

**ALFONSO X AND ISLAM:
NARRATIVES OF CONFLICT AND CO-OPERATION
IN THE ESTORIA DE ESPAÑA**

by

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ABSTRACT

Medieval Iberian literary tradition constitutes a vast corpus of writings with which to study interfaith relations – in particular, Christian attitudes towards Muslims. This thesis focuses on works produced in the thirteenth century under king Alfonso X of Castile-Leon. Scholars have often looked to Alfonso X's poetry and legal texts to explore Christian responses to Islam, at a pivotal moment of Christian domination in the Peninsula. The thesis looks to Alfonso's historiography (the *Estoria de España*), which has received much less attention from scholars of interfaith relations.

This study employs a historical-critical method of interpretation to explore the transmission and reformulation of Christian society's attitudes towards Islam. It offers a sophisticated analysis of the narratives of three prominent figures in the history of Spanish Islam: a) the Prophet Muhammad, b) Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur, and c) King al-Mamun of Toledo. The study reveals the wide-ranging and contrasting attitudes towards Muslims visible not only in the writings of Alfonso X, but throughout the broader historiography and literature of medieval Spain. The thesis explains how these contradictions are rooted in the paradoxes of conflict and co-operation among the faiths in the Peninsula. It concludes that the ambivalence of Christian writers allows for the coexistence of both disdain and respect for Muslims in medieval society.

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CHAPTER FIRST

CONFLICT AND CO-OPERATION IN MEDIEVAL IBERIA

Medieval Iberia attracts the attention of scholars from many disciplines. Indeed, it is a field that entails enormous diversity of research interests: art, architecture, culture and society, numismatics, linguistics, literature, politics... the list of disciplines goes on. The allure of the Iberian Peninsula owes to its intriguing historical circumstances during Middle Ages. Separated from the tip of North Africa by scarcely nine miles of sea, the Iberia Peninsula was the frontier that stood between two of the world's great faiths: Christianity and Islam. Of course, Iberia was not the only frontier in the Mediterranean: the Balearics, Sicily and the Balkan Peninsula were equally hosts to the Christian-Muslim encounter.

Over the course of nine centuries, Hispanic civilisation witnessed the contact of not only Christianity and Islam, but also a third belief system: Judaism. The three Abrahamic faiths interacted in ways that demonstrated the best and worst of human nature. The interactions that took place have accordingly provided scholars with a near-

infinite source of intellectual pursuits. This was a land of kings, caliphs, emperors and emirs; its languages were Latin, Arabic and Hebrew. Africans and Europeans fought for territory, traded goods and exchanged culture. The evidence for this intriguing contact is most visible in architecture and archaeology. And for the present study, it is visible in medieval writing. Poets, clerics and chroniclers engaged in the trade of insults; yet they also sang the praise of the 'other'. This was a place of conflict and co-operation among the sons of Abraham: its writers captured this expertly.

In this chapter I will attempt to lay the foundations for the study of the interfaith encounter in medieval Iberia. In order to do so, I will begin with a brief exploration of the paradoxes of conflict and co-operation at the frontier. We will observe many aspects of the encounter – both constructive and destructive alike. Specifically, we will touch on political, military, economic and social history. We will then explore the notion of *convivencia*, and how scholars and historians of today have debated the nature of interactions among the three faiths in Medieval Iberia. Consideration for the modern narratives of medieval Iberia will equip us with a valuable perspective for historical interpretation: addressing episodes of history on a case-by-case approach. This serves a useful reflection to bear in mind for the later interpretation of the *Estoria de España*. I will then move on to offer a brief survey of Christian attitudes to Islam and Muslims, as fossilised in Christian historiography. I will draw on a number of works of literature and chronicle tradition. This will reveal that medieval portrayals of Muslims are just as paradoxical as history itself. Our survey will show how Muslims are represented in both

a positive and a negative light. Finally, I will evoke the notion of ambivalence, to articulate better the coexistence of seemingly contradictory characterisations.

1.1 The nature of interfaith conflict and co-operation in medieval Iberia

Let us first turn our attention to the broader historical context of relations between Christians and Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula. For if we are to make sense of the attitudes expressed by medieval writers, we must consider the world in which they lived. That world was a frontier, characterised by conflict and co-operation between different faith groups: this was a space that saw the paradox of constructive and destructive relations between Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The complex dynamic between the faiths can be seen through the political, military, economic and social history of medieval Iberia.

a) Political and military affairs

We must remember that for the purpose of this study, the term 'Islam' is much broader than the monotheistic belief system underpinning the Muslim community. In order to reflect the medieval worldview, we must add the connotations of government, society,

law, politics and military affairs to purely theological notions, when thinking of the terms 'Christianity', 'Islam' and 'Muslims'.¹

Importantly, military conflict was a frequent feature of Christian-Muslim contact for many centuries in medieval Iberia. After the initial Berber-Arab campaigns into Spain and France in the eighth century, Islamic rule was consolidated in central and southern reaches of the Peninsula. To the north, a number of independent Christian kingdoms remained. The Iberian frontier stretched along the Duero valley in the West, across the northern central *meseta* and to the east along the Ebro valley. Over the course of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, this frontier gradually shifted south, as vast regions of *al-Andalus* fell into Christian hands.²

Frontier zones were frequently the scene of hostilities, and were heavily fortified in order to stave off attack.³ From the eighth to the tenth century, the threat of military incursions from the Umayyad emirs and caliphs left the Christian kingdoms of the north on the defensive. This profoundly influenced the social and political evolution of those realms, which scholars have described as 'societies organised for war'.⁴ The conflict between the Christians and Muslims of Spain had an equally wide reach in international politics. Extra-peninsular powers often participated in Iberian conflict, with Christian Europe and Muslim North Africa responding to appeals made by their Spanish coreligionists.

¹ For discussion of medieval Christian perceptions of Islam as a political and military force, see section 3.B.1 of chapter 3 of this thesis. For the broader administrative aspects of religious affiliation in medieval Iberian society, see 'Faith boundaries and social interaction' in part c) of the current section of chapter 1.

² Any initial survey of frontier should refer to A. MacKay, *Spain in the Middle Ages: from frontier to empire, 1000-1500* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1977).

³ Castilla la Vieja was precisely the 'land of castles'. MacKay, *Spain in the Middle Ages*, p. 15.

⁴ James F. Powers, Derek Lomax and Angus MacKay have used this expression, echoing Elena Lourie's article 'A society organized for war: medieval Spain', *Past & Present*, 35 (1966), 54-76.

Frontier conflict took many forms.⁵ Raiding and plundering were common practices by both Muslim and Christian troops. Mounted raiders would conduct lightning incursions into enemy territory, with the aim of inflicting maximum damage and acquiring plunder. Agriculture was systematically destroyed, as a means to devastate food supply and debilitate an adversary. Constant military presence in enemy territory served to deteriorate an opponent and force them into submission.⁶ Conquest heavily characterised Christian-Muslim conflict. Enemy strongholds were subjected to sieges and blockades, threatening starvation for those trapped inside. A successful siege resulted in either bloodless capitulation or a violent assault; the former was usually preferred in order to avoid massive loss of life.⁷ Muslim Toledo (1085) and Cordoba (1236) were grudgingly surrendered to Castile and Leon without loss of life; many of Aragon's territorial gains in the thirteenth century were acquired by negotiated capitulation, rather than by violent assault.⁸ In contrast, massacres of many thousands of Muslims occurred during assaults on Almería (1147) and Palma (1229).⁹

The taking of captives was a means to secure income through ransom purchases.¹⁰ Prisoners, including women and children, could also find themselves sold into slavery.¹¹ Occasionally, pitched battles were fought between enormous Christian and Muslim

⁵ Francisco García Fitz offers a comprehensive study into aggressive military tactics developed on the Castilian-Leonese frontier and captures the nature of Christian-Muslim conflict in Iberia: *Castilla y León frente al Islam: estrategias de expansión y tácticas militares (siglos XI - XIII)* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1998).

⁶ As we shall see in the third chapter of this study, al-Mansur successfully ran dozens of campaigns into Christian Iberia between 987 and 1002, whilst Fernando I and Alfonso VI pressured the Andalusí *taifa* kingdoms through repeated territorial incursions during the eleventh century.

⁷ García Fitz, *Castilla y León frente al Islam*, pp. 54-55.

⁸ Mackay, *Spain in the Middle Ages*, pp. 60-63.

⁹ J. F. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 140.

¹⁰ Alfonso X's *Siete Partidas* indicate the ubiquity of this practice in the thirteenth century, with guidelines for ransoms and prisoner exchange. For recent study on this topic see: J. Brodman, 'Captives or prisoners: society and obligation in Medieval Iberia', *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia*, 20 (2011), pp. 201-219.

¹¹ Again, the question of Muslim slaves features in Alfonsine legislation. For the practice of slavery see: S. Bensch, 'From prizes of war to domestic merchandise: the changing face of slavery in Catalonia and Aragon, 1000-1300', *Viator*, 25 (1994), 63-93; an especially comprehensive study is offered by W. Phillips, *Slavery in medieval and early modern Iberia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

armies, notably at Zalaca (1086), Alarcos (1195) and Las Navas de Tolosa (1212). In contrast to overt military campaigns and conquests, diplomacy was artfully used to foment internal unrest and destabilise the opponent from within. Diplomacy was particularly well used by Alfonso X himself in his dealings with Nasrid Granada.¹² Kings and commanders had a variety of tactics at their disposal, and they were employed in combination against the enemy.

Military orders were important institutions on both sides of the frontier, and played a major role in shaping conflict between the two faiths. The Muslim *ribat* was a fortification, combining intense spirituality and discipline with *jihad* against the "enemies of the faith".¹³ From these institutions the Muslims famously conducted their lightning cavalry raids.¹⁴ It was the *ribat* institution that epitomised the Almoravid struggle against the infidel in the eleventh century.¹⁵ Christian equivalents emerged in Iberia during the twelfth century and consolidated their presence across the Peninsula. Monasticism and militarism combined together, as knights pledged to dedicate themselves to a life of devotion and piety, whilst engaging in combat for the defence of Christianity. With a surge of crusading spirit after the fall of Jerusalem in 1099, military orders were established on the Iberian frontier throughout the twelfth century. The Spanish orders of Santiago, Calatrava, Montesa and Alcántara grew to hold many fortresses and large jurisdictions, whilst foreign orders also established a presence in the Peninsula, joining the combat against Spanish Islam.¹⁶

¹² When insurrection broke out in Nasrid Granada between 1266 and 1267, Alfonso X intervened and supported the rebels, in a bid to foment instability across the southern emirate. See: F. García Fitz, 'Alfonso X, el reino de Granada y los Banu Asqilula. Estrategias políticas de disolución durante la segunda mitad del siglo XIII', *Anuario de los Estudios Medievales*, 27(1) (1997), 215-237.

¹³ For the concept of the *ribat*: F. Franco-Sánchez, 'El gihad y su sustituto el ribat en el Islam tradicional: evolución desde un espíritu militarista y colectivo hacia una espiritualidad interior e individual', *Mirabilia*, 10 (2010), 21-44.

¹⁴ Lourie, 'A society organized for war', pp. 67-68.

¹⁵ 'Almoravid' in Arabic (*al-Murabit*) means '*ribat* warrior'.

¹⁶ An excellent history of the military orders of Spain has been provided by C. de Ayala Martínez, *Las órdenes militares hispánicas en la Edad Media (siglos XII - XV)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons; Latorre Literaria, 2007).

Despite the prominent role of warfare and conflict, we find numerous instances of alliances and co-operation between Christian and Muslim forces. Al-Mansur's ruinous campaigns throughout Leon in the tenth century were supported by Christian noblemen. The Leonese monarch Alfonso VI retreated into exile at the court of al-Mamun of Toledo, resulting in a lasting mutual protection pact with him after his restoration to power. Pope Celestine III was so enraged with Alfonso IX's alliance with the Almohads that he ordered the king's excommunication in 1196.¹⁷ Mercenaries from both sides served their respective "enemies of the faith" as a result of exile or disaffection, or simply for adventure and material gain. Distinguished Christian mercenaries include Portugal's Geraldo Sempavor, the Catalan viscount Reverter, and champion of Castile Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, otherwise known as El Cid.¹⁸ Muslim mercenaries served Christian kings well into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, notably in the Aragonese courts.¹⁹

Paradoxically, the military orders did not always defend the Christian faith from its Islamic enemies as ardently as might otherwise be expected. Christian monarchs appear to have occasionally used the military orders against their co-religionists, in tacit collaboration with Islam. Fernando II of Leon, in alliance with the Almohads, used the Order of Santiago against Afonso Henriques of Portugal; the Portuguese later instructed the order to defend Monsanto from Christians and Muslim rivals alike.²⁰ For the cultivation of their lands, the military orders of Extremadura appear to have issued

¹⁷ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and crusade in Medieval Spain*, pp. 62-64.

¹⁸ R. Burns, 'Renegades, adventurers, and sharp businessmen: the thirteenth-century Spaniard and the cause of Islam', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 58(3) (1972), 341-366 (for mercenaries see pp. 350-358); S. Barton, 'Traitors to the faith? Christian mercenaries in al-Andalus and the Maghreb, c. 1100-1300', in *Culture, conflict and coexistence. Studies in Honour of Angus MacKay*, ed. by R. Collins and A. Goodman (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

¹⁹ For the *jenets* in the service of Aragon see: B. Catlos, 'Mahomet Abenadalill': a Muslim Mercenary in the Service of the Kings of Aragon (1290-1291), in *Jews, Muslims and Christians in and around the Crown of Aragon*, ed. by H. James (Leiden: Brill, 2004); H. Fancy, 'Theologies of violence: the recruitment of Muslim soldiers by the crown of Aragon', *Past and Present*, 221 (2013), 39-73.

²⁰ MacKay, *Spain in the Middle Ages*, pp. 33; A. J. Forey, 'Military orders and secular warfare in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', *Viator*, 24 (1993), 79-100 (specifically pp. 82-83).

many tenancies to Mudejar farmers, rather than to Christians, whose faith they stood to defend.²¹

We find that the Iberian frontier provides many instances of military conflict between Christians and Muslims. Warfare – framed often as 'holy war' – served both sides with opportunities for personal, political and material gain. At the same time, there were numerous cases of military co-operation and collaboration, running counter to the protracted religious conflict. We are left with a curious dichotomy of encounters, in which Christians engaged in hostilities with Islam at one time, and entered into alliance with Muslims at another. It is fitting that the *Estoria de España's* very author demonstrated these contradictions during his reign: in a desperate attempt to wrestle his kingdom from Sancho, Alfonso X enlisted the support of the sultan of Morocco, despite previously having launched a crusade against the sultanate and sacking the port of Salé.

b) Economy and trade among religions

In contrast to the military encounters at the frontier, economy and trade in medieval Iberia provided a range of other, if less dramatic, interactions between Christians and Muslims. Religious minorities participated in wider economic activity, exchanging goods and services that served the interests of the dominant faith group, as well as the self. Essential activities, including farming and irrigation, buying and selling at market and moneylending, constituted face-to-face encounters among communities of different

²¹ As L. P. Harvey points out, this seems rather paradoxical that the lands of the military orders were worked by Muslims. Christians found they had more rights outside of the lands of the orders, whilst the Mudejars were much more limited for choice. L. P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain 1250 to 1500* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 70-71.

faiths at lower levels of society. Whilst these exchanges remain far less visible than the great military feats of Christians and Muslims, economy and trade were an integral aspect of the interfaith encounter.

Documentation from late medieval Christian Iberia provides us with a detailed picture of common economic exchanges. The archives reveal that Mudejars were participating in a wide variety of professions throughout Christian Spain. Like their Christian counterparts, the vast majority of Muslims were farmers, working the land for crop production and rearing animals. Agriculture was the mainstay of the medieval economy, and as the Iberian frontier moved south, conquered Muslims continued to work the lands under Christian lordship. Islamic irrigation and horticultural practices initially remained intact, though Muslim farmers were gradually forced to adapt to Christian systems of land usage.²² In the Ebro valley, Muslims and Christians contracted the 'other' to work as shepherds and herders.²³ Mudejars were also artisans and skilled workmen in towns and cities. In thirteenth-century Ávila, Muslims and Jews owned properties and rented shops from the cathedral chapter, working as dyers and weavers.²⁴ In Navarre, Muslim blacksmiths supplied armour and weaponry to the Crown.²⁵ To this very day architectural forms across the Peninsula are testimony to the activities of Mudejar masons and carpenters in the Christian kingdoms.

Alongside Mudejar manpower, Jewish communities were also instrumental to the economy. Whilst the image of the Jewish usurer was a popular negative stereotype,

²² B. Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, c.1050-1614* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 423-425.

²³ B. Catlos *The victors and the vanquished: Christians and Muslims of Catalonia and Aragon, 1050-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 186, 192.

²⁴ T. Ruiz, 'Trading with the 'other': economic exchanges between Muslims, Jews and Christians in late medieval northern Castile', in *Culture, conflict and coexistence. Studies in Honour of Angus MacKay*, ed. by R. Collins and A. Goodman (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 68-69.

²⁵ A. Ozaki, 'El régimen tributario y la vida económica de los mudejares de Navarra', *Príncipe de Viana*, 47(177) (1986), 437-484. For blacksmithing see pp. 447-451.

Jews did play an important role as moneylenders and tax collectors, often in close collaboration with Christians.²⁶ Whilst Jews also worked in many other lower profile trades, a distinguished elite administered royal finances, farmed the kingdom's taxes and provided loans to the Aragonese and Castilian monarchies.²⁷ Jewish lenders equally had an important role supporting the agrarian economy: in Vic during the 1340s and 1350s, Jewish lenders provided almost two hundred loans to local farmers.²⁸ Whilst the contribution of Jews is notable with regards to moneylending, we occasionally we find records of Muslim creditors.²⁹

Trade served as an important source of exchange between Christians and Muslims. Muslim merchants travelled throughout the Peninsula bringing a range of goods, and Christian traders established lucrative trading posts on the coast of North Africa. Before the Aragonese conquests of the twelfth century, the Ebro valley was a principal gateway for trade across the frontier, connecting Christian Iberia with al-Andalus and North Africa.³⁰ However, the threat of cross-border raids and military hostilities hindered trade with the Almoravid and Almohad empires³¹ – though the latter did allow Italian traders access to the port of Almería during the twelfth century.³² With the 'reconquest' of the early thirteenth century, Muslim and Christian traders traversed the frontier with greater

²⁶ It was illegal for Christians to lend at interest within the faith community: a common loophole was act in covert partnership with a Jewish lender. T. Ruiz, 'Trading with the 'other'', pp. 69-70.

²⁷ J. Ray, *The sephardic frontier: the reconquista and the Jewish community in Medieval Iberia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), pp. 55-60. T. Ruiz, 'Trading with the 'other'', p. 70.

²⁸ Irene Llop Jordana, 'Jewish moneylenders from Vic according to the *Liber Judeorum* 1341-1354', *Hispania Judaica Bulletin*, 2 (1999), 75-87.

²⁹ For example, Navarrese archives reveal the activity of Muslim creditors from Tudela throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. See: J. Carrasco Pérez, 'Los mudéjares de Navarra en la segunda mitad del siglo XIV (1352-1408): economía y sociedad', in *Homenaje a José María Lacarra*, vol. 1 (Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1986), p. 94; C. Conde Solares, 'Social continuity and religious coexistence: the Muslim community of Tudela in Navarre before the expulsion of 1516', *Continuity and Change*, 26(3) (2011), 309-331, especially, p. 317 for the activity of Muza Alburet who lent directly to the Crown.

³⁰ J. M. Lacarra, 'Acerca de las fronteras en el valle del Ebro (Siglos VIII-XII)', *En la España Medieval*, 1 (1981), 181-191; B. Catlos *The victors and the vanquished*, p. 65.

³¹ MacKay, *Spain in the Middle Ages*, p. 76.

³² D. Abulafia, 'Christian merchants in the Almohad cities', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 2(2) (2010), 251-257.

security. In 1257 Alfonso X guaranteed the safe passage and the rights of all merchants – Christian, Muslim and Jewish – travelling through the Kingdom of Murcia.³³ Indeed, the *Estoria de España* testifies to the wealth of trading opportunities with Muslim ports that the conquest of Seville opened up:

... villa a quien el nauio del mar le viene por el rio todos dias, delas naues e delas galeas e delos otros nauios dela mar, fasta dentro a los muros apuertan alli con todas mercadorias de todas partes del mundo: de Tanjar, de Cepta, de Tunez, de Bogia, d'Alexandria [...] e de otras muchas partes dallen mar, de tierra de cristianos e de moros...³⁴

Furthermore, the conquests of Andalusí cities provided a great deal of economic infrastructure that Christian rulers sought to keep intact, though they frequently displaced the inhabitants. Of particular value was the Islamic trading inn known as the *funduq*. These institutions served as a hostel for merchants and as a depot for incoming goods. The Castilians and Aragonese appropriated these institutions, and the royal *alfondigas/fondechs* proved effective for the storage, regulation and taxation of merchandise.³⁵ Catalan traders also established their own *fondechs* in North Africa to support their booming trade in the Mediterranean.³⁶

³³ 'Don Alfonso, por la gracia de Dyos rey de Castiella [...] A todos los mercaderos christianos et moros et iudios que esta mi carta uieren, salut et gracia. Mandouos que todos aquellos que uenir quisieredes a Murcia et a mi tierra et a mios regnos, que uengades saluos et seguros con uestro auer con uestras mercaduras et con uestras cosas. Et defiengo que ninguno non sea osado de uos fazer fuerça nin tuerto nin mal ninguno de uos tomar uestra mercaderia sinon por sus dineros o como se abiniere conuusco a uestro plazer...'. Ed. by J. Torres Fontes, *Fueros y privilegios de Alfonso X el Sabio al Reino de Murcia*. Colección de documentos para la historia del reino de Murcia, 3 (Murcia: Academia Alfonso X el Sabio, 1973), doc. 33, p. 50.

³⁴ A. Ward, *Estoria de Espanna Digital*, v.1.0 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2016), E₂: 1139 (356r) <estoria.bham.ac.uk> [accessed 29-07-2017].

³⁵ R. I. Burns, 'Baths and caravanserais in Crusader Valencia', *Speculum*, 46(3) (1971), 443-458; O. R. Constable, *Housing the stranger in the Mediterranean world: lodging, trade and travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Alfonso X was keen to exploit the *alfondigas* for taxation and regulation of trade, whilst the Aragonese recognised their value in cultivating foreign trade networks. See ch. 5, especially pp. 164-191.

³⁶ Constable, *Housing the stranger*, pp. 191-199; See also M. D. López Pérez and J. I. Padilla Lapuente, 'Mallorcan merchants in the medieval Maghrib: mercantile strategies in the port of Hunayn in the mid-fourteenth century', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 28(2) (2013), 141-165.

Despite the mutual benefits of trade and commerce, economic activity was also a source of antagonism. The role of some Jews as lenders and taxmen throughout Castile and Aragon gradually fuelled anti-Jewish sentiment and led to confrontations. Zaragozaan Mudejars resentfully tried to evade debt repayments,³⁷ while in Castile the Christian elites complained at the *cortes* of excessive interest rates.³⁸ Religion was a specific problem for those Jews who participated in the Mediterranean slave trade. In line with legislation, no Jew was allowed to possess a Christian slave. This served as a loophole for captive Muslims, who sought conversion to Christianity as a means to escape servitude. In 1288, for example, a group of Mallorcan Jews petitioned Alfons III regarding their lost slaves.³⁹ And whilst the *alfondigas* provided guaranteed the rights and safety of foreign traders, they were an effective means of segregating Muslims from Christians. Restrictions were gradually placed on Muslim merchants, confining them to the *alfondigas* of the city's Mudejar quarter (*morería*). In contrast, Italian traders enjoyed much greater freedom of movement and accommodation in both Castile and Aragon.⁴⁰

Broadly speaking, business activity was a very large aspect of the interfaith encounter in medieval Iberia. Whilst much of the face-to-face interaction of Jews, Christians and Muslims has escaped the historical record, documentation reveals the economic integration of religious minorities in late medieval Christian Iberia. They supported the agrarian economy and produced an array of goods and services in skilled professions. Christians and Muslims traded throughout the Iberian Peninsula, North Africa and the wider Mediterranean. In spite of the many hostilities and conflicts that placed Muslim

³⁷ Catlos, *The victors and the vanquished*, 206-209.

³⁸ T. Ruiz, "Trading with the 'other'", p. 71.

³⁹ Ray, *The sephardic frontier*, p. 66.

⁴⁰ Constable, *Housing the stranger*, pp. 173-174, 182-191.

and Christian lords against each other, kings recognised the value of long-distance trade and granted privileges to foreign merchants. Alfonso X displays this entirely different stance towards Muslims and Jews, as read in the privilege of 1257. Whilst modern and medieval memory tends to overlook the role of religious minorities within economic history, trade and commerce was a significant reality of the frontier encounter.

c) Faith boundaries and social interaction

The presence of religious minorities within the kingdoms of Christian Iberia was – in terms of economy – a necessity. As such, minorities were granted the right to remain in the newly conquered lands. However, the high degree of social interaction among Christians and minorities was problematic for the authorities. Jews, Christians and Muslims existed side by side, traversing the same streets and visiting the same markets. Yet they were not equal. The challenge for the authorities was, then, to maintain boundaries along religious lines, and ensure the pre-eminence of the dominant faith group.⁴¹

In medieval Iberia, religious affiliation meant far more than the acceptance of the Holy Trinity or the prophethood of Muhammad. Christianity, Islam and Judaism offered different ethical and legal systems, as well as separate fiscal and administrative frameworks. Religious affiliation designated adherence to an entirely distinct

⁴¹ Islamic authorities were equally faced with this challenge. For a recent monograph see: J. Safran, *Defining Boundaries in al-Andalus: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Islamic Iberia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).

community.⁴² Whilst many Andalusí Muslims emigrated to Islamic lands in the face of the Christian advance southward, those without the means to do so were forced to accept Christian rule. In something akin to a 'social contract', conquered Muslims were permitted free practice of religion, as self-governing populations. In return, they were required to pay annual tribute and submit entirely to Christian lordship. Thus the fabric of conquered society could remain intact. Nevertheless, urban populations could see themselves uprooted and resettled to make way for Christian colonisation – Alfonso X did just this in 1255, ordering the relocation of the Muslims of Morón, resettling them in Siliébar.⁴³ Broadly speaking, however, Muslim and Jewish communities continued to cohabit the towns and cities throughout Christian Iberia over the course of centuries. It was not until the late fifteenth century that the *Reyes Católicos* put an end to that cohabitation, through the expulsion and forced conversions of Spain's Jewish and Muslim communities.

Following the extensive territorial gains of the first half of the thirteenth century, legislative texts emerged that sought to clarify the *official* stance towards minorities. In Castile, Alfonso X oversaw the compilation of the *Siete Partidas*,⁴⁴ whilst Jaime I produced the *Fori Aragonum*; Portugal asserted its own legal compendium in the fifteenth century, in the form of the *Ordenações Afonsinas*. These texts outlined the rights and obligations of subject Muslim and Jewish populations, in the hope that a robust legal framework would consolidate Christian supremacy in the Peninsula.⁴⁵ Alongside these larger codes, numerous edicts were passed at municipal level, in

⁴² L. Pick, 'What did Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada know about Islam?', *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia*, 20 (2011), 221-235; Catlos, *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, p. 350.

⁴³ M. A. Ladero Quesada, 'Los mudéjares de Castilla en la Baja Edad Media', in *Actas del I Simposio Internacional de Mudejarismo* (Madrid; Teruel: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas; Diputación Provincial de Teruel, 1981), pp. 349-390 (p. 361); Harvey, *Islamic Spain 1250 to 1500*, pp. 64-65.

⁴⁴ See section 2.2 of the second chapter of this thesis.

⁴⁵ This does not necessarily mean the laws were fully observed, as exemplified later in this section. See also section 2.2 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

response to the concerns of local representatives. Generally speaking, conditions became more restrictive over the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁴⁶

Legislation established boundaries and limited social interaction in many ways.⁴⁷ In the first place, it was necessary to distinguish Christian from non-Christian. Spanish legislators therefore placed restrictions on outward appearance, regulating Mudejar dress and hairstyle. This echoed the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, which complained of a need to distinguish Jews from Christians to avoid sexual relations between the communities. Centuries earlier, Islamic society had tried to distinguish Muslim from non-Muslim through similar regulations around hair and attire.⁴⁸ Other restrictions included the physical separation of living quarters and the deference of Muslims and Jews to Christian worship and holidays. Their marginalisation was enshrined in their exclusion from positions in office.

Of great concern to Christian legislators was the "contamination" brought about by sexual relations between Christians and minorities. Sexual transgression was so great an anxiety that it carried the death penalty. By contrast, Islamic law had long permitted the union of Muslim men with Christian and Jewish women, on the grounds that their children would be brought up as Muslims. Furthermore, the cohabitation of Andalusí princes and Christian women was common in the early centuries of Umayyad rule.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Catlos, *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, p. 363. For an example of the increasing restrictions placed on Mudejar society, see M. Ryan, 'Power and pilgrimage: the restriction of Mudéjares' pilgrimage in the kingdom of Valencia', *Essays in Medieval Studies*, 25 (2008), 115-128.

⁴⁷ The legal panorama is extremely broad, but includes recurrent forms of marginalisation and restriction. See: L. Torres Balbás, *Algunos aspectos del mudejarismo urbano medieval* (Madrid: Maestre, 1954), pp. 68-71; Ladero Quesada, 'Los mudéjares de Castilla en la Baja Edad Media', pp. 371-376; Catlos, *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, pp. 365-370; M. F. Lopes de Barros, 'Body, baths and cloth: Muslim and Christian perceptions in Medieval Portugal', *Portuguese Studies*, 21 (2005), 1-12.

⁴⁸ See A. Noth, 'Problems of differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims: re-reading the 'Ordinances of 'Umar' (Al-Shurut al-'umariyya)', in *Muslims and others in early Islamic society*, ed. by R. Hoyland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 103-124.

⁴⁹ The concubinage of Basque and Navarrese women by the Umayyad rulers is well known. The principal source is the extensive genealogy produced by seventeenth-century Ottoman historian Ahmad Muhammad al-Maqqari; the work was later translated and abridged by Pascual de Gayangos: *The history of the Mohammedan dynasties in Spain*, 2 vols (London: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1840).

The Banu Qasi of the Ebro valley forged dynastic unions and strategic alliances with the Kingdom of Pamplona-Navarre through intermarriage.⁵⁰ But as the frontier shifted south after the eleventh century, Christian lawmakers progressively forbade marriage outside of the faith group.⁵¹ And with the advent of Christian dominance, it was in the interests of all faith communities to avoid sexual transgression and maintain group cohesion.⁵²

Communal bathing was a long-standing tradition in the Peninsula, and consequently bath houses were the setting for potential fraternisation among the faiths.⁵³ Islamic and Jewish theology placed emphasis on ritual purification, while Christians continued to enjoy the socialisation of bathing in the Roman tradition.⁵⁴ Regulations surrounding minorities' use of public baths varied. Castilian and Portuguese customary laws allowed Jews to use public bath houses on certain days, whilst Muslims were barred entry. Meanwhile, Aragonese charters indicate that Muslims were granted access on separate days of the week.⁵⁵ There were harsh penalties if Jews and Muslims sought to use baths outside of allotted days, and it is likely that minorities had their own bathing facilities to maintain standards of ritual purity.⁵⁶ Yet it is the repeated effort to outlaw fraternization at bath houses that betrays the occurrence of inter-communal mixing there.⁵⁷

Needless to say, legal proclamations do not necessarily represent the reality on the ground. There are numerous cases of Muslims, Jews and Christians interacting in ways that might not be seen to be 'proper', when compared to the legal panorama. Minority

⁵⁰ S. Barton, *Conquerors, brides, and concubines: interfaith relations and social power in medieval Iberia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), pp. 25-33.

⁵¹ Barton, *Conquerors, brides, and concubines*, pp. 45-56.

⁵² Ray, *The sephardic frontier*, pp. 165-174; Catlos, *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, p. 369; Barton, *Conquerors, brides, and concubines*, pp. 58-59, 75.

⁵³ J. Powers, 'Frontier municipal baths and social interaction in thirteenth-century Spain', *The American Historical Review*, 84(3) (1979), 649-667 (p. 650).

⁵⁴ Lopes de Barros, 'Body, baths and cloth', p. 3.

⁵⁵ Powers, 'Frontier municipal baths', pp. 661-662.

⁵⁶ Catlos, *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, p. 470

⁵⁷ Catlos, *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, p. 470

groups continued to confound authorities by ignoring distinguishing dress codes.⁵⁸ Jewish and Muslim families did reach positions of wealth and stature, in careers that should have been the preserve of the Christians – these elites could be found in the service of the king himself. Muslims worked as royal physicians in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Navarre, whilst another prominent Muslim family served as doctors for the Archbishop of Toledo and Alfonso XI.⁵⁹ A Mudejar named Lope Barbicano worked as master architect and carpenter for Joan II, managing the restoration of the castles of the Navarrese Ribera.⁶⁰ In lieu of the debts owed to his Jewish courtier Astrug Jacob Xixon, Jaume I gave him control of the town of Peñíscola.⁶¹ Alfonso X no less is well known for his entourage of Christian, Jewish and Muslim literati, who shared his love of the sciences and the arts. And in wider society, though the law outlined severe punishment for sexual transgressions, offenders might well escape with a lesser penalty.⁶²

It is clear to see that religious minorities living in Christian Iberia were not to be treated as equals of the dominant faith group. Jews and Muslims were to remain on the fringes of society: ghettoised, distinguishable and always deferent. They were to lead unassuming lives, interacting courteously with Christians, where the demands of day-to-day business required it. That said, there is much evidence that these boundaries were blurred and circumvented quite flagrantly at times – to the great dismay of moralists and authorities. In short, what was preached was not always practised. What is important to recognise, however, is that medieval ideals were markedly *not* the same as today's

⁵⁸ Ladero Quesada, 'Los mudéjares de Castilla', pp. 372-373; Ray, *The sephardic frontier*, pp. 158-164

⁵⁹ M. García-Arenal and B. Leroy, *Moros y judios en Navarra en la Baja Edad Media* (Madrid: Hiperion, 1984), p. 32; Ozaki, 'El régimen tributario', p. 458; Catlos, *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, p. 432

⁶⁰ García-Arenal, *Moros y judios en Navarra*, pp. 25, 27-28; Ozaki, 'El régimen tributario', pp. 452-453; Solares, 'Social continuity and religious coexistence', p. 315.

⁶¹ Ray, *The sephardic frontier*, p. 60

⁶² Lopes de Barros, 'Body, baths and cloth', pp. 6-7; Catlos, *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, pp. 475-477; Barton, *Conquerors, brides, and concubines*, pp. 58.

visions of an ideal society. Medieval Iberian societies protected the cultural supremacy of the dominant faith group through the judiciary, the legislative and, if needed, the executive. In 1260, Alfonso X asserted legal rights of his Muslim subjects of Alicante, simultaneously demanding they uphold their legal obligations – in this case, the payment of annual *pecho*.⁶³ Whilst Muslims were protected by the law, and by the king himself, the *Siete Partidas* later codified an array of restrictions destined to relegate religious minorities to a position of inferiority.⁶⁴

1.2 Convivencia theories

Faced with the complexities and contradictions of medieval Iberian societies, modern scholarship has developed a large body of thought on the matter. Scholars in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have discussed the notion of *convivencia* to explore the dynamic between the three faiths. The different theories and concepts that have come about from scholarly debate provide us with a number of valuable reflections, some of which will prove to be crucial to the development of this thesis.

In 1948 Américo Castro published a work entitled *España en su historia*,⁶⁵ sparking a debate that continues to this day. The basis of his argument was that the origins of the Spanish soul were to be found in the encounter between Christianity, Islam and Judaism in the Middle Ages. Castro claimed that medieval Iberia had been the *morada vital* of

⁶³ Addressing the *concejo* of Alicante, Alfonso X proclaimed: 'Bien sabedes uos de como los moros que son en nuestros regnos que son nuestros et que los auemos de guardar et de amparar et en qualquier logar que uiuan en nuestros regnos auemos de auer dellos nuestros drechos...'. Torres Fontes, *Fueros y privilegios de Alfonso X el Sabio*, doc. 55, p. 74.

⁶⁴ See section 2.2 of the second chapter of this thesis.

⁶⁵ Here we have used a later edition of this work: *La realidad histórica de España* (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1954).

the modern Spanish nation. It was the close proximity of the faiths existing side-by-side – *convivencia* – that had been the foundation of *Hispanidad*. What is more, this had only been possible due to a culture of *tolerancia*. Much of the controversy of later decades seems to lie in the ambiguities of the term *tolerancia*. In Spanish, there are two levels of meaning, which exist as separate items in English: 'tolerance' and 'toleration'. The former designates the more modern, liberal notion of respect for the belief of another. 'Toleration' represents the formal permission for the practice of minority religions. The possible ambiguity has, as we shall see, been the catalyst for continued debate among scholars – especially when discussing 'tolerance' in medieval Spain.⁶⁶

A second aspect of his argument was that Islam was the source of this *tolerancia*. This was due to the fact that Islamic doctrine found its roots in the Jewish and Christian faiths. Islamic polities were therefore able to accommodate the presence of these minorities in society. Castro held that the *tolerancia* of Alfonso X's law codes had been founded upon the permissive model laid out in the Quran.⁶⁷ Whilst *convivencia* pointed to the cultural achievements of this proximity, it also acknowledged the violent struggle. Castro recognised that the Iberian encounter had at times been characterised by religious animosity. He argued that *tolerancia* was motivated principally by politics, and that *intolerancia* came about from 'totalitarismo de la creencia':

Los españoles, moldeados en su estructura por el roce histórico de tres religiones, fueron tolerantes por exigencias políticas, e intolerantes por la índole totalitaria, omnipresente, de su creencia.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ The debate is aggravated by this double entendre. Some English scholars have discussed 'toleration', whilst others have referred to 'tolerance'. The term 'intolerance' is also used, and its connotations have become even stronger into the twenty-first century.

⁶⁷ *La realidad histórica de España*, p. 225.

⁶⁸ *La realidad histórica de España*, p. 226.

Whilst this partly accounted for the conflict among the faiths, Castro stressed the peaceful and productive effects of *convivencia* – considered by later scholars as idealism.

Castro's ideas quickly met resistance, most notably from Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz.⁶⁹ Where Castro saw cultural mixing as the making of Spanish identity, Sánchez-Albornoz took the view that *Hispanidad* existed independently of Islam and Judaism. He argued that the limits of the Iberian Peninsula had long been inhabited by the *homo hispanus*.⁷⁰ This suggested something of an eternal ‘race’ of Spaniards, who were separate and discrete from the influences of Islam and Judaism. Sánchez-Albornoz was resolute in the impermeability of the eternal Spain:

No; la contextura vital hispana no pudo arabizarse.⁷¹

He refuted the Arabization of the Peninsula's inhabitants after 711, claiming that the flame of *Hispanidad* still burned deep in the hearts of the Andalusí *homo hispanus*. Neither did he accept that Spanish Islam had been a model of *tolerancia* later adopted by Christian Spain.⁷² If nothing else, it was the conflict with Muslims that helped solidify Spanish character. Sánchez-Albornoz described it as a ‘guerra divinal y nacional contra el Islam’, and as the ‘fuerza motriz de nuestra historia medieval’.⁷³ Despite his objections to Castro's narrative of coexistence and symbiosis, Sánchez-Albornoz was keen to assert the unique nature of the Spanish Middle Ages. His nation's history was one that was marked by the singular ‘reconquest’ effort. This state of

⁶⁹ His response was entitled *España: un enigma histórico*.

⁷⁰ *España: un enigma histórico*. Vol. 1 (Barcelona: Edhasa, 2000), p. 77.

⁷¹ *España: un enigma histórico*, p. 189.

⁷² *España: un enigma histórico*, pp. 291-299.

⁷³ *España: un enigma histórico*, p. 77.

warfare was unlike anything that had occurred in Western Europe: it was a popular, national struggle against Islam, in order to liberate the land and the faith.⁷⁴

The eminent American historian Robert I. Burns was not entirely persuaded by the sweeping statements of the *tolerancia* proposed by Castro. Instead, he advocated a careful delimitation of the contexts of Christian-Muslim interaction in time and space.⁷⁵ His regard was directed to late medieval Valencia and its sizeable Mudejar population. Here, the particulars of interfaith relations were different from situations of Mudejars in Castile, Aragon and Catalonia. The 'reconquest' was an erosion of *al-Andalus*, which occurred in fits and starts over the centuries: the conditions of conquered populations were accordingly uneven. There were multiple incidences of interfaith contact throughout society, among elites and at lower levels, over many generations. In the case of Valencia, Burns was less convinced of the productive cultural symbiosis suggested by Castro. This centred on the fact that Valencian Mudejar populations could not be viewed in the same light as modern minority populations. They did not wish to assimilate, he argued, but instead desired to keep completely separate from the distrusted Christian overlords. To an extent the Mudejar was 'an accomplice in his own exclusion'.⁷⁶ In a pre-Enlightenment setting, our modern values of 'tolerance' would have been unlikely, even if interaction between the Christians and Muslims in Valencia was 'reasonably non-conflictive'.⁷⁷

The dichotomy of Mudejar populations of Iberia was also observed by John Boswell. In a comprehensive study of the Mudejars of fourteenth-century Aragon, Boswell demonstrates the difference between Aragonese-Catalan Muslims and those from

⁷⁴ *España: un enigma histórico*, p. 310.

⁷⁵ He outlines this approach to the study of interfaith relations in 'Muslim-Christian conflict and contact: Mudejar methodology', in *Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the crusader kingdom of Valencia: societies in symbiosis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 1-51.

⁷⁶ Burns, 'Muslim-Christian conflict and contact', p. 22.

⁷⁷ Burns, 'Muslim-Christian conflict and contact', p. 51.

Valencia.⁷⁸ Mudejar populations in the north were much more acculturated: their Arabic was likely to have been poor, Romance being their principal tongue. These northern Mudejars showed a greater loyalty to the Crown, he argued, than the Valencian Muslims. In contrast, the southern realms had had a shorter timespan within which to adapt. These Muslims were Arabic-speaking; they were suspicious of their new rulers, and were prone to revolt. As such, we see a two-tier *convivencia*. In the north it was one of 'mutual acceptance' and loyalty to the Crown; in the south *convivencia* was much more mechanical, based solely on the close proximity of the faiths.⁷⁹

The approaches of Burns and Boswell are particularly valuable for the present study. Both scholars offer a systematic breakdown of the historical panorama. For Boswell, it is the contrasting interests of social classes (ruling versus lower, agricultural versus military), and of human nature, that favour conflict or peace among the faiths.⁸⁰ Similarly, Burns draws divisions between interfaith contact at different levels, in different places and at different times.⁸¹ But when taken as a whole, the historical panorama is rife with paradoxes. This allows the observer to veer towards extremes of interpretation. As a result there is an emergence of 'false polarities': scholars construct either an 'optimist' or 'pessimist' stance with regard to interfaith relations.⁸² It is only through a careful dissection of the panorama that we begin to make sense of what we find, *in context*. This is essentially what the current study aims to bring to the debate. How do we make sense of the different attitudes towards Muslims in the works of Alfonso X? Are we adopting an 'optimistic' or 'pessimistic' reading of interfaith relations in the *Estoria de España*? Or should we strive to find a balanced

⁷⁸ J. Boswell, *The royal treasure: Muslim communities under the Crown of Aragon in the fourteenth century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977).

⁷⁹ Boswell, *The royal treasure*, pp. 398-400.

⁸⁰ Boswell, *The royal treasure*, pp. 21-22.

⁸¹ Burns, 'Muslim-Christian conflict and contact', pp. 12-17.

