to pay tax of some kind to whatever overlord from time immemorial. There may have been periodic calls for conscription, but

otherwise, nothing to bring the majority of the population in the Peninsula in contact with the ruling Muslims. Islam simply did not impinge on their way of life. If it is thought that, by saying this, I am implying that Christianity prevailed unimpeded in the rural areas, then the impression would be mistaken. There certainly were churches in some rural areas of the Peninsula at the time of the Muslim conquest, but these were located north of the rivers Duero and Ebro, which very roughly constituted the uppermost geographical boundaries of al-Andalus. In al-Andalus, evidence of the presence of similar edifices in rural areas is few and far between. There was a church at Melque near Toledo, and probably one at 'Umar b. Hafsūn's headquarters at Bobastro, near Málaga, but little archaeological evidence to suggest that Christianity had taken root away from the major urban centres. This is not the occasion to speculate on what religion if any the rural communities espoused, but it is worth returning to my earlier assumption that in the areas remote from the principal cities, there is little evidence, written or archaeological, that suggests to me the active presence of either Christianity or Islam until, that is, the establishment of the Caliphate in Córdoba in the first half of the tenth century. The indigenous people were barely aware of the presence of Islam as a religion; they were not obliged, still less coerced, to convert. For the few Christians that were in these remote rural areas, Islam was a distant secular authority.

If we now move on to a period where evidence of a sort does exist, then the picture that emerges is, I believe, one that is consistent with the one that was apparent in the earlier period.

After the conquest of Toledo in AD 1085, and its incorporation into the kingdom of Castile governed by Alfonso VI, a substantial number of Arabophone Mozarabs were found to be established in the city itself and in the relatively fertile rural surrounds. Over the centuries since the initial invasion of 711, these communities had become Arabicized and, after the flight of the ruling Muslims from the city itself, they observed Christianity whilst retaining all the characteristics of the defeated political enemy. Thus 'Mozarab', which in fact was a surname that some of them had, came to mean 'Arabicized Christian'. When, many years ago, Ángel González Palencia published twelve hundred or so documents in Arabic relating to the activities of these Mozarabs, bills of sale, wills, donations and so on, he made the telling remark that 'aquellos dos pueblos [Muslim and Christian], hermanos de raza, aunque de distinta religión, se pelearon, es verdad, muchas veces, pero estuvieron otras muchas juntos, aunque fuera sólo parcialmente; se conocieron uno y otro lo bastante para que si unas veces tocó al cristiano estar sometido políticamente, pudiera haber *mozárabes*, y si otras fue dominador el cristiano, perdurasen los *mudéjares*' (1926–30: I, 117–18). These sentiments, it seems to me, are wholly appropriate, 'hermanos de raza, aunque de distinta religión'. If this is borne in mind, then many of the misconceptions concerning the presence of Muslims in the Peninsula would, I believe, be eradicated. The González Palencia documents have been the subject of much scholarly attention, as they are a precious testimony of aspects of life of these Arabicized Christians in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and they shed some light on Christian/Muslim understanding. To be sure, Muslims are mentioned, and mosques, but not with any religious connotation, or what might be termed subtext. Muslims did not, as far as is known, dress differently, they did not speak differently, and they had Arabic names, just as these Christians did. González Palencia makes the point that: 'La costumbre

de llevar nombres árabes los cristianos confundiría para distinguir a los musulmanes' (iv, 152). This illustration is indicative of their mutual indistinguishability.

In Toledo itself, although the grand mosque had been redesignated a cathedral, there was a mosque used by Muslims after 1085, in the French quarter of the city, named in a document of 1202 as *masjid al-muslimin*. It is mentioned simply to indicate the location of a 'mesón' that is to be sold (I, 257). There are also individuals identified as Muslims, either involved in the transactions, or as possessors of property adjacent to the one being sold. They did not live, as did the Jewish community in Toledo, in a separate quarter, and a house belonging to a Muslim could be next to one belonging to a Christian, (as, for example, the house of al-Mawwāq being close to that of someone known in the community as 'the Monk': I, 117–18). For the Arabicized Christians who lived in and around Toledo after 1085, Muslims were simply other citizens, like themselves governed by Castilians.

Now, in Toledo in the twelfth century, the cathedral was a towering Christian presence, with clerics and even Raimund, Archbishop 1124–51, being involved in some of the transactions. In these circumstances, it is perhaps surprising to find no traces of anti-Islamic opprobrium. It may be concluded, then, that in the twelfth century there is nothing in these legal documents drawn up in Arabic to indicate that Muslims in the city of Toledo were any other than citizens who happened to be Muslims.