⁸² Burns, 'Muslim-Christian conflict and contact', pp. 20-24.

interpretation? In any case, the *Estoria* narratives surely require thorough delimitation and contextualisation, if we are to make inferences about their meaning. Burns applied this perspective precisely to the interpretation of Alfonso X's *Siete Partidas* and their treatment of Jews and Muslims – we will return to this in due course.⁸³ Our thesis follows in a similar vein, using context to help explain the paradoxical portrayals of Muslim protagonists in the *Estoria*.

Thomas F. Glick, also of the North American school, maintained an interest in the debate surrounding *convivencia*.⁸⁴ He clarifies that Castro's idealism was a distortion of social reality, and could not be used to explain how Christians, Muslims and Jews interacted. Glick reminds us of the context of the early twentieth century: inspired by Darwinian thinking and exiled by the Civil War, Castro and Sánchez-Albornoz were engaged in a deeply introspective search for Spanish identity. Both scholars believed that the interfaith encounter was key to this. In light of this, *convivencia* should not be taken at face value. Castro and Sánchez-Albornoz imposed value judgements to make their cases, and their writings have been contested accordingly. Nonetheless, Glick credits Américo Castro in his exploration of cultural processes among the faiths. *Convivencia* appeared to Glick as a viable pathway to further scholarship on acculturation and cultural exchange in medieval Spain and Portugal.⁸⁵ And it certainly has moved historians of all backgrounds to examine the Iberian frontier.

It was following the publication David Nirenberg's seminal work that *convivencia* attracted renewed interest. Applying anthropological theory, Nirenberg focused on the role of violence in medieval Aragon. A distinction is drawn between outbursts of

⁸³ See chapter 2 of this thesis.

⁸⁴ T. F. Glick and O. Pi-Sunyer, 'Acculturation as an Explanatory Concept in Spanish History', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 11(2) (1969), 136-154; *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); 'Convivencia: an Introductory Note', in *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain*, ed. by V. B. Mann, T. F. Glick and J. D. Dodds (New York: Braziller, 1992) pp. 1-9.

⁸⁵ Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 337-348.

extraordinary, or "abnormal" violence – massacres of Jews, Muslims and lepers in the fourteenth century –, and the smaller-scale quotidian, or "normal", violence towards minorities. The argument held that violence was functional, that toleration required manifestations of intolerance to demarcate minority cultures and establish faith boundaries. Ultimately, the relationship between conflict and coexistence was constructive, the latter predicated by the former.⁸⁶ The argument is compelling, and importantly recognises violence was an every-day aspect of medieval society. It recasts *convivencia* in a gritty and oppressive light, revealing the human suffering that was characteristic of an imperfect cohabitation of the faiths at the Iberian frontier.

A concern that presents itself within the focus of this study is that of the dehumanisation of acts of brutality. When arguing the constructive nature of violence, there is a risk of overlooking the immediate breakdown in social relationships, and the resentment and distrust that it breeds. Violence is, in the short term, entirely destructive: the experience of intimidation and victimisation stays with the victims and their families throughout their lives. That said, Nirenberg focuses first on the micro-level, before expanding the field of view to the macro-level. He emphasises that violence was always perpetrated by individuals at local level, in the case of the massacres of 1320 and 1321 in Aragon and France. The destructive acts of those who systematically attacked Jews and lepers and properties associated with them, were driven by the popular grievances of disaffected shepherds. What is striking, however, is how authorities and elites appropriated this wave of persecution, initially instigated by rampaging, frenzied mobs. Jews and lepers were put on trial, and came to represent the corruption and ills of

⁸⁶ D. Nirenberg, *Communities of violence: persecution of minorities in the Middle Ages*. 2nd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).

Franco-Aragonese society at that moment.⁸⁷ And it is from instances such as these that Nirenberg convincingly argues how utterly destructive behaviour had a constructive purpose: the management of society. It would appear that across the Iberian Peninsula, authorities saw the utility in the accusation and victimisation of minorities, helping to keep these "undesirables" at arms length from the majority.

Soon after Nirenberg's publication, another proposal emerged that challenged the Castroite ideal. Brian Catlos stressed that religious minorities were integrated into a complex of social and economic relations with the dominant faith. Whilst Muslim and Jewish communities retained their own administrative structures, minorities were also incorporated into wider financial, commercial and judicial spheres. An individual might belong to multiple collectives, and in doing so they transcended faith boundaries. The status of minorities was, Catlos argued, dependent on their utility to society. Interaction between minority and majority cultures was determined by mutual interest: *conveniencia*. And in the event of competition for resources and insecurity, religious affiliation could become an aggravating factor in disputes, leading to a breakdown in relations.⁸⁸

At the very heart of *conveniencia* are two fruits of modern sociology: the theory of the social network and the idea of constructed identities. Catlos is not alone in the exploration of social networks and identity at the medieval Iberian frontier. Jonathan Ray has operated from a similar perspective, to shed light on the Jewish communities of medieval Iberia. Ray held that Jews were not just Jews: theirs was a highly ramified society, in which individuals sought to better themselves in gentile society. As we have seen Jews were labourers, artisans, merchants and high-status officials. More affluent

⁸⁷ D. Nirenberg, *Communities of violence*, part one.

⁸⁸ B. Catlos, 'Contexto social y 'conveniencia' en la Corona de Aragón. Propuesta para un modelo de interacción entre grupos etno-religiosos minoritarios y mayoritarios', *Revista d'Història Medieval*, 12 (2001-2002), 229-268.

Jews owned property, land and slaves. For Ray, *convivencia* was to be seen not simply in terms of religious affiliation, but as 'a product of variety of contending identities' that produced 'social, cultural, and religious tensions' between the individual and other groups.⁸⁹ This conflict of identities did not go unperceived by Jewish authorities, who were at pains to maintain faith boundaries, and to define the 'imagined community' of the Sephardim.⁹⁰

Whilst the mention of 'identity' is wont to raise eyebrows among medievalists, there is every reason to accept that religious minorities were not *just* religious minorities. True, their presence was in many ways problematic for Christian authorities, whose derogatory tones towards minorities are easily read in the historical record. Glenn Olsen has captured the essence of medieval toleration: far from being an achievement, it was in fact a negative virtue. 'Tolerating' minorities was really a question of suffering their presence, akin to an itch within society that would not go away.⁹¹ Expulsion, relocation and conversion were all strategies to deal with minorities, but ones which history proves were not always desirable or practical. Fundamentally speaking, the proof of the net value of Jewish and Muslim participation is self-evident: from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries, settlements negotiated the free practice of religion for the conquered peoples of *al-Andalus*. Minorities gave to society as taxpayers, as consumers and as producers of goods and services. Thus we find the permissive stance towards Jews and Muslims to be one of *conveniencia*. Until, of course, their utility was overshadowed by the opportunities that expulsion and conversion presented, as the *Reyes Católicos* spectacularly demonstrated at the end of the fifteenth century.

⁸⁹ Ray, 'Beyond tolerance and persecution: reassessing our approach to Medieval *Convivencia*', *Jewish Social Studies*, 11(2) (2005), 1-18 (p. 13).

⁹⁰ J. Ray, 'Images of the Jewish community in medieval Iberia', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 2(1) (2009), 195-211.

⁹¹ G. Olsen, 'The Middle Ages in the History of Toleration: a Prolegomena', *Mediterranean Studies*, 16 (2007), 1-20.

The reassessment of *convivencia* has seen contributions from historians of religious thought. For Lucy Pick, it was no longer a question of toleration, but broadly one of paradoxes, interdependence and continual conflict. In her illuminating study into the life of thirteenth-century Archbishop Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, religious polemic was another stabiliser that helped preserve a fragile equilibrium among the faiths. In the same way that Nirenberg argued the constructive role of inter-communal violence, Pick felt that polemic served to define boundaries. In attacking the beliefs of Jews and Muslims, Christians were able to draw a line between themselves and the 'other', without necessitating their expulsion from society. She stressed that religious polemic ought to be viewed together with the intellectual co-operation of the faiths – translation of Jewish and Islamic scripture, as well as classical tradition – and on-going military conquest. All three were part of the process of Latin Christendom's self-affirmation. And in the culturally-diverse context of the Archbishop of Toledo, Christians could certainly live alongside non-Christians – the 'moral corruption' of the latter notwithstanding.⁹²

Religious polemic features prominently in our own study. It is the necessary perspective through which we shall piece apart the narrative of the Prophet Muhammad in the *Estoria de España*. As we shall see in due course, polemic was introduced to historiographical writings to undermine Islam and its origins, in favour of Christian supremacy. Our priority is to understand how the biography of Muhammad held a specific role in the transmission of history in the thirteenth century. And as our case

⁹² L. Pick, *Conflict and coexistence: Archbishop Rodrigo and the Muslims and Jews of Medieval Spain* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

study develops, it becomes clear that the negative portrayal of the Prophet was, in part, an attempt to assert the Truth of Christianity and refute Islamic doctrine.⁹³ Such a stance was being upheld by writers against a backdrop of intermingling of Muslims and Christians throughout the Peninsula. Our own position is therefore only a small step away from echoing Pick's assertions that polemic was a constructive boundary, allowing for on-going coexistence.

Focusing on the Umayyad courts of early medieval Iberia, Dede Fairchild Ruggles argued the importance of *convivencia* as 'cohabitation' in the denotative. It was the mixing of males and females from entirely distinct Arab and Hispano-Gothic cultures to which *al-Andalus* owed a context of cultural hybridity. Umayyad heirs were unmistakably hybrid: references abound to the fair hair and blue eyes that the emirs and caliphs inherited from their mothers – invariably Christian concubines from northern Iberia. But the ethnicity of the Andalusí princes was fundamentally gendered: male, Arabo-centric genealogies were professed, in order to legitimise claims to power. The emphasis was on the father, and not the mother. Unjustly side-lined from the historical narrative, Christian mothers diffused 'alternative cultural habits' in the cultural setting of the harem, in which the young Muslim princes grew up. These manifested in the form of lullabies, songs, play and chatter, from exposure to the mother, and not the father.⁹⁴

The argument is founded on an acceptable body of observations. However, it is complicated by simultaneously drawing attention to the art history of the Islamic world. Fairchild Ruggles notes how Islamic art incorporated features from the foreign cultures with which it came into contact. Yet her thesis falls short of affirming in a definitive manner any causality between the practice of miscegenation and Andalusí artistry. She

⁹³ See chapter 3 of this work.

⁹⁴ D. Fairchild Ruggles, 'Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty: Race, Genealogy, and Acculturation in al-Andalus', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 34(1) (2004), 65-94.

identifies Christian mothers as patrons of both literary and visual arts, in the harems. The difficulty lies in knowing to what extent the mother left any *detectable* cultural imprint on the child. As Fairchild Ruggles admits, successful concubines had to be fluent in Arabic, and in line with Islamic law, mixed children were required to be brought up as Muslims. Whilst the heir to the throne could happily bear his mother's genes, he was to be educated in Arabic, and present himself as a pious Muslim, a defender of the faith, who could trace his lineage to the Prophet Muhammad.

And then there is the fact that late medieval art of Christian Iberia was equally 'hybrid'. Architecture, literature and language of the Christian kingdoms display all the signs of cultural borrowing and appropriation. Yet, as we have seen, Christian kings were wary of sexual mixing; the concubinage of Muslim women did not define Christian monarchies in the manner of the Umayyads centuries before. Fairchild Ruggles' observations on art history are placed in parallel to the question of genetic hybridity, but with no clear correlation. At best, she argues convincingly that there is certainly room for questions of gender and miscegenation in the context of *convivencia*. Unfortunately, historians remain tightly constrained in their ability to reconstruct the undocumented, unseen intimacies of the lives of the men, women and children of medieval Iberia. That Basque and Navarrese slave girls sang to their newborns in Romance in the royal nurseries of Cordoba, we may conjecture, but never hope to discern from the historical record.

One of the more well-balanced views on *convivencia* has been offered by Maya Soifer. In her opinion, neither the Castro nor Sánchez-Albornoz brands of *convivencia* stand up to empirical scrutiny. These were nationalist myths, which professed the idea that Spain was completely unique in Europe, as defined by its singular interfaith

experience. Yet there were minority communities living elsewhere in Europe: Jews were to be found in France, England and Germany. The kingdoms north of the Pyrenees likewise had to negotiate a workable settlement for their religious minorities. The issue, then, is one of perspective. Soifer posits that continued dialogue with scholars of northern European interfaith coexistence will be needed. Without this, the false dichotomies of a persecuting northern Europe and a tolerant Spain will persist.⁹⁵ Perspective is an invaluable tool: in its absence we risk blindly subscribing to an Ibero-centric view of interfaith relations, and potentially overlooking the experiences of minority communities elsewhere in Europe and Africa.

In the outstanding monograph by H. Salvador Martínez, we find a study that is focused in the same direction as our own: attitudes to religious minorities in the Alfonsine corpus. Suffice to say that the present study is greatly informed by the labours of Salvador Martínez. A great deal is to be said of his exploration of the *Cantigas de Santa María* and the *Siete Partidas*. For him, these works are a valuable source through which to explore interfaith relations – specifically within the frame of *convivencia*. He considers the term to be misleading if left unqualified. What type of 'living together' was it: 'peaceful' or 'conflictive', 'loving' or 'excruciating'? In light of these elemental qualifications, Salvador Martínez emphasised the cultural exchange that came about from the coexistence of the faiths – in the contexts of peace *and* conflict. This could be captured with the designation of 'cultural *convivencia*'. He also referred to 'social *convivencia*', distilling the notion of minorities' assimilation into society. His verdict was that 'cultural *convivencia*' did occur, but there was no 'social *convivencia*'.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ M. Soifer, 'Beyond *convivencia*: critical reflections on the historiography of interfaith relations in Christian Spain', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 1(1) (2009), 19-35.

⁹⁶ H. Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII: persectivas alfonsíes* (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2006), pp. 13-15.

In light of these considerations, Salvador Martínez prefers to apply *convivencia* to a very specific context of religious toleration and intimacy: the royal court. If rigid faith boundaries were imposed upon the masses, it was the privileged non-Christian courtiers who were exempt from strict regulation. Alfonso X's entourage included wise and talented Muslims and Jews, among the closest collaborators of the king. It was they who transgressed faith boundaries most spectacularly, and they alone. And it is in this context of scholarship and collaboration that Salvador Martínez claims to read Alfonso's own attitudes to minorities. Granted Salvador Martínez produced an exemplary biography of the king⁹⁷, it is extremely difficult to claim to know the king's personal standing on religious minorities. It is certainly true that a handful of individuals from minority groups were in the favour of the sovereign – this was the case in numerous other Christian and Muslim courts. Furthermore, when we look in hindsight at the history of late medieval Iberia, the reign of Alfonso X does appear to be relatively permissive. Minorities were guaranteed protection in his *Siete Partidas*; wholesale expulsion was still a long way off. Nevertheless, it was only a select group of Jews and Muslims who were exempt from strict regulations, such as those placed on dress. It is here that Salvador Martínez claims that close collaboration and toleration between minorities 'debió ser también el ideal para el resto del reino'.⁹⁸

Can we really sustain that Alfonso X personally longed for a 'serene', 'harmonious', or 'utopian' existence between Christians, Muslims and Jews?⁹⁹ Was he simply constrained by the pressures of being an upstanding Christian king, reluctantly upholding 'official' attitudes and maintaining rigid faith boundaries? Salvador Martínez fundamentally

⁹⁷ *Alfonso X, el Sabio: una biografía* (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2003).

⁹⁸ Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, pp. 21.

⁹⁹ Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, pp. 21. Salvador Martínez uses such terms as these to describe the environment that Alfonso X desired to create, even stating that 'para el mismo Alfonso, este modelo ideal de convivencia fue una añorada utopía' (p. 22).

relies on the ability to discern the views of Alfonso X himself from the *Cantigas* and the *Siete Partidas*.¹⁰⁰ This assertion is not entirely valid, for a number of reasons. Firstly, these texts were the work of many different collaborators, with contending backgrounds and dispositions. Secondly, his law codes – and his historiographical writings – were works of compilation. Content was necessarily a reformulation of previous material. Thirdly, Alfonso's cultural project was inextricably linked to his political objectives: he had a kingdom to run. That is to say, the authorship of these texts hoped to meet certain objectives. This directed how content should act upon the readership. The Alfonsine corpus was not an outlet for the king's personal reflections, but for his political power. Bearing these observations in mind, it would be overstepping the mark to discuss Alfonso X's personal attitudes to religious minorities: we simply cannot tell with confidence what manner of *convivencia* appealed to the Rey Sabio.¹⁰¹

Of all the discussion surrounding *convivencia* it is the stance of Francisco García Fitz that the present study has come to echo most closely. García Fitz had already concluded in 2002 that *convivencia* was a specific response to a sociological and anthropological context. His verdict was that in today's world, the idea of harmony among the three faiths is a comforting myth, in a time when there is cause for concern in the present.¹⁰² The idea of a "Golden Age" of interfaith relations retains its appeal in the early twenty-first century. Yet, when the vestiges of that harmony are scrutinised, they are revealed to be only partially representative of the reality of medieval Spain. The myth is created by divorcing specific instances of interfaith co-operation from the wider historical and

¹⁰⁰ We shall evaluate this approach in greater detail in chapter 2.

¹⁰¹ These questions are highly significant in the formulation of an appropriate interpretative framework for the current study, and accordingly they have been addressed in greater detail in chapters 2. They have also formed the basis for some conclusions, in chapter 4.

¹⁰² F. García Fitz, 'Las minorías religiosas y la tolerancia en la Edad Media hispánica: ¿mito o realidad?', in *Tolerancia y convivencia étnico-religiosa en la Península Ibérica durante la Edad Media: iii jornadas de cultura islámica*, ed. by A. García Sanjuán (Huelva: Universidad de Huelva, 2003), pp. 13-56.

social contexts. In doing so, one can present a past world of *tolerancia* and amity. But the result is a fragmented, artificial reality. García Fitz demonstrates that by restoring the wider contexts, the veneer of peaceful accord among the faiths vanishes quite readily. In his view, *convivencia* is a convenient illusion.

1.3 Popular convivencia

The question of interfaith relations in medieval Spain has not remained a purely academic matter. Since its initial conception, *convivencia* has seen its influence extend into the realm of popular history and social conscience in the West. The work of several scholars has demonstrated how *convivencia* has been reformulated for issues of a more contemporary nature, and for non-academic audiences. This in itself is a valuable reflection for the thesis, considering the role of narratives of the Spanish past, in the present.

María Rosa Menocal's *Ornament of the world* is perhaps the best example of how *convivencia* has since captured the attention of the public.¹⁰³ The popular history focused on the cultural and social history of medieval Iberia, in an attempt to highlight the productive aspects of Christian, Muslim and Jewish interaction. Menocal strove to challenge the commonly-held prejudices of the backwardness and darkness of the European Middle Ages. Furthermore, it was necessary to counter the Crusade-style perception of Christian-Muslim enmity. Instead, the Peninsula was a place where the

¹⁰³ *The ornament of the world: how Muslims, Jews, and Christians created a culture of tolerance in Medieval Spain* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2002).

three faiths unconsciously accepted 'otherness', and allowed it to shape their society. The cultural achievements of the Spanish Middle Ages was, in Menocal's eyes, 'worth knowing and worth retelling as part of our common history'.¹⁰⁴

Menocal's approach was to use a series of miniature portraits to illustrate cultural and social symbiosis. The Great Mosque of Cordoba was a testimony to the transplanting of Eastern culture in the Iberian Peninsula. Centuries later, when Toledo was annexed by Alfonso VI, a new Christian church was built, echoing the red-and-white arches of the Great Mosque. This diverse city would become the centre of translation and cultural exchange among the faiths. *Ornament of the world* reminds us of the poetry of Ibn Hazm and Judah Halevi, and of the great scholars Averroes and Maimonides. There was a diverse world, a culture of thought and intellectual endeavour. It was a world in which Christians, Muslims and Jews unconsciously adopted the cultures with which they came into contact: this was a culture of 'tolerance'. Menocal acknowledges this term is applied at a stretch. And it is done with the express purpose of recasting the Middle Ages in a new light.

It was an appropriation of the essence of Castro's *convivencia*, destined for popular consumption. The idea of Christians, Muslims and Jews living in parallel appeared to captivate twenty-first century popular psyche. A long-lost symbiosis among the Abrahamic faiths resonated with the non-specialist audience. The work was praised by critics, including the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Miami Herald* and the *Wall Street Journal*. Christopher Hitchens perceived the work to be a timely reminder of the intellectual achievements of Andalusí scholars and poets, in the face of modern 'theocratic

¹⁰⁴ *Ornament of the world*, p. 13.

fascism'.¹⁰⁵ Critics felt that there was something enlightening about Spain and Portugal's distant past. One commentator even described it as a 'melancholic remembrance'.¹⁰⁶

The popular history of medieval Spain could even embody some degree of healing effect. This appeared to be the aim of Chris Lowney's *Vanished world*.¹⁰⁷ The work was published at a time when the Western world had witnessed a second major attack on its people and its values. Three years after 9/11, Madrid commuter trains had been targeted by Islamic extremists. The attackers used Spain's historical conflict between Islam and Christianity to justify their murderous actions. Lowney stresses that we have a choice in how we use the memory of medieval Spain. Do we perpetuate cycles of violence, focusing on religious enmity? Or do we try to move forward, recognising what unites us, and pave the way for tolerance and respect?¹⁰⁸

Lowney is under no illusion that medieval Spain was a paradise for the sons of Abraham. Saint James appears to epitomise the duality of hatred and hope in Spain's past. For medieval Christians, *Santiago Matamoros* evoked the notion of war with Islam. Yet, at the same time, *Santiago Peregrino* was the figure of charity and love for one's neighbour. *Vanished world* juxtaposes the collision of the faiths with the scholarly feats of the great Andalusí men of letters. We recall that Pelayo, Eulogius, al-Mansur and El Cid were protagonists of the interfaith experience, alongside Maimonides, Averroes, Ibn Arabi and Moses of Leon. It was Alfonso X who best demonstrated the contradictions of the interfaith encounter. What united them was the Abrahamic tradition; they worshipped the same God and were all his sons.

¹⁰⁵ C. Hitchens, 'The God Squad', *The Nation* (March 28, 2002) <<http://www.thenation.com/article/god-squad/>> [accessed 24-02-2016].

¹⁰⁶ Emram Qureshi of the Canadian *National Post* commented: 'This celebration and melancholic remembrance serves as a useful reminder of what once was and what could be.' *Ornament of the world*, p. iii.

¹⁰⁷ C. Lowney, *A vanished world: Muslims, Christians and Jews in medieval Spain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

¹⁰⁸ *A vanished world*, pp. 5-14.

More often than not, medieval Christian writers sought to flaunt their victories over Islam. Their histories were coloured by combat, rather than co-operation and coexistence. And thus, Saint James the 'Slayer of Moors'. Lowney's survey of Spain in the Middle Ages reduces each of its protagonists to believers of the same deity. Though their way of life was eventually destroyed, the three religions accommodated one another for hundreds of years. It is here that Chris Lowney, like Menocal, evokes the phantom of *convivencia*. It was a past, he wrote, that mirrored our own present: a mixed society, housing many different faiths groups. Its history of conflict was exploited by medieval writers, just as it had been by the 2004 Madrid train bombers. Whilst *Vanished world* does not push the idea of a past 'tolerance', it places *convivencia* at the heart of today's search for reconciliation and peace. Lowney is decidedly forward-thinking in his publication. He invites readers to reflect on the shared past among Christians, Muslims and Jews, precisely so that we might succeed in our quest for unity, tolerance and mutual respect.

Efforts such as these to offer a popular re-branding of *convivencia* in the twenty-first century have been welcomed by scholars such as Simon Doubleday and David Coleman.¹⁰⁹ Where many medievalists have sought to isolate the past from present-day concerns, Doubleday has argued the profound relevance of Spanish history in the twenty-first century. As a first-hand witness of the 9/11 terror attacks, he considers the critical reflection of Spain's past to be a valuable tool in the present. It is a source of 'collective rethinking' and even a form of 'therapy' in a troubled world. Accordingly,

¹⁰⁹ S. R. Doubleday and D. Coleman (eds) *In the light of medieval Spain: Islam, the West, and the relevance of the past* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

Doubleday credits Menocal's *Ornament of the world*, as an excellent analogy and 'catalyst for rethinking religious and cultural difference'.¹¹⁰

1.4 Scrutinising the writing of history: modern and medieval historians

The close scrutiny of *convivencia* – both academic and non-academic – serves as a springboard for a rigorous and critical examination of the *Estoria de España*. The self-conscious assessment of present-day historians' writing of the past is essential to keep in mind: it represents the critical evaluation of the writing of history. This brings us to the essence of this thesis: the evaluation and interpretation of historical writing in medieval Spain. Evaluating *convivencia* historiography and its interpretations can help shed further light on precisely how to interpret the very different narratives of interfaith conflict and co-operation in the *Estoria*.

Whilst the Holy Land and the West remain deeply troubled in the twenty-first century, a mythical medieval *convivencia* of harmony and 'tolerance' might just be the elixir to calm our nerves. A closer survey suggests that the interaction of Christians, Muslims and Jews in medieval Iberia was one of both conflict and co-operation. Whilst an 'optimist' narrative meets the demands of the present, it consciously manipulates the past. The existence of a utopia among the Abrahamic faiths is admittedly rather reassuring and heart-warming. But it is an artificial totalising narrative; it is a myth, as García Fitz concludes. Though it appears destructive of the undesirable events that it

¹¹⁰ Doubleday, 'Introduction: "Criminal non-intervention": Hispanism, medievalism and the pursuit of neutrality', in *In the light of medieval Spain*, pp. 1-31.

obscures, it is at once a creative process in the present. Maya Soifer attests to the very malleability of *convivencia*: it can be manipulated and reformulated to allow for new explorations of interfaith contact. As she puts it 'convivencia can be anything and everything'.¹¹¹ It is exactly that, which has allowed *convivencia* to be reshaped and exported into the popular domain by Lowney and Menocal.

How exactly do we reconcile the *Estoria de España* and the question of *convivencia*? First of all, we must concede that both involve the process of moulding the past in the present, in order to meet a particular end. We shall explore this process in greater detail in the case of the *Estoria de España*.¹¹² But for now, it suffices to say that Alfonso X's history was a sequencing of past events, focusing primarily on political and military history. The *Estoria* charts the rise and fall of the different civilisations that held a stake in Spanish history. Later sections of the history narrate the decline of Visigothic rule, the ascendancy of Spanish Islam and the gradual 'reconquest' of *al-Andalus* by the Christians. The history of Christian-Muslim contact between the eighth and thirteenth centuries is heavily dependent upon the work of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's *De Rebus Hispanie*. Both the *Estoria* and *De Rebus Hispanie* stress the emergent supremacy of Castile-Leon, and the Christian victory over Islam.¹¹³

As for *convivencia*, historians have used this term to explain processes of acculturation, co-operation and coexistence among Christians, Muslims and Jews at that time. It has a tendency towards the optimistic: it seems to favour the constructive relations among the faiths. It retells social interactions, art history and miscellaneous past events to illustrate cultural symbiosis and exchange. Scholars have reformulated

¹¹¹ Soifer, 'Beyond *convivencia*', p. 21.

¹¹² For the broader political aims of Alfonso's history writing enterprise, see chapter 2. Chapter 3 explains the moulding and shaping of the historical narratives of the three Muslim figures, each with its own distinct political and historiographical agenda.

¹¹³ See chapter 3.

convivencia in different contexts and for different purposes – academic, political and popular alike. The compilers of the *Estoria de España* told one story of Christians and Muslims; modern historians have told another. The *Estoria* projects the political and military exchanges at the frontier; *convivencia* offers us the cultural, social and art history of the frontier.

In order to make greater sense of the paradoxes that we find in medieval Iberia, we must scrutinise the argument that a historian of *convivencia* might offer. A scholar might well emphasise the free practice of religion granted to Muslims and Jews by Alfonso X, and claim this to be an example of a tolerant *convivencia*. We might pick out Alfonso's entourage of Muslim and Jewish intellectuals, his protection of non-Christian merchants, his school of Arabic and his translations of the Quran as evidence of some degree of harmony. We might well project our own subjectivity into the matter, and argue the case of Alfonso X in a positive light. It would certainly make for an inspiring television documentary! Yet a closer exploration would reveal practicality, politics, tradition and continuity, financial constraint, economic pragmatism and cultural supremacy as possible motivating factors in Alfonso's treatment of minorities.¹¹⁴

We might find all kinds of examples of co-operation and exchange, to create a given account or theory of interfaith coexistence. In this sense, *convivencia* historiography itself becomes a 'narrative'. Modern historians become compilers, selecting the events that help solidify a particular stance. However, a critical eye is needed when faced with any '*convivencia* narrative'. As García Fitz has illustrated, we must explore the vestiges of a peaceful coexistence one by one, paying heed to other contexts that gave rise to them.

¹¹⁴ These factors are integral to understanding the portrayal of Muslims in Alfonso's works. Refer especially to chapter 2's discussion of Muslims in the *Siete Partidas*, in addition to the final section 'Understanding the portrayal of...' in each case study in chapter 3.

Where *convivencia* deals with the history of Christian contact with Muslims, the *Estoria* rather represents the history of Christian writing and 'self-expression'. Following the distinction made by Brian Catlos, the *Estoria* might be treated as a repository of Christian 'thought' concerning Muslims.¹¹⁵ In this sense, the manuscripts survive as historical artefacts revealing Christian portrayals of Spanish Islam. When reading Alfonsine accounts of Muslims, we can observe something of medieval attitudes to Muslims. Just as with any modern '*convivencia* narrative', we can only make sense of what we read by drilling down and exploring the component parts in their contexts. With the *Estoria* as our repository of Christian thought, we have chosen and separated three Muslim protagonists with lengthy portrayals. The life of the Prophet Muhammad is a highly critical portrayal. The characterisations of al-Mansur and al-Mamun are significantly more dignified, and endow these two rulers with a degree of virtue.

The *Estoria de España* is a work of historical compilation. This means that the narratives contained within have been constructed from a number of sources. The *Estoria* therefore implicates the hands and minds of writers *other* than those who penned Alfonso X's history. It also suggests that content has been purposefully reformulated by Alfonso's chroniclers. We must explore both of these aspects of the redaction process, in order to understand the *how* and the *why* of these portrayals of Muslims. And we should not neglect to mention the wider intentions of the king's political and cultural project. We find ourselves mirroring the process for assessing the question of harmony and 'tolerance': isolating a particular moment of interest from the wider panorama, and critically analysing it in a variety of contexts. With a close

¹¹⁵ Catlos makes the distinction between Muslims in Latin Christian 'thought' (theology and ideology), 'word' (law and administration) and 'deed' (economic, cultural and social activity). *The Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom*, ch. 8, 9 and 10.

examination of the *Estoria* narratives of Muhammad, al-Mansur and al-Mamun, we find separate instances of disdain for Islamic beliefs, admiration of leadership and exemplification of loyalty.

1.5 *Islam and Muslims in late medieval literature*

Let us now turn our attentions to the writers of the Middle Ages. In order to understand Alfonso X's attitudes to Muslims, we must not isolate him from the wider literary culture of Christian Iberia. As such, a brief survey of the literature of late medieval Iberia will help reveal the common and conventional attitudes towards Islam.¹¹⁶ (My use of the term 'literature' here excludes chronicles, which are dealt with separately in section 1.6 of this chapter. I make this distinction on a purely practical basis for this introductory chapter. Whilst Iberian chronicles are of course also literature, I have isolated them as a specific textual continuum of highly interrelated erudite histories, within which the *Estoria de España* falls. Accordingly, a later section will deal with chronicle tradition separately.) This overview demonstrates the breadth of attitudes towards Muslims: though they were frequently presented as the arch rivals of the Christians, at other times they were presented as friends and allies, and idealised as gracious and gallant knights. This is very much in line with the range of attitudes found in Alfonso X's own writings.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ The consideration of epic tradition is particularly relevant, since Alfonso X incorporated vernacular poetry into the *Estoria de España*. See the case of al-Mansur in chapter 3.

¹¹⁷ The range of attitudes in Alfonso's writings will be explored in detail across this thesis: chapter 2 will examine attitudes to Muslims in the *Partidas* and the *Cantigas*; chapter 3 will focus on a range of different narratives of

It is often the case that literature was defined by the rivalry among faiths. The thirteenth-century *Poema de Fernán González* fairly captures that enmity between Christianity and Islam.¹¹⁸ The poem tells the story of the famed Count Fernán González of Castile, who faced the mighty armies of the caliphate during the tenth century. Heavily outnumbered by the Muslim forces, the count is aided by a series of supernatural and divine interventions. The triumph of Christianity is assured, and the glory falls to Castile. The author includes the typical denigration of Islam: Muhammad preached evil, and led many astray with his teachings.¹¹⁹ At the same time, it acknowledges the superiority of Cordoban power. It specifically mentions the humiliation of the northern kingdoms, who were forced to hand over one hundred beautiful Christian brides to be married off among the Muslim elite.¹²⁰ The poem's image of Cordoban prowess was later developed by Alonso de Fuentes in his *Libro de quarenta cantos pelegrinos*. He characterised the Andalusí emir Abd al-Rahman III as 'próspero y en ufanía', demanding one hundred and eighty brides from the Christians, along with an annual tribute. The work inflates the glory of Cordoba, and in doing so presents the great adversity faced by Count Fernán González.¹²¹

The *Siete Infantes de Lara* is particularly interesting in its variety of portrayals of Muslims.¹²² It is a story of family feuding among Castilian nobles (Ruy Velázquez and Gonzalo Gústioz), in which Muslim protagonists play a key role. Ruy Velázquez pens a letter to al-Mansur, ruler of Cordoba, encouraging him to strike down his rival Gonzalo

Muslims in the *Estoria*; chapter 4 brings each of these texts and narratives together to make sense of the breadth of attitudes expressed across Alfonso's writings.

¹¹⁸ *Poema de Fernán González*. Ed. by A. Zamora Vicente (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1946). Henceforth referred to as *PFG*.

¹¹⁹ *PFG*, vv. 7a-8d (pp. 2-3).

¹²⁰ *PFG*, vv. 104a-d (pp. 30-31).

¹²¹ Alonso de Fuentes, *Libro de los quarenta cantos pelegrinos* (1564), in *Romanceros de los condes de Castilla y de los infantes de Lara*, ed. by D. Catalán and others, *Romancero tradicional de las lenguas hispánicas*, vol. 2 (Madrid: Seminario Menéndez Pidal; Gredos, 1963), pp. 55-56.

¹²² The epic is fossilized in the *Estoria de España*. See chapter 3 of this thesis, on the *PFG* as a source for the narrative of al-Mansur.

Gústioz. Al-Mansur prefers not to kill Gonzalo Gústioz, and instead imprisons him. The Cordoban chamberlain also provides Gonzalo Gústioz with a Muslim female attendant. The captive has a child by his attendant; their son Mudarra González later avenges the demise of his father. The poem includes the inevitable conflict among Muslims and Christians. The seven *infantes* of Lara face a horde of Muslim troops, and slay countless of their adversaries, before they themselves are killed and beheaded. The epic portrays the clemency of the mighty al-Mansur, and once more attests to the military prowess of the caliphate.¹²³

The fourteenth-century *Dança de la Muerte* is a prime example of disdainful characterisations of conquered Jewish and Muslim communities.¹²⁴ Specifically, the *Dança* portrays the leaders of the respective communities: a Jewish rabbi and a Muslim *alfaqui* (expert in Islamic law). The Muslim and the Jew feature as part of the *Dança's* cross-section of the many tiers of Christian society. The rabbi is characterised by his great error in rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. He is presented as having obsessively studied the Talmud, without any regard for the Truth, as the Christian author would have it. For this grave error, Death asserts that the rabbi's afterlife will be one of punishment and suffering.¹²⁵ As for the *alfaqui*, the charge is one of indulgence and carnal pleasures. A common topos of the time, the Muslim is presented as a sensual creature.¹²⁶ The *alfaqui* pleads with Death, saying that he has a 'discrete' and 'gracious' wife, in whom he finds his life's pleasure. If he must die and lose everything, he begs that he may be able to bring his sexual partner with him. Death ignores these requests,

¹²³ See chapter 3 case study of al-Mansur.

¹²⁴ *Dança General de la Muerte*. Ed. by V. Infantes (Madrid: Visor, 1982). There are two surviving copies of the Castilian *Dança*: one manuscript from the fourteenth-century, and a print version from 1520. Here both are reproduced in Infantes' edition (the fourteenth-century version, followed by the sixteenth-century print).

¹²⁵ *Dança General*, vv. 568-583 (pp. 91-93); vv. 640-655 (pp. 181-183).

¹²⁶ See: J.M. Solá-Solé, 'El rabí y el alfaquí en la Dança general de la Muerte', *Romance Philology*, 18(3) (1965), 272-283; L.P. Harvey, 'The alfaquí in La dança general de la muerte', *Hispanic Review*, 41(3) (1973), 498-510.

and replies that the *alfaqui* will end up in hell. No longer will he practise pilgrimage to Mecca, nor will he enjoy the feast of Eid.¹²⁷

The celebrated Castilian epic *el Cantar de Mio Cid* serves as a valuable repository for Christian treatment of Islam in the Peninsula.¹²⁸ It offers us depictions of conflict, diplomacy and alliance with Muslims. Naturally, these portrayals are a reflection of the complex nature of affairs in the eleventh century. This was a time of Almoravid incursions, inflamed with religious rhetoric of holy war on both the Christian and Muslim sides. It was equally a moment of Christian-Muslim co-operation, in the form of protection pacts, vassalage agreements and mercenary support.

Images of conflict and defeat of the Muslim dominate the epic of the Cid. Soon after his exile from Castile, Rodrigo de Vivar approaches the frontier settlement of Alcocer. His small company outmanoeuvres the Muslim forces, and slaughters three hundred troops 'sin piedad'.¹²⁹ The Cid then sees off the efforts of Andalusí commanders Fariz and Galve, this time dispatching a three thousand-strong force. It is portrayed as a vicious and brutal clash, with so many Christian flags spattered with the blood of the Muslims.¹³⁰ The battle explicitly suggests religious struggle: the Christian troops are said to call out in the name of St. James, and Muhammad is the war cry of the Muslims.¹³¹ The *cantar* triumphantly states:

¡Tan buen día por la cristiandad,
ca fuyén los moros de la part!¹³²

¹²⁷ *Dança General*, vv. 584-599 (pp. 93-95); vv. 656-671 (pp. 183-185).

¹²⁸ Here I refer to Alberto Montaner's edition of the epic: *Cantar de Mio Cid* (Barcelona: Centro para la edición de los clásicos españoles, Galaxia Gutenberg, Círculo de lectores, Instituto Cervantes, 2007). Henceforth referred to as *CMC*.

¹²⁹ *CMC*, v. 604 (p. 40).

¹³⁰ v. 729 (p. 47). The verse reads: '[Veriedes] tantos pendones blancos / salir vermejos en sangre'.

¹³¹ v. 731 (p. 47).

¹³² vv. 770-71 (p. 49).

The Cid's wondrous victories against Islam include the conquest of Valencia, and the defeat of multiple onslaughts by Muslim forces.¹³³ The Cid's forces are outnumbered more than ten to one by the Moroccans, but it is Islam that suffers a crushing defeat. There is nothing to suggest an inherent weakness on the part of the enemy: the Muslim are strong fighters, and great in number. Moorish commanders are wounded, but live to fight another day.¹³⁴ However, it is the decisive defeat of King Búcar that appears to be the climax of the Christian-Muslim contest. In this final showdown, the Christian bishop Jerónimo leads the attack. He insists on holding a frontline position, expressing his desire to kill Moors.¹³⁵ Over the course of the attack, the Muslims are butchered, their heads strewn across the ground.¹³⁶ And when the Almoravid commander ('king' Búcar) decides to retreat, he is dramatically pursued by the Cid. Moments from escape, the Moroccan warrior is dealt his deathblow: the Cid slashes through Búcar's helmet, cutting him down to the waist.¹³⁷

Different aspects of the interfaith encounter can be found in the *cantar*. Despite the successful capture and defence of Alcocer, the Cid eventually sells the stronghold to nearby Muslim lords. When he leaves, the Moors of Alcocer are distraught. They weep for the departure of their Christian lord, who has done so much for them.¹³⁸ The case of the Cid and his Christian rival Ramón Berenguer demonstrates that warfare was not solely determined along religious lines. When the Cid leads incursions into the lands of

¹³³ The King of Seville attempts to retake Valencia with 30,000 troops (v. 1224, p. 78); the Almoravids of Morocco send a force of 50,000 effectives (v. 1626, p. 106), followed by another massive army camped out in 50,000 tents (v. 2313, p. 144).

¹³⁴ This is the case of Fariz and the King of Seville.

¹³⁵ Don Jerónimo announces: '...salí de mi tierra e vinvos buscar, / por sabor que avía de algún moro matar.' (vv. 2371-2372, p. 148). The notion of holy war is plainly visible in an earlier siege of Valencia by the Moroccans, when the bishop offers remission of sins for those who die in battle against the Muslims: 'El que aqui muriere lididando de cara, / préndol' yo los pecados e Dios le abrá el alma.' (vv. 1704-1705, pp. 109)

¹³⁶ 'Tantas cabeças con yelmos que por el campo caen' (v. 2405, p. 150).

¹³⁷ '...un grant cope dado-l' ha, / las carbonclas del yelmo tollidas ge le ha, / cortól' el yelmo e, librado todo lo ál, / fata la cintura el espada llegado ha. / Mató a Bucar, el rey de allén mar' (vv. 2421-2425, pp. 150-151).

¹³⁸ vv. 851-861 (pp. 53-54).

the Count of Barcelona, he faces the wrath of the Catalans. They prepare to do battle: both sides are comprised of mixed forces of Christian and Muslim troops, fighting for their respective Christian lord.¹³⁹ And it is the person of Abengalbón in which we find a prime example of friendship and alliance between Christians and Muslims. Abengalbón is the lord of Molina, a strategic ally of the Cid. On three occasions, the lord of Molina acts as a gracious host and well-armed military escort for the Cid's men. He is a designated ally,¹⁴⁰ even described as an 'unfailing friend' of the Castilians.¹⁴¹

Here it is important to keep the concept of the chivalric code in mind, when assessing the behaviours and qualities of the medieval warrior class. This code of ethics among knights and noblemen developed across Western Europe during the Middle Ages. Alongside the exercise of military activity, knights and noblemen were expected to display ideal qualities such as bravery, generosity, loyalty, wisdom, honour and piety.¹⁴² The ethos of chivalry also began to take hold in the Iberian Peninsula, and became visible in literary traditions throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹⁴³ It is in this light that we see the idealised and virtuous behaviours displayed by Abengalbón. In contrast, the Christian knights of Carrión are presented as dishonourable and malicious. When Abengalbón hosts them during their return from Valencia, the *infantes* of Carrión plot to kill the Moor and take his riches. When Abengalbón finds out, he refrains from destroying them, out of respect for the Cid – they are, after all, Rodrigo's sons-in-law.

¹³⁹ vv. 968 (p. 61), 988 (p. 62).

¹⁴⁰ The Cid says of Abengalbón: 'mio amigo es de paz' (v. 1464, p. 95).

¹⁴¹ Alvar Fáñez affably remarks: 'Ya Avengalvón amigo-l' sodes sin falla!' (v. 1528, p. 99)

¹⁴² For an overview of chivalry, see: J. Flori, *Chevaliers et chevalerie au Moyen Age* (Paris: Hachette, 1998); R. Kaeuper, *Chivalry and violence in medieval Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); M. Keen, *Chivalry* (London: Yale University Press, 2005).

¹⁴³ For the development of chivalry in medieval Iberian literary tradition, see: D. Porrinas González, 'Caballería y guerra en la Edad Media castellano-leonesa: el "Libro del caballero Zifar" y su contexto', *Medievalismo*, 15 (2005), 39-70; S. Barton, 'The "Discovery of Aristocracy" in twelfth-century Spain: portraits of the secular elite in the "Poem of Almería"', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 83(6) (2006), 453-468; E. Beck, "Porque oyéndolas les crescian los corazones": chivalry and the power of stories in Alfonso X and Ramon Llull', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 88(2) (2011), 159-176.

The Christian knights are firmly reprehended as traitors, and are sent on their way in absolute disgrace.¹⁴⁴

The honourable and virtuous Moor does in fact recur in later Spanish literature. At the very latest reaches of the medieval literary culture – otherwise termed the early modern –, the finest example of the virtuous Moor can be found in the sixteenth-century novel *El Abencerraje*.¹⁴⁵ This is the story of Abindarráez, a lusty Granadan knight driven by his forbidden love for the ravishing Moorish Jarifa. Whilst on his way to be with her, he runs into a company of Castilian knights at the frontier. He fights bravely, throwing four Castilians from their horses. The Christian captain, Rodrigo de Narváez seizes him. But when Narváez learns of the young Moor's passion for Jarifa, he allows Abindarráez to seek out his lover. The Muslim knight is released, on condition that he return to captivity immediately afterward. Abindarráez upholds this promise, and by doing so earns his freedom. Narváez goes to great lengths to ensure the happiness of the Moorish lovers, and maintains a lasting friendship with them.

In the novel, it is Rodrigo de Narváez who is exalted above all others for his clemency, generosity and virtue. In parallel, the Muslim Abindarráez is presented as a worthy and virtuous knight. The Granadan is of excellent physique and has an attractive face, and his appearance is exemplary: he is exquisitely dressed and looks magnificent upon his horse.¹⁴⁶ He is of noble birth: the Abencerrajes are an upstanding family of high repute.¹⁴⁷ When Abindarraéz is ambushed by five Castilians, he proves himself to

¹⁴⁴ v. 2681 (p. 164).

¹⁴⁵ The collaboration of Francisco López Estrada and John E. Keller provides an excellent bilingual version of Antonio de Vallegas' work: *El Abencerraje*. University of North Carolina, Studies in Comparative Literature, 33 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964). Whilst this is rather termed 'early modern', it is on a continuum of 'medieval' literary tradition, and cannot be viewed as entirely divorced from the literary culture of previous centuries.

¹⁴⁶ *Abencerraje*, p. 46.

¹⁴⁷ The Abencerrajes are described as 'la flor de todo aquel reino', owing to their gentility, good temperament, public approval and victory in battle. However, the family is falsely accused of conspiring to overthrow the King of Granada, for which many members of the family are executed (p. 52).

be a worthy opponent. Most importantly, the Muslim knight shows great virtue, by honouring his agreement with Narváez to return to captivity.¹⁴⁸

At first glance it may seem paradoxical that *Abencerraje* was the literary product of a society that was expunging its Andalusí culture. In 1492 and again in 1609, the authorities took radical measures to expel minority communities of Jews, Muslims and converts. At the same time, early modern literature demonstrated a degree of *maurophilia* with regards to the past.¹⁴⁹ Muslims continued to appear in literature, as remnants of a rapidly vanishing culture. Moors represented the exotic, and as *Abencerraje* demonstrates, they could be idealised as gallant, noble and virtuous long after the expulsions.¹⁵⁰ This was a continuation and intensification of a literary practice that had begun in earlier centuries, in which medieval writers occasionally idealised Muslim protagonists on the basis of heroic and noble qualities.

1.6 Islam and Muslims in chronicle tradition

To maximise our contextualisation of Alfonso X's narratives of Muslims, we will now consider Christian chronicle tradition. This is particularly important for our study, since much of the content of earlier chronicles was incorporated into Alfonso's *Estoria de España*. A brief examination of the Iberian chronicle continuum provides further

¹⁴⁸ *Abencerraje*, p. 68.

¹⁴⁹ The term 'literary maurophilia' was originally used by Georges Cirot to describe this vein found in sixteenth-century literature. Cirot produced a series of articles entitled 'La maurophilie littéraire en Espagne au XVIe siècle' in *Bulletin Hispanique* (1938-1944). A more recent study includes: B. Fuchs, *Exotic nation: Maurophilia and the construction of early modern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

¹⁵⁰ See: M. S. Carrasco Urgoiti, *El moro de Granada en la literatura (del siglo XV al XX)* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1956); 'Notas sobre el romance morisco y la comedia de Lope de Vega', *Revista de Filología Española*, 62(1) (1982) 51-76.

evidence of the wide range of attitudes to Muslims, commonly found in medieval Christian historiography. As we have previously seen in wider literary tradition, Muslims were both friends and foes – partly as a reflection of the historical reality of Christian-Muslim contact. Not only were they the Christians' sworn enemies and a plague upon the land, but also they were reliable friends and idealised as noble warriors.

Medieval chroniclers, as the historians of the day, were faced with the task of bringing some order to the worldly events of their past. In doing so, they came face to face with the realities of Christian-Muslim relations in the Peninsula. Retracing their past, chroniclers first had to confront the arrival of Islam in Spain. In the early eighth century, Berber-Arab forces from North Africa had overrun the Peninsula and put an end to Visigothic rule. Medieval Christian historians universally decried the Muslim conquest. To them, it was a great calamity, a disaster of epic proportions. Soon after the conquest, the *Crónica Mozárabe de 754* depicted scenes of tremendous cruelty: the land was devastated, beautiful cities were burnt to cinders, nobles were crucified and the young were dismembered.¹⁵¹ The chronicler lamented the conquest, evoking such terms as 'peril', 'sorrow', 'shipwreck' and 'ruin'.¹⁵² This sadness was shared by subsequent chroniclers, who mourned the fall of the Christian Visigoths.

A very literary portrayal of the conquerors can be found in Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's *De Rebus Hispanie*.¹⁵³ His description of the Berber-Arabs is one of alien 'others':

¹⁵¹ 'Ciuitates decoras igne concremando precipitat, seniores et potentes seculi cruci adiudicat, iubenēs atque lactantes pugionibus trucidat.' *Crónica mozárabe de 754*. Ed. and trans. by J. López Pereira. *Textos Medievales*, 58 (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1980), pp. 70-72.

¹⁵² The language of the chronicle reads: 'sorrowful Spain' (*infelicem Spaniam*), 'such peril' (*tanta pericula*), 'rude shipwreck' (*importuna naufragia*) and the 'ruin of Spain' (*Spanie ruinas*), p. 72.

¹⁵³ Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada. *Historia de rebus Hispanie sive Historica gothica*. Ed. by J. Fernández Valverde, *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 72 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987).

The men were dressed in scarlet, and the reigns of their horses were as fire; their faces were as black as pitch – even the finest man among them was jet black. Their eyes glowed under their headdresses; they rode swiftly, as if their horses were leopards; they were like wolves in the night.¹⁵⁴

The portrayal is a striking image of the Umayyad forces, surging across the Peninsula. In particular, the depiction suggests the 'evil' nature of the invaders. The blackness of their skin is not simply a reference to their actual complexion: instead, it is a device that contrasts the African from the European.¹⁵⁵ Nor is their exaggerated darkness intended to be flattering. Their glowing eyes and bright red attire brings with it connotations of menace and villainy. For Jiménez de Rada, the conquerors were wolves preying on Christian Spain.

For all the pity that chroniclers transmitted through their writings, historians also offered explanations for the perceived calamity. The guiding principle was that all earthly events were in line with the Divine will. In short, God had ordained the spread of Islam and the collapse of Christian rule. But why had God worked in this way? The *Crónica Profética* looks to the Bible, citing the book of Ezekiel: the prophecy tells that Ismael would one day occupy the land of Gog. The Muslims were taken to be the sons of Ismael, whilst Spain was held to be the land of Gog.¹⁵⁶ Another explanation was that it was a punishment, in response to the sins of the Visigoths.¹⁵⁷ The *Crónica de Alfonso*

¹⁵⁴ My translation. 'Viri exercitus in coccineis et equorum ignee sunt abene et eorum facies ut nigredo; uultus gloria quasi olle et eorum oculi uelat ignis; uelocior pardis miles eius et lupo crudelior uespertino.' III, XXII (pp 106). In order to translate this I have drawn on the corresponding vernacular translation of this passage in the *Estoria de España*, as well as the translation of *De Rebus* by Fernández Valverde: *Historia de los hechos de España* (Madrid: Alianza, 1989), p. 150.

¹⁵⁵ In reality, some North African and southern Spanish complexions are not particularly divergent.

¹⁵⁶ In *Crónicas asturianas: Crónica de Alfonso III, Crónica Albeldense*, ed. and trans. by J. Gil Fernández and J. L. Morales (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), pp. 185-186.

¹⁵⁷ A full treatment of the Muslim conquest as divine punishment in Iberian chronicle tradition can be found in: A. García Sanjuán, 'Las causas de la conquista islámica de la península ibérica según las crónicas medievales', *MEAH. Sección árabe-Islam*, 53 (2004), 101-127.

III provides an elaborate account of the sins of the penultimate Visigothic king.¹⁵⁸ We read that the behaviour of the Christian King Wittiza (692/4-710) was particularly scandalous: not only did he have many wives and concubines, but he also attempted to dissolve ecclesiastical assemblies – he even forced the clergy to break their vows of celibacy and get married! These were grave offences, and God delivered a fitting punishment: the destruction of the Visigoths.¹⁵⁹ Another explanation for the Muslim conquest centres on the protagonism of a disaffected Christian noble, named Count Julian. According to the *Historia Silense*, King Roderic (710-712), the last of the Visigoths, raped the daughter of Count Julian. The count took his revenge by inviting the Berber-Arabs across the Gibraltar Straits and into Spain.¹⁶⁰

Chronicles were principally concerned with political affairs: the affairs of kings, counts, lords and bishops. Much of the material we encounter includes military affairs, in which Muslims appear as the natural rival: as an "enemy of the faith", and as the 'scourge' of Spain. Many different terms are used that imply the religious opposition between the Christians and Muslims. They are, amongst other terms, Hagarites, Saracens and Ismaelites.¹⁶¹ Chroniclers did not shy away from inserting hostile rhetoric to denigrate Islam. The *Historia Silense* is full of religiously-charged language: Spain is seen to be occupied by 'Pagans', and territory was to be taken from their 'sacreligious hands' and made property of the 'faithful'.¹⁶² The same chronicle refers to Islam as 'the superstitious sect of Muhammad' (*mahometica superstitiosa secta*).¹⁶³ The *Historia*

¹⁵⁸ Here we are referring to the *Versión rotense* of the chronicle, which offers a more extensive account than the *Versión de Sebastián*. In *Crónicas asturianas*.

¹⁵⁹ *Crónicas asturianas*, p. 118.

¹⁶⁰ *Historia silense*. Ed. by J. Pérez de Urbel and A. G. Ruiz-Zorilla, Textos, 30 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1959), 15-17, pp. 127-128.

¹⁶¹ 'Agareni', 'sarraceni' and 'ismaeliti' are recurrent throughout Latin chronicles.

¹⁶² '...ab eorum sacrilegis manibus retractas et in Christi fidem conuersas...' (p. 119); '...a paganorum manibus erueretur...' (p. 120).

¹⁶³ *Historia silense*, 36, p. 146.

Compostelana likewise considers Islam to be a 'heathen superstition' (*gentili superstitione*).¹⁶⁴ Its twelfth-century author envisions that one day God will 'wipe out this plague'.¹⁶⁵ At the time of writing, Christian Spain had begun to advance southwards, and had met fierce resistance from the Almoravids of Morocco. The chronicler recounts a campaign involving Galician troops, who had set out against the 'perfidious unbelievers' (*perfidiam gentilium*) at Lisbon (1094/5):

The Saracens amassed their massive forces around the Christian encampment near Lisbon. The Almoravids encircled them in great number, and laid siege to them. What a horde of unbelievers had come together! So many columns of barbarians had converged to lay waste to the Christians!¹⁶⁶

With the development of vernacular histories – notably the *Estoria de España* –, the diverse Latin terms for the Muslim were replaced with the common designation of 'moro', or Moor. The roots of the term lie in the Latin *Maurus*, designating the native inhabitants of the Roman provinces of *Mauretania* (modern-day Morocco and Algeria). Whilst this still carried with it connotations of 'otherness' and of the African continent, its roots were not biblical, as is the case for *Saracen*, *Haragite* and *Ismaelite*.¹⁶⁷ The declining use of biblical connotations also coincided with the reduced existential anxiety of the Christians. By the mid-thirteenth century, *al-Andalus* had been reduced to the southern coast of the Peninsula. The conquests of Fernando el Santo and Jaime I were regarded as decisive victories for Christianity. Only the Emirate of Granada

¹⁶⁴ *Historia Compostelana*. Ed. by E. Falque Rey, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, 70 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987), p. 8.

¹⁶⁵ 'Ante autem illius pestis expulsionem...' (p. 8).

¹⁶⁶ My translation. '... Sarraceni collectis undique uiribus Christicolarum castra prope Olisbonam circumdantes immensa obsederunt bellatorum multitudine. Tanta confluerat incredula gentis multitudo, tanta conuenerant barbarorum agmina ad Christianorum perniciem impetum facturi.' LIII, p. 316. For my translation I have also drawn on the modern Spanish edition of the *Historia Compostelana* by M. Suárez (Santiago: Editorial Porto, 1950), p. 327.

¹⁶⁷ N. Barbour, 'The significance of the word *Maurus*, with its derivatives *Moro* and *Moor*, and of the other terms used by medieval writers in Latin to describe the inhabitant of Muslim Spain', *Biblos*, 46 (1970), 253-266. The author suggests that the Latin terms represented an erudite culture, and that poems like the *Cid* were aimed at popular audiences, and as such used the more common expression *moro* (pp. 263-264).

remained, the last bastion of independent Islamic rule. Even this kingdom had been forced into a degree of submission as a *de facto* client state, paying vast sums of tribute to shore up its survival. The Christians were more confident of their victory over Spanish Islam, and their rhetoric is accordingly less inflammatory, since the Muslim threat within the Peninsula had diminished.¹⁶⁸

In any case, Christian chroniclers could not always rely on the rhetoric of conflict and enmity, when speaking of relations with *al-Andalus*. As we have already seen, the historical reality of the frontier was that Christian and Muslim militaries occasionally worked in co-operation. Medieval writers could not escape this fact.¹⁶⁹ The military co-operation between the eleventh-century *taifa* kingdoms and the northern kingdoms, for example, was inescapable. In the *Historia Roderici* we are presented with the narrative of the Castilian alliance with the Taifa of Seville. The Cid is forced to defend Seville from the aggressions of Granada, which is also allied with a group of Christian magnates.¹⁷⁰ Here the chronicle demonstrates that an attack against Seville was an attack against Leon-Castile – Seville was at that moment a tributary of King Alfonso VI.¹⁷¹ The agenda this time is the denunciation of the enemies of the kingdom, rather than the "enemies of the faith".

Another example of a potential conflict of interests is the Cid's service as a mercenary for Islam. After his banishment from Castile in 1081, Rodrigo went into exile in the

¹⁶⁸ Generally speaking, the struggle to restore Spain to Christian domination had been achieved. External threats remained, however: Muslim expeditionary forces from North Africa continued to be a source of conflict, in alliance with the kingdom of Granada. Furthermore, the conquered Muslim populations of Castile and Aragon threatened internal stability. This anxiety is more discernible in legal codes than in histories: see section 2.2 of chapter 2 for Alfonso X's anxieties as read in the *Siete Partidas*.

¹⁶⁹ Fermín Miranda García has produced an excellent article that we have drawn on here to develop the argument. See: 'Legitimar al enemigo (musulmán) en las crónicas hispanocristianas (Ss. XI-XII)', in *Cristianos contra musulmanes en la Edad Media peninsular. Bases ideológicas y doctrinales de una confrontación (siglos X-XIV)*, ed. by C. de Ayala Martínez & I. C. F. Fernandes (Madrid: Edições Colibri, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2014).

¹⁷⁰ *Historia Roderici*. Ed. by Emma Falque Rey, in *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII, Pars I*, ed. by E. Falque Rey, J. Gil and A. Maya, *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 71 (Turnhout: Brepolis, 1990), ch. 7-9, pp. 49-50.

¹⁷¹ Miranda García, 'Legitimar al enemigo', p. 264.

Taifa of Zaragoza, serving the Hudid rulers of that kingdom. The chronicler of the *Historia Roderici* writes:

Al-Mutamin held Rodrigo in great esteem. He placed him in a high-ranking position, elevating him to the very top of the kingdom, above all others throughout the land. The king went to him for all of his advice.¹⁷²

One might argue that this is nothing other than aiding the "enemies of the faith"! Of course, the chronicler was not about to concede this. Instead, the Cid's service at the court of al-Mutamin is presented in a way that is favourable to the Christian hero. The Cid is presented as an outstanding asset to his lord, commanding great authority as the king's right-hand man.

Zafadola (Sayf al-Dawla), the last of the Hudid rulers of Zaragoza, is remembered in the *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris* as a close friend and ally of Alfonso VII.¹⁷³ After the city of Zaragoza fell to the Almoravids, its former ruler went into the service of the King of Castile. The author of the chronicle of Alfonso VII ennobles Zafadola: his lineage as 'the finest pedigree among the Muslim kings of *al-Andalus*'.¹⁷⁴ Zafadola's co-operation is welcomed by Leon-Castile. The chronicle designates Zafadola as a friend (*amicus*),¹⁷⁵ whose loyalty lies not with his co-religionists – the Almoravids – but firmly with King Alfonso VII. Zafadola is portrayed as a valuable intermediary with the Muslims of the Guadalquivir valley, brokering the Christian-Muslim effort to overthrow

¹⁷² My translation. 'Iste uero Almuctaman multum diligebat Rodericum et preposuit et exaltauit eum super regnum suum et super omnem terram suam utens omnibus consilio eius.' *Historia Roderici*, ch. 12, p. 52.

¹⁷³ *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*. Ed. by A. Maya, in *Chronica Hispana Saeculi XII, Pars I*, ed. by E. Falque Rey, J. Gil and A. Maya, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, 71 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990). Henceforth *CAI*.

¹⁷⁴ 'Rex ex maximo semine regum Agarenorum', *CAI*, I, 27, p. 162. See A. Williams, 'Images of Biblical Conflict in Castile, c.1150–c.1240: a Comparison of the *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris* and the *Chronica Latina Regum Castellae*', *Al-Masaq*, 27(1) (2015), 77-92 (specifically p. 85).

¹⁷⁵ King Alfonso VII himself speaks of this friendship: 'Zafadole amici mei'. II, ch. 98, p. 243.

Almoravid rule in *al-Andalus*.¹⁷⁶ He is also present at Alfonso's imperial coronation.¹⁷⁷ And when Zafadola meets his death, King Alfonso is visibly saddened at the loss of his loyal vassal.¹⁷⁸ Despite this display of cordial relations among the Christian king and his Muslim ally, the chronicle equally depicts great brutality towards Islam under the reign of Alfonso VII. During Leonese raiding around Jaén and Úbeda, mosques are destroyed, Islamic scripture is burnt and Islamic jurists are massacred.¹⁷⁹

As we have seen in the wider literature and poetry of Christian Iberia, Muslims could be presented as formidable warriors, as noble and chivalric, and even as virtuous. This is similarly visible within chronicle tradition. The *Crónica Mozárabe de 754* recognises the extraordinary victories of the Umayyad caliph al-Walid I (705-715) in North Africa and India, and against the Byzantine Empire. The chronicler concedes that:

He was a man of great wisdom in military exploits, even without the aid of the Divine.¹⁸⁰

The chronicler also described Abdul Rahman al-Ghafiqi, who led deep incursions into French territory, as a 'great warrior' (*uir belliger*).¹⁸¹ Centuries later, the Amirid general al-Mansur was widely acknowledged as having laid many crushing defeats upon the Christian kingdoms. Furthermore, he was remembered as a skilful politician. Particularly, chroniclers noted his ability to earn the respect of both Muslims and Christians. The twelfth-century *Crónica Najerense* portrayed him as liberal in his administration of justice. In the event of a dispute between a Muslim and a Christian, he

¹⁷⁶ Zafadola advises a fellow *princeps Agarenorum* to mobilise his forces against the Almoravids and await military support from Alfonso VII. *CAI*, I, 41, p. 169.

¹⁷⁷ *CAI*, I, 70, p. 182

¹⁷⁸ 'Rex nimium contristatus'. *CAI*, II, 98, p. 243.

¹⁷⁹ *CAI*, II, 36, p. 212.

¹⁸⁰ My translation. 'Vir totius pudentie in exponendis exercitibus in tantum dum diuino expers fabore...' *Crónica mozárabe de 754*, p. 66, 67. For my English translation I also consulted the modern Spanish translation by J. López Pereira that is featured in his edition of the chronicle.

¹⁸¹ *Crónica mozárabe de 754*, p. 94. López Pereira's translation reads 'excelente guerrero' p. 97.

would favour the latter. The chronicler writes that as a result al-Mansur was well regarded, and successfully recruited many Christian soldiers to his armies.¹⁸² This attribute is developed in *De Rebus Hispanie*. Jiménez de Rada asserts that the Amirid was able to use his charms to cajole and manipulate the Christian kingdoms to his advantage.¹⁸³ Whilst he was indeed responsible for widespread destruction throughout the northern kingdoms, we can discern the recognition of al-Mansur's political achievements.

It is not until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that the topos of the chivalric Moor becomes most prominent in Iberian chronicles.¹⁸⁴ The *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI* presents the thirteenth-century Marinid rulers of Morocco as upright, virtuous kings. For Abd al-Haqq I and his descendants we read:

Este rey Abdalface fue el primero de los marines, e fue buen rrey en su ley e muy esforçado e dio çima a grandes fechos [...] e bien anssi fueron todos los otros rreyes muy buenos que descendieron deste linage.¹⁸⁵

The chronicle makes clear that the Muslims were fine warriors. They are referred to as 'muy maestros en las peleas',¹⁸⁶ and they are portrayed as steadfast in battle.¹⁸⁷ The *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos* also creates images of Muslims as noble fighters. The Moors who were gradually conquered during the fifteenth century are credited as

¹⁸² *Crónica Najerense*. Ed. by A. Ubieto Arteta, Textos Medievales, 15 (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1985), II, 63, p. 80.

¹⁸³ *De Rebus Hispanie*, V, XIII, pp. 162-163.

¹⁸⁴ The work of A. García-Valdecasas and R. Beltrán Llavador has been an invaluable source for capturing the incidences of chivalric imagery in later chronicle tradition: 'La maurofilia como ideal caballeresco en la literatura cronística del XIV y XV', *Epos*, 5 (1989), 115-140.

¹⁸⁵ *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI*. Ed. by D. Catalán, vol. 2 (Madrid: Seminario Menéndez Pidal; Gredos, 1977), pp. 201.

¹⁸⁶ Referring to the siege at Gibraltar in 1333. *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI*, vol. 2, p. 62.

¹⁸⁷ 'E los moros como omes de gran esfuerço, maguer que vían caer muchos de los suyos, nonn querian partirse de la pelea ni procurauan de fuyr'. *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI*, vol. 2, p. 275.

having defended their cities 'valientemente'.¹⁸⁸ In particular, the Muslims of Alhama had been willing to die 'por defender su honrra e fazienda e libertad' – gallantry at its finest. The chronicle presents the Muslim defenders of Alhama as a model of chivalry: the Castilian commander leading the assault tells his troops that they ought to imitate the virtue of the Moors.¹⁸⁹ This is, of course, an idealisation of the Muslim. This device was increasingly employed in later maurophile writing, appearing in works such as *Abencerraje*, as we have seen.

1.7 Contradiction and ambivalence in a paradoxical world

At the close of this chapter, what can be said of the historical context and literary tradition in which the *Estoria de España* fits? Over the course of this chapter, the wider historical context has revealed the complexity of Christian-Muslim relations. Furthermore, literary tradition allows us to view the range of Christian attitudes towards Islam. Both elements are vital to our own conclusions later in chapter four of this thesis. In this final section of chapter one, we will introduce the term 'ambivalence' in order to capture the apparent contradictions in historical writing. Furthermore, we will give some consideration to the few scholars who have remarked this ambivalence. Once again, the critical evaluation of modern scholarship will further strengthen our own

¹⁸⁸ *Crónica de los reyes católicos*. Edited by J. de Mato Carriazo (Madrid: J. Molina, 1927). The term recurs throughout the chronicle in reference to the Muslims of the frontier. See García-Valdecasas and Beltrán Llavador, 'La maurofilia como ideal caballeresco', pp. 127-128.

¹⁸⁹ *Crónica de los reyes católicos*, p. 138.

interpretative efforts, helping to justify the methodology for exactly *how* the *Estoria de España* can be used to explore attitudes to Islam.

Thus far we have only scratched the surface of the literature and chronicles of medieval Iberia. To dig any deeper would be verging on developing an entirely separate thesis. But for the purposes of the present study, we can ascertain the culture and literary tradition of which the *Estoria de España* is part. Alfonso X's compilers drew on many of the works that we have seen heretofore: as a result, the content of the *Estoria* is inextricably linked to the literary and historiographical tradition of previous centuries.

What is to be made of this tradition? What ideas do medieval historians appear to express? Put most simply, Islam and its adherents were many things at once. Islam was the wayward moral code of an indulgent people who rejected the Catholic faith. It was the law that had been brought to the Peninsula by alien conquerors, as a divine punishment for the sins of the Visigoths. They were a strong and numerous enemy, who posed an existential threat to the Christian kingdoms that survived the conquest. They were a plague upon the land, to be slayed without pity or mercy. Any recovery of Muslim-held territory was a victory for Christianity, their destruction being ordained by God. Yet among them, there were noble warriors, with whom loyal friendships could be forged. There were Muslims who were an asset to the kingdom, and who could be relied on to serve the interests of the king. The finest among them were of noble birth, and were models of chivalry and gallantry to be emulated by Christian knights.

Addressing the great respect attributed to the Marinids in the *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI*, Diego Catalán made a number of observations. First of all, Christian victory is enhanced through the portrayal of an upright, noble enemy.¹⁹⁰ Put simply, there is

¹⁹⁰ D. Catalán, 'Ideales moriscos en una crónica de 1344', *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, 7(3-4) (1957), 570-582 (p. 575).

more glory in the defeat of a courageous, well-bred Moor. But this is only one small aspect of the narrative. Instead, Catalán believes that there are deeper reflections to be gained from the *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI*. Importantly, the chronicle suggests that Muslim knights lived by the same chivalric codes as their Christian counterparts.¹⁹¹ This suggests that the Muslim rival is something of an equal. Most importantly, Catalán discerns an ideology that places the Divine above Christianity and Islam: religious affiliation takes second place. In the chronicle, God determines the course of events 'sin atender a la religión, sino a la verdad de cada uno'.¹⁹² Catalán concluded that warfare against Muslims was governed by chivalric code, rather than xenophobia or religious hatred:

España había perdido la intolerancia religioso-racial que pervivía en Europa, y concebía la reconquista como una guerra nacional de recuperación de la que no había que excluir ninguna de las normas caballerescas.¹⁹³

García-Valdecasas and Beltrán Llavador also hold that the admiration for the adversary in the *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI* is genuine.¹⁹⁴ What is more, they explain that the maurophilia of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century chronicles was part of a wider process of *aristocratization*. The long struggle between the nobility and monarchy during these centuries had left its imprint on chronicles. This was manifested in the exaltation of Muslim adversaries, thereby enhancing the fame and honour of the warrior class.¹⁹⁵ Whilst these scholars offer convincing explanations for chronicles of later centuries, we are left without satisfactory reasons for the apparent respect for the Muslim in earlier centuries.

¹⁹¹ Catalán, 'Ideales moriscos', pp. 571-573.

¹⁹² Catalán, 'Ideales moriscos', pp. 579.

¹⁹³ Catalán, 'Ideales moriscos', pp. 581-582.

¹⁹⁴ 'La maurofilia como ideal caballeresco', p. 138.

¹⁹⁵ 'La maurofilia como ideal caballeresco', p. 140.

Other scholars have addressed the problem by applying postcolonial theory. In particular, Israel Burshatin sought to explain the idealisation of Muslims through the prism of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Burshatin argues that the idealisation of the Granadan Moor in *Abencerraje* is in fact an assertion of Christian control over the Muslim world. He writes:

The romantic image of the Moor seeks to describe him within the language and rhetorical system shaped by the conqueror and intended to project his presence and ascendancy.¹⁹⁶

He has also applied the same theory to the epic of the *Cid*.¹⁹⁷ For Burshatin, positive representations of Muslims in medieval literature are ultimately patronising, and represent the mind-set of the coloniser towards a subjugated minority. He has also suggested that there was a vested interest among some Christian lords with Morisco vassals to promote 'peaceful coexistence'. He believed this was the case of the maurophile Aragonese lords, hoping to protect their Morisco vassals 'by conjuring up aristocratic Moors of yore'.¹⁹⁸

David Hanlon has also been influenced by postcolonial theory in his exploration of stereotypical discourse of Muslims. The typical portrayals of Muslims are, he claims, interpreted by today's scholars in the literal sense: that medieval writers were habitually expressing 'disquiet about contact with Islam' and its disruption to established faith boundaries.¹⁹⁹ Hanlon instead applies colonial discourse analysis, with recourse to the Freudian concept of fetishism, to explain ambivalence towards Muslims. Using a

¹⁹⁶ See: I. Burshatin, 'Power, discourse, and metaphor in the *Abencerraje*', *Modern Language Notes*, 99(2) (1984), 195-213 (p. 212).

¹⁹⁷ See: 'The Moor in the text: metaphor, emblem, and silence', in *Race, writing, and difference*, ed. by H. L. Gates (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 117-37 (pp. 118-122).

¹⁹⁸ 'The Moor in the text' p. 118.

¹⁹⁹ D. Hanlon, 'Islam and stereotypical discourse in Medieval Castile and Leon', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 30(3) (2000), 479-504 (p. 479).

fourteenth-century version of the *Siete Infantes de Lara*, and the thirteenth-century biography of the Prophet Muhammad, he argues these texts demonstrate the simultaneous 'sameness' and 'otherness' of the Muslim. The 'sameness' of the Muslim is a means to know the colonial subject to allow for their surveillance. Meanwhile, 'otherness' is emphasised in order to justify the conquest and subjugation of the Muslim.²⁰⁰

However, there are challenges in applying postcolonial-inspired notions of discourse, literary theory and psychoanalysis to medieval texts. Scholars may well be able to find support for their theoretical models within one or indeed several medieval texts. The danger is that these theories attempt to make generalisations about the entirety of that society. The theories themselves were often never originally intended for medieval contexts or societies. In many cases, we lack the most fundamental details of the life and context of medieval author(s) – we may not even be able to identify the author at all. In such cases, a sophisticated psychoanalysis of the writer and his milieu is all but impossible. It seems that Burshatin and Hanlon have found a handful of texts that 'fit the theory'. But this is done at the expense of wider textual tradition, spanning hundreds of years.

This is especially problematic in the context of Hanlon's study of the biography of Muhammad. He has isolated a single text in its Alfonsine form, without paying sufficient attention to its sources, textual continuum, and wider polemical tradition. In reality, the manipulation of source material principally determines the *content* of the *Estoria* biography of Muhammad. As we shall see in due course, the *Estoria* portrayals of the Prophet are first and foremost a display of traditional polemical arguments,

²⁰⁰ Hanlon, 'Islam and stereotypical discourse', p. 480.

intended to refute Islamic doctrine. These same arguments were used by medieval writers around Europe for hundreds of years, far from the colonial setting of the frontier. Medieval chroniclers were principally compilers and arrangers of their source material. Consequently, any interpretation of such texts must take great care to address the textual tradition, and avoid treating works in isolation.²⁰¹

Fermín Miranda García effectively captures the wider culture of chronicle tradition, in his survey of no fewer than sixteen chronicles. His study represents more than four hundred years of historical writing, between the ninth and twelfth centuries.²⁰² Whilst Islam is overwhelmingly presented as the enemy in early chronicles, there are instances in which the Muslim is indirectly legitimised. That is to say, these chroniclers rarely set out to credit the prowess and victories of the Muslim. Nor did the chroniclers seek to demonstrate the fruits of military co-operation across the frontier. Many of these chronicles were composed during the concerted 'reconquest' efforts. Instead, the legitimisation of the Muslim is often a product of the *historical realities* of the day. Medieval chroniclers could not escape the fact that they had suffered defeat at the hands of Musa, al-Mansur and Ibn Tashufin. It was an undeniable fact that there had been alliances and friendships between Christian and Muslim rulers. Accordingly, chroniclers attempted to justify what they found on the historical record, formulating explanations to satisfy the inconsistencies. And no matter how baffling the paradoxes of Christian struggle against Islam, the medieval chronicler ultimately saw all earthly events as the Divine Will.

²⁰¹ My arguments for closer scrutiny of source material and the redaction process are laid out in chapter 2, and applied in full in chapter 3.

²⁰² Miranda García, 'Legitimar al enemigo'.

We find ourselves once again trying to make sense of an apparently paradoxical state of affairs. At the beginning of this chapter, we explored the complex panorama of political, military, economic and social history of medieval Iberia. Our exploration of the deeds of medieval men and women revealed the duality of interfaith relations: interactions among Christians and Muslims were characterised by both conflict and co-operation. We then moved from the realm of history, to the practice of historiography in the Middle Ages. A second brief survey has shown how poetry and chronicles offer positive and negative depictions of Muslims.

Just as modern historians have struggled to explain the dichotomy of conflict and co-operation in the Spanish past, we are presented with similar difficulties when exploring medieval writing. Historians of *convivencia* have tried to bring meaning to what they observe by containing their studies to one point in space or time – e.g. fourteenth-century Aragon. Scholars have also employed the same case-by-case approach to medieval writing on the Moor – e.g. *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI*. Despite this, the delimitation of a single work of Christian historiography will still reveal contrasting portrayals of Muslims, as friends and foes, both noble and perfidious.

Certainly, we are able to see a shift in the way in which Muslims are presented over time, as the military threat posed by Islam grew smaller. Chroniclers are mournful after the fall of Visigothic Spain, blaming their ancestors for the loss of Christian supremacy. Anti-Islamic rhetoric is at its strongest during the most intense moments of struggle against *al-Andalus*. And after the 'reconquest' had been completed, chroniclers seem more self-confident, presenting their conquered Muslim rivals as worthy opponents. But this evolution of attitudes is only a line of best fit, as there are plenty of anomalies throughout literary and chronicle tradition.

Medieval historians are perhaps the best example of the duality of medieval Iberian society. Not only do their histories tell of past conflict and co-operation: their writings simultaneously transmit disdain and respect for Muslims. Whilst such narratives may seem rather contradictory, perhaps the more appropriate word to use is 'ambivalent'. That is to say, ambivalence suggests a coexistence – or *convivencia?* – of contrasting feelings towards Muslims. Literary culture is one in which hatred, animosity and disdain sit adjacent to respect, admiration and praise. Enmity is mirrored by friendship; mortal combat stands beside alliance. 'Contradiction' may suggest that writers were in some way unconscious of their opposing displays of rhetoric, or neglected to ensure their arguments were coherent. However, if we credit medieval men of letters on their intellectual capacity, we realise that an ambivalent standpoint could have been entirely acceptable. María Rosa Menocal credited the culture of medieval Spain as one of 'first-rate intelligence',²⁰³ echoing the notion coined by F. Scott Fitzgerald:

The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.²⁰⁴

The simultaneous displays of love and hate seem to be just that.

In search of this curious phenomenon, we turn to the *Estoria de España* to explore Christian attitudes towards Muslims. The Alfonsine history stands as a prime example of the ambivalence of medieval chroniclers. Within the text we find very different attitudes towards Muslims: this can be seen in the narratives of the deeds of the Prophet Muhammad, al-Mansur and al-Mamun. These are narratives of contempt, admiration

²⁰³ *Ornament of the world*, pp. 10-11.

²⁰⁴ F. Scott Fitzgerald, 'The crack-up', in *The crack-up*, ed. by E. Wilson (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1993) pp. 69-84 (p. 69).

and love. In order to understand these passages and the meaning they carry, we will be faced with many more questions. These will be addressed in the following chapter.

* * *

By way of a last word, let us set the historical scene for the composition of the *Estoria*. In the mid-thirteenth century, Alfonso had inherited a sprawling kingdom. His father Fernando el Santo had recently 'reconquered' large areas of *al-Andalus*. The jewels of Islamic Spain – Cordoba and Seville – now belonged to Christianity. Alfonso himself had led the conquest of Murcia. Then in 1252 he ascended to the throne of Castile-Leon. His southern dominions included large populations of conquered Mudejars, who had proved prone to rebellion. To the south, the Emirate of Granada was a problematic client. Worse still, the Marinids of Morocco lurked across the Gibraltar Straits, and might still undo the glorious conquests led by of his father. Such was the state of affairs in the Spain of Alfonso X.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ See chapter 3 for greater contextualisation of the state of affairs of Alfonso X's kingdom.

CHAPTER SECOND

READING INTERFAITH RELATIONS

IN ALFONSO X'S *ESTORIA DE ESPAÑA*

As the previous chapter has demonstrated, medieval Iberia stands as a vast field, with potential for many forms of scholarship. Our own interest is in glimpsing the way in which Christians wrote about Muslims. Much survives of medieval literature, and the paradoxes of antagonism and co-operation among the faiths are recorded by the hands of scribes. As we move to focus on one particular case of historical writing in the thirteenth century, our focus turns to the cultural works of Alfonso X. The *Estoria de España* presents itself as a rich and accessible source for exploring how writers thought about Christianity's experience with Islam at the Iberian frontier. Amongst the centuries-old folios of the *Estoria* manuscripts, narratives of all kinds recount Spain's past, from Greeks and Romans to Visigoths and Arabs.

A number of initial reflections on the interpretation of history and historical writing were put forward in the previous chapter. These preliminary reflections helped to equip this study with a fundamental outlook on the interpretation of historical writing: first, the isolation of a single element from the wider panorama, and the critical analysis of it across a number of contexts; second, an examination of historical attitudes to Muslims in the wider literary tradition of Christian Iberia.¹ Chapter 2 now provides a thorough groundwork for the historical interpretation of the *Estoria*, as a means to explore representations of Muslims in the text. The chapter begins with an outline of this study's innovative approach to Alfonsine historiography and interfaith relations. It is followed by a brief survey of the depictions of Muslims in Alfonso X's legislation and poetry, as a reference and point of contrast for the study of the king's historiography. This will also offer a window to the existing debate surrounding religious minorities in the works of Alfonso X. The reflections presented by scholars will help us acquire perspectives and assumptions for this study. Following this I will develop an appropriate form of historical criticism for the interpretation of the *Estoria*. I will evidence the assumptions underpinning my reading of the text, as well as considering the theoretical obstacles to reading medieval texts. I will look to biblical scholarship to gain further perspective on the debate, and to equip my thesis with an effective method for historical criticism. Finally, I will justify the use of source-critical and redaction-critical methods of interpretation, as effective means to read historical compilations such as the *Estoria*.

¹ These fundamental reflections are accumulated over the course of chapter 1, and are made clear in sections 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6.

2.1 *An innovative approach to Alfonso X: reading attitudes to Islam in the Estoria de España*

This first section of chapter 2 introduces the specific question of methodology and interpretation for the study of attitudes to Islam in the writings of Alfonso X. In order to address this, the following questions arise: how do the writings of Alfonso X allow us to explore interfaith relations? What has scholarship previously made of this topic? As we shall see, scholars have looked to the *Siete Partidas* and the *Cantigas de Santa María* to shed light on attitudes to religious minorities under Alfonso X. However, previous studies have often failed to articulate an explicit methodological framework for interpretation. This study aims to build a strong case for interpreting representations of Muslims in the *Estoria*, presenting an innovative way of using the Alfonsine corpus to explore questions of interfaith relations in medieval Iberia.

Medieval Iberia reveals itself to be a place of intriguing diversity of thought. The written record reveals this in great detail: poetry and prose throughout the centuries offer us many different representations of the Muslim according to Christian writers. As we have seen in the previous chapter, poets and chroniclers spoke of Islam with words of scorn, derision and disdain. At the same time, they also demonstrated admiration, appreciation and respect for their neighbour. The manuscripts that survive today are the fossils of the medieval Christian mind, in all its ambivalence.

Alfonso X has long captivated academics, by virtue of his enormous efforts to advance learning and culture in the thirteenth century. It is easy for the modern scholar to feel something of a personal affinity for the *Rey Sabio*. Despite the eight centuries that divide us, we sense Alfonso's thirst for knowledge, his appreciation of culture and

his desire to make sense of the world. His intellectual pursuits are effectively unmatched in scope and in length at that time. Astronomy, law and history were the centrepieces of his cultural project, in addition to many other works of poetry and scientific treatises. His distinguishing works include: the *Tablas alfonsíes* and the *Libros del saber de astronomía* (astronomy-astrology); the *Fuero real*, the *Espéculo* and the *Siete Partidas* (legislation); the *Estoria de España* and the *General Estoria* (historiography); the *Cantigas de Santa María* (lyric poetry).² The works of Alfonso el Sabio constitute an enormous corpus of thirteenth-century writing, the fruit of an ambitious project directed by the king himself.³

The works of Alfonso X offer us a valuable record of how religious minorities were perceived at the time. In particular, Muslims and Jews are dealt with in his legislation, historiography and poetry. But in spite of the great scope and length of these works, there have been only a few serious studies concerning attitudes to minorities in Alfonso's writings. Whilst the *Siete Partidas* and the *Cantigas de Santa María* have attracted some attention, the *Estoria de España* remains to be studied in any great detail on this topic. Yet the *Estoria* is an extensive repository for Christian thought, recording centuries of contact between Christianity and Islam in the Peninsula. It is this gap that the present study hopes to address, with an in-depth exploration of a range of portrayals of Muslims in the *Estoria*.

² The bibliography for the intellectual exploits of Alfonso X is too extensive to list here. In lieu of this, the following studies are a small selection of pertinent contributions to modern scholarship of the Alfonsine scriptorium and its activities: A. G. Solalinde, 'Intervención de Alfonso X en la redacción de sus obras', *Revista de Filología Española*, 2 (1915), 283-288; E. Procter, 'The scientific works of the court of Alfonso X of Castile: the king and his collaborators', *The Modern Language Review*, 40(1) (1945), 12-29; G. Menéndez Pidal, 'Cómo trabajaron las escuelas alfonsíes', *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, 5(4) (1951), 363-380; F. Rico, *Alfonso el Sabio y la General estoria* (Barcelona: Ediciones Ariel, 1972); F. Márquez Villanueva, *El concepto cultural alfonsí* (Madrid: Mapfre, 1995); J. Montoya Martínez and A. Domínguez Rodríguez (eds) *El scriptorium alfonsí: de los Libros de Astrología a las Cantigas de Santa María* (Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 1999); M. Fierro, 'Alfonso X the Wise: the last Almohad caliph?', *Medieval Encounters*, 15 (2009), 175-198. A full bibliography for the works of Alfonso X has been produced by Francisco Bautista for the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes (2011) and is available online: <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/portales/alfonso_x_el_sabio/> [accessed 10-05-2016].

³ See section 2.5 of this chapter.

Dwayne Carpenter was the first scholar to prepare a discrete, in-depth study into attitudes towards religious minorities in the writings of Alfonso X. He focused on the status of Jews according to Alfonso, enshrined in the *Siete Partidas*. His work took the form of a critical edition of *Partida 7 Título 24* "De los judios", and included a detailed commentary on the content of its eleven statutes.⁴ The work thoroughly dissected the compilation process of Alfonso's jurists, identifying the canon and Roman law that underpinned the pronouncements of *Título 24*. This allowed him to explore how Alfonsine compilers made use of existing legal writings, and adapted them to meet their own objectives. His work is exceptional in its level of scrutiny, and offers an unrivalled analysis of how the Jews were portrayed in Alfonso's legal writings.