As a corroboration of these changing attitudes, it is instructive to reflect on fortuitous evidence provided by the very early thirteenth-century epic, the *Poema de Mio Cid*. It is curious that the author, writing over a century after the occurrence of the events he is describing, should call all Muslims 'moros', that is to say, both the friends and neighbours of the Cid in Saragossa and elsewhere, and the ethnically distinct, fearsome Almoravids from North Africa who threatened to overrun the Peninsula. His particular friend, the 'moro Abengalbón' (an Andalusí or Peninsular Muslim (l. 1551), at one point kisses the Cid's lieutenant on the shoulder 'ca tal es su usaje' ('as was his custom', l. 1519; Christians knew that Muslims behaved in this way). The Almoravids are likewise 'moros', sometimes qualified as 'moros de Marruecos' (l. 1671); after a great victory, and in his thanks to the Almighty, the Cid refers to 'Marruecos, ó las mezquitas son' (l. 2499). 'In Morocco where the mosques are' is equivalent to the music-hall witticism 'In Brazil where the nuts come from'. Such drollery is far removed from official anti-Muslim invective charted by Norman Daniel (1975), John V. Tolan (1996), and others. The language of the author of the *Poema* suggests a grass-roots understanding of 'moros' as friend or foe depending on the prevailing political situation and irrespective of race. At one point (l. 2667), a Muslim in the retinue of Abengalbón overhears the Infantes of Carrión plotting to kill him. This Muslim is described as a 'moro latinado', a Muslim who understands Latin or its vernacular form. In this detail, fellow-Castilians are the Cid's enemies; a Muslim is his friend, and a Muslim who understands Castilian reveals the treachery of the Infantes. When the phrase 'moros e cristianos' is used, it has the connotation of 'everyone' (e.g. ll. 968, 1242, 2498), political friend and political foe.

Later on in the thirteenth century, one may detect a remarkable change of fortune in the lives and day-to-day existence of Arabicized Christians. These Mozarabs now come under scrutiny themselves. Castilian-speaking Christians came to consider their

co-religionaries with suspicion because of their alien names, language, and habits. The Mozarabs were now perceived to be akin to their political enemies. When we return to the Toledan documents, we need to remind ourselves that they were transactions of bills of sale, etc., relating to Christians, now known as Mozarabs by virtue of the fact that they were Arabicized, with all that that entailed. Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (1170–1247, Archbishop of Toledo 1208–47), author of *De rebus Hispaniae*, and a *Historia Arabum* which shows his familiarity with some Arabic sources, was an active political figure in the reign of Fernando III (1217–52) and a mighty presence in Toledo throughout the first half of the thirteenth century. He had also been present with Alfonso VIII at the decisive battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, where the Almohads quite palpably represented a religious foe to be defeated. When Alfonso had captured the fortress town of Alcaraz in 1213, Archbishop Rodrigo said mass in the mosque consecrated that same day to Christianity (Lomax 1978: 130). Archbishop Rodrigo was further entrusted by Pope Honorius III in 1217 with the task of preparing a Crusade against the Muslims in Spain, one which ultimately foundered in 1220 (Lomax 1978: 131). He was then, at the forefront of the conflict between Christian Castile and Muslim (largely Almohad) al-Andalus throughout his period as Archbishop. He was what today might accurately be called ‘politically aware’. It is against this background that his attitude towards the Mozarabs of Toledo has to be evaluated. He and the Cathedral church of Toledo were the principal beneficiaries in the acquisition of a substantial amount of property within and outside Toledo (around forty purchases are registered from 1211 onwards), to the detriment and ultimate disappearance of the Mozarabic communities. His policy may be interpreted as one of systematically reducing Mozarabic smallholdings, thereby impoverishing and threatening the existence of the communities themselves. To my mind, this conclusion is consistent with what is known of his political attitudes. That Arabic-speaking and Arabic-named neighbours could share his faith was incomprehensible to him, so what he could not understand, he sought to eradicate, quite legally but as a deliberate policy. Furthermore, in his *De rebus Hispaniae*, he devised an etymology for the word Mozarab which would seem to be what has been described by Francisco J. Hernández (1989: 40) as a ‘pejorative slur’. He called the Mozarabs ‘mixti Arabes’, that is to say ‘eo quod mixti arabibus convivebant, quorum hodie apud nos nomen perseverat et genus’ (lib. iii, cap. 22; Cabanes Pecourt 1968: 70). The Mozarabs were mixed with Arabs, indistinguishable from them, and by inference contaminated by them. This false etymology was revived in the sixteenth century, when the Mozarabic families of Toledo were facing a further threat to their existence.