After Dwayne Carpenter, the work of Salvador Martínez stands as the only other serious investigation of attitudes to minorities in the Alfonsine corpus. In his exploration of *convivencia* within the milieu of the court, Salvador Martínez undertook a comprehensive study of the representations of Muslims and Jews in Alfonso's poetry and legislation.⁵ As Carpenter had done previously, Salvador Martínez turned to the *Partidas*. Taking the study further, he also looked at the portrayals of religious minorities in the *Cantigas*. Where Carpenter took a microscope to the law concerning one minority group, Salvador Martínez expanded the field of view, addressing *both* minority groups in law *and* poetry. The monograph is a significant achievement, and acts as an invaluable comparison of attitudes to Jews and Muslims in the works of

⁴ D. Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews: An edition and commentary on Siete Partidas 7.24 De los judíos* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

⁵ H. Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*.

Alfonso X. Accordingly, it is of great relevance to the present thesis, and his work helps inform the broader debate around *convivencia* in medieval Spain.⁶

The *Estoria de España*, with its many references to Christian-Muslim contact over the centuries, has attracted comparatively little interest. John Tolan has addressed the representations of Muhammad in thirteenth-century writing, including in the *Estoria*.⁷ Focusing on the use of anti-Islamic polemic in Christian biographies of the Prophet, he seeks to explain the context of such pejorative depictions. Writers are particularly hostile towards Muhammad, and insisted on discrediting him through a variety of rhetorical attacks. He reflects on the way in which Christian biographers of the Prophet often preferred to use polemical Latin sources, rather than consult original Arabic accounts of the life of Muhammad. Tolan concludes that the compilers of the *Estoria* used polemic in order to exert influence over their readership.

David Assouline has taken a more general view of the portrayals of Muslims in the *Estoria*. His doctoral thesis has drawn together various works of the Alfonsine scriptorium, seeking to illustrate the "utopian" aspect to the cultural project.⁸ Assouline holds that the narrative of the Muslim presence in the Peninsula, as seen in the *Estoria*, is multivalent. Generally speaking, the *Estoria* portrayals of Muslims indicate the cultural mixing between Islam and Christianity.⁹ At the same time, Alfonso X's historiography considers Muslims to be objects of material conquest: Andalusian wealth is

⁶ Owing to the importance of the notion of *convivencia* in medieval Hispanism, this study has naturally used the wider debate on *convivencia* as a frame for our own exploration of attitudes towards Muslims in Medieval Iberia.

⁷ J. Tolan, 'The polemical dismemberment of Muhammad', in *Sons of Ismael: Muslims through European eyes in the Middle Ages* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008), pp. 19-34.

⁸ D. Assouline, *The utopian fictions of Alfonso X* (Doctoral thesis, Yale University, 2009). In addition to the *Estoria de España* he looks at the *Setenario*, the *Cantigas*, the *Libro de los doze sabios* and the *Partidas*.

⁹ *The utopian fictions of Alfonso X*, p. 136

ripe for the taking, through Christian raiding and conquest.¹⁰ Furthermore, he recognises that Muslims are also portrayed as formidable warriors.¹¹

Assouline's key conclusion is the following:

The Muslims were the primary means the Alfonsines used to articulate their political ideology through a persistent narrative of the replacement of Spanish-Muslim culture with a symbiotic Hispano-Arabic Castilian culture.¹²

The extracts that he picks out from the *Estoria* do support his thesis. However, he gives little attention to the fact that the *Estoria* is part of a chronicle continuum, transmitting the narratives of previous authors and histories. His work includes only broad interpretations of how Muslims are represented in Alfonsine historiography. Where the current thesis differs is the degree to which the "construction" of Alfonsine narratives is pieced apart: my methodology involves a much closer scrutiny of the compilation and arrangement of historical writing, discerning what it is that makes the narrative especially "Alfonsine".

In addition to these works, a number of other scholars have commented on attitudes towards minorities in mid-thirteenth century Castile. We will enter the debate and treat the question in detail: in doing so, we will attempt to clarify our own assumptions, carrying our interpretation of the works of Alfonso X forwards. Addressing the wider debate on attitudes to minorities in the Alfonsine corpus, we see that researchers have approached the topic from different perspectives. However, these scholars have struggled to articulate a specific framework or methodology through which interfaith relations can be read.

¹⁰ *The utopian fictions of Alfonso X*, pp. 139-141.

¹¹ *The utopian fictions of Alfonso X*, pp. 141-145. He includes a handful of extracts in the *Estoria* which present skirmishes and battles in which Muslims forces appear to be a formidable fighting force.

¹² *The utopian fictions of Alfonso X*, p. 141.

The lack of explicit methodologies means that historical interpretation and the retrieval of original meaning of Alfonso's texts are made in line with the presumed "character" and "temperance" of King Alfonso X. Interpretative studies in the fields of history and literature are, of course, subjective. Nonetheless, a sophisticated methodological foundation is required to strengthen any interpretation. It is here that the present study borrows its approach from another discipline: biblical studies. The Bible has been studied for many centuries, and has a long tradition of analysis and interpretation. In the modern era, various biblical criticisms have emerged. These distinct forms of criticism have allowed scholars to use biblical texts across many different fields. Most notably, biblical criticisms have incorporated history and literary theory.¹³

Where the 'semiotic challenge' quietly divides scholars of medieval Iberian history and historiography, the present study is hoping to take a clear stance on the historical interpretation of the *Estoria de España*.¹⁴ By drawing on the work of philologists such as Georges Martin and Inés Fernández Ordóñez, we can shed light on *how* Alfonso's history of Spain was constructed. Only through understanding *how* it was composed, can we understand *what* was included from extant historiographical tradition. Consequently, if we can shed light on the manipulation of source material, we can develop a case for *why* the content appears as it does. These processes reflect the historical-critical methods used by biblical scholars, in their aim to understand the ancient world. After clearly articulating our methodology, we can begin the systematic interpretation of the narratives of Muhammad, al-Mansur and al-Mamun in the *Estoria de España*.

¹³ See section 2.6 of this chapter.

¹⁴ This is the term employed by Gabrielle Spiegel. See section 2.6 of the current chapter of this thesis.

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We are left with two crucial themes to tackle. First, we must explore the authorship of the *Estoria*: this will allow us to understand the internal workings of the text as a repository of attitudes towards Muslims. Second, we must address our methodology, making clear the basis upon which interpretations can be offered in subsequent chapters. Before we delve into Alfonso's historiographical writings, a first port of call will be a brief survey of the attitudes to Islam that we find elsewhere in his corpus: the *Siete Partidas* and the *Cantigas de Santa María*. Turning our attention to his poetry and legislation will offer us further contextualisation of how Muslims and Islam were perceived and portrayed by the Alfonsine scriptorium.

2.2 *Alfonso X and Islam: reading the Siete Partidas*

Retracing the logic outlined in the previous section of this chapter, let us initially consider the line of enquiry popular among scholars exploring Alfonso X's attitudes towards Islam: the *Siete Partidas*. This section will offer a close look at the legislation, in order to shed light on the way in which Alfonso envisaged the management of religious minorities in society. This is useful from two angles: first, it serves as a

springboard for the discussion of previous scholarship on Alfonso's attitudes to Islam.¹⁵ Second, by observing attitudes in the *Partidas*, the study gains a wider perspective on the works of Alfonso X, and this allows the *Estoria* to be viewed in comparison to other works by the king.¹⁶ As we shall see in this section, the *Partidas* tell us a great deal about the king's pragmatism concerning the management of the Muslim minority. On the one hand, the king wishes to be a defender of the Faith, relegating Muslims to the status of second-class citizens with punitive measures, designed to encourage conversion. On the other hand, the codes recognise that Muslims must be accommodated and guaranteed safety, security and the free practice of religion.

Alfonso X's vision for an orderly society was laid out in his *Siete Partidas*, a vast compendium of legislative writings.¹⁷ The *Partidas* were an effort to produce a standardised justice system throughout the now sprawling realms under the authority of the Crown of Castile-Leon. Alfonso sought to clarify the status of all men across society. This included the standing of religious minorities. Of course, the text represented Alfonso's *idealised* society, and cannot be taken as evidence of how minorities *actually* lived under Alfonso X.¹⁸ That said, the *Partidas* provide us with a detailed insight into Alfonso's vision for the status of his Mudejar subjects, in the eyes of the law. We also find references to *enemigos de la fe* – a designation that undoubtedly included hostile Muslim kingdoms across the frontier. Contained within the *Partidas* are a wide variety of pronouncements concerning those who follow Islam.

Across the *Partidas*, minorities are shown to have a stake in a number of aspects of medieval society and daily life. In addition to the more detailed treatment of Muslims in

¹⁵ See section 2.4 of this chapter.

¹⁶ See sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the final chapter of this thesis.

¹⁷ Here I have relied on the 1807 edition of the *Partidas* produced by the Academia de la Historia: *Las Siete Partidas del rey don Alonso el Sabio*. 3 vols (Madrid: Atlas, 1972).

¹⁸ This point is also stressed in section 1.1 of chapter 1, addressing legal restrictions to social interaction in medieval Iberia.

Partida 7.25,¹⁹ edicts concerning Muslims are scattered elsewhere throughout the code. For instance, Muslims receive mention with regards to commonalities such as marriage, serfdom and captivity. The fourth *Partida* forbids intermarriage and clarifies how Christian marriage may be affected if the husband or wife converts to Islam.²⁰ Serfdom is, at this time, an entirely commonplace phenomenon throughout Iberia. It is particularly relevant for minorities, owing to the presence of wealthy Jewish elites, and the trade in foreign captives. *Partida* 4.21.8 states that no Jew or Muslim is allowed to hold a Christian as a slave.²¹ In the case of Jewish slave owners, Muslim captives must not be converted to Judaism. A loophole arises in that Muslim slaves to Jews are to be made free if they choose to convert to Christianity.²² Foreign Muslims who are captured through warfare and Christians who are captured in Islamic lands are addressed in *Partida* 2.29 and 2.30. The release of prisoners is a formal affair and is secured by ransom payments, as outlined by these statutes.²³

Furthermore, there are a number of implications for Muslims and Jews in the case of inheritance, court testimonies and burial rights. The sixth *Partida* specifies that Christians who convert to Islam lose their inheritance; if a Muslim converts to Christianity, he or she is entitled to the entirety of the father's estate, leaving Muslim siblings with nothing.²⁴ Inheritance therefore stands as an important means to incentivise conversion and deter apostasy. Meanwhile, religious minorities are entirely

¹⁹ We will employ the commonly used format when stating legislation from the *Partidas* upon the basis of *Partida-Título-Ley*. For example, 7.25.1 represents *Partida* 7, *Título* 25, *Ley* 1.

²⁰ *Partida* 4.2.15 forbids intermarriage (vol. 3, p. 20); 4.2.7 specifies how conversion affects marital status (p. 15); 4.4.4 permits intention to wed a Jewess or a Moorish woman on the basis that she will convert to Christianity (p. 29); 4.6.6 holds that the Church will recognise the marriage of Muslim or Jewish couples who later convert to Christianity (p. 37); 4.9.8 concerns apostasy and claims of adultery (p.51); 4.10.2 deals with divorce and apostasy (pp. 58-59).

²¹ *Partida* 4.21.8 (vol. 3, p. 120).

²² *Partida* 7.24.10 (vol. 3, p. 674).

²³ *Partida* 2.29 (vol. 2, pp. 326-336); 2.30 (pp. 336-339).

²⁴ *Partida* 6.7.7 (vol. 3, pp. 428).

stripped of the right to testify against a Christian at court.²⁵ As for burial rights, Jewish and Muslim graves are to be kept entirely separate from Christian cemeteries.²⁶ Whilst they are separate in death, they are equally owed respect: minorities' graves are not to be desecrated or vandalised.²⁷

However, it is *Partida 7.25* that seeks to give the most clarity to the position of Muslims in Castilian society. 'De los moros', along with *Partida 7.24* 'De los judios', sets out the kingdom's stance towards religious minorities within its jurisdiction. It is an attempt to provide a legal framework for their treatment, on the basis of the 'rights and responsibilities' of religious minorities. The statutes in *Partida 7.25* are concerned primarily with conversion and apostasy – seven of the eleven laws deal with the process of leaving one faith for another. The Christian population is accordingly implicated: they have a duty to facilitate the conversion of Muslims, and there are harsh penalties for Christians converting to Islam.

Partida 7.25 opens with a brief definition of the content that is covered within the *título*. In the very first lines of this section, the doctrinal conflict between Christianity and Islam is immediately clear:

Moros son una manera de gentes que creen que Mahomat fue profeta et mandadero de Dios: et porque las obras et los fechos que él fizó non muestran dél tan grant santidad por que á tan santo estado pudiese llegar, por ende su ley es como denuesto de Dios.²⁸

According to the *Siete Partidas*, then, Islam is practically blasphemy. On that basis, the code stresses the need for Muslims, along with the Jews in their 'ciega porfia', to be

²⁵ *Partida 3.16.8* (vol. 3, pp. 519).

²⁶ *Partida 1.13.8* (vol. 1, p. 386).

²⁷ *Partida 7.9.12* (vol. 3, p. 583).

²⁸ *Partida 7.25* 'De los moros' (vol. 3, p. 675).

saved. The driving factor behind much of the content of 7.25 is quite clearly reasoned from the outset.

Whilst the legislation indicates the ideal of conversion, it also deals with the reality of the Mudejar community that is steadfast in its faith. *Partida* 7.25.1 acknowledges that 'deben vevir los moros entre los cristianos', just as the Jewish presence is to be managed. Muslims are permitted to observe their faith and implement its legal structures. The condition placed upon them is that they must not disparage the Christian faith.²⁹ Additional constraints include an edict on the construction and requisitioning of mosques, and an interdiction against ritual sacrifices in public.³⁰ Nonetheless, the safety and security of Mudejars is guaranteed by law.³¹

There are aspects of *Partidas* 7.25.2 and 7.25.3 which appear to show a degree of sensitivity in the efforts to bring Muslims to Christianity. In 7.25.2, the law states that Christians must promote the Word of God 'por buenas palabras et convenibles predicaciones'. The use of force or coercion is strictly prohibited. The theological grounds for such a stance are that God himself would have forcefully compelled Muslims to convert, if it were His intention. Instead, the Almighty is said to prefer that men serve him wholeheartedly and wilfully, free from intimidation or fear. Alfonso's code therefore upholds something of a cordial approach to conversion. With regards to Muslims intending to convert, 7.25.3 forbids Christians from abusing or mistreating new converts. Fear of castigation is no doubt a disincentive, and would hinder the flow

²⁹ 'Et decimos que deben vevir los moros entre los cristianos en aquella misma manera que diximos en el título ante deste que lo deben facer los judios, guardando su ley et non denostando la nuestra.' *Partida* 7.25.1 (vol. 3, p. 676).

³⁰ 'Pero en las villas de los cristianos non deben haber los moros mezquita, nin facer sacrificios públicamente ante los homes: et las mezquitas que habien antiguamente deben seer del rey, et puédelas él dar á quien quisiere.' *Partida* 7.25.1 (vol. 3, p. 676).

³¹ 'Et como quier que los moros non tengan buena ley, pero mientras vivieren entre los cristianos en seguridad dellos, non les deben tomar nin robar lo suyo por fuerza...' *Partida* 7.25.1 (vol. 3, p. 676).

towards Christianity. The legislation is also sensitive to the great upheaval that a Muslim would face in their conversion:

...todos deben honrar á estos atales por muchas razones, et non deshonrarlos: lo uno es porque dexan aquella creencia en que nascieron ellos et su linage; et lo al porque desde que han entendimiento conocen la mejoría de la nuestra fe, et recíbenla et apártanse de sus padres et de sus madres, et de los otros sus parientes et de la vida que habien acostumbrado de facer, et de todas las otras cosas en que reciben placer.³²

There is a clear desire to bring Muslims into the Faith, and Alfonso's vision is one that is underpinned by sensitivity and consideration.

A further five laws detail the "evil" of apostasy and the punishments it brings. The code reasons that men are driven to Islam through misfortune and despair. Men may desire to live as the Moors after losing family members, to escape poverty or to evade serving the punishments for crimes they have committed. Apostasy is treated as 'muy grant maldat et muy grant trayción'; it is a crime which carries the death penalty.³³ Apostates who repent and wish to return to the Church are made to live with an immense burden of shame, losing many of their former rights as a Christian – a fate worse than death.³⁴ However, Alfonso X seems to make a provision for those apostates who render 'granado servicio a los cristianos'. Renegades are absolved of their sin and are given a clean slate if they act in the express interest of Christianity.³⁵ This stance may be something of a safeguard for the *ricos omnes* and adventurers who would occasionally disappear across the frontier when in conflict with their lord: the statute

³² *Partida* 7.25.3 (vol. 3, p. 677).

³³ *Partida* 7.25.4 (vol. 3, pp. 677-678).

³⁴ 'Et esta pena tenemos que es mas fuerte á este atal que si lo matasen; ca la vida deshonrada que él fará le será por muerte de cada día...' *Partida* 7.25.5 (vol. 3, p. 678).

³⁵ *Partida* 7.25.8 (vol. 3, p. 680).

provides a clear provision for those wishing to return to Christianity with full rights, 'bien asi como si nunca hobiese renegado de la fe católica'.³⁶

'De los moros' also concerns the rights of some foreign Muslims travelling within Alfonso's jurisdiction. *Partida* 7.25.9 defends the right of the Muslim envoy 'que venga et vaya salvo et seguro por todo nuestro señorío'.³⁷ This provision is extended to *mensageros* from hostile kingdoms, and of all faiths. Their special status also includes a certain degree of immunity from arrears claims. The edict represents the highly practical dimension of the *título*: it is crucial that diplomatic channels are protected, allowing the king to manage a dynamic military policy of open hostilities, alliances and truces with neighbouring Muslim kingdoms. This practicality brings to mind *Partida* 5.7.4, which guarantees safe passage and security to Christian, Muslim and Jewish merchants.³⁸ Following on from the rights of envoys, the *título* closes with a series of harsh penalties for fornication between Muslim men and Christian women: confiscation of property, stoning, flogging, burning and execution are deemed fitting punishments, according to the perpetrator and if it is a repeat offence.³⁹

In addition to the internal threat posed by the Mudejars, the *Partidas* also mention the external threats from hostile Islamic kingdoms. *Partida* 4.21.4 provides a stark warning against the supply of arms or resources to the "enemies of the faith":

Malos cristianos hay algunos que dan ayuda ó consejo á los moros que son enemigos de la fe, asi como quando les dan ó les venden armas de fuste ó de fierro, ó galeas ó naves fechas, ó madera para facerlas...⁴⁰

³⁶ *Partida* 7.25.8 (vol. 3, p. 680). Robert Burns has illustrated the phenomenon in his study, 'Renegades, adventurers, and sharp businessmen'.

³⁷ *Partida* 7.25.9 (vol. 3, pp. 680-681).

³⁸ 'Mandamos que todos los que venieren á las ferias de nuestros regnos, tambien cristianos como moros como judios, et otrosi los que venieren en otra sazón qualquier á nuestro señorío, maguer que non vengan á ferias, que sean salvos et seguros sus cuerpos, et sus haberes, et sus mercadorias et todas sus cosas...' *Partida* 5.7.4 (vol. 3, p. 214).

³⁹ *Partida* 7.25.10 (vol. 3, p. 681).

⁴⁰ *Partida* 4.21.4 (vol. 3, p.119). If found guilty, the crime is punishable by enslavement and excommunication.

Furthermore, *Partida* 4.26.13 prohibits vassals from accompanying a lord who chooses to cross the frontier and serve the cause of Islam:

Por su voluntad saliendo algunt ricohome de la tierra non lo echando el rey, si se fuere á tierra de moros, non lo deben seguir sus vassallos, et esto porque face traycion en dos maneras: la una contra Dios, porque va á ayudar á los enemigos de la fe: la otra contra su señor natural...⁴¹

The fifth *Partida* also reiterates the dangers of supplying and aiding the "enemies of the faith".⁴² The severity of punishments – excommunication, enslavement, confiscation of all property – indicate the gravity of such actions. Aiding the enemy is evidently a major concern in the thirteenth century; the legislation holds that neighbouring Muslim kingdoms remain a significant threat to Christian Iberia.

A number of scholars have commented on the *Siete Partidas* when considering the question of *tolerancia* in the mid-thirteenth century. This will be dealt with in greater depth later in this chapter. In view of the wider discussion, for the moment it suffices to say that the pragmatism of the *Partidas* is clear. Dwayne Carpenter and Salvador Martínez – through their very different studies – have attested to Alfonso's practical approach towards religious minorities.⁴³ The *Siete Partidas* stand as Alfonso's proposal for a justice system that ensured the supremacy of Christianity and facilitated the conversion of Muslims. Simultaneously, the king's law codes protected minorities and guaranteed their religious freedoms, thereby maintaining law and order in a plural frontier society.

⁴¹ *Partida* 4.26.13 (vol. 3, p. 139).

⁴² *Partida* 5.5.22 (vol. 3, p. 186). This law proscribes the supply of weapons, and also the supply of foodstuffs to Muslim kingdoms in wartime. Note that foreign envoys must not be denied sustenance during diplomatic missions.

⁴³ See section 2.4 of the current chapter.

2.3 Alfonso X and Islam: reading the *Cantigas de Santa María*

A second line of enquiry to consider initially is Alfonso X's attitude towards Muslims in the *Cantigas de Santa María*. Along with the *Partidas*, scholarship has often looked to Alfonso's compilation of Galician lyric poetry to explore representations of Islam. An examination of the *Cantigas* therefore helps us access the existing debate around Alfonso X and minorities.⁴⁴ Furthermore, this broadens the perspective on the *Estoria*, providing further strength to the interpretative efforts of this study. Whilst this thesis focuses on Alfonsine historiography, viewing the *Estoria* in relation to Alfonso's other writings will ultimately help confirm the ambivalence of the king and his scriptorium.⁴⁵ The following section reveals how the *Cantigas* exhibit a range of attitudes towards Muslims: they are both friends and foes of the Virgin Mary, Alfonso X and his kingdom. The lyrics reflect the historical reality of the thirteenth century, in which Christian-Muslim contact was at times hostile, and at other times co-operative. The Virgin is portrayed as the defender of Christianity; in other instances she is a friend to Muslims. Importantly, Muslims are repeatedly characterised through their devotion to Mary, offering a favourable portrayal of piety and a subtle reconciliation between Christian and Islamic theology.

In addition to the *Partidas* and the *Estoria*, a third project within Alfonso's enormous cultural enterprise was the compendium of lyric poetry, in the form of the *Cantigas de Santa María*.⁴⁶ These works of Marian devotion were composed in Galician, and were

⁴⁴ See section 2.4 of this chapter.

⁴⁵ This is discussed in chapter 4.

⁴⁶ Here I have relied on Walter Mettmann's edition of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. 4 Vols (Coimbra: Acta Universitatis Conimbrigensis, 1959-1972).

the product of efforts to compile oral and literary traditions that existed throughout Iberia and Europe. The *Cantigas* provide a detailed portrait of the diversity of thirteenth-century society, where different faith groups came into contact with one another. Religious minorities are represented through many narratives, and are witnesses to a great number of miracles of the Virgin Mary. Jews appear in some thirty *cantigas*; Muslims feature in fifty or so. They are portrayed in a variety of different contexts, and play a number of roles in the events that give rise to the intervention of the Virgin.

As we have seen in our earlier survey of medieval Iberian literature, Christian-Muslim enmity is a widely used topos. The *Cantigas* are no different: many seek to portray Islam as the rival *par excellence* of Christianity. Muslim forces are frequently engaged in conflict with Christians, as both instigators and victims of raiding, campaigns of devastation, sieges and conquests. A small number of *cantigas* depict images of conflict in the Levant: *cantigas* 28 and 264 concern two sieges of Constantinople by Muslim forces, whilst *cantiga* 165 narrates a Mamluk campaign against the Crusader city of Tartus around 1270. Others depict violence among the faiths at the Iberian frontier: *cantiga* 277 tells of an act of Marian devotion by Portuguese almogavars raiding throughout the Algarve; 374 likewise portrays Castilian almogavars riding out to devastate Spanish Islam.

A number of *cantigas* are testimony to the on-going conflict with Islam during Alfonso's own lifetime.⁴⁷ In *cantiga* 169, Alfonso X speaks in the first person of how Murcia – the city that "God gave me"⁴⁸ – was attacked by the forces of the Sultan of Morocco. The forces of Abu Yusuf disembark and threaten to take the city, but the

⁴⁷ *Cantigas* 221 and 292 refer to Fernando III's conquest of Andalusia; meanwhile *cantiga* 361 recognises Alfonso X as 'aquele que prime[i]ra vez / ve[n]çeu o sennor dos mouros' (vv. 12-13, vol. 3, p. 274).

⁴⁸ 'E daquest' un miragre direi grande, que vi / des que mi Deus deu Murça'. *Cantigas*, 169, vv. 8-9 (vol. 2, p. 174).

Virgin intervenes to dispatch the invaders, protecting her chapel there from falling into Muslim hands. The notion of warfare against Islam is very clear at the close of the *cantiga*:

E porend' a eigreja sua quita é ja,
que nunca Mafomete poder y averá;
ca conquereu ela e demais conquerrá
Espanna e Marrocos, e Ceta e Arcilla.⁴⁹

Here, Alfonso projects 'reconquest' ideology through the Virgin Mary, depicting her as a protagonist of Christian rule. It is she who holds off the Marinid expedition, defending her church from 'Mafomete'. It is she who 'conquered and will conquer Spain and Morocco'. In a similar vein, *cantiga* 401 includes an appeal to the Virgin Mary to help Alfonso rid Spain of the Moors.⁵⁰

Just as they are an external threat to the kingdom, Muslims also appear as an internal menace.⁵¹ *Cantiga* 345 narrates the uprising of the Mudejars of Jerez. The *cantiga* tells of how the Muslim community – who had been allowed to remain in the city after it was conquered by Castile – flagrantly deceive Christian rule. In a bid to undermine the new authority, the Mudejars build a wall, separating their town from the castle and its Christian garrison. When the Castilian lord abandons the castle, the rebels threaten to destroy the chapel and its image of the Virgin and Child. The Mudejars are presented as highly subversive, watching and waiting before openly defying Castilian authority:

Ca os mouros espreitaron quando el Rei bien seguro

⁴⁹ 169, vv. 63-66 (vol. 2, p. 176).

⁵⁰ 'E al te rog' ainda... que contra os mouros, que terra d'Ultramar / t'ēen e en Espanna gran part' a meu pesar, / me dé poder e força pera os en deitar.' *Cantigas*, 401, vv. 22, 29-31 (vol. 3, p. 351).

⁵¹ Salvador Martínez has helpfully divided the negative representations of Muslims along these lines, to help account for the many different protagonists that feature in the *Cantigas*. He identifies the Mudejars of Castile as the principal domestic enemy, whilst the main external threat is that of Marinid Morocco. *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 300

estava deles, e toste foron fazer outro muro
ontr' o castel' e a vila, muit' ancho e fort' e duro;⁵²

Salvador Martínez has noted how this *cantiga*, amongst others, illustrates a profound sense of betrayal that Alfonso felt, after the Mudejar revolts of 1264.⁵³ It appeared that the settlements and pacts negotiated with the Muslims of Andalusia and Murcia were tearing apart at the seams. We can quite reasonably read in *cantiga* 345 that Alfonso had trusted the Moors of Jerez to live alongside their Christian lords: 'el Rei ben seguro / estava deles'.⁵⁴ Instead, Alfonso was proved wrong by the uprising, and consequently repopulated the city with Christians after the revolt was quelled.

While there are many instances of conflict among the faiths, the Virgin is presented as a powerful mediator between Christians and Muslims. *Cantiga* 344 is particularly illustrative of this. The lyrics relate that two companies of riders – one Muslim, the other Christian – settle down to camp for the evening on either side of a church, unbeknown to the other. When they awake to find themselves in such close proximity to the enemy, they are amazed that neither side has heard or seen the adversary right in front of them. Both sides acknowledge that this extraordinary event took place by the virtue of Saint Mary. In recognition of her, they refrain from conflict and sign a truce, as an act of deference to the authority of the Virgin.

Elsewhere, in *cantiga* 181 the Virgin Mary holds back a Marinid campaign against Almohad Marrakech. In this instance the *cantiga* holds that Mary has intervened in Islamic affairs, to assist 'seus amigos, / pero que d'outra lei eran'.⁵⁵ The Marinids here are presented as her 'enemies', whilst the Muslim rulers of Marrakech are her 'friends'.

⁵² 345, vv. 21-23 (vol. 3, p. 234).

⁵³ *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, pp. 300, 302-303.

⁵⁴ 345, vv. 21-22 (vol. 3, p. 234).

⁵⁵ 181, vv. 40-41 (vol. 2, p. 203).

The motive for such an intervention on behalf of the Almohads owes essentially to the fact that there was a Christian stake in that affair: in the thirteenth century there was a large Christian population in Marrakech.⁵⁶ Whilst this *cantiga* cannot escape the politics of strategic alliances with the "unbelievers", its message rings out that the Virgin is above simple faith boundaries. That is to say, she willingly assists her Muslim 'friends' against their enemies as she sees fit. The implications are significant: the Virgin can grant favour upon Christians *and* Muslims, according to how she sees fit.

Even in the context of perpetual struggle among the faiths, the *Cantigas* do not overlook the shared veneration of the mother of Jesus by Christians and Muslims. In *cantiga* 165, the Christian composer astutely points out that Mary has her place in the Quran, and is duly respected by Muslims. During the siege of Tartus by the Mamluks of Egypt, Mary bolsters the Crusader city's defences with a garrison of angels. When the Mamluk sultan is made aware of the Virgin's intervention, he refrains from making war with her, owing to her sanctity and status, to which the Quran is testimony:

...Eno Alcoran achey
que Santa Maria virgin foi sempr'; e pois esto sey
guerra per nulla maneira con ela non fillarey⁵⁷

Even greater devotion to Mary can be seen in *cantiga* 329. In this instance, a group of Muslim raiders have obtained a large booty, and demonstrate their veneration to the Virgin. When they come across a Marian sanctuary, they make her offerings with items they have plundered. The *cantiga* precisely states that Islam shares the doctrine of the Virgin birth:

⁵⁶ See J. Montoya Martínez, 'El frustrado cerco de Marrakech (1261-1262)', *Cuadernos de Estudios Medievales*, 8-9 (1980-81), 183-192.

⁵⁷ 165, vv. 65-67 (vol. 2, p. 168).

Onde, pero que os mouros no teman a nossa fe,
tod' esto da Virgen santa t'een [que] gran verdad' e'⁵⁸

Both *cantigas* 165 and 329 portray Muslims as showing great reverence for Saint Mary. On a theological and spiritual level, the *Cantigas* transmit something of an entente between Christianity and Islam, despite the frequent backdrop of military conflict.

In other *cantigas* the Virgin embraces Muslims, bestowing her kindness upon them, and bringing about their conversion. In a rather dramatic episode, *cantiga* 192 narrates the struggle between a Muslim slave and the Devil. The slave continually resists conversion, until he finds himself in mortal combat with Satan himself. The Virgin steps in and banishes the Devil, whereby the Muslim gives himself entirely to Christ, and is baptised. In another instance (*cantiga* 167), a grieving mother travels to a Marian sanctuary and implores the Virgin to bring back her recently perished son. And *on the third day* the Virgin resuscitates the son, after which the mother gives herself to Christianity. Conversion is a recurrent theme in the *Cantigas*, and suggests that Muslims may yet find Salvation, in renouncing the law of Muhammad and embracing Catholicism.⁵⁹

Perhaps the most transparent composition is *cantiga* 379, in which Muslim traders are shown to be strategically important to Castile. The *cantiga* addresses the difficulties that Alfonso faced in his settlement initiatives for El Puerto de Santa María on the Andalusian coast. We read that alongside the settlers, a number of 'mui ricos

⁵⁸ 329, vv. 30-31 (vol. 3, p. 195).

⁵⁹ *Cantiga* 28 recounts the conversion of the commander leading a siege of Constantinople; *cantiga* 46 concerns a warrior who witnesses the lactation of an image of Mary and is baptised; in *cantiga* 205 a mother and son are saved from death during a siege and are converted. See Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, pp. 329-331.

mercadores' were establishing themselves at the port.⁶⁰ However, this project is said to have been undermined by Catalan pirates, who:

...roubavan aos mouros que ali per mar querian
vñir, e muitos matavan deles e muitos prendian⁶¹

The disruption caused by Catalan piracy is portrayed as a lack of due reverence to Saint Mary. The *Virgen gloriosa* puts the pirates in their place, causing a great storm that halts their escape. The privateers have no choice but to sail up the Guadalquivir to Seville, where they hand over the stolen goods and their Muslim prisoners. The *cantiga* clearly asserts that whilst Muslims may often be in conflict with the Virgin Mary, her door is never closed to them and she will come to them in times of duress:

...empero que os mouros a vezes le fazen guerra,
aos que vee coitados nunca lle-la porta serra
d'acorrer con sa merçee, que é mayor das mayores.⁶²

As is the case with *cantiga* 181, the Virgin Mary is seen to bestow favour upon those Muslims who are of strategic value to the Crown. The Muslim traders of El Puerto de Santa María are 'coitados', and owing to their importance to Alfonso's colonisation efforts on the southern coast, they are treated with benevolence.

From the *cantigas* that we have briefly explored here, we find a wide range of portraits of Muslims. Many offer a clear image of the reality of Christian-Muslim contact during Alfonso's reign. Consistent with other forms of historical writing, the composers of these lyrics represent Islam as the eternal rival of Christianity, but also as

⁶⁰ 379, v. 13 (vol. 3, p. 314).

⁶¹ 379, vv. 25-26, (vol. 3, p. 314).

⁶² 379, vv. 56-58, (vol. 3, p. 315).

crucial allies and trading partners. Crucially, the portrayals of warfare, devastation, slavery and trade are entirely secondary to the more pressing narratives of the Virgin Mary's treatment of Muslims. The very actions of protagonists, and those of the Virgin herself, reveal a variety of attitudes towards Islam.

In many instances, the Virgin directly intervenes to protect Christians from Muslim attacks. Let us take as examples the sieges of Constantinople and Tartus (*cantigas* 28 and 165). Though the commanders leading the attack represent a mortal threat to Christianity, their actions are ultimately highly desirable. When the Virgin protects Constantinople from bombardment, the Muslim aggressor yields, and converts to Christianity. In the case of Tartus, the Mamluk sultan shows great deference to her – he confirms in the Quran that it is his duty as a Muslim to respect Mary – and calls off his attack. Even more revealing is the sincere devotion of the Muslim raiders in *cantiga* 329. In this respect, the *cantigas* demonstrate that even though Muslims are frequently at war with Christians, they are nonetheless upright and decent in their veneration of Saint Mary. There are of course cases where Muslims are presented as lacking in respect for the Virgin, or are even identified as her 'enemies'. But it is through the representations of Muslim devotion to the Virgin that we read a subtly favourable verdict on their actions and piety.

For Salvador Martínez, much of the content that we find is explained by the literary and oral traditions that were the basis of the *Cantigas*. They incorporate popular sentiment among the Christian community, and the negative portrayals of religious minorities are a reflection of popular prejudices of the time. On these grounds the *Cantigas* differ noticeably from the *Siete Partidas*: Alfonso's lyrics do not contain the same degree of political rigour that are found in his legal works. Accordingly the

Cantigas represent popular attitudes, rather than *official* attitudes.⁶³ At the same time, Salvador Martínez considers the depictions of enmity and conflict among Christians and Muslims as an extension of Alfonso's own desire to continue the 'reconquest' efforts. To the king, Islam is a threat both inside and outside the realm, and this explains the frequency of such narratives in the *Cantigas*.⁶⁴

Salvador Martínez concludes that Muslims receive a 'benign' treatment in the *Cantigas de Santa María*. Certainly, he acknowledges the frequency of enmity and 'reconquest' rhetoric. Nonetheless, he holds that these Galician lyrics are illustrative of Alfonso's attitude of *tolerancia* – a product of the *convivencia* of the Alfonsine court – and show less severity towards minorities than the *Partidas*.⁶⁵ Salvador Martínez looks to *cantiga* 305 to sustain his position. Here we find a very curious reference, regarding the great mercy of the Almighty:

...aquele que perdōar pode crischão, judeu e mouro,
atanto que en Dios ajan ben firmes sas entenções.⁶⁶

This narrative of sincere repentance and redemption suggests that Jews and Muslims are not exempt from forgiveness. The condition placed on these minorities is that their intentions be firmly placed in the Lord God. These two lines seem to leap out of the page at the modern reader, against the more commonplace anti-Jewish and anti-Islamic rhetoric of the time. Salvador Martínez asks whether we could interpret this as Alfonso's recognition that all three faiths can lead to God.⁶⁷ This is indeed an ambitious claim – and it is one that we will not attempt to make here. This is due several fundamental

⁶³ *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, pp. 227-230.

⁶⁴ *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 283.

⁶⁵ *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, pp. 333.

⁶⁶ 305, vv. 67-68 (vol. 3, p. 135).

⁶⁷ *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 232. See below in this chapter, where this discussion is developed.

limitations to our interpretation of the Alfonsine corpus. How confidently can we speak of Alfonso X's attitude towards Muslims? To this question we turn now our attention.

2.4 *Interpreting Alfonso X's attitudes to Islam*

Following our brief analysis of representations of Muslims in the *Partidas* and the *Cantigas*, let us now consider the debate among modern scholars. Given the breadth of references to religious minorities in these works, scholars have drawn on them to offer their verdict on Alfonso's attitudes to minorities. This section is a crucial stepping-stone in the development of an appropriate methodology for this thesis: first, it serves as a review of existing literature on the topic of attitudes to religious minorities in the writings of Alfonso X; second, it reveals a series of critical reflections and considerations for the historical interpretation of Alfonso's writings. This section will reveal that scholars' interpretations of Alfonso's works rely on assumptions about authorship, readership and the political objectives behind the texts. In due course, these factors will be shown to be the pillars of the interpretative framework of this thesis.

Albert Bagby considered the depictions of Muslims and Jews in the *Cantigas*, and concluded that in the great majority of cases minorities are characterised negatively.⁶⁸ This reflects the standard stereotypes of the time, which held minorities to be unpleasant and disagreeable characters. Jews were seen to be scheming, untrustworthy and avaricious; Muslims were perceived as barbarous invaders. Bagby provides us with an

⁶⁸ A. Bagby, 'Alfonso X el Sabio compara moros y judíos', *Romanische Forschungen*, 82(4) (1970), 578-583.

important reflection on the nature of the descriptions: are these portrayals representative of the author's own prejudices? Or is the author simply meeting the demands of a readership that expected these negative stereotypes? Bagby cannot say either way, suggesting that both cases were possible. In the absence of a definite answer, we must certainly bear in mind the concepts of *intent* and *reception* as we interpret the depiction of Muslims in the *Estoria*.

In the case of the *Siete Partidas*, Marjorie Ratcliffe offers us a characterisation of the author of the legislation. She affirms that at court level Alfonso X was a great innovator, and was progressive in his outlook. Undoubtedly he appreciated the *sabiduría* of the Jews and Muslims with whom he mingled at court. That said, the king was very much bound to the legal tradition of his lands. His legislation demonstrates a profound loathing of Jews, and a strong desire to subjugate Iberian Muslims. Alfonso was, she asserts, a man of his times, conditioned by his Christian faith and the customs of the kingdom. He was just as open to prejudice as any other in the thirteenth century.⁶⁹ Another factor to keep in mind for our analysis of Alfonso's historiography is that of textual tradition.

This is precisely the approach that Carpenter took in his robust assessment of the Jews in the *Partidas*. His commentary of *Partida* 7.24 constitutes a unique insight into the compilation process of the laws governing Jewish subjects.⁷⁰ Through Carpenter's research, we can see the construction of the statutes piece by piece. This approach is crucial to the recognition of the redaction process accounting for the *content* that we find within the historiographical works of Alfonso X. Carpenter's wider view is that Alfonso's policy towards minorities was one of toleration. This *modus vivendi*

⁶⁹ M. Ratcliffe, 'Judíos y musulmanes en las Siete Partidas de Alfonso X', in *Alfonso X el Sabio, vida, obra y época: actas del Congreso Internacional* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 1998).

⁷⁰ Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews*.

envisaged by the king is, however, not driven by love, but through a justice system that is purely practical and which meets his political designs.⁷¹ Attitudes to Muslims in the *Partidas* are an 'amalgamation of religious antipathy and political fear',⁷² indicating an inherent anxiety surrounding the Mudejar community. For Carpenter, the law codes represent the *official* position of the king. And a very close analysis of the text reveals operations of a collective of jurists, compiling legal texts with political objectives in mind.⁷³ By extent, our own study will closely follow the work of Carpenter, recognising the multiplicity of hands at work, compiling the narratives of Muslims in the *Estoria*. We also hold that political objectives are vital to the understanding of Alfonso's historiography.

Francisco Márquez Villanueva has taken a wide view of the king and his works, examining every aspect of the grand cultural enterprise.⁷⁴ His work takes into account the negative stereotypes found in the *Cantigas*, the rulings of the *Siete Partidas* and the polemical biography of Muhammad in the *Estoria*. Márquez Villanueva asks:

Don Alfonso es tan pragmático y tan cumplidor de su deber de gobernante cuando incurre en los estereotipos negativos que eran actitud oficial de su época como cuando, contra los mismos, se sirve a fondo de la competencia y saber de moros y judíos. En uno y otro caso el rey Sabio podría responder con un '¿Esperábais otra cosa?' a muchas perplejidades de sus historiadores de hoy.⁷⁵

This very frank observation is particularly powerful. Recognising the times in which Alfonso lived, what could we reasonably expect to find in his writings? Theological expositions defending the truths of Jewish and Islamic doctrines? Songs of praise to

⁷¹ Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews*, p. 105; 'Alfonso el Sabio y los moros: algunas precisiones legales, históricas y textuales con respecto a Siete Partidas 7.25', *Al-Qantara*, 7(1) (1986), 229-252.

⁷² Carpenter, 'Minorities in medieval Spain: the legal status of Muslims and Jews in the Siete Partidas', *Romance Quarterly*, 33(3) (1986), 275-287 (p. 276).

⁷³ 'Minorities in medieval Spain', p. 279; *Alfonso X and the Jews*, pp. 103-104.

⁷⁴ Márquez Villanueva, *El concepto cultural alfonsí*.

⁷⁵ *El concepto cultural alfonsí*, p. 101.

Allah and Yahweh? Treatises of love and tolerance – in today's sense – to his fellow brothers of Abraham? Candid questions such as these remind us of the limits of acceptable positions in Alfonso's time. Negative portrayals and anti-Islamic rhetoric were habitual, normal practices at the time. Accordingly, there is no reason why Alfonso should not *officially* uphold those derogatory practices in that context. For our own detailed assessment of the *Estoria*, here is another reminder to consider Alfonso's pragmatism and political objectives. We can also add the notion of conformity to the theological norms of Western Christendom.

Robert Burns considers whether the *Siete Partidas* are in themselves representative of Alfonso's stance, or are simply the commonplaces of medieval legal writing. The laws governing minorities are, to a degree, legal boilerplate – as a compilation of extant Canon law. Burns concludes:

There is no reason to think that the king did not accept the ancient attitudes and ideals expressed here, to be applied according to the political possibilities of a given time or place.⁷⁶

The views contained within are a combination of common, conservative stances towards minorities. Furthermore, the legislation is an instrument intended for application. According to Burns, there is no basis for divorcing Alfonso X from the conservative ideals present in his defining work of jurisprudence. In a broadly realistic approach to the question of the king's own attitudes, Burns effectively echoes Ratcliffe and Márquez Villanueva: Alfonso was a man of his times.

It is Salvador Martínez – an assiduous biographer of the Rey Sabio – who strives to reconstruct the personal attitude of the author of the *Partidas* and the *Cantigas*.

⁷⁶ 'Jews and Moors in the Siete Partidas of Alfonso X the Learned: a background perspective,' in *Culture, conflict and coexistence. Studies in Honour of Angus MacKay*, ed. by R. Collins and A. Goodman (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 54.

Throughout his assessment of the king's legislation and poetry, he defends the *tolerancia personal* of Alfonso X. Addressing the question of attitudes to minorities in the *Partidas* and the *Cantigas*, Salvador Martínez writes:

El estudio de estas obras permite una visión comprensiva del problema tal como lo percibía el Rey Sabio...⁷⁷

Throughout the monograph, there is a continual tension between the idealising notion of Alfonsine *tolerancia* – he even speaks of *armonía* under Alfonso X –⁷⁸ and the weight of evidence that contravenes this proposal. Faced with the severe treatment of Mudejars in *Partida* 7.25, Salvador Martínez writes:

Cuando analizamos el Título 25 de la Séptima Partida la imagen del Islam que se desprende parece en claro conflicto con todo lo que sabemos de las actitudes del Rey Sabio hacia los musulmanes, como sabios colaboradores y expertos en las ciencias y la filosofía.⁷⁹

Moreover, Salvador Martínez draws on the curiosity of *cantiga* 305, with its intriguing reference to a God capable of forgiving 'crischão, judeu e mouro'. Salvador Martínez asks the following:

A la vista de textos como éste, debemos preguntarnos: ¿está el Rey Sabio, a diferencia de su sobrino don Juan Manuel, sugiriendo que la salvación se puede conseguir tanto si se es cristiano como si se es judío o moro 'tanto que en Dios ajan ben firmes sas entenções'? ¿Podemos pensar que, si bien no hubo en su reino un sincretismo religioso, es más, se defendió la separación de los tres grupos y se opuso a la convivencia social, el Rey Sabio pensó que era posible llegar a Dios por tres vías diferentes?⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 23.

⁷⁸ 'Ni antes de él se había conocido en el mundo cristiano, ni después de él se volverá a conocer, mayor armonía entre las tres etnias...' *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 18.

⁷⁹ *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 183.

⁸⁰ *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 232.

Whilst these reflections are admittedly enticing and enthralling to any scholar of interfaith relations, they are ultimately indefensible in the context. As Carpenter had asserted earlier:

The world in which Alfonso moved did not subscribe to the notion of relative truth as far as religions were concerned, and, consequently, the idea that all religions are somehow coequal would have been considered both heretical and preposterous. [...] Religious tolerance, when it did manifest itself, was not a moral issue, but, rather, a response to a theological or political concern.⁸¹

What, then, are we to make of this apparent anomaly of *cantiga* 305? Is this, as Salvador Martínez entertains, a glimpse at the personal dispositions of Alfonso *hombre*? There are many different avenues that allow us to reconstruct the Castile and Leon in the thirteenth century: archaeology, surviving architecture and artwork, administrative documentation, missives and personal correspondence, legislation, historical writing and verse. For the reign of Alfonso X specifically, we are fortunate that many attitudes towards Muslims were expressed in the great body of legal codes, poetry and historical writing. However, do any of these equate to the *personal* view of the king? Did Alfonso write *cantiga* 305 himself? Are the *Cantigas* the attitudes of the author, as Bagby asks, or were they formulated for the readership, reproducing societal attitudes?

We are faced with an array of questions, surrounding Alfonsine jurisprudence, verse and historiography. What we *can* say, at the very least, is that we may never retrieve definitive answers, nor manage to bring the academic community to an agreement. Such is the nature of medievalism; such is the nature of academia. Instead, this thesis can

⁸¹ 'Minorities in medieval Spain', p. 283.

only hope to articulate its position, and clarify the assumptions we are making as a basis for our interpretation of the *Estoria de España*. Considering the arguments of scholars over recent decades, there are many issues to bear in mind when interpreting attitudes to religious minorities in the works of Alfonso X. There appear to be four major concepts in contention: *official* attitudes, the king's personal views, the expectations of the readership and the political-pragmatic objectives associated with the texts.

In an attempt to find some form of closure to the present debate, let us affirm our position. First, it will be prudent to avoid speaking of Alfonso's personal views. Whilst we must recognise Alfonso as the author of his many works – in the medieval sense of *authorship* – we have no means to verify that one or other written enunciation is the linguistic coding of an individual thought originating in Alfonso's mind. In fact, we have every means to trace these enunciations – especially in the *Estoria* – to a previous text. The use of source material – as argued later in this chapter – is crucial, as this implicates extraneous influence over the content of the text.⁸² However, by reproducing the enunciations of others, Alfonso appropriates this material and exerts ownership of it anew. It is reproduced and 'approved' by the king – *officially* approved.

Second, we must acknowledge that these texts intended to communicate with a readership. Be it a readership of one, or a readership of a million, the case is the same: it is an information transfer between sender and receiver. We will make a more detailed case for who the sender and the receiver may be, in the remainder of this chapter. For the moment, however, we will simply hold that an interpretation of the *Estoria* must try to conceive of the destination of the information contained within.

⁸² The case for a source-critical approach to interpreting the *Estoria* is developed across sections 2.6 and 2.7 of this chapter.

Closely related to this is the third assumption: the *Estoria de España* was a document that responded to a political objective. Authored by the sovereign of Castile and Leon, the text was an extension of the king's objectives for the lands and people over which he ruled. It is easy for us to picture Alfonso el Sabio at a desk, surrounded by star charts, astrolabes, draft translations of every kind, with jottings of verses of devotion to the Virgin to one side. This caricature is perfectly acceptable. Nonetheless, these intellectual exploits were by no means leisurely: there is certainly reason to believe that his cultural endeavours were inherently bound to his duties as the leader and sovereign ruler of Castile and Leon.

2.5 *Interpreting the Estoria de España: assumptions about the text*

As section 2.4 of this chapter has demonstrated, scholars have offered a number of conclusions on attitudes to minorities in Alfonso X's works. Scholars have based their interpretations on a variety of assumptions, centred on questions of authorship and readership. However, few of these scholars have explicitly defended the basis for these assumptions. In light of this, the following section of chapter 2 offers a detailed defence of the assumptions that will be used for the historical interpretation of *Estoria* narratives of Muslims. This section will clarify the evidence to support the following: the authorship, the readership and the political agenda of the *Estoria de España*. In short: the text represents the work of a number of different individuals; it was intended for political elites and the *cavallero* estate; the text was formulated as a function of Alfonso

X's wider political objectives. Each of these is essential to bear in mind for later analysis of *Estoria* narratives of Muslims. That is to say, these assumptions must be clarified in order to explain *why* narratives of Muslims were shaped in a particular manner, and to what effect.⁸³

a) Authorship of the *Estoria*

At the outset, who crafted the *Estoria* narratives? Who was responsible for the way in which Muslims were portrayed in the text? How was the writing of the text managed? The written record of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries helps shed light on the king and his scriptorium. We are fortunate that evidence of Alfonso's *modus operandi* was made explicit by his contemporaries. The *General Estoria* provides us with an excellent basis for understanding the concept of authorship. In an early section of his extensive universal history, the question of authorship is explicitly evoked in the context of the Ten Commandments. We read that in the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy, there is a potential conflict concerning the author of the Commandments: was it Moses or God himself who *wrote* them? The *General Estoria* tells us:

...podemos entender e dezir que compuso nuestro sennor las razones delos mandados, e que ouo ell auctoridad e el nombre d'el, por que las mando escriuir. Mas que las escriuio Moysen...⁸⁴

The *General Estoria* then draws an analogy to Alfonso's own authorship:

⁸³ The 'why' and 'to what effect' of narrative portrayals of Muslims are discussed in each of the three case studies explored in chapter 3 of the thesis.

⁸⁴ Alfonso X, *General Estoria*, I. Ed. by A. G. Solalinde (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Históricos, 1930), XVI, XIV, p. 477.

...assi como dixiemos nos muchas uezes El Rey faze un libro, non por quel el escriua con sus manos, mas por que compone las razones del e las emienda e yegua e enderesça e muestra la manera de como se deuen fazer. E desi escriue las que el manda, pero dezimos por esta razon que el Rey faze el libro.⁸⁵

This aptly captures the concept of authorship, in the very context of the Alfonsine scriptorium. The literality of an expression such as 'el rey faze un libro' is removed: other hands actively commit words and statements to paper, and this collective action is attributed to the king – just as the Ten Commandments are attributed to God. This passage also suggests that Alfonso had an active role in the editing process. The king is shown to revise the work of the scriptorium, making emendations and improvements to draft texts.

A second source alluding to Alfonso's involvement in his cultural works can be found in the prologue to Don Juan Manuel's *Crónica Abreviada*. The picture of Alfonso X *scholar* is painted by his own nephew:

...Fallamos que en todas las ciencias fizo muchos libros e todos muy buenos. E [...] auia muy grant espacio para estudiar en las materias de que queria componer algunos libros. Ca moraua en algunos logares vn anno e dos e mas, e avn, segunt dizen los que viuián a la su merced, que fablauan con el los que querian e quando el queria, e ansi auia espacio de estudiar en lo quel queria fazer para si mismo, e avn para veer e esterminar las cosas de los saberes quel mandaua ordenar a los maestros e a los sabios que traya para esto en su corte.⁸⁶

This extract offers a modest insight into the king's role providing leadership in essentially collaborative projects.⁸⁷ In much the same way as the *General Estoria*

⁸⁵ *General Estoria*, I, XVI, XIV, p. 477.

⁸⁶ Don Juan Manuel, 'Prologo'. *Crónica Abreviada*, in *Obras completas*, ed. by J. M. Blecua, vol. 2 (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1983), pp. 575-576.

⁸⁷ The passage ought to be considered less as 'proof' of the exact workings of the court, since the testimonies are at least second-hand accounts from Alfonso's consorts 'segunt dizen los que viuián a la su merced'. We can also consider the image to play a rhetorical role in the presentation of the king as a great scholar, as Don Juan Manuel frequently wishes to highlight within his works.

explains, the king is at the centre of all intellectual activity in the court. Alfonso X is seen to enjoy time and space for his own private study, as well as occupying himself with meetings and consultations with the many *maestros* and *sabios* that were part of the court.

Modern scholars have broadly agreed that Alfonso did not single-handedly produce his enormous cultural legacy, but held an important editing role. Antonio García Solalinde explained that Alfonso directly intervened in the composition and correction phases of production.⁸⁸ Gonzalo Menéndez Pidal has also attempted to identify systematically the operations of the scriptorium and its many arms of translation. He was able to identify a number of individual translators from the prologues, and their specific contributions. Furthermore, he considered the miniatures of several manuscripts as valuable depictions of the king's role, surrounded by collaborators and personally overseeing the project.⁸⁹ Thanks to the work of scholars such as Diego Catalán, Georges Martin and Inés Fernández-Ordóñez, we now have a detailed picture of the collaborative efforts of the team that produced the *Estoria de España*.⁹⁰ Though the individual compilers are extremely hard to identify, we know that there were many hands contributing to the work, with different phases and tasks in the writing process.⁹¹ As such, we can deduce that representations of Muslims in the *Estoria* were formulated by many different hands, and the drafting of these narratives was later approved by the king himself.

⁸⁸ 'La intervención de Alfonso X en la redacción de sus obras'.

⁸⁹ G. Menéndez Pidal, 'Cómo trabajaron las escuelas alfonsíes'.

⁹⁰ The philological question of the multiple redactions of the *Estoria* will be addressed in 2.7 of this chapter, and later in section 4.3 of chapter 4 of this thesis.

⁹¹ See section 4.3 of chapter 4 for the implications of multiple authorship of the *Estoria*.

b) Readership of the *Estoria*

Let us now bring some clarity to the question of the readership of the *Estoria de España*. To be very clear, this begs a certain degree of nuance: there are those who are *intended* to be reached at the time of writing, and those who *were* reached as the text was disseminated. The reader is naturally elusive, and we cannot identify for certain the minds that were moved by Alfonso X's historical writing. Nonetheless, we can reconstruct quite plausibly the profile of the readership – intended and historical – who consumed *Estoria* narratives and its depictions of Muslims. There is a wealth of research that can be drawn on to reconstruct the hypothetical readership.

As Alberto Manguel has shown, reading has been an integral part of culture in pre-modern society. Books held an important social function in the Middle Ages, notably as a source of entertainment, as they were in Roman times.⁹² Book culture was multifaceted: on the one hand they were objects of silent reading, and on the other they were often read collectively. Helpfully for us, medieval writers have captured the habits of their times, with literary depictions of contemporary reading culture.⁹³ Whilst the late Middle Ages witnessed a transition from oral reading towards silent reading, there was a strong oral-aural dimension to book culture.⁹⁴ Reading aloud – known as prelection – was one of the principal ways in which books were consumed, particularly among society's elites.

⁹² A. Manguel, *A history of reading* (London: HarperCollins, 1996).

⁹³ See: J. Cerquilligni-Toulet, 'La scène de lecture dans l'oeuvre littéraire au Moyen Age', in *Le goût du lecteur à la fin du Moyen Age*, ed. by D. Bohler (Paris: Cahiers du Léopard d'Or, 2006), pp. 13-26.

⁹⁴ P. Saenger, 'Silent Reading: its impact on Late Medieval script and society', *Viator*, 13 (1982), 367-414.

Joyce Coleman has produced an exceptional monograph on reading culture in the Middle Ages, with a focus on late medieval England and France.⁹⁵ The study indicates the importance of prelection in the vernacular, among secular elites. Group reading was enjoyed by the upper echelons of society and by members of the court, and historical writing is identified as a source of reading material among this class. Coleman points to Wace's *Roman de Rou* as prime reference to historical writing in twelfth-century Norman England. The text states how histories should be read aloud at *festes*, and highlights the distinct value of history:

Pur remembrer des ancesurs
les feiz e les diz e les murs
les felunies des feluns
e les barnages des baruns,
deit l'um les livres e les gestes
e les estoires lire a festes.
Si escripture ne fust faite
e puis par clers litte e retraite,
mult fussent choses ubliées
ki de veiz tens sunt trespassees.⁹⁶

Wace's assertions on history in the abstract are remarkably similar to what we find in medieval Iberian tradition. In much the same way as the *Estoria de España*, the *Roman* holds that memory is something to be treasured: history is the repository of 'the wicked deeds of wicked men and the brave deeds of brave men'.⁹⁷ Likewise, Wace views oblivion to be lamentable. It is to be combatted by the reading of histories.

Coleman retrieves many other testimonies to the consumption of historical writing in medieval Europe. In the case of France, Christine de Pisan tells of how Charles V took

⁹⁵ J. Coleman, *Public reading and the reading public in Late Medieval England and France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁹⁶ Wace, *Roman de Rue*. Ed. and trans. by G. S. Burgess (St Helier, Jersey: Société Jersiaise, 2002), Part 3, lines 1-10 (p. 108).

⁹⁷ Burgess' translation of 'les felunies des feluns / e les barnages des baruns'. *Roman de Rue*, p. 108.

pleasure in listening to the *Faits des Romains*.⁹⁸ This history was extremely popular throughout France, and was widely enjoyed by the nobility, who sought moral teachings for it.⁹⁹ Furthermore, the Burgundian dukes Philip the Good and Charles the Bold are said to have enjoyed hearing various histories of old; Marshal Jean le Maingre de Boucicaut is also recorded as having a fondness for historical writing.¹⁰⁰ Coleman looks to manuscript illuminations as evidence of prelection at court. Based on the tight gathering of the listeners, she posits that group reading had the goal of:

imparting information and influencing individuals towards a single approved understanding of history and the key social values it is presented as illustrating.¹⁰¹

Research has also offered an image of the consumption of historical writing in medieval Spain. Isabel Beceiro Pita's work has helped discern the panorama of book culture in late medieval Castile.¹⁰² For the aristocracy, the book's main function is reflection, along with sociability. The reading of history, she argues, had its own precise functions. First of all, courtly prelection strengthened the image of the king as educator, as his subjects were summoned to gather around and listen at his request. This also reinforced cohesion among the *cavallero* estate as an audience, facilitating discussion and debate over the subject matter. Crucially, histories provided a model of conduct for the nobility, exhorting them to follow the examples set by their predecessors. Finally, historical writing helped rally the fighting spirit of the warrior class.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Coleman, *Public reading and the reading public*, p. 118.

⁹⁹ B. Guenée, 'La culture historique des nobles: le succès des Faits des Romains (XIII-XV siècles)', in *La noblesse au Moyen Age, XIe-XVe siècles. Essais à la mémoire de Robert Boutruche*, ed. by P. Contamine (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 1976), pp. 261-288.

¹⁰⁰ Coleman, *Public reading and the reading public*, pp. 118-121.

¹⁰¹ p. 127.

¹⁰² I. Beceiro Pita, 'Libros, nobles y letrados. El caso de Castilla.' in *Libros, lectores y bibliotecas en la España medieval* (Murcia: Nausicaä, 2007), pp. 19-46.

¹⁰³ 'Libros, nobles y letrados', pp. 35-38.

The fifteenth-century writings of Alonso de Cartagena are particularly illustrative of Beceiro Pita's conclusions. The *Doctrinal de los cavalleros* specified which forms of reading material were most appropriate for the chivalric class, and how they were of benefit to the reader.¹⁰⁴ Cartagena asserted that chronicles:

son suficientes para induzir los nobles coraçones a seguir el rrastro de la virtud. Ca asi como en el espejo se considera el bulto corporal, asi en las istorias, leyendo los fechos agenos, se veen los propios con los ojos del coraçon, aunque non del todo claros.¹⁰⁵

The verdict is quite clear: histories compel virtue; the past is innately revealing of the present. The *Doctrinal* recommends that lords should possess 'grand copia' of chronicles, and that military treatises and jurisprudence should equally be obtained.¹⁰⁶

An exact portrait of the readership of the *Estoria de España* will likely never be known for sure. Despite this, we know something of reading culture of late medieval Europe. On the basis of a shared culture of historiography throughout England, France and Spain, we can reconstruct a credible case for who the readers of the *Estoria* may have been. First and foremost, the *Estoria's* audience would certainly include secular elites of thirteenth-century Castile. The royal manuscripts may well have been intended for courtly prelection, helping to build a cohesive environment at the centre of Castilian-Leonese government. In addition, the *cavallero* may have been an intended and actual reader. The *Estoria* recounts many narratives concerning the ruling class, in matters of political and military affairs. Histories modelled exemplary behaviours and virtues, and these were to be imitated by the *cavallero* estate. In spite of the lack of testimonies to confirm this, we find some evidence in the writings of Alfonso's

¹⁰⁴ Alonso de Cartagena, *Doctrinal de los caualleros*. Ed. by N. Fallows (Newark, DE: Juan de la Cesta, 1995).

¹⁰⁵ *Doctrinal de los caualleros*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁶ *Doctrinal de los caualleros*, p. 83.

loquacious nephew Juan Manuel. Writing to the Archbishop of Toledo, the *Adelantado de Murcia* admits that on sleepless nights he finds some relief in histories:

...el cuydado es vna de las cosas que mas faze al omne perder el dormir, et esto acaesçe a mi tantas vezes que me enbarga mucho a la salud del cuerpo; et por ende cada que so en algun cuydado, fago que me lean algunos libros o algunas estorias por sacar aquel cuydado del coraçon.¹⁰⁷

c) The political agenda of the *Estoria*

Lastly, let us consider the goals associated with the writing of the *Estoria*. What was the purpose of this text? What did the king seek to achieve through his *official* history of Spain? What agenda was driving the way in which historical narratives – including those of Muslims – were formulated? The prologue to the text is an obvious place to begin. It serves as a frame for the text as a whole, and provides an exposé on the practice of historiography in the thirteenth century. From the very first, the *Estoria* communicates the importance of memory and warns against the dangers of forgetting. It continues that the past is a principal means to understanding the present and the future, and the importance of recording knowledge, so that it is not lost to oblivion.¹⁰⁸ These statements, along with other sections of the prologue, are a translation of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's *De Rebus Hispanie*.¹⁰⁹ As Aengus Ward has shown, the *Estoria* prologue is fundamentally influenced by Iberian historiographical tradition, sharing

¹⁰⁷ Don Juan Manuel, *Libro del cauallero et del escudero*, in *Obras completas*, vol. 1, p. 39.

¹⁰⁸ *Estoria de Espanna Digital*, E₁: 1 (2r) <estoria.bham.ac.uk> [accessed 29-07-2017].

¹⁰⁹ 'Prologuvs', *De Rebus Hispanie* (henceforth *DRH*), pp. 5-7.

features of the *Chronicon Mundi* and the *Historia Compostelana*.¹¹⁰ Whilst translation does determine the content in large part, Alfonso X asserts his authorial intent:

E por end nos don Alffonso [...] mandamos ayuntar quantos libros pudimos auer de istorias en que alguna cosa contasse de los fechos d'Espanna...¹¹¹

The prologue laments the upheaval caused by the 'mudamiento de los sennorios': many books were destroyed, and this led to the loss of the knowledge of Spain's origins. The objective, as stated by the king, is to gather as many sources as he could, in order to retrieve a maximum of knowledge of Spain's past. Rafael Cano Aguilar has pointed to the difference here between the *Estoria* and *De Rebus Hispanie*. Jiménez de Rada's prologue refers to this upheaval in an apology for the shortcomings of his historiographical efforts. Meanwhile, Alfonso X uses the upheaval as a means to assert his own triumphant *restauración del saber*.¹¹² Ward has also acknowledged the king's exertion of power in the prologue, not only as the intellectual author of the work, but in the act of superseding his *auctor* Jiménez de Rada.¹¹³

In addition to the prologue, the short laudatory verses on the first folios of E₁ hint at the intended applications of the text. We are told that many things to come can be seen through knowledge of the past, and that the *Estoria* is the transmission of that memory, linking past, present and future:

Onde si por las cosas pasadas quiere alguno saber las venideras,
Non desdenne esta obra mas tengala en su memoria.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ A. Ward, 'El prólogo historiográfico medieval', *Cahiers d'études hispaniques médiévales*, 1 (2012), 61-77.

¹¹¹ *Estoria de Espanna Digital*, E₁: 1 (2v).

¹¹² R. Cano Aguilar, 'Los prólogos alfonsíes', *Cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale*, 14(1) (1989), 79-90 (p. 87).

¹¹³ Ward, 'El prólogo historiográfico medieval', p. 72.

¹¹⁴ *Estoria de Espanna Digital*, E₁: 1v.

The laudatory verse clearly indicates the didactic value of the *Estoria*:

Muchas vezes conviene esto leer, ca poderas muchas cosas ver,
Por las quales te aprouecharas, e en las cosas arduas ensennado te faras.¹¹⁵

Importantly, the laudatory suggests that the history is to be consumed with a view to being replicated, through the deeds of readers and listeners:

Ca ssaberas qualquier cosa si es azeptata la tal o si es ynepta [...]
Por el qual fuyendo de las cossas peores, tomaras las meiores.¹¹⁶

The laudatory verses appear to confirm the role of the *historia* as a moralising instrument. In line with the wider culture of the Latin West, the *Estoria de España* intended to set examples for its readership.¹¹⁷

The notion of *Imperium* is integral to the linking of Alfonso's cultural enterprise with political objectives.¹¹⁸ *Imperium* was central to the medieval conception of power, for Alfonso X and his Iberian predecessors. The quest for empire and the king's efforts to further knowledge and understanding are explicitly stated in the *Setenario*. In this comparatively shorter work, Alfonso explicates his father's grand plans for peninsular supremacy. Fernando III, we read, had long intended to adopt the title of Emperor, thereby claiming lordship over Spain:

En rrazon del enperio, quisiera [Fernando] que ffuesse asi llamado ssu sennorio e non rregno, e que ffuese el coronado por enperador segunt lo ffueron otros de su linage.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ *Estoria de Espanna Digital*, E₁: 1v.

¹¹⁶ *Estoria de Espanna Digital*, E₁: 1v.

¹¹⁷ The moralising nature of the *Estoria* is further exemplified in each of the narratives explored in chapter 3. The topic is also revisited in chapter 4, section 4.5.

¹¹⁸ For *Imperium* in the Middle Ages see: R. Folz, *L'idée d'Empire en Occident: du V au XIV siècle* (Paris: Aubier, 1953).

¹¹⁹ *Setenario*. Ed. by K. H. Vanderford (Buenos Aires: Instituto de Filología, 1945), p. 22.

However, we are told that the time was not right for the King of Castile to claim the imperial title. Firstly, military objectives were yet to be complete;¹²⁰ secondly 'por que los omnes non eran endereçados en sus fechos commo deuien.' In order for Fernando's successors to be worthy of the imperial title, a record of exemplary behaviour would have to be captured in writing:

Et por ende cato que lo mejor e mas apuesto que puede sser era de fazer escriptura en que les demostrase aquellas cosas que auyan de fazer para sser buenos e auer bien, e guardarse de aquellos que los ffiziesen malos por que ouyesen a ffazer mal. Et esta escriptura que la ffiziessen e la touyesen asi commo heredamiento de padre e bienffecho de sseñor e commo conseio de buen amigo.¹²¹

The cultural objectives are intrinsically linked to the wider political objectives of Alfonso's reign. Writing, memory and example are clear means to ushering in a new era of *Imperium* in the Peninsula.

Scholars have long discussed the practical applications of Alfonso's cultural project. Solalinde asserted that Alfonso's works had a clear direction:

determinar la conducta del ser humano, es decir, averiguar lo que el hombre hizo en tiempos pretéritos, señalar la calidad e índole de sus acciones al estar éstas sometidas a poderes ultravisibles – influencia astral o divina –, y fijar los deberes ciudadanos.¹²²

In this sense, these three major foci of intellectual attention had a very practical application: history served to highlight the nature of man; jurisprudence proposed the management of man; astronomy-astrology revealed the course of man. For Solalinde, these were the prime interests of the king. Iturmendi Morales has shed light on the imperial thinking of the king. Alfonso's cultural enterprise certainly indicates his

¹²⁰ The *Setenario* reads: 'primeramente, porque la tierra daquent mar non era conquerida toda e los moros fincauan en ella', p. 23. This statement would in part explain the ideology behind Alfonso's campaign to Salé, North Africa.

¹²¹ *Setenario*, p. 23.

¹²² *General Estoria*, I, p. ix.

awareness of his Leonese imperial legacy; the *Partidas* in particular indicate his policy of legislative unification across his dominions.¹²³ As Francisco Rico has shown, the *General Estoria* indicates a link between *Imperium* and scholarship. Precisely, the transfer of learning from one civilisation to another is akin to the transfer of *Imperium*.¹²⁴ Knowledge is, therefore, a crucial aspect of empire. Rico rationalises the place of history in the Alfonsine scheme:

la historia (sagrada o profana) [...] se concibe en el mismo plano que la ciencia "de naturas" y, como ella, apuntada a la ética y, en un soberano, a la política.¹²⁵

By extent, the *Estoria de España* has a practical application in politics and government.

Catalán equally views history as an integral part of Alfonso's scholarly works, linking *saber* to political efforts and aspirations. He sees coherence in the plethora of writings, which are centred on the advancement of knowledge and understanding in Castile-Leon. More profoundly, the search for learning is aligned to the quest for *Imperium*, an objective initiated by Fernando III and enshrined in the encyclopaedic efforts of Alfonso X.¹²⁶ Likewise, Martin is in no doubt of the importance of history and its associated political stakes:

El papel de la historia entre los demás saberes cobró en los talleres alfonsíes una importancia raramente alcanzada, y en la medida en que participó de un proyecto político, a mi parecer propiamente inaugural.¹²⁷

¹²³ J. Iturmendi Morales, 'En torno a la idea de Imperio en Alfonso X el Sabio', *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, 182 (1972), 83-158.

¹²⁴ Rico, *Alfonso el Sabio y la General estoria*, pp. 160-166.

¹²⁵ *Alfonso el Sabio y la General estoria*, p. 124.

¹²⁶ D. Catalán, 'Alfonso X historiador', in *La Estoria de España de Alfonso X: creación y evolución* (Madrid: Seminario Menéndez Pidal, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 1992), pp. 11-44 (pp. 16-18).

¹²⁷ G. Martin, 'El modelo historiográfico alfonsí y sus antecedentes', in *La historia alfonsí y sus destinos (siglos XIII-XV)*, Collection de la Casa de Velázquez, 68 (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2000), pp. 9-40 (p. 10).

*

With the help of primary sources and the work of scholars over recent decades, we can speak with some degree of confidence about the authorship, readership and purpose of Alfonso's history of Spain. What is essential to our historical interpretation of the text is that the representations of Muslims in the *Estoria* were formulated by teams of historiographers, overseen by the sovereign himself. Their compilations received the *official* stamp of approval of the king, in line with his political designs for the kingdom. Hoping to reach society's elites and those engaged in political and military affairs, the text was a source of moral guidance. It had its social functions too: it was a source of diversion, bringing individuals together through collective reading. The king was also able to meet his own objectives through the production of an *official* history of Spain. Alfonso places himself as the central authority in the text, appropriating the work of Jiménez de Rada to strengthen his image as the supreme power. In an attempt to prepare Castile and its people in the quest for a new epoch of *Imperium*, Alfonso's historiography complemented his works of science and law. And as the laudatory indicates, the knowledge and *exempla* of Spain's past were given to the people of Spain by the king himself:

El rey, que es fermosura de Espanna e thesoro dela filosofia, ensenanças da alos yspanos.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ *Estoria de Espanna Digital*, E₁: 1v.

2.6 *A robust methodology for historical interpretation: source-redaction criticism*

Thus far, this chapter has gradually built up the foundations of the interpretative framework for this thesis. After establishing a broad perspective on Alfonso's attitudes to Islam, scholarly debate facilitated my assertion of several fundamental assumptions pertaining to the authorship, readership and political agenda of the text. These assumptions are crucial to the historical interpretation of *Estoria* narratives and their depictions of Muslims. This section now intends to bring sufficient rigour to this study by defending the wider historical paradigm within which this thesis operates. Naturally, this gives rise to a degree of tension with the opposing literary paradigm – often preferred by scholars of the *Estoria*. It is the discreet – but significant – divide between the historian and the literary critic. This section aims to reconcile the opposing paradigms, whilst defending the position adopted in this thesis. Using the work of Gabrielle Spiegel as a frame for this issue, and drawing on the competing methodologies used in biblical scholarship, we can clarify the strength and appropriateness of the chosen methodology for this study: *source-redaction* criticism.

Gabrielle Spiegel has been instrumental to the development of critical approaches to medieval historiography. In her celebrated work *Romancing the past*, Spiegel focused on the reading of thirteenth-century chronicles in medieval France.¹²⁹ Her work explored the ways in which the French aristocracy moulded and shaped the past, through the writing of vernacular prose chronicles. Spiegel argued that the chronicle served two essential social functions: first, the aristocracy shaped narratives in line with its political ideology, simultaneously legitimising that ideology through the practice of

¹²⁹ G. Spiegel, *Romancing the past: the rise of vernacular prose historiography in thirteenth-century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

history; second, the use of prose was a means to create a novel system of historical truth, moving away from the traditional use of Latin in French chronicle tradition.

Her monograph applied the concept that she conceived for the understanding of medieval writing, known as the *social logic of the text*.¹³⁰ The concept was an attempt to strike a centre ground between the historical paradigm and the literary paradigm, with the proponents of each side engaged in a quiet struggle over questions of *meaning* and *context*. On the one hand, the historian delves into the literary document and confidently asserts that one or more aspects of the past can be discerned from the text. Meanwhile, the literary theorist is far more cautious. With the successive waves of structuralist and post-structuralist thought, the idea of retrieving the *original meaning* of the text was thrown into question. Semiotics holds that linguistic systems are unstable: as a result, the meaning of a text is dynamic, rather than static. For the modern reader of medieval texts, the *original meaning* has likely been lost. And by extent, some of the context has disappeared too. Semiotics represented a spanner in the works of traditional historical interpretation, as Spiegel explained:

A belief in the fundamentally linguistic character of the world and our knowledge of it forms the core of what I would call the "semiotic challenge". As a language-based conception of reality, semiotics has disrupted traditional literary and historical modes of interpretation by undermining materialist theories of experience and the ideas of causality and agency inherent in them.¹³¹

Spiegel's *social logic of the text* focused on the social dimensions of the text and its production. She argued that meaning could only be retrieved if 'the text is situated within a local environment of social and political networks'.¹³² That is to say, the text can only be understood as a social response to a given social context. When applied to

¹³⁰ G. Spiegel, 'History, historicism, and the social logic of the text in the Middle Ages', *Speculum*, 65 (1990), 59-86.

¹³¹ 'History, historicism, and the social logic of the text in the Middle Ages', p. 60.

¹³² 'History, historicism, and the social logic of the text in the Middle Ages', p. 83.

chronicles, this was useful in two principal ways. First, it explored the way in which the literary form of the vernacular chronicle reflected the social phenomenon of life in the Middle Ages. The chronicle was effectively a mirror of the culture of dynasty, genealogy and lineage in medieval France. Second, *social logic* explained the way in which the content of the chronicle reacted to the social context, by disputing and defending the social reality in which the text was formed. In other words, medieval French chroniclers intended to defend the interests of the aristocracy, by shaping history in a way that met the agenda of the author.¹³³ Spiegel's notion allowed for the retrieval of *social meaning*, rather than of the fixed *historical meaning* of chronicles.

Much recent study of the *Estoria de España* has been undertaken within the literary paradigm. This follows from the popularity of applying literary theory within the study of medieval literatures. Namely, literary theory has helped to elucidate the broader purposes and functions of historical writing in the Middle Ages, capturing something of the moment of writing – often distant and by no means fully conceivable. Alongside post-structuralism, theory of reception has greatly influenced scholars of the *Estoria de España* and its wider historiographical tradition. Hans Robert Jauss proposed an aesthetic of reception, for the purpose of discussing the relationship between the text and the reader.¹³⁴ This work also has implications for the idea of *genre* in medieval literature, when considering notions of form and textual continuity in chronicles and histories.¹³⁵

¹³³ 'History, historicism, and the social logic of the text in the Middle Ages', pp. 78-83.

¹³⁴ H. R. Jauss, *Toward an aesthetic of reception*. Trans. by P. Bathi (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982).

¹³⁵ Jauss argued that for medieval literature, *genre* should be conceived as diachronic i.e. a *genre* is a family of texts that are historically related and are part of an evolving continuum (pp. 79-80).

Leonardo Funes has offered a poetics of the historical narrative, as a basis for understanding the practice of historiography in medieval Iberia.¹³⁶ He focused on the textual continuum of Iberian chronicles, ascertaining the distinguishing discursive practices within these texts. In his application of poetics, Funes brings Iberian historical writing decidedly into the sphere of literature and letters. He acknowledges the potential anachronism that this brings:

Este cruce entre la literatura y la historia parecería una operación deliberadamente anacrónica mediante la cual se transporta al ámbito medieval el fenómeno contemporáneo de disolución de los límites entre los diferentes tipos de discurso (entre lo literario y lo no literario).¹³⁷

In response to this, he asserts that chronicles were very much held as literature in the Middle Ages. His application of poetics helps draw together history *in abstracto* and literature, to reflect the paradigm in which the medieval author operated.

Furthermore, Ward employed a clear theoretical framework to explore historical narratives as a function of context. His work considered the successive narratives of King Wamba, throughout medieval Iberian historiographical tradition.¹³⁸ Together with questions of *genre* and poetics, Ward evokes the dialectical nature of Iberian chronicle tradition. This serves as a means to conceptualise the constant evolution and interaction of text, context and agency.¹³⁹ His work also provided a historical dimension to the text. Through the consideration of discourse and narrative technique, his work demonstrates

¹³⁶ 'Elementos para una poética del relato histórico', in *Poétique de la chronique: l'écriture des textes historiographiques au Moyen Âge (péninsule Ibérique et France)*, ed. by A. Arizaleta (Toulouse: Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, 2008), pp. 241-273.

¹³⁷ 'Elementos para una poética', p. 241.

¹³⁸ *History and chronicles in late medieval Iberia: representations of Wamba in late medieval narrative histories* (Brill: Leiden, 2011).

¹³⁹ *History and chronicles*, p. 3.

how Iberian chroniclers exercised a degree of symbolic power, by subtly modifying their narrative sources.¹⁴⁰

By nature of its sheer length, as well as its groundbreaking use of the vernacular, the *Estoria de España* is extremely significant in Iberian chronicle tradition. In studies such as those of Funes and Ward, the *Estoria* features prominently. A number of other scholars have drawn on the legacy left by Alfonso X in the practice of historiography in the Iberian Peninsula.¹⁴¹ In light of the *Estoria's* rich potential for broader literary criticism, can it yet provide us with a valuable contribution to the study of the interfaith encounter? And how can we demonstrate a robust methodology for our historical interpretation of this text?

Biblical scholarship serves as a useful reference for our purpose. Long before the modern era, exegetes and clergymen dedicated their full efforts to the interpretation of ancient scripture. Pre-modern hermeneutics was primarily concerned with the retrieval of Truth from scripture: readers of the Bible were interpreting the Word of God, in search of its *divine meaning*. Into the modern era, approaches to interpreting the Bible became more critical. Scholars began to question the long-held tradition that Moses had single-handedly written the first five books of the Bible.¹⁴² By the nineteenth century, a sophisticated criticism of the Old Testament emerged. German scholars worked to piece

¹⁴⁰ This is enshrined in the term 'historiographical hegemony'. *History and chronicles*, p. 195.

¹⁴¹ Notably Georges Martin, Francisco Bautista and Manolo Hijano. See: G. Martin, *La historia alfonsí y sus destinos (siglos XIII-XV)*, Collection de la Casa de Velázquez, 68 (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2000); F. Bautista, *La Estoria de España en época de Sancho IV: sobre los reyes de Asturias*, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 50 (London: Queen Mary, University of London, 2006); M. Hijano, 'Continuaciones del Toledano: el caso de la *Historia hasta 1288 dialogada*', in *El relato historiográfico: textos y tradiciones en la España medieval*, ed. by F. Bautista, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 48 (London: Queen Mary, University of London, 2006), pp. 123-148.

¹⁴² The first five books of the Old Testament are known as the *Pentateuch*: *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*.

apart the form and style of the *Pentateuch*, recognising it as a compilation of different sources. Most notably, the *Documentary Hypothesis* was developed by Julius Wellhausen, which identified four principal sources within the *Pentateuch*.¹⁴³ With this critical approach, the Bible now presented itself as a historical *artefact* of ancient Israelite thought: Judeo-Christian scripture was opened to secular, historical investigation.

The achievement of biblical studies has been the wealth of discrete methods for the critical interpretation of the Bible.¹⁴⁴ The criticism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are now referred to as 'traditional' methods – considering the development of New Criticism in the mid-twentieth century. Source criticism was vital for the development of the *Documentary Hypothesis*. This method explores the biblical writers' use of source material to develop a single narrative. Form criticism complements this, as it looks to identify changes in style, that might indicate multiple forms within scripture. This method acknowledges that the Bible is composed of both literary and oral traditions, with implications for the study of ancient Israelite culture. Thirdly, redaction criticism has focused on the work of the compilers themselves. In the case of the New Testament, the four Gospels are effectively four different narratives of the life of Jesus. This criticism allows for the study of the intent of biblical redactors, as well as reconstructing the different contexts in which they were operating.

These methods of study were later challenged over the course of the twentieth century. With the arrival of Saussurean linguistics and subsequently New Criticism, the

¹⁴³ The *Documentary Hypothesis* posited that the *Pentateuch* was comprised of four principal sources: J, E, P and D. The hypothesis has since been subjected to further scrutiny and debate, and remains contested. Nonetheless, it marked a significant step towards a more critical, secular study of biblical texts.

¹⁴⁴ For the general discussion of biblical criticism, we are fortunate that the diverse practices of biblical scholars have been self-consciously studied within the discipline. For the explicit discussion of methodology, we have used two authoritative works: J. Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: method in biblical study* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1984); S. McKenzie and S. Haynes (eds.) *To each its own meaning: an introduction to biblical criticisms and their applications* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999).

historian's ability to retrieve *original meaning* from the text was called into question. New Criticism argued that there was a divorce between text and context: the text was inherently independent of its author and social setting. As a result of these innovative ways of thinking, biblical studies entered a new paradigm of literary criticism. Methods emerged based on structuralism, post-structuralism and reader-response theory. The interpretation of scripture even came to be influenced by political-ideological criticisms, such as feminist theory. Accordingly, biblical scholarship has been a prime arena for the contest between the historical and literary paradigms.

Broadly speaking, the historical interpretation of biblical texts has been fundamentally shaped by the very same challenges facing the scholar of medieval chronicles. Those intending to secure meaning from these texts for historical purposes are arguably limited in their ability to do so. However, by observing the work of the biblical scholar, we gain a degree of perspective: the case for the historical interpretation of medieval texts is defensible. In our case we are aiming to learn something of a past, at a distance of seven and a half centuries. The New Testament scholar, meanwhile, explores texts and contexts from around two thousand years ago; for the Old Testament, there are many more millennia involved. In comparison, we have a large amount of documentation from the times of Alfonso X, to support our knowledge of the context of the *Estoria de España*. Similarly, we are comparatively well informed about the authorship of the *Estoria* and its readership.

A second substantial advantage for the study of medieval chronicles is the ability to identify source material. Whilst the lost sources of the *Pentateuch* are largely hypothetical, we can firmly identify many of the sources of the *Estoria de España*. Not only are many sources named in the prologue, we also have hard copies of histories and

epics – at times only in fragments – originally used by medieval historians. We can readily identify the very passages and chapters that Alfonso's compilers appropriated for their *official* history. Copies of *De Rebus Hispanie* and the *Chronicon Mundi* – the principal sources for Alfonso X – have reached us in the twenty-first century. In this sense, the minute details of the redaction process are relatively discernible. Additionally, we know a great deal about the events described in the *Estoria*, from other sources. Our knowledge of Iberian history is supported by an array of surviving documentation. In the case of Christian-Muslim relations, we benefit from both Latin and Arabic accounts of political, military and social history.

Returning to the debate among medievalists today, how much doubt ought we to place over the question of context? Spiegel has argued that the context of writing is often incomplete. The nuance here is that relative to biblical critics, medievalists enjoy a wealth of knowledge to offer plausible reconstructions, where context may be lacking. There may be question marks surrounding one or more aspects of the text, however this should not hold us back from making well-educated hypotheses where gaps arise. Furthermore, we are not as poorly placed to estimate the original meaning of the medieval text as might be suggested. Our understanding of the political and social milieu of thirteenth-century elites is considerable. Evidence of the literary traditions and norms of writers throughout the Middle Ages can be seen in the mass of surviving manuscripts. From a historical perspective, quite simply, all is not lost.

The implicit nature of the historian's assumptions at the point of interpretation is genuinely problematic. For one, it does not help bridge the gulf between historical and literary approaches to the medieval text. Operating in a vacuum from literary criticism risks making fundamental errors in the interpretation of medieval texts. It is here that

biblical scholarship serves as a model for the effective articulation of critical methodology. The historical approaches to the Bible have recognised central features of the texts and the way in which they were composed. Crucially, source criticism reveals the importance of accounting for the materials that writers used for their compositions. In parallel, redaction criticism focuses on the compilers themselves, manipulating source material to their own ends. Both methods prove to be fruitful methods for the present study of the narratives embedded within the *Estoria de España*.