The generally accepted etymology derives the word ‘Mozarab’ from the Arabic *musta’rab* ‘having become assimilated to the Arabs and adopted their customs and practices’. The Archbishop, in his explanation of the word, was showing his contempt for the Mozarabs with this blatant defamation of their character in accordance with his intention to reduce their influence and do away with their presence in thirteenth-century Castile. It has to be said that this argument was strongly rebutted by Hernández who pointed out that the false etymology ‘is not Rodrigo’s invention’, and referred to a supposed precedent for ‘mixti arabes’ in a document of 1178 which was witnessed by a ‘Dominicus mistarabs’ (1989: 40). Yet, a surname without an explanation is not quite the same as the Archbishop’s clinical definition and immediate

justification. The forms of the name: 'Muzaravi' or 'Muzaravo', or equivalent, but always with the first vowel as an 'o' or 'u', were by now well established in Christian territories. In Tudela, for example, 'Don Petro Mozaravo capellano' of the church of Santa María bought a piece of land in July 1178, the same year as the apparent exonerating evidence above (Fuentes 1944: 28, no. 45). In the Mozarabic documents of Toledo, the form of the word that occurs most commonly is Mustarab or equivalent, showing an affinity with the actual derivation of *musta'rab*. With regard to the word 'mistarabs', it seems unlikely that it should have influenced the Archbishop when he evolved his deprecating etymology. Francisco Javier Simonet, the great historian of the Mozarabs, wrote in the 1860s that 'mistarabs' may have been 'simplemente un cambio de pronunciación por Mostárab' (1897–1903: xv). My interpretation of all this would be that Archbishop Rodrigo, who had much earlier in his archiepiscopate been commissioned by the Pope to instigate a Crusade against Muslims in Spain, represented in his attitude a new intransigence towards what was alien to formal Christianity. Mozarab Christians in Toledo, who had lived beside Muslims, knowing them to be such, as well as fellow-Christians, though these were Romance-speaking, were now perceived to be *personae non gratae*. This was not racial prejudice, but an aspect of a politically motivated campaign to reduce any influence that these Arabicized Christians might conceivably wield.

One of the great paradoxes of the Middle Ages is that European intellectuals were tapping the sources of Arabic knowledge in Toledo and in Sicily, at the same time as attitudes were hardening towards Islam as a religion and Muslims in particular, largely as a consequence of the Crusading initiatives. It seems appropriate to comment on one aspect of what has been called the 'school of translation' in Toledo from the twelfth century onwards, when so many important treatises in the fields of philosophy, mathematics, and the sciences were rendered from Arabic into Latin. What were the mechanics of these translations? The so-called translators, famous names such as Adelard of Bath, Gerard of Cremona (d. 1187), Robert of Chester, Daniel Morley, Michael Scot (whose first known translation dates to 1217), and others, probably had no knowledge of Arabic when they arrived in Toledo, although Adelard may have been an exception to this. How, then, were the translations effected if the translators knew no Arabic? Almost all would have needed help, to a greater or lesser degree. Some of the required assistance with the Arabic texts may have been forthcoming from fellow-scholars, based in the Peninsula, with a familiarity with Arabic (Adelard may have collaborated with Pedro Alfonso, for example), but there were also, in the words of the distinguished French scholar, Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, in a paper read in 1977, 'Men born in Spain, who spoke Arabic and the Romance vernacular, [and] sometimes knew Latin if they were clerics' (1985: 440). The likelihood is that some of these 'men' may have been Mozarabs, and that Mozarabs were involved in the business of translation. It is not known for certain how exactly these translations were made. One scenario is that the European scholar, aware of the text that he wanted to be translated in to Latin, hired the services of an intermediary who either translated it verbally in the vernacular for the scholar to put it into Latin, or did a kind of rough version which was then corrected and polished by the scholar in his finished version. It is known from the Toledan documents that there were scribes capable of writing in Romance and in Arabic (e.g. 'Pedro Sanchez,

escribano de romance', 1283, and 'Fernando Domingo, escribano de árabe', 1297) and, if capable of writing, presumably capable of reading also (González Palencia 1926–30: 1, 224 & 228–29). Clerics were involved in teaching the Mozarabs, 'maestro' presbyters being frequently named (and, indeed, paid for their services), and it is possible that they, too, had a hand in the translating process. There were also local scholars and translators in their own right, such as Dominicus Gundissalinus, almost certainly a corruption of Gundisalvus (therefore his name was Gonzalvo), who was Gerard of Cremona's collaborator (Burnett 1992: 1045).