Spiegel's *social logic of the text* was a timely response to the dilemma of post-structuralism. The 'semiotic challenge' was the product of the clash of the literary and historical paradigms, casting doubt over questions of meaning and context. If the interpretation of the Bible is anything to go by, it seems that there is a second challenge facing historians of medieval and ancient texts: the "redactive challenge". This is the need to consider the technical composition of the texts under investigation: namely the copying and arrangement of source material by redactors. The interpretation of ancient and medieval texts is fundamentally affected by these techniques. Medieval texts – like biblical texts – are fundamentally composite in nature. This is certainly the case for the interpretation of Alfonso X's historiography and legislation.¹⁴⁵ Historians and jurists worked with their respective traditions to develop new texts, and in doing so brought together a number of different voices. This composite aspect cannot be overlooked at the moment of interpretation.

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¹⁴⁵ The *Cantigas de Santa María* are also implicated, as they are partly the recollection of existing oral traditions. The oral sources are, of course, extremely difficult to retrieve within the written record.

When we read the *Estoria de España*, we are reading the compilation and modification of many sources. In light of the explicit methods of biblical scholars, we can pin down the precise manner in which we will interpret this text. The response to the "redactive challenge" is a method which accounts for *content* that is determined in large part by source materials, as the work of redactors. To account for this dual aspect, we will use the term *source-redaction criticism*. In the final phase of this chapter, we will look in greater detail at how this form of historical criticism can be transplanted into our study of interfaith relations in the *Estoria*.

2.7 *Hispanic philology and source-redaction criticism*

In the final section of this chapter I aim to bring the question of methodology to a close, defending the use of source-redaction criticism by reconciling it fully with the field of medieval Iberian historiography. By examining existing scholarship on the writing process of the *Estoria*, this section will reveal how Hispanic philology can firmly accommodate the use of source-critical and redaction-critical methods, when offering a historical interpretation of Alfonsine historiography. Furthermore, this section will reveal that the bases of source-redaction criticism are closely aligned with the interpretations made by respected scholars such as Burns, Carpenter and Tolan, on the subject of interfaith relations in the works of Alfonso X.

In recent decades, scholars have furthered our understanding of the writing process of the *Estoria de España*. Within the field of medieval Iberian historiography there have been two key developments: first, a greater understanding of the collaborative efforts within the scriptorium; second, an improved reconstruction of the compilation process that built Alfonso's *official* version of history. Both developments have stemmed in large part from the efforts of Diego Catalán, whose work marked the arrival of a new generation of research into Iberian historiographical tradition. Focusing on both prose and verse tradition, Catalán paved the way for many new developments in the philology of late medieval Iberian historiography. Central to this was his scholarship of the *Estoria de España* and its legacy. Importantly, Catalán began to unveil the inner workings of the text, helping to reconstruct the technical procedures behind Alfonso's massive project. Breaking with the previous generation of scholarship, he asserted that Ramón Menéndez Pidal's 1906 edition of the history – entitled the *Primera Crónica General* –¹⁴⁶ was not the *Estoria de España* that Alfonso X had envisaged. It was essential to recognise that the *Estoria* was not completed in Alfonso's lifetime. Instead, the materials and works-in-progress of Alfonso's team of historiographers were appropriated in subsequent years and decades. These renewed efforts to continue the history were made during the reigns of Sancho IV and Alfonso XI.¹⁴⁷

Catalán noted that the fragmentary nature of the manuscripts allows us to view the compilation process behind the text. Following previous efforts to systematically identify the sources behind the *PCG*,¹⁴⁸ Catalán conceptualised the distinct operational stages associated with the production of the *Estoria*. An initial operation would have

¹⁴⁶ *Primera Crónica General de España que mandó componer Alfonso el Sabio y se continuaba bajo Sancho IV en 1289* (Madrid: Universidad de Madrid, Facultad de Filosofía y letras, 1955).

¹⁴⁷ D. Catalán, 'El taller historiográfico alfonsí: métodos y problemas en el trabajo compilatorio', in *La Estoria de España de Alfonso X*, pp. 45-60 (pp. 45-47).

¹⁴⁸ The 1955 edition of the *Primera Crónica General* includes a detailed breakdown of the sources used in each chapter of the history: it has been crucial for this thesis.

been the translation of *De Rebus Hispanie* as the principal source and backbone of Alfonso's history. This was complemented by the translation of Lucas de Túy's *Chronicon*, which was then set in parallel to *De Rebus Hispanie*. After this, further sources were consulted and incorporated, including the prosification of poetry and epic. This material was then organised into chapters on a year-by-year basis. Finally, there was the complex procedure of establishing the precise chronology of the accumulated content. This was all-the-more sophisticated, owing to the synchronisation of different dating systems, and the categorisation of material relevant to different Hispanic kingdoms. The intricacies of these operations hinted at the team effort behind the compilation and drafting of the *Estoria*. For Catalán, it was clear that this involved many specialists with different skills to contribute.¹⁴⁹

Georges Martin has built on the foundational work of Catalán. Developing these concepts further, Martin identified five key operations in the compilation process.¹⁵⁰ Firstly, to compile a text meant the reproduction of the work of *auctores*, the respected mentors and maestros, from whom wisdom was received. In this respect, historical compilation was fundamentally conservative. This was the basis of the compilers of the *Estoria*: re-declaring the already declared, but as something entirely new. The effort also meant the gathering of as many relevant sources as possible. Of course, 'relevance' is essentially subjective. The team therefore placed judgments on the utility of historical writings in their own context. There followed an assembly process, merging these sources and integrating the many voices into a unitary historical narrative of Spain. The compilers are agents in this process, actively selecting passages to be included and

¹⁴⁹ 'El taller historiográfico alfonsí', pp. 47-50.

¹⁵⁰ The processes are identified as: *reproduire, réunir, assembler-bâtir, assembler-agencer* and *réviser*. See: 'Compilation (cinq procédures fondamentales)', in *Histoires de l'Espagne médiévale: historiographie, geste, romancero*, Annexes des cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale, 11 (Paris: Publication du Séminaire d'études médiévales hispaniques de l'Université de Paris XIII, 1997), pp. 107-121.

excluded in the new text. Lastly, compilers actively revised historical tradition. As they rearticulated their *auctores*, they introduced modifications to the historical record, with additions, corrections and qualifications. Here the significance of the *Estoria* lies in the considerable semantic shifts, as a result of the translation of Latin sources into the vernacular. Coupled with this was the clear prose style that Alfonso used across his cultural works.

The composition of the *Estoria* has also been explored by Inés Fernández-Ordóñez. In contrast to the more conceptual nature of Martin's work, Fernández-Ordóñez has looked at the subtle differences in the organisation and structure of the text.¹⁵¹ Such an approach provides further evidence of the multiplicity of individuals and teams working for the king. From the outset, we must consider the *Estoria de España* as essentially plural: it is a series of histories, organised coherently according to the different civilisations that held lordship (*señorío*) over Spain. Herein lie some visible inconsistencies in the redaction of these sections.¹⁵² Importantly, she asserts that these inconsistencies are not attributable to the sources themselves, but instead to the differences in the conception of historical discourse within the scriptorium. Such subtle differences in organisation and narration reveal the multiplicity of minds at work within the project.

Broadly speaking, then, Hispanic philology has developed a strong theoretical and evidential base for reconstructing the compilation process. Scholars have been able to discover the internal workings and operations of the *Estoria*, an effort that was dependent upon the meticulous arrangement of source material. Central to this was the

¹⁵¹ See: *Las estorias de Alfonso el Sabio* (Madrid: Istmo, 1992).

¹⁵² For example, the titles for the *señorial* histories show differences in their titles. Note that earlier E₁ titles are designated as 'la estoria del sennorio' for the Almujuces, the Carthaginians and the Romans. Meanwhile the term 'sennorio' is absent in the headings for the successive German peoples who ruled the Peninsula (pp. 47-48). Fernández-Ordóñez also points to conceptual differences in the recounting of the history of the Romans and the Goths (pp. 49-53; 207-217).

involvement of many different specialists, working in collaboration on this single project. This team assiduously organised centuries upon centuries of Peninsular and universal history, creating a single chronology that was directed and *officially* approved by the king. This strong evidence for the writing process effectively supports the framework that we have developed over the course of this chapter. To ensure that our study of *Estoria* narratives demonstrates interpretative rigour, we must view its content as a function of the writing process. And that process has been clearly laid out: the reiteration of source material, and the agency of compilers. It is into this medieval paradigm of historiography that we apply a source-critical and redactive-critical method for reading the text.

As a point of qualification, this study is by no means the first to employ such a method. Previous studies have used this perspective for the interpretation of attitudes to minorities in the works of Alfonso X. Our study is, however, the first to fully articulate a clear interpretative methodology, applying an explicit form of criticism, following the lead from biblical scholarship. Furthermore, this study moves between the historical and literary paradigms of interpretation: we assert a historical approach, having maintained some dialogue with questions of literary theory and post-structural thought. Efforts to build these bridges are often scarce; even closely related branches of learning seem to lack sufficient dialogue today. It is precisely through our observations of biblical scholarship that we demonstrate the fruits of an inter-disciplinary perspective.

To bring some closure to the question of methodology, let us return to those scholars who have explored attitudes to Islam in Alfonso X. Ratcliffe's assessment of Alfonsine

legislation held that the *Siete Partidas* were bound to legal tradition. By extent, the content of Alfonso's compendium is inextricably linked to source material. Moreover, Carpenter's critical edition of *De los judios* is effectively the embodiment of source-redaction criticism, as we have conceived it. His commentary of the eleven statutes rested on relating their content to Roman, Visigothic and contemporary canonical tradition. His analysis demonstrated how Alfonso's team of jurists relied heavily on legal tradition to compile their text. Further to this, he concluded that the redaction of law was done so according to the king's political agenda. Both elements of Carpenter's approach will be applied to our own study of the *Estoria*. These aspects of interpretation are the basis of source-redaction criticism.

Burns has given his resounding support for Carpenter's exemplary criticism of the *Partidas*.¹⁵³ He values the 'comparative textual perspective' that underpins Carpenter's analysis of the statutes. It is quite different to Burns' own approach to interpretation, which relies heavily on wider historical contexts. Burns believes that *ever-widening circles of context* will be the means to shed even greater light on attitudes to religious minorities. He identifies *parallel societies*, *theological default* and *short-term context* as a means to help understand the writings of the *Siete Partidas*. In other words, the multiplicity of historical contexts must be considered when reading legal texts.¹⁵⁴ Burns also acknowledges that the attitudes to minorities in the *Partidas* are in great part legal boilerplate. Assertions about Jews and Muslims are the reproduction of widely held attitudes in the Middle Ages. Burns himself refers to the "conservatism" of Alfonso X, adhering closely to canon law. In accordance with this, source-redaction criticism

¹⁵³ Burns writes: 'Far and away the best study concerning Alfonso and the Jews is the small book of exegesis centering on the *Partidas* segment by Dwayne Carpenter. His obsessively complete ingathering and analysis of the data in Alfonso's four pages, in comparative textual perspective, constitute the most elaborate exposition of any essay or title in the whole range of the *Partidas*.' 'Jews and Moors in the Siete Partidas', p. 48.

¹⁵⁴ See: 'Jews and Moors in the Siete Partidas'.

allows us to read the text as a product of textual tradition. This is the basis by which we will read the *Estoria de España* narratives of Muslims.

Finally, let us consider John Tolan's research as a tentative application of source-redaction criticism for attitudes to Islam in the *Estoria*. As we shall see in the following chapter, he has investigated the portrayal of Muhammad in thirteenth-century writing. His research draws on the tradition of polemic, used throughout the Middle Ages to discredit the Prophet of Islam. Citing the biography of Muhammad in the *Estoria*, Tolan makes some important observations on the use of sources. He considers the way in which Alfonso's compilers chose to include or exclude source material to meet a specific agenda. His article considers a number of other texts, and accordingly does not have the scope to explore the *Estoria* in the same depth as this thesis. Nonetheless, his approach captures the essence of source-redaction criticism, and allows for a robust interpretation of the *Estoria*.

My methodology has now come full circle. I have considered the work of scholars such as Carpenter and Salvador Martínez, who have examined attitudes to religious minorities in Alfonso X. Relative to this research, I have clarified and evidenced the assumptions I will use as the basis for the historical interpretation of the *Estoria*, shedding further light on thirteenth-century attitudes to Muslims. Moreover, I have ensured that a critical accord has been struck between historical and literary analysis of medieval historiography. Learning from the practices of biblical scholars, I have isolated a critical method for reading the *Estoria*. This has proved to bear strong resemblance to Dwayne Carpenter's critical analysis of the *Partidas*. Returning to the earliest phases of this chapter, I provided my own brief survey of the general portrayals

of Muslims in the *Partidas* and the *Cantigas*. The confines of this study do not permit me to apply source-redaction criticism to the legislative and lyric works of Alfonso X.¹⁵⁵ Instead, the range of attitudes visible in Alfonsine poetry and jurisprudence serves as a reference point for those attitudes within the *Estoria*. To help understand the different narratives of Muslims in Alfonsine historiography, I have a brief sketch of the ambivalence found in other works directed by the king. This exercise in perspective will prove valuable for my efforts to make sense of thirteenth-century writing, as a fossil of contemporary attitudes to Muslims in Christian society.

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As we have seen in this chapter, the collective reading of histories was widely enjoyed among society's elites. We can presume that the *Estoria de España* – despite being incomplete and fragmented – achieved something of its original purpose: the entertainment and moral guidance of its readers and listeners. In the beginning, the *Estoria* recounted, the world was created by God. After the great flood, the sons of Noah inherited Asia, Africa and Europe. Then came Hercules, who laid the foundations for Spain. The Greeks, the *Almujuces*, the Carthaginians and the Romans ruled the Peninsula in succession. As the Roman Empire wavered, Spain fell to Germanic invaders; power eventually came to rest in the hands of the Visigoths.

¹⁵⁵ Admittedly, it would be intriguing to undertake a detailed analysis of the *Partidas* and its textual tradition for the Mudejar statutes, as Carpenter has done for the Jewish settlement. The *Cantigas*, by their nature, represent a much greater challenge: on the one hand, many *cantigas* are original compositions by Alfonso X and his troubadour associates. On the other hand, the diverse oral traditions that inspired many other *cantigas* would require a vast effort to recover – as far as they are "recoverable".

As King Riccared spent his last days in Toledo, far away in Arabia unseen things were happening. A shrewd caravan trader in his mid-twenties married into a rich family, and his fortunes began to change. He consorted with a heretical Christian monk, and began preaching a new message that he claimed to be a Revelation from Gabriel. People flocked to join his cause, and his teachings spread throughout Arabia, Syria and North Africa. As the readers already knew, it would bring about the fall of the Visigoths.

The story of the Prophet Muhammad is covered in fourteen chapters of the *Estoria de España*. Later chapters tell the story of another powerful ruler, and faithful adherent to the teachings of Muhammad. Readers learnt of the fame of the Amirid *hajib* of Cordoba, al-Mansur, and his many campaigns against Castile and her neighbours. He was a man of great endeavour, cheer and military skill, the listeners were told. Soon after the *hajib*'s death, the land of the Moors was consumed by warfare. Through this turmoil, Fernando el Magno triumphed for Castile and Leon, subjugating the surrounding Moorish kingdoms. But his sons fought among themselves, vying for power. Sancho II of Castile forced his brother Alfonso from the throne of Leon. The young exile sought refuge with his friend and ally, Yahia al-Mamun of Toledo. As medieval readers discovered, this was a story of loyalty and virtue. These many narratives told of Spain's long and turbulent past, in which Muslims were at once friends and foes in the arena of history.

CHAPTER THIRD
NARRATIVES OF MUSLIMS
IN THE *ESTORIA DE ESPAÑA*

In the *Estoria de España*, Alfonso X set out to tell the long history of Spain. Charting the numerous generations of people that inhabited the region, the *Estoria's* organising principle was the succession of *señoríos* that ruled the Peninsula. It was the story of many civilisations: Greeks, *Almujuces*, Carthage, Rome, Germanic peoples and Arabs. The history was one of conflict and competition, its past shaped by the waxing and waning of kingdoms and empires. Throughout the six centuries leading up until Alfonso's own time, Iberia and the wider Mediterranean world witnessed the expansion and contraction of Islamic power. The Peninsula was a principal arena for the meeting of Christianity and Islam, and the experience was recorded by Alfonso X in great detail in his *Estoria*.

The previous chapter has laid out the basis for the historical interpretation of representations of Muslims in the *Estoria*. The assumptions for my interpretation of the text have been clarified: we can feasibly reconstruct the context of writing, the intended readership and the wider political agenda associated with the text. The form of criticism chosen for a robust historical interpretation has been identified as *source-redaction* criticism. Chapter 3 now seeks to apply this form of criticism, isolating three particular cases for close analysis, in their respective contexts.¹ Chapter 3 opens with a brief contextualisation of the compilation and conception of history in the *Estoria*, to support the later analysis of narratives and their principal source material. The remainder of the chapter is divided into three case studies: the narratives of the Prophet Muhammad, al-Mansur and al-Mamun of Toledo. Throughout these cases a common formula is applied for analysis. Cases begin with the consideration of the historiographical and political contexts for the narrative. This is followed by a close analysis of the themes and ideas arising within the text. Each case concludes with a concise interpretation of what has emerged from the study. My conclusions are offered with consideration of the work of previous scholars on the representations of these three Muslim protagonists in historiographical tradition.

¹ In contrast, chapter 4 will consider these narratives in comparison to one another, and taking heed of attitudes arising elsewhere in the *Partidas* and the *Cantigas*, thereby taking a more panoramic view of attitudes to Islam in Alfonsine historiography.

3.0 *The Estoria de España: compilation and conception of history*

By way of a prelude to an in-depth exploration of *Estoria* narratives, it is necessary to reiterate the importance of historical compilation. The previous chapter considered the notion of compilation to help justify the chosen interpretative methodology for this thesis. Here, we will examine in greater detail how the text was closely related to two principal works of thirteenth-century historiography. Historical compilation will help explain the intertextuality of the *Estoria* and its two key sources. By understanding the mechanics of the *Estoria* and its conception of history, the narrative analysis of Muslim figures in the *Estoria* can be set in an appropriate frame.

As the prologue to the *Estoria* indicates, the works of Archbishop Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada and Bishop Lucas de Túy were central to Alfonso X's history of Spain.² Whilst Alfonso X consulted and compiled a range of other sources, the Latin histories of Lucas (*Chronicon Mundi*) and Jiménez de Rada (*De Rebus Hispanie*) formed the backbone of the *Estoria*. Both works represented a significant development in historiographical tradition in the first half of the thirteenth century, and Alfonso X treated them as his main authorities for Iberian history.

Doubts surround the exact dates for Bishop Lucas' composition of the *Chronicon Mundi*. However, scholars broadly agree that the work was commissioned by Queen Berenguela – mother of Fernando III – around 1230, and completed in 1236 or shortly thereafter.³ The author himself is rather elusive, but it is known that he emerged as a

² 'Nos don Alffonso [...] mandamos ayuntar quantos libros pudimos auer de istorias en que alguna cosa contasse de los fechos d'España, e tomamos de la cronica dell arçobispo don Rodrigo [...] e de la de maestre Luchas, obispo de Tuy.' *Estoria de Espanna Digital*, E₁: 1 (2v) [accessed 29-07-2017].

³ For a thorough treatment of the dates of composition see: *Chronicon Mundi*. Ed. by E. Falque Rey (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003) pp. xvii-xxi. See also: P. Linehan, 'Dates and doubts about don Lucas', *Cahiers de linguistique et de civilisation hispaniques médiévales*, 24 (2001), 201-217 (206-208); B. Reilly, 'Bishop Lucas of Tuy and the Latin chronicle tradition in Iberia', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 93(4) (2007), 767-788 (771).

deacon at San Isidoro de Leon and gained favour with Queen Berenguela.⁴ The four books of the *Chronicon Mundi* cover the expanse of history from the creation of the world up to the recapture of Cordoba in 1236. The notion of kingship is central to his work, in which Lucas seeks to emphasise the ideal qualities of an effective ruler.⁵ As the case studies of the present chapter will show, Alfonso X's chroniclers translated and modified many of Lucas' accounts when formulating the *Estoria* during the second half the thirteenth century.

Soon after the *Chronicon Mundi*, a second major work of history emerged in Castile-Leon. Authored by Archbishop Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *De Rebus Hispanie* was completed in 1243.⁶ This history was more focused on the Gothic lineage of the kings of Castile and Leon, with less of a universal approach to history than Lucas. That said, the Archbishop of Toledo appears to have relied heavily on the *Chronicon Mundi* for the structure and logic of his work, though scholars continue to discuss the level of dependency on Lucas.⁷ Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's principal concern was the quest for unity in the Peninsula. His work retraced the long and turbulent history of the successive lords of Spain from Antiquity, through the more recent centuries of a fallen Spain, after the calamity of the Muslim conquest of the Peninsula. It is worth noting that his vision of unity did not exclude the possibility of a Jewish and Muslim presence in the Peninsula, but rather their subjugation under Christian rule, as the rightful lords of Spain.⁸ Nonetheless, he was ardently in favour of a Christian 'reconquest' of Islamic lands – having been present at the battle Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212 – and under the

⁴ Falque Rey, *Chronicon Mundi*, pp. vii-xii; Reilly, 'Bishop Lucas of Tuy', p. 771.

⁵ Falque Rey, *Chronicon Mundi*, pp. xxxv.

⁶ See Valverde's introduction to *DRH*, pp. ix-xlvi.

⁷ Valverde indicates that the *Chronicon Mundi* was the basis for only two of the books of *DRH* (p. xxix). Meanwhile, Reilly asserts that *DRH* relied 'wholesale' on Lucas, and that the Archbishop's chronicle could not have taken its final literary form without the *Chronicon Mundi*: 'Bishop Lucas of Tuy', p. 769.

⁸ Pick, *Conflict and coexistence*; X. Bonch-Bruевич, 'A philosophical history: unity and diversity in Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's *Historia de rebus Hispanie*', *Viator* 37 (2006), 223-239.

mandate of Fernando III his history championed the supremacy of Castile-Leon throughout the Peninsula.

Beneath the surface of these two histories, there is of course the question of their true political agendas. Peter Linehan famously made the case for the heated contest between Lucas de Túy and Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, making their respective claims for the primacy of Spain.⁹ In the early 1230s it was clear that Seville would be reconquered in the coming years. Whilst Lucas hoped that Seville would hold the primacy of Spain, Jiménez de Rada was vying for Toledo. As Linehan candidly put it, the contest for ecclesiastical primacy was much like those of modern-day countries competing for the prestige of hosting the Olympic Games.¹⁰ Other scholars have been less convinced of such flagrant political rivalry.¹¹ Whether this was the case or not, what is clear is that these historians – just like those in the court of Alfonso X – depended upon existing textual tradition, compiling and reworking the best source material for their purpose.

In the words of Evelyn Procter, the *Estoria* was 'a work of scissor and paste'.¹² The prologue to the work does affirm that Alfonso X sought out 'as many books as could be found' that included accounts of Spanish history.¹³ Furthermore, a close analysis of the *Estoria* reveals that Alfonso X's chroniclers were indeed particularly reliant upon *De Rebus Hispanie* when compiling their work. Even the prologue to the *Estoria* reveals itself to be a near-wholesale translation of Jiménez de Rada's Latin prologue.¹⁴ As the following case studies of this chapter will show, Alfonso's chroniclers depended greatly

⁹ This was outlined in detail in his work *History and the historians of medieval Spain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

¹⁰ 'On further thought: Lucas of Tuy, Rodrigo of Toledo and the Alfonsine histories', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 27(1) (1997), 415-436 (425).

¹¹ Reilly was not persuaded by the idea of such antagonism, instead supposing that there was a degree of 'goodwill' between the two writers: 'Bishop Lucas of Tuy', p. 788. Meanwhile Valverde even referred to an 'estrecha amistad' between Lucas and Rodrigo: *DRH*, p. xxxiii.

¹² E. Procter, *Alfonso X of Castile: patron of literature and learning* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 111.

¹³ For the original quote of this section, see section 2.5 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

¹⁴ Refer to section 2.5 of chapter 2 for my discussion of the prologue to the *Estoria* and its relation to *De Rebus Hispanie*.

on *De Rebus Hispanie*, and the complementary work of the *Historia Arabum*, when recounting the history of Islamic rule and Christian-Muslim contact.

Though scholars recognise the *Estoria's* large scale reliance on Jiménez de Rada, this does not mean that Alfonso's history was as simple as 'CTRL+C, CTRL+V': it was a separate work of history in itself, distinct from *De Rebus Hispanie* in a number of ways. In spite of the major influence of the Archbishop's Latin chronicle, Alfonso X's scheme of history was fundamentally different. This can be seen when considering the organising principle for *De Rebus Hispanie* and the *Estoria*. In both cases, these works used the successive *señoríos* (lordships) of Spain as the organising principle for the history of the Peninsula. However, Jiménez de Rada and Alfonso conceived of the notion of peninsular history in separate ways.

De Rebus Hispanie focused primarily on the sequence of Iberian history pertaining to the Goths. In conjunction with *De Rebus*, the Archbishop of Toledo wrote a number of other discrete histories, providing further detail on the past lords of Spain. These works were auxiliary to his central work on the Goths, offering supplementary background narratives for the many different groups who exercised *señorío* in Spain: the Romans (*Historia Romanorum*), various peoples of Europe and Asia (*Historia Hugnorum, Vandalorum et Sueuorum, Alanorum et Silingorum*), the Ostrogoths (*Historia Ostrogothorum*) and the Arabs (*Historia Arabum*).¹⁵

In addition to compiling much of the content and material of *De Rebus Hispanie*, Alfonso's redactors also incorporated material from these smaller histories, including the *Historia Arabum* – an important text used in the source criticism of the narratives studied in this chapter. Where *De Rebus* was a history of the Gothic people, the *Estoria*

¹⁵ These works have been edited and published as his *Historiae minores*. See: *Historiae minores; Dialogus libri vite*, ed. by J. Fernández Valverde, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis, 72C (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999).

took a broader view of the various peoples and civilisations that ruled Spain. The *Estoria* stood therefore as a history of a single *orbis* of Spain, in all its diversity. Catalán argues that Alfonso X presented rulers such as the Romans and the Arabs as an integral part of peninsular history, and for the first time conceived of a "national" history of Spain.¹⁶

The question of Christian-Muslim rivalry within the Peninsula was of course central to Alfonso's conception of history. It was highly relevant in the present: during the first half of the thirteenth century, Fernando III had conquered large swathes of Andalusia, and Alfonso too had led the conquest of Murcia.¹⁷ Regarding the *Estoria's* approach to Islamic rule in Spain, Alan Deyermond outlined how Alfonso X's conceptualisation of the fall of Visigothic Spain closely matched that of Jiménez de Rada. Both narratives pointed to the sins of Wittiza and Roderic, bringing about the fall of Spain and the Muslim conquest. Following the retreat of the Visigothic nobles to the mountains of Asturias, the battle of Covadonga gave way to the rebirth of Spain under Pelayo, and its gradual revival under his Asturian, Leonese and Castilian successors, right up to Fernando III. Deyermond argued that this was by no means Alfonso's own innovation, but rather a replica of Jiménez de Rada's narrative.¹⁸

Funes challenged the idea that the *Estoria* narrative of the fall and rebirth of Spain was a straightforward translation of *De Rebus*. Instead, he posited that Alfonso X offered an entirely new configuration of history. Funes argued that Alfonso's history had a universal outlook on the Spanish past, distinguishing it from the Archbishop's inward-looking chronicle. A principal feature was the *Estoria's* use of multiple dating

¹⁶ 'Alfonso X historiador', pp. 30-31. I have addressed the question of the marginality of Islamic *señorío* in the case study of Muhammad in this chapter.

¹⁷ This is covered in greater detail in the present chapter: see the case study of the Prophet Muhammad for contextualisation of Alfonso's newly expanded kingdom.

¹⁸ A. Deyermond, 'The death and rebirth of Visigothic Spain', *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*, 9(3) (1985), 345-367.

systems (Byzantine Empire, King of France, Islamic Hejira) to orient Hispanic events in relation to the wider world. Furthermore, Alfonso's analistic approach to organising events – the sequencing of chapters on a year-by-year basis – was a departure from *De Rebus Hispanie*. Funes concludes that there was an innovative rationalism in Alfonso's history, as events are positioned in time more precisely, organising the Hispanic past relative to the universal context.¹⁹

Whilst the close relationship between the *Estoria de España* and *De Rebus Hispanie* is undeniable, it is worth reiterating that Alfonso's chroniclers referred to many other works of historiography. Alfonso's chroniclers often consulted multiple sources at a time when recounting one specific event in history, and attempted to harmonise the different versions of the same historical events where discrepancies arose. Notably, where *De Rebus* had reworked material from the *Chronicon Mundi*, the *Estoria* often returned to Lucas' original account and added any details that Jiménez de Rada had left out. In addition to erudite Latin sources, Alfonso included material from many epic poems, reshaping them into prose form, in an attempt to build a more extensive account of Castilian-Leonese historiographical tradition.²⁰ Where chroniclers found discrepancies among the sources, they often opted for *De Rebus* over the *Chronicon Mundi*, and for Latin histories over vernacular epic.²¹

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¹⁹ *El modelo historiográfico alfonsí*, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 6 (London: Queen Mary and Westfield College, 1997), pp. 43-50.

²⁰ See the case study of al-Mansur for my analysis of the use of vernacular epic in the *Estoria*.

²¹ 'Alfonso X historiador', pp. 35-37.

The three case studies to be explored in this chapter can now be seen in the context of historical compilation, and in view of the broader Alfonsine scheme of history. Across the entirety of the *Estoria*, the careful arrangement and ordering of source material allowed for the construction of many individual narratives, charting the chronology of the kingdoms and empires that dominated Spain.

It is also worth noting at the outset that there is no single *Estoria*, but instead multiple redactions of the same historiographical project. No single redaction tells the entirety of the history of Spain, from its origins to the end of the reign of Alfonso X, as the king had likely intended. Instead, the history of Spain from Hercules to Fernando III was written across two decades, during the reigns of Alfonso and his successor. The *Versión primitiva* (1270-1274) and the *Versión crítica* (1282-1284) represent Alfonsine redactions; the *Versión amplificada* (1289) was written under the reign of Sancho IV (though in narrative content it is essentially identical to earlier Alfonsine material).²² The manuscript tradition of the *Estoria* is extremely rich: in some cases, manuscripts are the aggregation of fragments of multiple *versiones*. The Escorial manuscripts (E₁ and E₂) are perhaps the best example, combining the *VP* and the *VA*, amongst other fragments of historiographical tradition.²³ For the purpose of reliability, I will use transcriptions of E₁ and E₂ – the earliest and most complete manuscripts of the *Estoria de España* – to explore the finer details of the narratives of the Prophet Muhammad, al-

²² For the remainder of this thesis I will use the following abbreviated forms: *VP* (*Versión primitiva*), *VC* (*Versión crítica*) and *VA* (*Versión amplificada*).

²³ The intricacies of the *Estoria* tradition have been laid out by Inés Fernández-Ordóñez: 'Estoria de España', in *Diccionario filológico de literatura medieval española. Textos y transmisión*, ed. by C. Álvar and J. M. Lucía Megías (Madrid: Castilia, 2002), pp. 54-80.

Mansur and al-Mamun, through the source-critical and redaction-critical method developed in the previous chapter.²⁴

A. THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

The first of our three narratives of interest explores the life and teachings of the Prophet of Islam. In a substantial biography spanning many chapters, the *Estoria* tells the story of the life of Muhammad and his rise to power. He was of interest to Christian historiography: this was the founding figure of a competing belief system and of a rival political entity. The *Estoria* provides a distinctly hostile depiction of the Prophet Muhammad, expressing strong criticisms of his character, his deeds and his teachings.

Over the course of this section we shall explore the long tradition of polemic against the Prophet Muhammad in Latin European thought. We will also consider the key factors that drove the compilation of the biography of Muhammad in Alfonso's history of Spain

²⁴ For transcriptions of E₁ and E₂, I have used the *Estoria de Espanna Digital* edition by Ward, henceforth *EED*. In later sections where I refer specifically to the VC, I have used: M. De la Campa Gutiérrez, (ed.), *La Estoria de España de Alfonso X. Estudio y edición de la versión crítica desde Fruela II hasta la muerte de Fernando II*, Analecta Malacitana, Anejo 75 (Malaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2009). This is a detailed edition, combining multiple witnesses of the VC. However, it only covers only a later portion of the *Estoria* (from the reign of Fruela II to Fernando II). For earlier sections of the VC, I have used transcriptions of the Ss manuscript, in Ward's *EED*.

– namely the historiographical and political imperatives that underpinned the negative portrayal of the Prophet. We will consider the use of sources and piece apart the narrative, with a view to understanding the manner of its compilation. Finally, we will discuss the value of polemic in the narrative of Muhammad, in light of its application elsewhere in thirteenth-century Iberian historiographical tradition.

A.1 Polemical tradition of the Prophet Muhammad in Latin Europe

From the outset, it is important to consider Western European attitudes to Islam as a whole. This is essential, given that Christian Iberia was only a small part of the wider Latin community headed by the papacy. Papal authority was the superstructure sheltering the thirteenth-century Iberian chroniclers and necessarily conditioning their theological discourse to some degree. As such, we cannot expect to make full sense of the stance of Iberian chroniclers towards Islam without evoking the wider attitudes upheld in Christendom. Thirteenth-century Iberian chroniclers inherited a distinctly hostile attitude to Islam, one that was cultivated centuries before. In many ways the core of medieval Europe was reluctant to engage with the Islamic faith on an intellectual level, initially possessing a very limited understanding of that belief system.²⁵ That fundamental understanding of Islam did eventually grow and develop over the Middle

²⁵ The idea of early medieval Europe's lack of awareness is the basis for Richard Southern's first chapter 'The age of ignorance', (pp. 1-33) in his work *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962). Latin Christendom's lack of information can be articulated in a contrast to Byzantine and Eastern Christians, whose engagement with Islam was much better informed. Scholars such as Benjamin Kedar and Hugh Goddard have incorporated this contrast into their research. See: B. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European approaches toward the Muslims* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); H. Goddard, *A history of Christian-Muslim relations* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000).

Ages, and Iberia played a central role in the translation and interpretation of Quranic texts.

The work of researchers such as Richard Southern and Norman Daniel has contributed heavily to the understanding of how medieval Christendom viewed Islam. In Southern's mind, Islam was none other than the greatest problem for Latin Europe. The competing faith was a source of military conflict in the Holy Land and Spain, and risked contaminating the True Faith. Southern asserts that Latin Europe was broadly uneasy before its powerful and sophisticated rival. For many centuries Christendom was on the back foot, both reluctant and ill equipped to understand Islam.²⁶ Daniel equally perceives a degree of hostility to Islam. He traces the finer details of the development of an anti-Islamic polemic in Latin Europe, reconstructing the *official* attitudes to Islam during the medieval period.²⁷ Certainly there is no way of simplifying the myriad of views that emerge in medieval writing. However, we do find recurrent strands of thought, and we can consider these as representative of the most acceptable discourse of the day.

At the time of Islam's major incursions into Spain, France and Italy during the eighth and ninth centuries, the European core had a much less aggressive stance than in later centuries. We find only a very limited treatment of Islam by Carolingian scholars.²⁸ Research often looks to England, in the person of Bede, as the primary authority on early European reactions to Islam. Using the Bible, he identified the Arab invaders as descendants of Ismael and promptly asserted that they were the enemy of Christianity.²⁹

Modern research has also looked to the *chansons de geste*, recorded in manuscripts in

²⁶ Southern, *Western Views of Islam*, p. 3-8.

²⁷ N. Daniel, *Islam and the West: the making of an image* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1993). Daniel refers approaches the question of 'official' attitudes in his work *Heroes and Saracens: an interpretation of the chansons de geste* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1984).

²⁸ Southern, *Western Views of Islam*, p. 26.

²⁹ Southern, *Western Views of Islam*, pp. 16-18; Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, p. 6.

the twelfth century, as important fossils of earlier reactions to Islam in Western Europe. The *Chanson de Roland*, for example, has gained considerable attention for its accounts of warfare between Franks and Berber-Arabs during the eighth century.³⁰ The *chansons* often portray Saracens as pagans and idol-worshippers, as fossils of earlier reactions to the Muslims from the time of the Arab campaigns against the Franks.³¹ Following this initial contact with Islam, the image of the *Saracen* invader came to be an enduring manifestation of otherness.³²

It is over the course of the eleventh century that we begin to see the growth of a hostile policy toward Islam at Europe's core.³³ In the mid-1000s, the papacy showed its support for military campaigns against Islam in the Italian Peninsula.³⁴ And in light of the 1064 Barbastro campaign in Iberia, Pope Alexander II offered his backing, affirming that violence against Muslims was justified.³⁵ By the end of the century the papacy, under Urban II, was spearheading an expedition to the Holy Land. Among various aims, a central objective was the liberation of oppressed Christians in the Orient, and particularly the recovery of Jerusalem from the Saracens.³⁶ The debate on the origins and true start of the Crusades is expansive – this is not the moment to enter fully into that debate. What is important is that the pope's call to arms at the Council of Clermont visibly indicates a new, more explicit hostility towards Islam. After the 'First

³⁰ J. A. Cruz, 'Popular attitudes towards Islam in Medieval Europe', in *Western views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of other*, ed. by D. Blanks and M. Frassetto (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 56.

³¹ A thorough treatment of this subject is dealt with by in Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens*. The question is neatly summed up in 'Conclusions', pp. 263-279.

³² Cruz, 'Popular attitudes towards Islam', p. 57.

³³ D. Nirenberg, *Neighboring faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and today* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), p. 20

³⁴ There is evidence to suggest that the papacy was envisaging a Christian conquest of Muslim Sicily by the 1050s, years before the Norman campaigns began in the 1060s. Recent works supporting this branch of Crusade discourse include A. Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), pp. 88-92; P. Chevedden, "'A crusade from the first': the Norman Conquest of Islamic Sicily, 1060-1091", *Al-Masaq: Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean*, 22(2) (2010), 191-225.

³⁵ Nirenberg, *Neighboring faiths*, 20. For a more detailed discussion of papal involvement in the Barbastro campaign see A. Ferreiro, 'The siege of Barbastro 1064-5: a reassessment', *Journal of Medieval History*, 9 (1983), 129-144.

³⁶ Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, pp. 58-59.

Crusade' came a series of further military campaigns backed by the papacy, many of them targeting Muslim territories. Whilst it is true that there were many political and personal motives for Crusade, the whole effort was underpinned by military activity in the name of Latin Christianity.³⁷

It is during the twelfth century that we begin to see a more sophisticated polemic take shape. Gradually the Spanish encounter with Islam began to inform the wider European population as to the nature of Islam. In Spain, it is Petrus Alfonsi who offers the first major scholarly critique against the errors of the Jews and the Muslims. He had been born into a Jewish family and educated in *al-Andalus*, later converting to Christianity. His knowledge of Hebrew and Arabic placed him a unique position to offer a sophisticated critique of Jewish and Muslim theology.³⁸ This was composed in the form of *Dialogi contra Iudaeos*, gaining popularity throughout much of Europe.³⁹ Another significant contribution to Christian polemic came in the initiatives of the twelfth-century abbot of Cluny, Peter the Venerable. The abbot commissioned a Latin translation of the Quran, providing Catholic scholars with access to Islamic scripture for the first time.⁴⁰ With this, a rather more informed critique of the law of Muhammad emerged. Christians became much more attuned to the common traits between Islam and their own faith. Peter the Venerable pushed for the notion that Islam was a Christian heresy. In other words, Muslims were essentially extremely errant Christians. In this he perceived a danger: his Catholic brethren needed to be deterred from becoming contaminated and led astray by the teachings of Muhammad. In order to protect against

³⁷ *Neighboring faiths*, 20-24. Nirenberg emphasises that Muslims were only one target among others, and that the Crusades were 'a common project' to pacify Latin Christendom and provide a 'shared sense of purpose' (pp. 22-24).

³⁸ J. Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi and his medieval readers* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), p. 3, pp. 9-11.

³⁹ Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi*, 95-102.

⁴⁰ J. Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam* (Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 30-36.

this, he issued two treatises spelling out the grave errors of the Saracen heresy.⁴¹ Even before the translations of the Quran were completed and in full circulation, Latin Christians outside of Spain were beginning to show a very basic understanding of Islam. Works from English, French and German writers hinted at the gradual rejection of the idea that Muslims were idol-worshipping pagans.⁴² Instead, early twelfth-century Europe was becoming more sensitive to the monotheism of the Saracens. In any case, the hostilities towards Islam were enduring.

After decades of initial exposure to Arabic sources, accurate knowledge of Islam and its prophet was becoming more widespread. However, the overt hostility to Islam continued to be a major feature of scholarly writing. With the same intent as Peter the Venerable, close references to Islamic texts were an attempt to denigrate the beliefs of the Muslim and assert the verity of Catholicism. Several important works of this vein appear throughout the thirteenth century in Christian Iberia. In the first half of the century, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's *Historia Arabum* provided a discrete chronology of Islamic civilisation in Iberia. The history details the emergence of Islam in Southern Arabia and its expansion throughout Africa and Europe. The Archbishop maintains the usual hostility to Islam, however he uses a variety of Arabic sources as the basis for his history.⁴³ Another important work was the *De seta Machometi* by the Dominican Ramon Martí. The Catalan theologian was well versed in Hebrew and Arabic, and thus attacked both Judaism and Islam citing Talmudic and Quranic teachings.⁴⁴ At the end of the century we see a vernacular treatise against Islam by Pedro Pascual, bishop of Jaén. *Sobre la seta Mahometana* provides a biography of Muhammad and a critique of Islam,

⁴¹ Southern, *Western Views of Islam*, pp. 37-39.

⁴² Southern, *Western Views of Islam*, p. 14, pp. 34-36.

⁴³ See section 3.A.2 of the current chapter of this thesis.

⁴⁴ J. Tolan, 'Rhetoric, polemics and the art of hostile biography: portraying Muhammad in thirteenth-century Christian Spain', in *Sons of Ismael* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008), pp. 38-41.

written during the bishop's captivity in Nasrid Granada. Pedro Pascual's treaty is another example of first-hand consultation of Arabic texts.⁴⁵

Knowledge of Islam was certainly gaining ground in medieval writing, and continued to reach further afield. Into the fourteenth century, writers such as Ramon Llull and Roger Bacon would push for the peaceful conversion of the Muslim.⁴⁶ This could only be done with sufficient knowledge of the faith of the other, in order to highlight the errors of Islam. This knowledge took many centuries to develop in Latin Europe, hampered by latent antagonism and, it has been suggested, a cultural inferiority complex on the part of Christendom.⁴⁷

If the *Estoria de España* appears hostile to Islam in the thirteenth century, it is in part due to the wider attitudes held in Latin Europe. Historiography in Christian Iberia was still fundamentally grounded in the primacy of the Catholic Church. Whilst the Iberian frontier helped make the Latin core better informed about Islam, the core in turn disseminated a hostile polemic. This hostility simultaneously conditioned the periphery. Furthermore, Iberia was a frontier, where there was frequent contact between Christians and Muslims: conversion and apostasy were a very real threat. The *Estoria* chroniclers were therefore bound to maintain the anti-Islamic polemic when they wrote in a theological register – that is to say, when they addressed the conception of Islam as a contending belief system. They upheld the Truth of Catholicism by ridiculing and discrediting Islam and its teachings.

⁴⁵ Tolán, 'Portraying Muhammad', pp. 35-45; Daniel, *Islam and the West*, pp. 116-118, p. 288.

⁴⁶ Southern, *Western Views of Islam*, pp. 52-61;

⁴⁷ Addressing the subject of Medieval Christian perceptions of Islam, Blanks and Frassetto refer to a feeling of "cultural inferiority" that helped contribute to this hostility. 'Introduction', in D. Blanks and M. Frassetto (eds), *Western Views of Islam in medieval and early modern Europe*, p. 3.

Much of the anti-Islamic polemic was centred on the Prophet Muhammad. As medieval scholars began to discover more about the Prophet of Islam, they quickly found a target for their attacks. Not only did Muhammad claim to bring a new message as dictated by the Angel Gabriel: he was also the leader who commanded the early expansion of Islam in the East. His exploits, as much as his teachings, were frequently a subject of scorn and disdain. Attacking the person of the Prophet was done in order to undermine the faith of Islam. If Muhammad's prophethood came to nothing, then the same could be said for Islam.⁴⁸ Whilst Latin Christian historians became more informed about his life and sayings, their knowledge was used as a weapon against the Prophet of Islam.

The first informed polemicists set the tone for personal attack. Petrus Alfonsi and Peter the Venerable denounced Muhammad as deceitful, licentious and immoral.⁴⁹ Latin scholars took whatever they could find from the life of the Prophet to discredit him. They looked down on the Prophet's humble origins as an impoverished orphan.⁵⁰ The Christian and Jewish clergymen who educated the young Muhammad were written off as heretics.⁵¹ Muhammad was particularly detested for his achievements in commanding enormous influence in Arabia and Syria. His marriage to Khadija was treated with disdain: it was felt he had stepped into power simply by marrying into the ruling elite.⁵² Furthermore, Muhammad was written off as a charlatan: the conversion of Arabs to the nascent Muslim community was made to be the work of a trickster.⁵³ Rumours circulated about the manner of his undignified death. Christian accounts often suggested

⁴⁸ Daniel, *Islam and the West*, p. 88.

⁴⁹ Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi and his medieval readers*, p. 31; Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam*, pp. 124-128.

⁵⁰ Daniel, *Islam and the West*, p. 106.

⁵¹ Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi and his medieval readers*, pp. 29-33.

⁵² Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam*, p. 127.

⁵³ Daniel, *Islam and the West*, pp. 112-113.

Muhammad was murdered or poisoned; his body was invariably devoured by animals, namely dogs or pigs.⁵⁴

What most outraged Latin Christendom was that Muhammad should be considered a prophet.⁵⁵ There was no reason to believe he had been informed by God to deliver a new message: instead Muhammad had concocted every word himself. They attributed a host of terms to him to articulate their hostility to his prophethood: he was "false", he "lied", he "deceived" and "tricked" those around him. The early converts to Islam were equally criticised for empowering Muhammad: Peter the Venerable held the Meccans to have been suggestible and effectively led astray.⁵⁶ Muhammad was also portrayed as lascivious and indulging in the pleasures of the flesh. The Prophet, Latins wrote, promised his followers an abundance of carnal gratification in the afterlife.⁵⁷ They also suggested that Muhammad was a skilled magician, and that he used spells to trick Khadija and others into believing his revelation.⁵⁸ In short, they wanted to strip the Prophet of any saintliness. One powerful means to do this was to develop a narrative presenting him as diabolical. Whilst Muhammad was not Satan himself, they insisted that he was a vessel of that fallen angel. At every turn, Muhammad's prophethood was scorned. Latin European polemic sought to show him as the antithesis of Christ: they consistently portrayed him as unsaintly and the epitome of error.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ J. Tolan, 'The polemical dismemberment of Muhammad', in *Sons of Ismael*, p. 21; Daniel, N, *Islam and the West*, pp. 126-127.

⁵⁵ Daniel, *Islam and the West*, p. 88.

⁵⁶ Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam*, p. 127.

⁵⁷ Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi and his medieval readers*, p. 31; Nirenberg, *Neighboring faiths*, p. 17.

⁵⁸ Daniel, *Islam and the West*, p. 47.

⁵⁹ Tolan, 'The polemical dismemberment of Muhammad', p. 20.

A.2 *The significance of Muhammad in the Estoria de España*

Whilst European polemical tradition greatly informs the negative attitudes to Muhammad, we must consider why the Prophet of Islam features so prominently in the *Estoria*. As scholars have duly noted, Alfonso X dedicated fourteen chapters to the life and works of the Prophet Muhammad. The compilers of the *Estoria* relied heavily on Jiménez de Rada and Lucas de Túy, combining the two sources to create a substantial biography of the Prophet. Yet, why does the "false prophet" of a dangerous "sect" appear at all in a history of Spain? More specifically, why is there such a detailed account of Muhammad's life and rise to power? The presentation of the Prophet proves to be integral to the *Estoria*, and it is driven simultaneously by historiographical and political concerns.

Contact between Christianity and Islam at the Iberian frontier was, as we have seen at the start of this chapter, fundamental to the worldview and scheme of history in the *Estoria*. Alfonso X follows the conception of legitimacy as laid out in *De Rebus Hispanie*, holding Pelayo and the Astur-Leonese kings as the rightful heirs of the Visigoths. This is the overarching organising principle for the *Estoria*. As addressed earlier in this chapter, the Archbishop of Toledo wrote a series of auxiliary histories to complement his Gothic history. In parallel with *De Rebus Hispanie*, Jiménez de Rada composed the *Historia Arabum*, outlining the competing Islamic *señorío* of Spain after the eighth century Muslim conquest. In order to explain the rise of Islamic *señorío* in Spain, the *Estoria* chroniclers drew on Jiménez de Rada's *Historia Arabum*. In addition to this, they imbricated some of the *Chronicon Mundi* narrative, which offered further – albeit less accurate – details about the Prophet. As such, the *Estoria* chroniclers

intersperse Islamic history with the history of the Goths, beginning with the emergence of the Prophet Muhammad in the sixth century.⁶⁰

Rodrigo's *Historia Arabum* represents the first major history of Islam authored in the Latin West. Completed in 1245, its forty-nine chapters constitute a substantive treatment of the rise of Islam and the course of its history, focusing specifically on *al-Andalus*. It details the life of the Prophet, the deeds of his successors, the Umayyad conquest of Spain and its subsequent independence from Eastern rule. It charts the trials and tribulations of Andalusí governors, emirs, kings and caliphs, up to the time of writing. It relies on a number of Arabic sources, including the *Sira* of Ibn Ishaq, a collection of *hadith* authored by al-Bukhari, the *Kamil fi-l-Tariq* of Ibn al-Athir and the famous *Bayan al-Mughrib* of Ibn Idhari.⁶¹ The *Historia Arabum* serves as an additional history to complement *De Rebus Hispanie*, placing the wider details of Islamic rule apart, so as not to interrupt the narration of Gothic rule.⁶²

Whilst the *Estoria* prioritises the case for neo-Gothic *señorío*, it equally includes further details of Islamic lordship in Spain from the *Historia Arabum*. Scholars have pointed out that the *señorío* of the Muslims was only marginal.⁶³ Nonetheless, by incorporating sections from the *Historia Arabum*, the *Estoria* is seen to acknowledge some Islamic *señorío* throughout the Mediterranean and the Near East. We find the following explanation of Islamic lordship throughout Asia, Africa and Spain:

⁶⁰ The Prophet appears in the *Estoria* during the reign of the Visigothic King Leovigild. *EED*, E₁: 474 (162v).

⁶¹ J. Fernández Valverde, 'Introducción'. In *Historiae minores*, pp. 9-33.

⁶² Valverde, 'Introducción', p. 10.

⁶³ A. Deyermond, 'The death and rebirth of Visigothic Spain'; I. Fernández-Ordóñez, 'Evolución del pensamiento alfonsí y transformación de las obras jurídicas e históricas del Rey Sabio', *Cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale*, 23(1) (2000), 263-283. Fernández-Ordóñez points specifically to the *Estoria's* assertion of Gothic lordship and marginal Islamic rule in the following passage: 'Por ende dexa aqui la estoria de fablar de los fechos [...] que contescieron en Espanna e cuenta de los godos que fueron ende sennores despues aca todauia, cuemo quier que ouieron y los moros aya quanto tiempo algun sennorio.' *EED*, E₁: 393 (132v).

E despues de la muerte de Mahomat, los del linnage de Humaya que morauan aquend mar, partiron se del sennorio de Affrica so que eran, e fizieron cabeça de su regno en Cordoua assi como agora diremos adelante. Pues que fueron departidos los unos de los otros por sennorios, mantouieron siempre guerra e enxeco unos contra otros, e desamaronse e uuscaron se mal quanto pudieron. E duro les aquel desamor fastal tiempo de los almorauides, que fueron sennores de Espanna, e la metieron so el su sennorio e touieron toda la tierra a su mandar. Despues de los almorauides uinieron los almohades, e echaron de Espanna e de Africa a los almorauides, e tomaron [sic] toda la tierra e metieron la so el su sennorio, e mantouieron la fastal tiempo del Rey don Ffernando...⁶⁴

This passage effectively retraces Islamic rule in Spain back to the Prophet Muhammad. It clearly singles out Umayyad lineage, from the caliphs of Damascus ('los del linnage de Humaya que morauan aquend mar') to the independent emirate of Cordoba ('[que] fizieron cabeça de su regno en Cordoua'). After the collapse of Umayyad rule, the Almoravids came to dominate Islamic Spain; after this came the lordship of the Almohads, lasting until the reign of Fernando III.

Through the compilation of material from the *Historia Arabum*, an additional framework of history concerning Islamic rule is incorporated into the *Estoria*. This can be seen in the clear articulation that the Muslims held control over much of the known world, and were 'sennores de Espanna'. The origin of Islamic *señorío* is found in the person of Muhammad; Muslim rule in *al-Andalus* can be traced directly back to the Prophet. It is on this basis of historiography that Muhammad appears in the *Estoria*, owing to his direct stake in the Spanish past.

Historiographical framework is not the only explanation for the presence of these fourteen chapters. Another crucial element in understanding the biography of

⁶⁴ *EED*, E₂: 606 (11v); *Historia Arabum*, XVIII (pp. 114-115).

Muhamamad is the political context in which the *Estoria* was composed. Spanish Islam in all its forms – as a political entity, military threat, and a major religion – represented a significant challenge for Alfonso X. From the outset of his reign, he had been faced with the enormous challenge of holding together his many dominions. Almohad rule in *al-Andalus* had only recently come to an end during previous decades. With a sense of empowerment after the defeat of the Almohads at Las Navas de Tolosa (1212), Christian Iberia had advanced into the far south of the Peninsula. Fernando III had captured Cordoba, Jaén and Seville; Alfonso himself had led the conquest of Murcia before he took the throne. However, conquest and capture were only the beginning: the job of holding the new territory and keeping the peace was now at hand for Alfonso. *Señorío* was not only an abstract pretention: it had to be enforced effectively.

As we read in the *Crónica Particular de San Fernando*, Alfonso was told by his father:

'Ssennor te dexo de toda la tierra dela mar aca, que los moros del Rey Rodrigo de Espanna ganado ouieron, et de tu sennorio finca toda: la conquerida, la otra tributada. Sy la en este estado que tela yo dexo la sopieres guardar, eres tan buen rey commo yo. Et sy ganares por ti mas, eres mejor que yo. Et si desto menguas, non eres tan bueno commo yo.'⁶⁵

The challenge was clear: Alfonso was charged with keeping hold of the Crown's possessions – ideally expanding them even further. Fernando departed from the world basking in the glory of the conquest of Andalusia; Alfonso began his reign with the gruelling task of dealing with its aftermath. It is this context that we must bear in mind when addressing the question of the Prophet Muhammad and his teachings in the *Estoria de España*.

⁶⁵ *EED*, E₂: 1143 (358v).

From the outset of his reign, Alfonso made a concerted effort to consolidate the subjugation of Andalusia and Murcia.⁶⁶ In 1252, Muslims made up the overwhelming majority of the population of the newly conquered territories.⁶⁷ The new king had to strike a balance between maintaining peaceful coexistence among the conquerors and the conquered, and sowing the seeds for the progressive Christianisation of these cities. The priority, then, was to strengthen the Christian presence there over the course of time. This was also driven by the short-term needs of repopulating the areas that had become deserted, owing to the intense military activity of previous years. The settlement of these lands by Christians from the north was therefore vital for the longer-term integration of these lands into the Kingdom of Castile-Leon.⁶⁸

Re pobladores came to settle in towns and cities throughout Murcia and Andalusia. This was not without its negative consequences for these regions. Over the course of Alfonso's reign, relations between the Mudejars and their Castilian-Leonese overlords began to break down. The arrival of the settlers caused friction among the different communities. It was aggravated further by Alfonso's aggressive stance towards local Islamic rulers, most visibly in the form of the conquests of Tejada and Niebla. Worsening of relations culminated in open revolt by the Mudejars in 1264.⁶⁹ This only encouraged Alfonso to tighten his grip on power in the south.

As settlers began to pour into the frontier territories, they were sure to come into contact with local populations of subject Mudejars. These Christians would now be

⁶⁶ Ballesteros Beretta's exhaustive account of Alfonso's reign sheds light on the finer details of the occupation of the south: *Alfonso X el Sabio* (Barcelona: Ediciones El Albir, 1984). For a more condensed – but equally authoritative – account of the king's policy for Andalusia, see: M. González Jiménez, 'Alfonso X y Andalucía', in *Alfonso X el Sabio, vida, obra y época*, pp. 259-268.

⁶⁷ M. González Jiménez, 'Alfonso X y Andalucía', p. 263.

⁶⁸ Salvador Martínez conceives of Alfonso's strategy in four parts: 1) the Christianisation of Islamic territories through *re población*; 2) the Castilianisation of these lands by means of language and culture; 3) Romanisation, through legal and administrative restructuring; 4) Mudejarisation, seeing the fusion of Islamic and Christian cultures. *Alfonso X, el Sabio: una biografía*, p. 103.

⁶⁹ M. González Jiménez, 'Alfonso X y Andalucía', p. 266; Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España de siglo XIII*, 179-180.

exposed to the Arabo-Islamic culture that had developed in *al-Andalus* over the course of five centuries. There was a risk that the settlers might become "polluted" in some way by their contact with the culture and beliefs of the established faith group. Ironically, the fear of "contamination" had been experienced equally by the Muslim conquerors in the eighth century, as they came into contact with the majority-Christian Visigoth population.⁷⁰

Within this context, anti-Islamic polemic was now a valuable and necessary means to steady the Christian faith of Castilian-Leonese settlers across the south. As the *Partidas* demonstrate, there was a constant threat of conversion to Islam, be it out of despair, disaffection or pure opportunism.⁷¹ They would also engage with Islamic culture as the new residents and administrators of urban centres, and with the Arabic language, as the lords of subjugated Mudejars. Accordingly, there was a pressing need to assert the superiority of Christian rule and the Catholic faith. The hostile language of polemic was just as relevant as it had been throughout earlier centuries of mutual aggression among Christian and Islamic kingdoms. Breaking with tradition, Alfonso's history of Spain would be told in the vernacular: the wisdom of Jiménez de Rada and Bishop Lucas de Túy would help educate Castilian subjects of Muhammad's "trickery" and the "moral corruption" of his followers.

⁷⁰ See Baxter Wolf, 'Christian views of Islam in early medieval Spain', in *Medieval Christian perceptions of Islam*, ed. by J. Tolan (London: Garland Publishing, 1996), pp. 85-108 (pp. 90-91).

⁷¹ See section 2.2 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

A.3 *The Estoria de España narrative of Muhammad*

The fourteen chapters of the *Estoria* include a great quantity of detail surrounding the life of the Prophet and the origins of Islamic lordship. The chroniclers focus on various aspects of Muhammad's life: his lineage, upbringing, education, marriage to Khadija, disputes with the Meccans and his successful establishment of power throughout Arabia and Syria. They incorporate his encounters with angels, his journey through the seven heavens and the legend of the Black Stone.⁷² Emphasis is placed on the manner in which Muhammad rose to power: namely Muhammad's privileged position gained through his marriage to Khadija, and his skilful 'deception' of the people. This 'deception' is said to have been facilitated by a general state of limbo in the region: people were unsure of whether to follow Christianity or Judaism, and equally were suggestible to Muhammad's offer of freedom from Byzantine tutelage. The *Estoria* concludes with the later years of Muhammad's preaching and his death.

The *Estoria's* contempt for Muhammad is explicit: the narrative is strewn with anti-Islamic polemic. The chroniclers voice many of the traditional lines of attack, used by writers and theologians throughout Latin Christendom for hundreds of years. The *Estoria* resolutely denounces the life and works of Muhammad. In their eyes, Muhammad is the author of a great deception, and his teachings are a thoroughfare to the loss of one's soul. Three features of this diverse narrative will show us the overarching hostility toward the Prophet in the *Estoria*: first, the characterisation of Muhammad; second, the spread of his teachings; third, the *Estoria's* attitude toward the on-going transmission of Muhammad's teachings in the present.

⁷² The Black Stone refers to the cornerstone of the Ka'aba shrine of Great Mosque of Mecca. It was said to have descended from Heaven to Adam and Eve, and reclaimed by Muhammad. The Prophet placed the stone atop the mosque during the appropriation of the pagan temple.

A.3.1 Characterisation of the Prophet

In the first instances, the details surrounding Muhammad's origins are notably free from hostile polemic. Prior to the first chapter – concerning the lineage of Muhammad – the Alfonsine scribes place the following signpost to show the direction that the *Estoria* is about to take:

Mas agora dexe aqui la estoria de los godos de Espanna, e torna a contar de como nascio Mahomat el propheta de los moros e del linnage onde uino.⁷³

This short marker at once places Muhammad as the central figure upon which the civilisation of the *moros* is founded. Whilst later chapters adopt very hostile overtones toward him, it is interesting that in this first instance, the term 'propheta' is not qualified by the term 'falso'. Furthermore, in prioritising the details of his lineage – the line of Ismael⁷⁴ – the *Estoria* recognises that Muhammad's existence was preordained by Divine authority. In its simplicity, this signpost reveals why so many chapters are dedicated to the biography of Muhammad: his life and works are essential to explaining the presence of the Muslims in Iberia. On a second front, the chronicle upholds the practice of centuries of Christian historiography: the rise of the *Ismaelites* was simply a biblical prophecy, in accordance with Divine Will. As powerful a challenge as Islam appeared, Christian chroniclers could not but accept it as part of God's plan.

⁷³ *EED*, E₁: 474 (162v).

⁷⁴ Christian theologians and historians had widely adopted the view that the Muslim were descendants of Ismael, the son of Abraham and Hagar.

The story of the conception of Muhammad is taken from the *Historia Arabum*. This first chapter faithfully reproduces Rodrigo's Arabic sources, and there is little if any polemic to be found in the Alfonsine reorganisation of Rodrigo's account. The narrative relates that Muhammad's father Abdullah associated with a wise Jewish astronomer. As Muhammad's mother Emina is due to give birth, the astronomer foretells that Muhammad will grow to be strong and mighty:

Cum autem tempus partus Emine aduenisset, Iudeus ille ut erat geneaticus captauit consistenciam planetarum et horam natiuitatis infantis. [...] Et quicquid ille geneaticus de infante perceperat reuelauit et predixit eum in regno et lege mirabiliter exaltandum.⁷⁵

Quando uino el tiempo de Emina fazer su fijo, aquel judio estrellero que diximos cato e asmo la concordanca de las estrellas e de las planetas sobre la era del nascimiento del ninno, e entendio por ellas que auie de seer aquel ninno omne mucho esforçado e alçado, e poderoso en regno e en ley.⁷⁶

In this instance, the *Estoria* chroniclers maintain the Muslim account of the prophetic signs surrounding Muhammad's birth. It would appear that both Alfonso X and Rodrigo felt comfortable echoing Arabic sources: there was no threat in acknowledging the major significance of Muhammad's birth and the political convulsions it would bring.

In contrast to this unproblematic detail, the Christian chroniclers quickly encounter events in Muhammad's early life that they cannot accept as Truth. The *Estoria* takes Archbishop Rodrigo's account of the angelic cleansing of Muhammad's heart. We read that the child's heart was removed and washed by angels. The heart was then promptly measured and found to weigh more than all the hearts of Arabia combined. Christian historiography cannot accept this to be Truth: we read instead that the story was an elaborate lie on the part of the Jewish astronomer.⁷⁷ Whilst the *Estoria* discards any

⁷⁵ *Historia Arabum*, I, p. 88.

⁷⁶ *EED*, E₁: 476 (163r).

⁷⁷ 'Hec mentitur in uisione se a Gabriele angelo audiuisse', *Historia Arabum*, I, I, p. 88; '...el judio mintiendo dixo quel dixiera esto sant Grabiél arcangel en uision', *EED*, E₁: 478 (163v).

possibility of Muhammad's purity, the episode is nonetheless incorporated into the chronicle. By qualifying this as a lie, chroniclers are able to reproduce events relevant to the life of the Prophet, and by extent, of relevance to Iberian history.

The *Estoria* does not deny the great wisdom and erudition of the Prophet. We read that the Jewish astronomer was responsible for Muhammad's education, and passed on his vast knowledge of natural science and Judeo-Christian jurisprudence.⁷⁸ We read that by age thirteen the growing boy was particularly well read in theology and science:

Mahomat auiendo y treze annos de su edad [...] [ya era] muy grand clerigo en la nueua ley e en la uieia e en la sciencia de las naturas, e grand mancebo e mucho esforçado...⁷⁹

Whilst the narrative acknowledges Muhammad's learning, emphasis is placed on the appropriation of Judeo-Christian theology. The Alfonsine account echoes the *Historia Arabum's* earlier assertion that this was effective usurpation of the Old and New Testaments to Muhammad's advantage⁸⁰:

El iudio ensennol estonces en las sciencias e en la ley de los cristianos e de los iudios, e d'aqui apriso Mahomat e tomo despues cosas que metio en aquella mala secta que el compuso pora perdicion de las almas d'aquellos que la creen, por fazer creer a las yentes que era uerdadera aquella predigacion.⁸¹

In this vein, the *Estoria* portrays Muhammad's wisdom in a wholly negative light. This is a principal means to undermine him, where his intelligence would otherwise be a desirable character trait.

As the *Estoria* proceeds to detail the Prophet's teachings, terms such as 'enganno' and 'enfinta' portray Muhammad to be highly deceptive. The *Estoria* continues to warn that

⁷⁸ *EED*, E₁: 476 (163r) and 481 (164r). Taken from the *Historia Arabum*, I, p. 88, and II, p. 89.

⁷⁹ *EED*, E₁: 484 (164v). This is a rework of the *Historia Arabum*: 'Mahomat autem cum ad annos adolescencie peruenisset et in doctrina noui Testamenti ac ueteris et naturalis sciencie profecisset...', II, p. 89.

⁸⁰ '...unde et ipse postmodum aliqua de fide catholica, aliqua de lege ueteri in sue secte subsidium usurpauit.' *Historia Arabum*, II, p. 89.

⁸¹ *EED*, E₁: 481 (164r).

Muhammad's Revelation to the people of Arabia and North Africa was a mere fabrication, empowered by his knowledge of Judeo-Christian tradition.⁸² The penultimate chapter – to be explored in greater detail presently – asserts that Muhammad 'fazie enfinta muy a menudo' and that he was 'mintiendo' when he preached.⁸³ This portrayal of the Prophet as a 'liar' allows the Christian narrative to undermine Islamic doctrine.

There are many nuanced expressions of Muhammad's 'deception'. We read that Muhammad possessed several powerful traits that made him extremely influential, and by extent, allowed him to deceive those around him. Beyond his attractiveness and reputation, knowledge of the Dark Arts appears to give Muhammad a sinister magnetism:

Este Mahomat era omne fermoso e rezió et *muy sabidor en las artes a que llaman magicas*, e en aqueste tiempo era el ya uno de los mas sabios de Arauia et de Affrica.⁸⁴

This proved to be a cocktail of charisma and charm, effectively casting a spell over his future wife Khadija, and the masses too:

Esta Cadiga quandol uio mancebo tan grand e tan aguisado e fremoso e bien fablant, fue toda enamorada dell [...] [Mahomat] començo de coytar la mucho e de costrennir la por sus coniuraciones e sus espiramientos que se el sabie, de guisa que lo non entendiesse ella, diziendol que ell era Messias, el que los judios atendien que auie de uenir. Los judios quando oyron e sopieron aquello que el dizie, uinien se pora ell a compannas de cada logar, e aguardauan lo e creyeron le de quanto les el dizie. Otrossi los ysmaelitas e los alaraues uinien se pora ell, e acompannauan le e aguardauan le, ca tenien por marauilla lo quell oyen dezir e fazer.⁸⁵

⁸² 'E el començaua les de predigar e de fazer *enfintosa mientre* nueuas leys...' (EED, E₁: 487 (165v); based on *Chronicon Mundi*, III, 5, p. 167); '...predigo en Arauia e en Affrica, e *enganno* y e *confondio* muchos pueblos...' (EED, E₁: 487 (165v); reproduction of the *Chronicon Mundi*, III, 5, p. 168: '...in Affricam et Arabiam innumerabiles plebes *seduxit*...').

⁸³ EED, E₁: 502 (170v). The term 'mintiendo' is used twice to modify statements about Muhammad's preaching.

⁸⁴ EED, E₁: 487 (165r), based on *Chronicon Mundi*, III, 5, p. 167.

⁸⁵ EED, E₁: 487 (165v), based on *Chronicon Mundi*, III, 5, p. 167.

Muhammad is presented here as being highly adept at influencing and manipulating those around him. A similar character is created when reading of his conquests across the region. The *Estoria* relates that Muhammad was at times overt in his preaching, though stealthy at others. Through a combination of the two, the Prophet was able to conquer hearts and minds throughout Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia, releasing them from Byzantine hegemony.⁸⁶ In order to strip the Prophet of any sense of triumph, the chroniclers assert his conquest was 'mas por enganno que por fuerça'.⁸⁷

Another means of mass deception was, according to the *Estoria*, through the Prophet's false promises of salvation and eternal pleasure in heaven. The chroniclers point to the description of paradise that was offered to his followers:

E dizie les que el parayso era logar muy sabroso e muy delectoso de comer et de beuer, e que corrien por y tres rios: vno de uino, otro de miel, e de leche; e que auran los que y fueren mugeres escosas, non d'estas que son agora en este mundo, mas d'otras que uernan despues, e auran otrossi complida mientras todas las cosas que cobdiciaren en sus coraçones.⁸⁸

Furthermore, his manipulation was said to be supported by vicious acts of coercion. Alfonso X's chroniclers wrote that Muhammad ordered the decapitation of those who would not accept his teaching.⁸⁹ They presented habitual stereotypes that Muhammad and his followers would aggressively behead their victims, and that they were obsessed with indulgence and acts of gratification.

The notion of indulgence and carnal pleasure was a fundamental attack on the Prophet's moral standards. Like many other Christian biographers, the *Estoria* seeks to portray Muhammad's life as the antithesis of sainthood. We read that the Prophet

⁸⁶ *EED*, E₁: 496 (168r) reads: '...fuesse luego pora tierra de Arauia e de Siria e de Mesopotamia, e conquirio la toda. Desi, a las uezes a furto, a las uezes conceiera mientras como ueye quel fazie mester [...] e tanto fizio y que los torno a su uoluntad e a su sennorio'. *Historia Arabum*, III, pp. 91-92.

⁸⁷ *EED*, E₁: 496 (168r).

⁸⁸ *EED*, E₁: 487 (165v-166r). These assertions are from an unknown source.

⁸⁹ *EED*, E₁: 487 (165v).

engaged in adultery and fornication – thus rendering him guilty of cardinal sin.⁹⁰ The *Historia Arabum* claims illicit relations were had with a total of eighteen women.⁹¹ This accusation is readily incorporated into Alfonso's vernacular history, to reinforce the notion that Muhammad was a highly immoral figure.

Beyond debauchery, the narrative looks to the idea of Muhammad's invocation of Satan, in order to strip him of any claim of saintliness. Tainted with the evils of black magic, the Prophet is presented as collaborating with the Devil, in order to feign miracles and lead souls astray:

[Mahomat] trabaiosse por sus enca[n]tamientos e sus artes magicas e *con la ayuda del diablo por quien se el guiaua* de fazer antella assi como sennales e miraglos. E por que a las uezes se torna el diablo assi como diz la Escripura en figura de angel de lux, *entraua el diablo en ell* a las uezes, e faziel dezir algunas cosas d'aquellas que auien de venir, e por esta manera le auien de creer todas las yentes de lo que les dizie.⁹²

The diabolic characterisation serves two purposes. Firstly, the association with the Devil makes the Prophet out to be an ally of Satan, and by extent an enemy of the Almighty. This is a powerful attack on the descendants of Ismael, and a continued assertion of the righteousness of the Latin chroniclers. It also subtly undermines the power and influence of Muhammad, explaining that his achievements were facilitated by the supernatural. That is to say, the growth of Islam is presented as unnatural: Muhammad relied on the invocation of the Devil, it is suggested, to establish his new faith.

The Devil is once again involved in the account of Muhammad's preaching in Cordoba. The narrative claims that the Prophet travelled from North Africa into Visigothic Spain and began proselytising in Cordoba. Saint Isidore of Seville gains word of this and orders the dispatch of the 'false' prophet. Satan then appears to

⁹⁰ *EED*, E₁: 492 (167r).

⁹¹ *Historia Arabum*, II, p. 89: '...XVIII uxorum libidine immo adulterio fedebatur.'

⁹² *EED*, E₁: 487 (165v). *Chronicon Mundi*, III, 5, p. 168.

Muhammad and warns him to leave before Isidore's men arrive.⁹³ Here the narrative draws on the notion of Cordoba as the historic centre of Spanish Islam. In doing so, it is an important means to explain the presence of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula. Furthermore, it elevates the figure of Isidore and vilifies the Prophet Muhammad.

The account of Muhammad's death is particularly provocative. Instead of the *Historia Arabum's* relatively generic account, the *Estoria* opts for the *Chronicon's* much coarser version.⁹⁴ In the Bishop of Táy's account, Muhammad is derided and presented as the Antichrist. We read that he is the victim of poisoning: Albimor, one of his disciples, covertly poisons Muhammad to test whether he will be resurrected on the third day. Upon the hour of his death the Prophet gives his soul to the Devil, and promises his followers that they will be saved, their sins forgiven. The proclaimed resurrection is not fulfilled, and his consorts abandon the decaying corpse. Albimor returns on the eleventh day to find Muhammad's body ravaged by dogs:

Discipuli uero eius diligenter custodiebant corpus ipsius, expectantes quod resurgeret. Sed nimio erumpente fetore, cum iam sustinere non possent, eis abscedentibus Albimor post undecimam diem reperit corpus eius a canibus dilaniatum...⁹⁵

E sus discipulos guardaron bien el cuerpo cuedando que resuscitarie al tercer dia, assi como les el dixiera. Mas pues que ellos uiron que non resuscitaua e que fedie ya muy mal, desampararon le e fueron se su uia. Desi a cabo de los onze días pues que el muerto, uino Albimor, aquel su disciplo, ueer como yazie. E segund cuenta don Lucas de Thuy, fallol tod el cuerpo comido de canes.⁹⁶

With this image, the biography of the Prophet closes with a powerful message: Muhammad was akin to the Antichrist. He is seen as imitating Jesus, promising

⁹³ *Chronicon Mundi*, III, 5, p. 168: 'Quod cum beatissimo patri Ysidoro nunciatum fuisset [...] confestim misit ministros, qui caperent eum. Sed diabolus Machometo aparuit et quam cicuis fugeret, imperauit.' Retold in the *Estoria*: EED, E₁: 487 (165v).

⁹⁴ Jiménez de Rada provides scant detail of Muhammad's death, save that he died in Damascus. *Historia Arabum*, VI, p. 96. See the final section of this case study for discussion of the *Estoria's* preference for religious polemic in the narrative of the Prophet Muhammad.

⁹⁵ *Chronicon Mundi*, III, 5, p. 169.

⁹⁶ EED, E₁: 503 (171r).

Salvation to his disciples and claiming he will be resurrected upon the third day. Instead, he is presented as a fraud and a failure, whose soul went to the Devil and whose body was gorged upon by a pack of hounds.

A.3.2 The spread of Muhammad's teachings

Whilst Muhammad's character is portrayed as the driving force behind the "mass deception" of Islam, the *Estoria* points to a series of other factors to explain its rapid expansion. These are seen as facilitating the spread of Islam, complementing the "deceptive" charisma and tactics of the Prophet. The presentation of these contributing factors helps to build a clear picture of how Islam became accepted by so many, and why it was able to reach the Iberian Peninsula.

Early in the biography of the Prophet, the *Estoria* asserts that the context was already particularly favourable to the spread of a third Abrahamic faith. We read that Arabia and North Africa were generally at a theological crossroads, unsure of which belief system to adopt:

A aquella sazón que este Mahomat nascio eran los de Arauia et los de Affrica en muy grand cuñado por que non sabien cierta mientras a quales de las creencias a se atener, si a la de los cristianos o de los iudios o a la secta de los arrianos.⁹⁷

Drawing on the *Historia Arabum*, a crucial argument for Islam's existence is identified in the narrative. Were it not for the lack of consensus on the "correct" belief system,

⁹⁷ *EED*, E₁: 476 (163r). Based on *Historia Arabum*, I, p. 88.

Muhammad would not have gained such success. Profiting from this profound uncertainty, Muhammad was able to win hearts and minds with his preaching.

Furthermore, Muhammad's early contact with Jewish and Christian doctrines explains how he acquired the knowledge with which to preach a distinct revelation. At the age of eight, Muhammad's education was entrusted to the Jewish astronomer by his uncle Abutalib.⁹⁸ It is under these circumstances that Muhammad is instructed in Judeo-Christian thought. In this sense, Abutalib indirectly plants the seeds for the emergence of the "corrupt" doctrines of Islam, since it was he who gave Muhammad over to the Jewish astronomer. This was not Muhammad's doing, but was that of his uncle.

Furthermore, at the age of thirteen Muhammad is taken to Jerusalem by his uncle, 'a fazer y oracion'; the boy returns with further insight into Judeo-Christian theology.⁹⁹ There is no explicit reference to the belief system into which Muhammad was born in the *Estoria*. His uncle Abutalib is not specifically named as being a Jew, despite his friendship with the astronomer and his journey to worship in Jerusalem. At the same time, we read in a later passage that the Prophet's relatives are pagans.¹⁰⁰ The *Estoria* seems to show Muhammad as a product of a melting pot of Christianity, Judaism and paganism. The close proximity and interaction of these faiths proved to be the fertile breeding ground for Muhammad's development of a new Abrahamic revelation.

The *Estoria* overtly criticises the Jews and Christians who helped empower the young Muhammad. As previously touched upon, the Jewish astronomer is seen as responsible

⁹⁸ *EED*, E₁: 481 (164r).

⁹⁹ *EED*, E₁: 484 (164v), based on *Historia Arabum*, II, p. 89. The original Latin reads: 'Cum autem esset Mahomat annorum XIII, Abutalib duxit in Iherusalem, eo quod templum sanctimonie erat ibi'. This resembles a form of pilgrimage. Furthermore, Muhammad's guardian Abutalib mirrors (if not actively practising) Abrahamic tradition with this journey to worship in Jerusalem. We cannot say exactly what the chroniclers meant when they included this detail.

¹⁰⁰ Muhammad's preaching provokes hostility from the pagans of Mecca, and brings him into conflict with his extended family. Whilst Muhammad's uncle Abutalib embraces the Revelation, he admits that he does not want to fallout with their wider family, saying to the Prophet: 'yo non me quiero perder con mios parientes'. *EED*, E₁: 502 (170v).

for equipping Muhammad with the tenets of Christian law. The *Historia Arabum* affirms that the Jewish astronomer was simply lying, recounting the details of the angelic cleansing of Muhammad's heart. A visible attack is also made against the Christian monk whom Muhammad meets, during his voyages as a caravan trader:

[Mahomat] moraua [a tierra de Egipto e de Palestina] con los judios et los cristianos que y auie una sazón dell año, e mayor miente con un monge natural de Antiochia, que auie nombre Johan, que tenie el por su amigo e era herege. E d'aquel monge malo aprendio el muchas cosas, tan bien de la nueua ley como de la uieia, pora deffender se contra los iudios e los cristianos quando con ellos departiesse. Ca todo lo que aquel monge le demostraua, todo era contra Dios e contra la ley, e todo a manera de heregia.¹⁰¹

The Christian monk is regarded in a similar vein to the Jewish astronomer. He is considered as having equipped Muhammad with Christian theology, helping the Arabian trader develop rhetorical and debating skills. The monk is identified as 'evil' and as a heretic. Consequently, responsibility for Muhammad's "corruption" of Judaism and Christianity lies with his teachers.

Alongside the theological considerations, the geopolitical context of the region is shown to be significant. In Muhammad's later years, we read that Islam was able to infiltrate the fringe provinces of the Byzantine Empire. The *Estoria* tells us that the Prophet was able to sow discord by speaking out against Byzantine rule, encouraging uprising and secession:

Desi con sus engannos encubiertos punno de auuiar e de aluoroçar los pueblos en este fecho, demostrandoles de como eran apremiados de muy grand e amarga seruidumbre en dar rendas e tributos ademas a los romanos; e que eran caydos en pobredad e en lazeria por esta razon; e que por su pereza eran en este periglo, ca non por al, pues que por fuerça e por poder de yentes les podrien esto toller e uedar.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ *EED*, E₁: 487 (165r). Based on *Chronicon Mundi*, III, 5, pp. 166-167.

¹⁰² *EED*, E₁: 496 (168r). Based on *Historia Arabum*, III and IV, pp. 91-92.

Muhammad's agitation is shown to be successful. Byzantine authority in North Africa is undermined when Emperor Heraclius is denied supply of annual tribute. Whilst Muhammad is portrayed as misleading the masses, the success of his tactics proves that the region was receptive to his political narrative. That is to say, the *Estoria* implies that the region responded well to the Prophet's rhetoric of servitude and submission. Clearly, the people of North Africa, Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia are shown to be vulnerable to the charismatic Prophet of Islam. In doing so, the *Estoria* suggests they turned to Islam as a means of freedom from Byzantine rule.¹⁰³

The rapid spread of the Islamic faith is an integral part of the biography of Muhammad. Alongside the portrayal of the Prophet as powerfully "deceptive", we find that Iberian chroniclers also hint at contextual factors. They are aware that much of Muhammad's knowledge of Christianity and Judaism was due to the inevitable contact he had with them. The geopolitical context was also favourable to Muhammad's subversive activities. In this sense, the spread of Islam was not entirely down to Muhammad's "deceptive" character, but was related to contextual factors.

A.3.3 The transmission of Muhammad's teachings in the present

In the penultimate chapter of the *Estoria's* biography of Muhammad, we find a summary of the major criticisms of Islamic doctrine. This chapter is a translation of the *Historia Arabum*, dealing with the preaching of Islam during the Prophet's later life. By

¹⁰³ This is a convenient and subtle reminder that Islam remains a force of subversion in Christian Iberia, both internally and externally, during the thirteenth century.

following Jiménez de Rada, the *Estoria* incorporates the key academic criticisms of Islam made by the Archbishop of Toledo. There are many reasons that are used to refute Islam; this chapter very clearly shows concerns that Christians in the thirteenth century might find truth in Islamic doctrine. This helps explain the concerted vilification of the Prophet Muhammad.

This chapter's commentaries are made in the context of Muhammad's struggles in Mecca. In conflict with the pagans, we are told the Prophet secretly preaches his Revelation there. The wording of the *Historia Arabum* could not be more frank, as Muhammad's teachings are ridiculed and considered an abomination of the truth:

[Mahomat] apud Meham frequencius morabatur et ibidem predicta omnia et multa alia *ridicula* et *nefanda* sibi dicta a Gabriele angelo menciebatur...¹⁰⁴

[Mahomat] trabaiauasse mucho de ueuir e de estar siempre lo mas del tiempo en Meca. E alli estando, predicaua e dizie mintiendo todas estas cosas que auemos dichas, e aun otras muchas que son *de riso* e *de escarnio* e *de falsedad*, e fazie a todos creer que Grabiél ge las dixiera.¹⁰⁵

The *Estoria* uses three expressions to deride Islamic doctrine, considering it to be 'de riso et de escarnio et de falsedad'. The chroniclers dispel any notion of Divine revelation, reiterating that the Prophet's interaction with the messenger Gabriel was a mere fabrication.

The *Estoria* clearly identifies the shared monotheism of Christians and Muslims, making its readership aware that Muhammad had preached one God alone.¹⁰⁶ And in the *Estoria's* penultimate chapter on the life of Muhammad, the chroniclers bring the

¹⁰⁴ *Historia Arabum*, V, p. 95.

¹⁰⁵ *EED*, E₁: 502 (170v).

¹⁰⁶ '... Predigaua [a los coraxinos de Meca] que a un Dios solo deuien aorar tan sola mientre e non a mas.' (*EED*, E₁: 492, 167r); 'a muchos d'ellos engannaua por que les predicaua un Dios solo tan sola mientre...' (*EED*, E₁: 502, 170v). Based on chapters V and VI of the *Historia Arabum*.

question of monotheism into the present context of thirteenth-century Iberia. This rubric for this chapter reads:

De como Mahomad predico su secta, e se amortiçe e dizie que el angel fablaua con ell, e de *como les dio las zoharas que los moros llaman leyes*.¹⁰⁷

The role of the 'zoharas' – the *surahs* (divisions of the Quran) – is the key link between the biography of Muhammad and the chroniclers' present. The Alfonsine chroniclers visibly draw attention to the 'zoharas' as the source of the transmission of Muhammad's teachings. The 'zoharas' continue to guide the beliefs of the Muslims of Iberia. The *Estoria* distinctly criticises the Muslims of Spain in the present for continuing to be led astray:

...destas zo[h]aras les fizo [Mahomad] un grand libro departido por capitulos al que ellos llaman alcoran. E tanta nemiga e tanta falsedad escriuió ell en aquellas zoharas – esto es mandamientos – que uerguença es a omne de dezir lo nin de oyrlo, e mucho mas ya de seguirlo. E pero estas zoharas le recibieron aquellos pueblos mal auenturados, seyendo beldos de la poncon del diablo e adormidos en el peccado de la luxuria, e *oy en dia los tienen* e estan muy firmes en su porfia, e non se quieren llegar nin acoger a la carrera de la uerdadera fe, nin auer en si la ley de Dios nin el su ensennamiento.¹⁰⁸

There is a clear reminder that in the chroniclers' present, under the reign of Alfonso X, there are many within the Iberian Peninsula who continue to follow Muhammad's teachings. The *Estoria* stresses very clearly that it is to be lamented that a man should live by Islamic law; just hearing the *surahs* of the Quran, we are told, is shameful. These teachings are claimed to be tainted with the devil's own poison, and its followers are accused of indulging in the sin of lust. Importantly, the *Estoria* asserts that the Muslims of Iberia are steadfast in their belief: they have no interest in receiving the

¹⁰⁷ *EED*, E₁: 502 (170r).

¹⁰⁸ *EED*, E₁: 502 (170v).

Catholic faith. It acts as a clear division between the Christian faith and that of the Muslims, simultaneously ridiculing the belief system of the other.

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The *Estoria's* detailed account of the life of Muhammad is intent on denigrating and undermining the Prophet of Islam. It offers a consistently negative characterisation of the Prophet and of his teachings. This is a display of the most hostile attitudes towards Islam, shared by writers and theologians across Latin Christendom. Alfonso X judged this portrayal of the Prophet of Islam to be appropriate for his thirteenth-century readership.

A.4 Understanding the portrayal of Muhammad

Following our close exploration of the *Estoria* narrative of Muhammad, let us now return to the broader question at hand: why should Alfonso X wish to present such a negative representation of Islam? Was he not the *Rey Sabio*, a man of great intellectual endeavour and keen interest in the retrieval of knowledge and science from the Arabs? What was the logic and reasoning for expressing such condescension towards Islam and its prophet?