Furthermore, Muslims may also have been what might be called 'facilitators'. According to the twelfth-century treatise of Ibn 'Abdūn, it was prohibited for Muslims to sell scientific books to Jews or Christians, except those that had to do with their respective religions, because the Jews and Christians then translated them, and attributed the authorship to themselves, although they were the works of Muslims. This implies, as Juan Vernet pointed out, that 'such material was indeed sold by Muslims' (as why otherwise should a ban be imposed?) and perhaps, also, the Muslims helped the recipients to translate them (1978: 103).

Throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and notably during the second half of the twelfth, which was the heyday of the translations in Toledo, knowledge hitherto inaccessible to Western scholars was being transmitted to the universities of Europe, thus paving the way for the renaissance of learning. Christian scholars were not averse to seeking knowledge from Arabic texts, and indeed had done so since the time of Gerbert, the future Pope Sylvester II (d. 1003), who may have visited Córdoba in the 960s in the quest of mathematical and astronomical knowledge available only in Arabic texts, and who may subsequently have been responsible for the introduction of the astrolabe into Europe. It may be worth observing, in passing, that Gerbert, *qua* Pope, attracted the opprobrium of later commentators who charged him with *nigromantia* — necromancy, the black arts, because of his apparent collaboration with, and contamination by, Islam. In Toledo, after its capture by the Castilians in 1085, those Mozarabs who were qualified to do so co-operated with the translators, and therefore played a vital role in the transmission of science and philosophy to the West. There is little to indicate that the religious beliefs of any the parties involved in this process impeded it or even impinged upon it. I simply note, in passing, the situation in the second half of the thirteenth century, when 'convivencia' between Christians, Jews, and Muslims is manifest in the policies and legislation of Alfonso X. Much has been said and written about this period and, although there are dissenting voices and opinions, it is generally recognized that Christians and Muslims co-existed in an atmosphere of tolerance.

The final part of what I have to say takes us up to the sixteenth century. Whereas in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there were Arabicized members of the community who, to all intents and purposes, looked like Muslims, yet were Christians, in the sixteenth century the Arabicized members of the community looked like Muslims, yet posed as Christians. In other words, they were crypto-Muslims. In the thirteenth century, the faith of these Arabicized Christians was not in doubt (at least, it does not seem to have been a factor in contemporary relations); in the sixteenth century, the faith of these new converts was frequently called into question and, in many instances, with justification. Here were Moriscos, the name given to

those new Christians who were formerly Muslims, outwardly protesting their Christian faith, yet in private remaining true to their Muslim beliefs and practices. Leaving aside the official views of these *cristianos nuevos*, and trying once more to establish some kind of grass-roots perspective on their activities, it seems that their customs and practices were a normal feature of the everyday existence of Spaniards. It is worth emphasizing again that there was no racial tension; Christians and Muslims were as they always had been, racial kinsmen, yet now Moriscos dressed in a distinctive way, had distinct customs, and lived at variance to their way of life, although some assimilation was noted, as when, in a decree of 1513 reissued in 1523, which suggests that the practice was ongoing, old Christian women, *cristianas viejas*, were forbidden to wear Muslim garments or the veil, *almalafa* (Harvey 2005: 72–73). Perhaps these garments were more comfortable and the Christian women felt ‘a gusto’ wearing them; one is reminded of the use of the veil in the desert. Everyone, irrespective of religion, wears a veil in the desert, as what matters most is to keep the sand out of one’s nostrils. Christians in the smaller communities understood that, when Muslims celebrated a wedding, they did so with a *zambra*, singing and dancing to traditional musical instruments; when they needed a midwife, then it was understood that she would be a Muslim (in the 1520s, for fear of the influence that midwives could wield, the Christian authorities required a *cristiana vieja* to be present at all births to ensure that the ‘partera’ or midwife should not perform any ‘ceremonia morisca’ over the newborn child; Gallego y Burín & Gamir Sandoval 1968: 207). Morisco doctors or healers were a feature of Christian society. According to Luis García-Ballester, ‘people had no qualms about consulting Morisco doctors [...] and were also quite happy to talk about it publicly’ (1985: 251). By ‘people’ here, is meant precisely the segment of the population with whom I have been concerned, the ‘rank and file’ indigenous population. The ecclesiastical authorities ‘tried to stop this use of Morisco doctors right up to the end of the sixteenth century with prohibition after prohibition’ (1985: 251). Yet, they were clearly unsuccessful. Official sanctions against Moriscos, until these became much more severe in the reign of Philip II, who saw in this questionably Catholic minority both a religious and a political threat, had a reduced impact because the bulk of the population had no problem with the presence of Moriscos in their midst. This situation did change with the increasing activity of the Inquisition, but not effectively until the seventeenth century. It is also worth noting that when the decrees for the expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain were issued under the authority of Philip III from 1609 onwards, some village priests were instrumental in preventing the expulsion of some of their Morisco parishioners, by confirming that they were true Catholics.

One may try to draw the threads together as follows. When Muslims entered the Peninsula in 711, their presence was restricted to urban centres. Islam made little impact on the population at large until the tenth century. Up until that time, until the declaration of the state as a Caliphate in 929, there is scant information concerning the religious adherence and practices of the indigenous population away from the principal cities of al-Andalus. There is also little to suggest that the anti-Muslim invective from the pens of professional churchmen had any impact at all on the majority of the population. As the centuries went by, the process of Arabicization increased, irrespective of religion. When the Castilians conquered Toledo in 1085,

they encountered co-religionaries who dressed, spoke, and behaved like their political enemies, the Muslims. I have speculated that the Arabicization of these Mozarabs brought about the disparagement and hostility of Archbishop Rodrigo. Yet at about the same time, the poet of the *Poema de Mio Cid*, in abundant references to 'moros', made it quite apparent that they were political foes or allies depending on prevailing circumstances. For the European scholars in their quest for knowledge, Toledo was a city where Mozarabs and Muslims collaborated in order to secure the transmission of Classical and later Arabic learning, thus initiating the Renaissance in Europe. Religious affiliations, Christian, Jewish, or Muslim, did not impinge on the translating process. In the sixteenth century, when all Christians, new or old, were Spaniards, it was only the prevailing political situation (in effect, Philip II's single-minded agenda for his Spain) that made the continuing presence of Moriscos in the Peninsula impossible. As far as what I have called the grass-roots population was concerned, Moriscos had a different way of life, which did not threaten the *cristianos viejos* and, besides, Moriscos provided services otherwise unavailable to them. One could say that governmental decrees affected some of them as much as they did the Moriscos.

The Iberian Peninsula was unique in Western Europe in that part of it was governed according to the precepts of Islam for nearly eight hundred years. As a consequence, aspects of civilization, otherwise unrepresented in the Renaissance, made an indelible impact. As far as the indigenous population in rural areas was concerned, the impact of Islam was negligible. When Islam became established, and with it conversions, Muslims were still the neighbours of Christians, sharing the same race as they did. There seems to me to have been no reason why this state of affairs should not have gone on indefinitely. However, we all know that religion did become a factor in Christian/Muslim relations at specific historical junctures, thus rendering anachronistic the kind of rapport that had endured for centuries.

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En al-Andalus, hasta el siglo x, la gente indígena, según los preceptos del Islam, seguía la práctica de su propia religión mientras pagaba anualmente el tributo, llamado *jizya*. Dentro de las comunidades rurales, no hubo ninguna obligación ni necesidad de adoptar el Islam, y según parece, hubo poco conocimiento ni entendimiento del Islam fuera de las grandes ciudades. En cuanto a los mozárabes de los siglos xii y xiii, eran por apariencias musulmanes, pero en realidad, correligionarios de los cristianos. Se puede pensar que el arzobispo Rodrigo en el siglo xiii sospechaba que los mozárabes, aunque cristianos, fueran contaminados por el Islam, por lo cual intentó eliminarlos. A pesar de esto, en Toledo, las afiliaciones religiosas no presentaban ningún obstáculo para la traducción de los textos, realizados en colaboración por mozárabes, judíos y musulmanes. En el siglo xvi, fuera de las ciudades, los moriscos se comportaban de manera distinta a los viejos cristianos, pero coexistían con ellos. Por razones políticas, resultaba imposible que los moriscos pudieran permanecer en la Península Ibérica.

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