Scholars initially struggled to make sense of the *Estoria's* biography of the Prophet. Márquez Villanueva has admitted that the king's biography of Muhammad displays a strongly pejorative tone towards Islam. This is particularly evident in the way Alfonso X presents the Prophet's death. He points out that Alfonso and his scriptorium would have had access to a wide range of Arabic sources to create a far more balanced characterisation of the Prophet. Nonetheless, he opted for the legendary material of Lucas de Túy for part of the biography. Márquez Villanueva accepts that Alfonso was no philosemite or islamophile. Instead, he concludes that Alfonso was broadly conditioned by his thirteenth-century context, in which negative attitudes towards minorities were commonplace.¹⁰⁹

Salvador Martínez has also recognised to the prominence of Muhammad in the *Estoria*. He makes the self-same observation as Márquez Villanueva: Alfonso had a wealth of Arabic material to hand, but instead chose to use contemporary Christian sources. Recognising that Christian historiography was imbued with religious and racial prejudices, he considers the king's choice of sources as 'inexplicable'.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, he defends Alfonso's depiction of Muhammad as relatively moderate and restrained, considering the climate of warfare and anti-Islamic rhetoric of the times.¹¹¹ This argument is difficult to justify, however. By drawing on the *Chronicon Mundi*, Alfonso's biography of the Prophet is markedly *more* polemical than if he had relied solely on the *Historia Arabum*. The harshest aspects of the narrative – Muhammad's dealings with the Devil and the defilement of his corpse – originate in Lucas' writings.

¹⁰⁹ *El concepto cultural alfonsí*, p. 95. For my discussion of Alfonso's attitudes to religious minorities, see chapter 2 above.

¹¹⁰ 'Alfonso, historiador meticoloso y amigo de confrontar fuentes, que dedicó 14 capítulos a la vida y la actividad religiosa de Mahoma en la *Estoria de España*, y que hizo amplio uso de la historiografía en lengua árabe a lo largo de toda la obra, *inexplicablemente*, se sirve para la redacción de la vida de Mahoma sólo de fuentes cristianas, [...] y no de fuentes musulmanas que tenía a su alcance'. *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 183.

¹¹¹ *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, p. 185.

Had Alfonso wished to offer a moderate account of Muhammad, why did he have the Prophet die a humiliating death, as in the *Chronicon*, rather than a quiet passing and burial in Damascus, as in the *Historia Arabum*?

Tolan has offered a more convincing explanation of what we find. He has also observed that in a number of instances, Alfonso preferred to use Lucas' account. A major factor is the need to contrast Muhammad with the figure of Jesus. He notes that Rodrigo's *Historia Arabum* does this implicitly, whereas Lucas makes the contrast in a far more dramatic way. Muhammad is directly assassinated by his disciple, and his claim of resurrection on the third day is a spectacular failure. Tolan sees this as a highly convenient means to undermine the notion of Islamic lordship in Spain, by presenting its founder as the Antichrist.¹¹²

Christian-Muslim fraternisation was also a concern for Alfonso in the thirteenth century, argues Tolan. Certainly, questions of faith and belief system would have arisen during some of these encounters. By including details of Islamic tradition surrounding the Prophet, the *Estoria's* audience could equip themselves with arguments to refute Islam. Furthermore, knowledge of the 'other' helped Christians to differentiate themselves from Muslims. It was a means to reinforce faith boundaries, thereby reducing the risk of apostasy and conversion.¹¹³ The denigration of Muhammad in the *Estoria* is effectively a means to shore up the boundaries between the Christian readership and the Muslims they might encounter as part of everyday life in frontier society.

¹¹² 'Portraying Muhammad in Thirteenth-century Spain', pp. 41-42.

¹¹³ 'Portraying Muhammad in Thirteenth-century Spain', pp. 43-44. For the questions of faith boundaries and conversion to Islam in general, see section 1.1 of chapter 1. I have also explored Alfonso's concerns over Christian apostates in the *Partidas* in section 2.2 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

Polemic appears to be of great importance in thirteenth-century historiography. Even though the *Historia Arabum* stands as the more accurate source of Islamic history in the *Estoria*, polemic also had served a purpose for Jiménez de Rada. The prologue to the *Historia Arabum* explicitly voices its concern over Christian apostasy, indicating that souls may be led astray by the teachings of Islam.¹¹⁴ Rodrigo, like many other religious leaders and political elites, was eager to prop up faith boundaries. As Pick has shown, religious polemic was a crucial means for the Archbishop to implement his worldview of Christian rule over the Jews and Muslims of Spain.¹¹⁵ A generation later, Alfonso X now had even greater need for secure faith boundaries, as he endeavoured to consolidate Christian rule in Andalusia and Murcia.

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A combination of factors appear to be governing the highly negative portrayal of Muhammad in the *Estoria de España*. Firstly, the source material is overwhelmingly negative. As we have seen, both Rodrigo and Lucas use polemic to their advantage. By reproducing hostile attitudes towards the Prophet, they are able to undermine effectively the notion of Islamic rule in Iberia. Polemic also serves to reinforce faith boundaries – this is made particularly clear in the prologue to the *Historia Arabum*. The source material upholds Latin Christian tradition of using polemic against Islamic doctrine, in

¹¹⁴ 'Aduertat autem lectoris studium qualiter mentita reuelatio uersuti hominis Machometi ex corde finxit uirus pestiferum, quo libidinosas animas quasi nexibus colligauit, ut discant paruuli a fabulis abstinere et Ade funiculis colligari et trahi uinculis caritatis.' *Prologus*, p. 87.

¹¹⁵ Pick, *Conflict and coexistence*. See section 1.2 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

order to impose the supremacy of Christianity. As clergymen, this was the first order of the day for Lucas and Rodrigo.

Accordingly, the compilers of the *Estoria* combine both sources to respond to Alfonso's own context. As an expression of *official* attitudes towards Islam, the biography of the Prophet in the *Estoria* concurs with the stance towards Muslims in the *Siete Partidas*. Islam, it is made known, is a fundamentally wayward belief system. Muslims are in a state of error: they rejected Jesus as the Saviour, and instead adhered to the teachings of Muhammad. The latter, according to the *Estoria*, was *not* a messenger of God. Instead, he was a man of poor moral standards, who concocted a new revelation. Motivated by his own personal lust for power, he manipulated the masses and caused political upheaval throughout Arabia and the Mediterranean. He preached a fraudulent version of the Word of God, a corruption of Judaic tradition, as Jiménez de Rada had written. Muhammad's teachings were based on trickery and lies. There was nothing saintly about him, and in death he was exposed as the Antichrist. This was the message that Alfonso intended for his Castilian readership, the new lords of Andalusia, who were now living in times of increased fraternisation with Spanish Muslims.

Yet for this overwhelmingly harsh treatment of Islam, the narrative of Muhammad stands in contrast to the representations of Muslims elsewhere in the *Estoria*. As we shall see in the remainder of this chapter, the characterisation of some Andalusí Muslims was markedly more positive. Prominent figures in the history of Spanish Islam stood as examples of virtue and co-operation between the faiths. We shall now turn our sights towards these very different attitudes to Islam, as read in the *Estoria de España*.

B. AL-MANSUR

The second of our three narratives of interest explores the rule of Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur, the shadow caliph of Cordoba between 987 and 1002. The *Estoria de España* recounts his role as the leader of the caliphate and commander of powerful armies. During his rule, he repeatedly decimated Christian Iberia in some fifty campaigns of devastation. His reputation lived on through history, and was transmitted over many centuries of Christian historical writing. The *Estoria* treats al-Mansur with dignity and respect, as a successful and worthy Muslim opponent.

Over the course of this section we shall explore the notion of Spanish Islam as a political and military entity, rather than as a belief system. We will explore the historical record of al-Mansur, as evidence of his considerable reputation among Latin and Arabic historians. Paying close attention to the different works of Christian historiography used by Alfonsine compilers, we will continue to implement a source-critical and redaction-critical method to analyse the *Estoria* narrative of al-Mansur. Finally, we will consider the idealising tendencies in historical writing, driving Alfonso's favourable depiction of al-Mansur.

B.1 Spanish Islam as a political and military entity in Christian historiography

As we have seen, the *Estoria's* biography of the Prophet Muhammad was visibly critical of the teachings of Islam. In line with its negative portrayal of the Prophet, the belief system was harshly criticised. Chroniclers were scornful of the Revelation, and lamented that souls continued to be lost to that dangerous and wayward sect. The depiction of Muhammad largely drew on questions of a theological nature: it sought to refute Islamic teachings in defence of Catholicism. That said, in Christian historiography, Spain's Muslim rulers were not considered on the basis of their faith alone. In fact, Latin historians regarded Spanish Islam in political and military terms, first and foremost. It is through this prism that we will consider the *Estoria's* representation of al-Mansur.

Early responses to Islam often demonstrated a fundamental lack of understanding of Islamic beliefs. The absence of knowledge was such that some Christians held Muslims to be pagans and idol-worshippers. It was not until the twelfth centuries that Latin Christians began to engage intellectually with Islamic scripture and traditions. Kenneth Baxter Wolf argued that the perception of Islam as a *religion* has dominated modern scholarship of medieval Christian perceptions. That is to say, the approach to medieval attitudes to Islam has been too narrow, focusing on Islam as a belief system. He proposed that Latin Christians viewed Islam initially in political and military terms.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ This case was published in his work *Conquerors and chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* in 1990.

Developing this case, Baxter Wolf looked to early Iberian chronicles of the eighth and ninth centuries. His research built on the work of Ron Barkai, who had conducted a broader study of attitudes in both Latin and Arabic chronicles.¹¹⁷ Turning his attentions to the *Crónica Mozárabe de 754*, he argued that its Andalusí Christian author was not interested in the religious difference that Islam posed.¹¹⁸ Instead, the chronicle was focused on presenting the political history of Islamic expansion, with very little regard for questions of theology or doctrine. Whilst the chronicle decries the fall of Visigothic Spain, there is also recognition of the strengths and qualities of early Islamic rulers.¹¹⁹ The chronicler judged early Muslim governors of Spain on their merits. There were some who were noted for their ability to establish peace and effective rule in the Peninsula; others were seen as ineffective. The chronicler offered the Muslims the same treatment as he had done for the Goths: on the basis of political achievement.¹²⁰ Baxter Wolf concludes that the chronicler was attempting to accommodate the new system of rule in the Peninsula, and that the author was more concerned with the politics of the Muslim conquest than of its religious implications.¹²¹

More recently, Nicola Clarke has offered a thorough assessment of the historiography of the Berber-Arab conquest of Iberia.¹²² In accordance with Barkai and Baxter Wolf, her work demonstrates the political and military concern initially attributed to Islam. The *Chronicle of Fredegar*, written during the seventh century in Burgundy, appeared to present Islamic expansion in the East as little more than barbarian aggression. Muhammad and the first caliphs were treated as a nondescript test for Eastern

¹¹⁷ *Cristianos y musulmanes en la España medieval. (El enemigo en el espejo)*. 2nd ed. (Madrid: Ediciones Rialp, 1991).

¹¹⁸ *Conquerors and chroniclers of early medieval Spain*. 2nd ed. (Liverpool: University of Liverpool, 1999), ch. 3.

¹¹⁹ See also section 1.6 of chapter 1.

¹²⁰ *Conquerors and chroniclers of early medieval Spain*, pp. 33-35.

¹²¹ Barkai had pointed to this in his assessment of the *Crónica Mozárabe de 754* and the earlier *Crónica Bizantino-Arábica de 741*. See: *Cristianos y musulmanes en la España medieval*, p. 27.

¹²² *The Muslim conquest of Iberia: medieval Arabic narratives* (London: Routledge, 2012).

Christianity, just like many other barbarian invasions throughout history.¹²³ She also highlighted the lack of engagement with Islam as a belief system in the *Crónica Mozárabe de 754*.¹²⁴ Clarke echoes the view that early Christian chroniclers viewed Muslims primarily as a political and a military challenge.

It is in light of this thinking that Iberian chronicle tradition developed. In the narratives of the ninth-century Asturian chronicles, we find the use of biblical *topoi* to describe Islam as a fundamentally political and military challenge.¹²⁵ As Baxter Wolf has discussed, the Asturian chroniclers presented Islam as a scourge upon the Gothic people. The narrative likened the conquest to a divine punishment, but viewed it as something that was essentially temporary in nature. As in Old Testament narratives, God inflicted a scourge upon the people of Israel in the form of foreign invaders. This was a violent purging of sins, after which God promptly restored Israel to glory. The Asturian chronicles frequently referred to Muslims as 'Chaldeans', thereby invoking the struggles of the people of Israel. Despite its religious overtures, this is rather a case of metaphor. The Asturians were the 'Israelites', the "chosen people" to rule the Peninsula; the Berber-Arab conquest was the scourge to purify them of the sins of the Goths.¹²⁶ The *Crónica Profética* held that the scourge was coming to an end, and that Christians would recover the lands from Muslim rule. This was effectively a military struggle for hegemony and territorial aggrandizement, rather than an opposition on grounds of theology or doctrine. As such, it is through the prism of politics and militarism that we shall consider the depictions of al-Mansur.

¹²³ *The Muslim conquest of Iberia*, pp. 12-13.

¹²⁴ *The Muslim conquest of Iberia*, p. 17.

¹²⁵ The Asturian chronicle cycle includes the *Crónica Profética*, the *Crónica de Alfonso III (versión rotense and versión de Sebastián)* and the *Crónica Albeldense*. These chronicles are also discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis.

¹²⁶ *Conquerors and chroniclers of early medieval Spain*, ch. 4, especially pp. 55-56.

Over the course of the years, it became ever more clear that Islamic rule in Spain was not a temporary situation. Though the *Crónica Profética* had predicted the downfall of *al-Andalus* in the ninth century, history proved otherwise. The emirs of Cordoba were firmly embedded throughout the ninth century. Furthermore, Islamic rule strengthened during the tenth century, with the declaration of the caliphate by Abd al-Rahman III. Christian observers had to live with the fact that Spanish Islam was a significant political and military force. They witnessed, recounted and recorded the events that occurred in the world around them: among them was the astounding phenomenon of al-Mansur's rulership of *al-Andalus*. As we shall see in due course, al-Mansur emerged as a prominent leader of the caliphate of Cordoba in the late tenth century. His rise to power and skilful government of the caliphate left its mark on the historical record for many centuries. His campaigns of devastation throughout Christian Iberia earned him a reputation that proved to be enduring. It is that very reputation that we read in the *Estoria de España*, and which we look to as an example of thirteenth-century attitudes towards Islam.

B.2 *The significance of al-Mansur in the Estoria de España*

Al-Mansur's presence and significance in the *Estoria* requires a rather more detailed exploration. The tenth-century ruler of *al-Andalus* appears across many chapters of Alfonso's history, recurring as an important figure in the history of Christian and Islamic Iberia. In order to make full sense of the narrative of al-Mansur, it is crucial to

understand how he came to feature so prominently in the *Estoria*. This section will address this by taking note of the historical significance of al-Mansur's period of rule, as recorded in Arabic historiography. Furthermore, it will retrace Christian historiographical tradition, highlighting the reputation and collective memory of al-Mansur within Christian Iberia. Finally, the wider moral and political example of al-Mansur will be shown as an essential factor in understanding the lesson that Alfonso X intended his readers and listeners to find in the narrative.

Medieval historians have left us a wealth of accounts of the famed military strongman Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur. In particular, the Arabic sources speak volumes on his rise to power and exercise of authority during the reign of Hisham II. We are fortunate to have surviving accounts from men who lived during and immediately after the Amirid period (977-1009).¹²⁷ The works of court poet Ibn Darray provide us with a glimpse into power play and culture in tenth-century Cordoba, from al-Mansur's own inner circle.¹²⁸ Distinguished writers Ibn Hazm and Ibn Hayyan lived immediately after the Amirid period. Both writers possessed privileged insight into his rule, owing to their family links to al-Mansur.¹²⁹ Many years later, writers in fourteenth-century Granada would look back on the former glory of al-Andalus, recounting the achievements of Ibn Abi Amir.¹³⁰ Details of al-Mansur's rule were also compiled by prominent North African historians Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Idhari and al-Maqqari.

Al-Mansur's rise to power came about from curious circumstances in the year 976. Al-Hakam II, the ruling caliph of Cordoba, was facing a crisis of succession. His health

¹²⁷ The Amirid period refers to the rule of al-Mansur and his successors Abd al-Malik (1002-1008) and Abd al-Rahman Sanchuelo (1008-1009).

¹²⁸ See: M. Makki, 'La España cristiana en el Diwan de Ibn Darray', *Butlletí de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*, 30 (1964), 63-104; M. Garrido, *Almanzor en los poemas de Ibn Darray* (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1979); M. al-Mallah, 'Doing things with odes: a poet's pledges of allegiance: Ibn Darraj al-Qastali's "Ha'iyah" to al-Mansur and Ra'iyah to al-Mundhir', *Journal of Arabic Literature*, 34(1/2) (2003), 45-81.

¹²⁹ The fathers of Ibn Hazm and Ibn Hayyan had personally served al-Mansur.

¹³⁰ Notably, Ibn al-Khatib and al-Nubahi.

was deteriorating rapidly, and time was running out for him to name his heir. There was a long established tradition of father-son succession among the Umayyads of Spain, and al-Hakam was at pains to uphold it. As his life continued to slip away, the caliph chose his son Hisham to inherit the throne.¹³¹ Herein lay the cause of the brewing crisis: Hisham was barely eleven years old. In the context of Islamic legal tradition, this was a significant issue. Orthodoxy held that an *imam* (leader) must have reached sexual maturity (i.e. puberty) and had to demonstrate maturity of mind. In the eyes of many, 11-year-old Hisham hardly met the requirements.¹³²

In the face of these legal objections, the caliph made a concerted effort to raise the profile of his heir.¹³³ Al-Hakam took the extraordinary decision of inviting magnates and top officials to swear allegiance to Hisham, in a process known as a *bay'a*. This was an exceptional measure, on the basis that a *bay'a* was normally performed *after* the death of the incumbent, and not before. As García Sanjuán has argued recently, this preemptive *bay'a* demonstrated just how precarious al-Hakam felt the situation to be.¹³⁴ Nine months later, upon the death of al-Hakam, a second *bay'a* was held, officially recognising Hisham's accession. Among the political elites and ministers stood Muhammad Ibn Abi Amir, eager to ensure a smooth transition of power in the face of controversy.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Sources do not agree on the exact details of al-Hakam's male offspring. Al-Nuwayri and the author of the *Dhikr* suggested there were two other sons alongside Hisham. Furthermore, Ibn Hazm seems unclear as to whether Hisham was the sole candidate, or if there were other contenders whom al-Hakam had fathered to various women. See: A. García Sanjuán, 'Legalidad islámica y legitimidad política en el califato de Córdoba: la proclamación de Hišam II', *Al-Qantara*, 29(1) (2008), 45-77 (pp. 46-48).

¹³² García Sanjuán. 'Legalidad islámica y legitimidad política', pp. 65-70.

¹³³ L. Bariani, *Almanzor*, Serie Media, 15 (San Sebastián: Nerea, 2003), ch. 5; García Sanjuán. 'Legalidad islámica y legitimidad política', pp. 50-59. The caliph raised the visibility of Hisham through public presentations and involved him in acts of government. Furthermore, court poets sang praises of Hisham. Bariani has also suggested that the caliph fuelled the rumour that without father-son succession, the caliphate would collapse (p. 67).

¹³⁴ 'Legalidad islámica y legitimidad política', pp 63-64.

¹³⁵ Ibn Idhari's account of this emphasised the role of al-Mansur in ensuring the proceedings went smoothly. See: M. Ávila Navarro, 'La proclamación (bay'a) de Hisam. Año 976', *Al-Qantara*, 1(1) (1980), 79-114 (pp. 82-83).

In 976, Ibn Abi Amir was a high-ranking civil servant, closely allied to Hisham and his mother, Subh. He had risen through the ranks of government, initially training as a *qadi* (Islamic magistrate, ruling in accordance with *sharia* law) in Cordoba. His training gave him a thorough grounding in jurisprudence, literature and language.¹³⁶ Arabic sources do not corroborate on the exact trajectory of Ibn Abi Amir after his training in Cordoba. However, sources generally agree that he cultivated relationships with people in power, eventually landing himself a place within the caliphal administration. According to the *Anales de la corte de al-Hakam II*, Ibn Abi Amir held several important executive roles across a number of offices. These included: Chief of the Mint, Commander of the Guard, Secretary for Intestate Property and Qadi of Seville.¹³⁷

During the later years of al-Hakam's reign, Ibn Abi Amir managed to win the favour of the caliph's beloved concubine Subh, the mother of Hisham. Ibn Abi Amir had been charged with managing the affairs of the young prince. However, the key to success was his closeness to Subh. As a young slave girl of Christian origin, Subh had risen through the ranks of the harem, winning the heart of al-Hakam. She was determined to secure her son's place, as heir to the throne. Ibn Abi Amir was her representative in the world of politics, outside of the confines of the closely guarded harem. For Ibn Abi Amir, Subh was a source of influence over the caliph and his heir. Both held the shared objective of protecting young Hisham's interests, struggling for their own share of power.¹³⁸

When Hisham became caliph, Ibn Abi Amir was given supreme control of the armed forces. He confirmed his military prowess by leading his first major campaign into

¹³⁶ Bariani, *Almanzor*, p. 54.

¹³⁷ These are my translations of the Spanish terms that Bariani provides, in her translation from the original Arabic: *prefecto de la ceca, jefe de la guardia, administrador de las herencias vacantes, cadí de Sevilla*. (p. 55).

¹³⁸ Bariani, *Almanzor*, ch. 4 (pp. 57-62).

Christian territory in 977, affirming the rule of the new caliph.¹³⁹ He was rewarded for his victory, eclipsing the incumbent *hagib* (chamberlain) and became the right-hand man of the caliph. Ibn Abi Amir quickly managed to isolate Hisham from the outside world. The caliph was effectively locked away in the palace, absent from government and public life. Meanwhile, Ibn Abi Amir styled himself as the mediator between Hisham and the wider world. The *hagib* gave executive orders, claiming to be communicating the will of Hisham. He also ensured that the caliph reigned in name: Hisham was celebrated in mosques, minted on coins and praised in military victories. This subtle usurpation of power was broadly seen as central to the success of Amirid rule.¹⁴⁰

That said, it was obvious to many that the caliphal institution was losing all credibility. Ibn Abi Amir had particular difficulty justifying his rule before the Islamic authorities. The high judges could see clearly that the caliph was not in control, and once again the legality of this was highly questionable. Ibn Abi Amir's clashes with the authorities were a constant feature of his twenty-five years as shadow caliph.¹⁴¹ In an attempt to win over his critics, he presented himself as a pious Muslim and avid defender of the faith. Early in his reign, he ordered the cleansing of "un-Islamic" works from the library of al-Hakam: this included books on logic, philosophy and astronomy-astrology. Ibn Abi Amir ordered the destruction of these texts, burning them as a symbol of his dedication to Islamic orthodoxy. It has also been suggested that it was an assertion of power, purposefully damaging the legacy of al-Hakam.¹⁴² In a second gesture to the religious authorities, Ibn Abi Amir personally copied out the Quran. He

¹³⁹ He targeted Baños de Ledesma and Cuéllar, in a show of force to Christian Iberia.

¹⁴⁰ Bariani, *Almanzor*, pp. 97-97, 170.

¹⁴¹ Ávila Navarro, 'La proclamación (bay'a) de Hišam', pp. 107-108; Bariani, *Almanzor*, ch. 12.

¹⁴² See: J. M. Safran, 'The politics of book burning in al-Andalus', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 6(2) (2014), 148-168.

was said to have taken the manuscript with him on his military campaigns.¹⁴³ Both of these acts were a conscious attempt to use faith and devotion as a smokescreen for his manipulation of Hisham.

Above all, it was Ibn Abi Amir's military activity that defined his rulership. As we shall see in due course, Christian historians remarked his spectacular achievements in battle, despite the damage it had caused to the northern kingdoms. For Ibn Abi Amir, *jihad* was central to his grip on power. It was a useful means to strengthen his reputation, as a successful commander, devout Muslim, and protector of the caliph. Evidently, victory over the Christians was a convenient diversion from the political controversy of Hisham. Furthermore, the military was the key to his exercise of power, since the combined forces of the caliphate fell under his personal control. Notably, his organisation of the military saw the drafting of large numbers of Berber tribesmen, brought across the Straits from Morocco.¹⁴⁴ His ability to incorporate these foreign fighters owed to his network of clients there, cultivated in previous years on a diplomatic mission on behalf of al-Hakam.¹⁴⁵

Troop numbers were considerable: 12,000 cavalry, 26,000 infantry, 3,000 Berber troops and 2,000 Sudanese infantry, according to one Arabic source.¹⁴⁶ These figures did not include the Christian mercenaries who participated alongside the armies of the caliphate.¹⁴⁷ The majority of Arabic sources are in agreement that the *hagib* personally led some fifty campaigns over the course of twenty-five years.¹⁴⁸ No corner of Christian Iberia was left untouched. He attacked each of the kingdoms and counties in turn.

¹⁴³ Bariani, *Almanzor*, p. 105.

¹⁴⁴ On the Berberisation of the armed forces, see Bariani, ch. 10 (pp. 121-141).

¹⁴⁵ In 973, he had served as a commander in North Africa, during a period of unrest among the client territories of the Umayyads (Bariani, pp. 50-51).

¹⁴⁶ This is the testimony of Ibn Khaldun. See: J. Vallvé, 'Sobre demografía y sociedad en al-Andalus (s. VIII-XI)', *Al-Andalus*, 42(2) (1977), 323-340 (p. 338).

¹⁴⁷ Bariani, *Almanzor*, p. 140.

¹⁴⁸ L. Molina, 'Las campañas de Almanzor a la luz de un nuevo texto', *Al-Qantara*, 2(1) (1981), 209-263.

Among the many flashpoints were: Barcelona, Pamplona, Salamanca, Zamora, Leon, Astorga and Santiago. Some of these cities were attacked on multiple occasions.¹⁴⁹ Basking in the glory of his campaigns, he was given the title *al-Mansur* (the Victorious) – the title by which Christian historiography would remember him.

Al-Mansur finally met his end in the late summer of 1002. According to Arabic sources, the *hagib* was already ill when he set out from Cordoba on campaign. After laying waste to the region of La Rioja, he became seriously ill and died en route back to Cordoba. He was buried at the frontier, at Medinaceli in early August.¹⁵⁰ As we shall see shortly, Latin historians came to record his death through a number of different traditions. Invariably it was presented as a significant relief for Christian Iberia. For several years after al-Mansur's death, his son Abd al-Malik ruled as *hagib*, continuing to wage *jihād* against the northern kingdoms. Despite his efforts to continue in his father's footsteps, the integrity of the caliphate had all but disappeared. After Abd al-Malik's death in 1008, his brother Abd al-Rahman Sanchuelo took over. The third Amirid ruler's audacity was such that he proclaimed himself heir to the caliphate. This was the final blow. In 1009, a coup d'état marked the end of the Amirid dynasty, and ultimately, the end of the Umayyad caliphate.¹⁵¹

It is clear that from the beginning, Hisham's accession to the throne had undermined the legitimacy of the caliphate. As had been feared, he was incapable of leading *al-Andalus*. Instead, others had stepped in to take the reins of power. Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur had demonstrated the leadership required to maintain an otherwise failing institution. Though the caliphate appeared strong and victorious in battle, at its core it

¹⁴⁹ For example Leon and Astorga. See: Molina, 'Las campañas de Almanzor', pp. 230-237.

¹⁵⁰ Vallvé, 'Sobre demografía y sociedad en al-Andalus', p. 336; Molina, 'Las campañas de Almanzor', pp. 236-237.

¹⁵¹ Bariani, *Almanzor*, p. 237-249. For the consequences of the coup d'état, see section 3.C.1 of this chapter regarding the emergence of the *taifa* kingdoms of the eleventh century.

was rotten. In the figure of al-Mansur, historians of all walks recognised a unique ability to manage the crisis facing Spanish Islam. It was one that could not be replicated after his death. According to the *Dhikr bilad al-Andalus*, al-Mansur's tomb was marked with a rather fitting inscription:

Sus hazañas te informarán sobre él
como si con tus propios ojos lo estuvieras viendo.

¡Por Dios!, nunca volverá a dar el Mundo nadie como él
ni defenderá las fronteras otro que se le pueda comparar.¹⁵²

Owing to the extraordinary nature of his reign, al-Mansur emerges as a prominent figure in historiography on both sides of the frontier. Christian sources do not match the level of detail provided by Arabic historians. That said, Latin historians consistently captured the most significant details of his reign, distinguishing him from previous and subsequent rulers of *al-Andalus*. They referred to him exclusively as 'Almanzor', echoing his regnal title and reputation for military success. They also point to the enormity of his military capability. The presence of the foreign Berber contingent was noted, in addition to the participation of the Christian mercenaries. As the victims of al-Mansur's campaigns of devastation, Latin historiography's image of the *hagib* is one of strength, superiority and intimidation.

The *Crónica de Sampiro* provides only a limited account, but captures the essence of al-Mansur's campaigns of destruction. It recalls that with the support of Muslims from across the sea (*sarracenis transmarinis*), his armies crossed the frontier and laid waste to the northern kingdoms. The chronicler refers specifically to the campaign in which he

¹⁵² *Dhikr Bilad al-Andalus*, in Molina, 'Las campañas de Almanzor a la luz de un nuevo texto', *Al-Qantara*, 2(1) (1981), 209-263 (p. 237).

destroyed Santiago de Compostela in 997. Whilst much of the church of Santiago was destroyed, the tomb of St. James was left untouched. According to *Sampiro*, the aggressors had intended to desecrate the altar, but were frightened away for reasons unstated. God punished the Muslims with 'sudden death' (*morte subitanea*), annihilating the invading army.¹⁵³

The *Cronicón Iriense* includes a short – though significant – reference to al-Mansur's supremacy across the Peninsula. At the close of the chronicle, we are told that upon the death of Ramiro III of Leon, the *hagib* of Cordoba was involved in the transition of power to Vermudo II. The chronicle tells us that Vermudo went to the 'Great King of the Ismaelites' (*regem magnum hysmahelitarum*) to request military support to take control of Galicia and Leon. Al-Mansur provides Vermudo with an enormous Muslim force (*innumera multitudine paganorum*) to establish control over Ramiro's vacant kingdom.¹⁵⁴ Whilst this is the only reference to al-Mansur, the *Iriense* alludes to his considerable authority across the Peninsula. Beyond simple coercion and devastation, he is able to exercise his power as an arbitrator of the internal affairs of the Christian kingdoms. This is a sophisticated form of control, in which Cordoba actively intervenes in the politics of succession in Leon. As Miranda García has pointed out, it is a tacit legitimization of Islamic rule. The chronicler refers to al-Mansur as 'king', whilst Ramiro and Vermudo are given no regnal title whatsoever.¹⁵⁵

Over time, chronicle tradition widened in scope, gradually accumulating greater detail on al-Mansur. This further developed the image of the powerful and dominant *hagib*.¹⁵⁶

The *Historia Compostelana* mentions the 997 campaign to Santiago. In accordance with

¹⁵³ *Crónica de Sampiro*, 30, in *Historia silense*, p. 172.

¹⁵⁴ *Cronicón Iriense*. Ed. by M. R. García Álvarez (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1963), pp. 120-121.

¹⁵⁵ 'Legitimar al enemigo', p. 268.

¹⁵⁶ I have addressed the notion of how historiographical accounts are enriched and embellished over time in detail later in this thesis. See chapter 4 of this thesis.

Sampiro, during the destruction of the church, Santiago's tomb is not profaned. In the *Compostelana*, it is Santiago himself who punishes the perpetrators. In an act of vengeance, the Cordobans are struck with a lethal outbreak of dysentery (*dissenterie morbo*). Furthermore, al-Mansur is aggrieved at the desecration of the church out of his respect for St. James. Ashamed to his core, al-Mansur takes flight, but dies in Medinaceli from a sudden illness.¹⁵⁷

Elsewhere, the *Historia Silense* points to the massive incursions led by the 'mightiest of the Moors' (*omnium barbarorum maximus*). The *Silense* cites a lack of unity among the Christians as a source of empowerment for al-Mansur. It points the finger at the nobles who refused to obey Ramiro III, and at the Christians who were among the ranks of the Cordobans during al-Mansur's campaigns.¹⁵⁸ Amongst other details, it includes a caricature of the Andalusí commander losing his temper on the battlefield. When his camp is ambushed by a small band of Leonese soldiers, the *hagib* is incensed at the disarray among the Cordobans. In his dismay, he throws off his crown and sits on the floor. According to the chronicle, he frequently reacted this way if his troops were failing. Though apparently childish behaviour, it appears to bring his troops back into line, spurring them on and reviving their fighting spirit.¹⁵⁹ Regarding al-Mansur's death, the chronicler wrote that after twelve years of destruction, God showed mercy and took away the calamity that had befallen Spain. Al-Mansur was surprised by the Devil, who possessed him and put an end to his life in Medinaceli.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ *Historia Compostelana*, I, II, pp. 13-14. The chronicler notes that the Muslims respected St. James, since he was an apostle of Jesus (deemed a prophet in Islamic tradition).

¹⁵⁸ *Historia silense*, 70, pp. 173-174.

¹⁵⁹ *Historia silense*, 71, pp. 174-175.

¹⁶⁰ *Historia silense*, 71, p. 175.

The *Crónica Najerense* incorporates details gathered from previous traditions, such as *Sampiro* and the *Silense*, in addition to the poem of the *Condesa Traidora*.¹⁶¹ There is a reiteration of the role of foreign Berbers and Christian mercenaries in al-Mansur's armies. The *Silense's* caricature of the *hagib* losing his temper is presented as humiliation in the *Najerense*. At the same time, the chronicle acknowledges the desolation of wide stretches of Leon, Castile, Pamplona-Navarre and the Catalan counties. The chronicler maintains that al-Mansur was buried in Medinaceli, but states that he was cut down by Sancho García during a confrontation at Granjal de Campos. Unlike previous chronicles, the *Najerense* includes details of Abd al-Malik's campaigning in Leon and Astorga, as a continuation of al-Mansur's *jihad* effort.

Broadly speaking, this chronicle echoes the narratives of earlier chronicles, and continues to transmit the dominant position of Cordoba under al-Mansur. His military activity stands out from the historical record as a moment of great duress for the northern kingdoms – the *Najerense* suggests this was among the greatest moments of upheaval in history.¹⁶² It is evident that Latin chroniclers throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries were struck by al-Mansur, and were forced to confront the historical reality of his remarkable victories over the north. Over the centuries, Christian historians effectively consolidated al-Mansur's reputation, presenting him as a significant protagonist and noteworthy figure in Spanish history.

¹⁶¹ See: J. M Ruiz Asencio, 'La rebelión de Sancho García, heredero del condado de Castilla', *Hispania Sacra*, 22(43) (1969), 31-67 (especially pp. 45-53).

¹⁶² The chronicler asserts that Leon was destroyed three times in history: under the Roman emperor Nerva, then again during the eight-century Muslim conquest and finally by al-Mansur and Abd al-Malik. *Crónica Najerense*, II, 86, pp. 87-88.

It is clear, then, that al-Mansur left a significant mark on the historical record. This is the driving factor behind the appearance of the Cordoban *hagib* in later Christian historiography. Let us now consider the question more specifically: why did al-Mansur feature in over fifteen chapters of Alfonso's history? This requires a systematic approach to explaining the composition of the sections of the *Estoria* recounting the history of the tenth century. Just as we saw in the case of the compilation of the biography of Muhammad, the historiographical framework of the *Estoria* meant that al-Mansur would inevitably feature as a key personality in Christian history. In addition to this, al-Mansur's presence in the *Estoria* responded to more general requirements of the *Estoria*, as a work of collective memory and moral example.

The *Estoria de España* and *De Rebus Hispanie* relied in large part on the efforts of Lucas de Túy for the history of Leon in the late tenth century. The *Chronicon Mundi* in turn drew heavily on the *Crónica Najerense*, thereby incorporating the work of historians of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It is via Lucas that the *Najerense* account of al-Mansur's campaigns against Leon enter thirteenth-century historiography. *De Rebus Hispanie* also draws on Lucas' work, recounting the same episodes of destruction and devastation. As such, al-Mansur's firm imprint on Latin chronicle tradition reaches the *Estoria* via Lucas and Rodrigo.

Additional detail on al-Mansur is incorporated from Rodrigo's *Historia Arabum*. This auxiliary history provides further precision of the nature of Ibn Abi Amir's grip on power: there is a clear description of the manner in which the *hagib* usurped the power of the caliph. It recounts that the *señorío* of the Umayyads was effectively in the hands of al-Mansur. Rodrigo draws on Arabic source material, and provides a more accurate description of the Amirid period, shortly before the collapse of the caliphate. By

imbricating the *Historia Arabum's* details on the competing *señorío* of the Umayyads, Alfonso X adds a third Latin source for the *Estoria* narrative of al-Mansur, in addition to the *Chronicon Mundi* and *De Rebus Hispanie*. As a result, Alfonso's history provides a more complete account of al-Mansur.

Alfonso X keenly incorporated vernacular poetry into the *Estoria de España*, alongside the erudite Latin histories of Lucas and Rodrigo. As scholars have noted, this was a crucial feature of the king's approach to historiography.¹⁶³ One of the many vernacular sources included the *Poema de Fernán González (PFG)*. For Alfonso X this was an important Castilian-language work: it was testimony to the emergence of Castile, and an assertion of that county as a major player in Christian Iberia.¹⁶⁴ The *Estoria* also drew on the *Siete Infantes*, another valuable source of Castilian tradition.¹⁶⁵ Al-Mansur appears in both of these sources, and consequently features in these sections of tenth-century history. The *PFG* and the *Siete Infantes* helped to explain the trials and tribulations of early Castile, and recognised that al-Mansur was a significant actor in Castilian affairs. As a result of the wide-ranging efforts of the *Estoria* chroniclers to bring together vernacular and Latin sources, Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur appears across many chapters.

¹⁶³ See: D. G. Pattison, *From legend to chronicle: the treatment of epic material in Alphonsine historiography* (Oxford: Society for the Study of Mediaeval Languages and Literature, 1983); D. Catalán, 'Poesía y novela en la historiografía castellana de los siglos XIII y XIV', in *La Estoria de España de Alfonso X: creación y evolución*, pp. 139-156; Funes, *El modelo historiográfico alfonsí*, pp. 50-69.

¹⁶⁴ For discussion of the political assertions of the *PFG*, see: J. Aguado, 'La historia, la reconquista y el protonacionalismo en el Poema de Fernán González', *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies*, 3 (1999), 17-31; C. M. Hernández, 'Raíces medievales del nacional catolicismo: el Poema de Fernán González', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 1(30) (2000), 451-470; G. Coates, 'Endings lost and found in the Poema de Fernán González', *Hispanic Research Journal*, 9(3) (2008), 203-217; O. Martín, 'Conflicto político en el Poema de Fernán González', *Romance Quarterly*, 61(3) (2014), 192-201.

¹⁶⁵ Scholars have been particularly interested in the historical basis of the *Siete Infantes*: Ruiz Asencio, 'La rebelión de Sancho García', pp. 53-67; T. Montgomery, "'E sobre esto se levanto la trayçion": probing the background of the leyenda de los Siete Infantes', *Hispania*, 72(4) (1989), 882-889; J. Escalona Monge, 'Épica, crónicas y genealogías en torno a la historicidad de la leyenda de los Infantes de Lara', *Cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale*, 23(1) (2000), 113-172.

Besides the historiographical element, there is a more general notion that helps explain the breadth of al-Mansur's presence in the *Estoria*: the exemplary nature of history. As we have seen in chapter two, history served to highlight the good and bad deeds of men.¹⁶⁶ The past, as the *Estoria* prologue outlines, is a source of moral instruction for readers and listeners: virtuous historical figures serve as examples of good moral conduct. And in his second *Partida*, Alfonso X alluded to the ideal chivalric qualities that he expected of the nobility. Through virtuous behaviour such as loyalty, wisdom and piety, noblemen were to demonstrate a commitment to upholding political and social stability.¹⁶⁷ By the thirteenth century, al-Mansur had come to be seen as a model of leadership and virtuosity, in politics and in battle. The Cordoban *hagib* was therefore a valuable point of reference in the *Estoria*. Furthermore, al-Mansur's daring campaigns and his skilful handling of power ensured that Alfonso X's history was exciting, entertaining and instructive. The narrative of al-Mansur was representative of strength and success, and this was intended to have an edifying effect upon readers and listeners.

B.3 *The Estoria de España narrative of al-Mansur*

Over the course of the *Estoria* chapters pertaining to him, al-Mansur stands as an astonishing adversary of Christian Iberia. The chroniclers tell of the epic struggle between Fernán González and 'Almançor', narrating the existential threat he posed to

¹⁶⁶ This notion is also discussed in detail in section 4.5 of chapter 4 of this thesis.

¹⁶⁷ *Partida* 2.9.6 (vol. 2, p. 314). See also: Barton, 'The 'Discovery of Aristocracy' in twelfth-century Spain', p. 455; Beck, 'Chivalry and the power of stories in Alfonso X and Ramon Llull', p. 162.

the County of Castile. They also offer a more accurate description of his tight grip on power, as the *hagib* under Hisham II. The *Estoria* presents al-Mansur as a key protagonist in the dramatic struggle between Castilian nobles, as found in the legend of the *Siete Infantes*. It equally draws on established chronicle tradition, presenting his many incursions into Christian territory. Finally, the death of al-Mansur is marked as a turning point in peninsular history.

The *Estoria* demonstrates respect and admiration for the ruler of *al-Andalus*. The narrative comfortably acknowledges his reputation of success, in both political and military affairs, reflecting the historical reality of the late tenth century. In Alfonso X's history of Spain, al-Mansur stands out as a model of leadership and military victory. In order to piece apart this complex characterisation, we will explore three elements of the *Estoria* narrative of al-Mansur: firstly, the *hagib*'s exercise of power; secondly, his military activity; thirdly, the death and legacy of Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur.

B.3.1 Al-Mansur's exercise of power and influence

Across the chapters of the *Estoria* dealing with tenth-century history, al-Mansur is presented as a figure of immense power. It is important to bear in mind here that his presence in the *Estoria* is a function of a range of sources: both erudite Latin historiography and vernacular poetry. In spite of the notable diversity of sources, they do appear to corroborate and provide an even portrayal of al-Mansur's immense power.

The *Estoria* therefore tells a consistent narrative of domination by the Caliphate of Cordoba, over the weaker Christian kingdoms of northern Iberia.

Passages concerning the *Siete Infantes* offer a clear picture of the central role of al-Mansur in Iberian politics. Here, the *Estoria* presents al-Mansur as the judge and arbitrator among feuding Castilian nobles. Firstly, the *hagib* is the primary weapon that Ruy Velázquez uses to trap his opponent Gonzalo Gústioz. By writing a letter to the ruler of Cordoba, Ruy Velázquez draws on an external power to detain Gonzalo Gústioz and thereby remove him from the picture.¹⁶⁸ When Gonzalo Gústioz finds himself imprisoned, his language indicates the superiority of al-Mansur:

Respondiol Gonçalo Gustioz: 'sennor, assi como la uuestra mercet tiene por bien, e mucho me plaze agora por que uos aca uniestes, ca bien se que desde oy mas me aures merced e me mandaredes d'aqui sacar, pues que me uiniestes uer, ca assi es costumbre de los altos omnes por su nobleza, que pues que el sennor ua uer su preso, luego manda soltar.'¹⁶⁹

Gonzalo Gústioz refers to al-Mansur as 'sennor' and infers that he should act as all other 'altos omnes' and show mercy. This visibly shows the high status of al-Mansur. Ruy Velázquez is equally dependent upon al-Mansur's favour to achieve his own political objectives: the nobleman requests Andalusí military support to eliminate the *siete infantes* at Almenar.¹⁷⁰ In both cases, al-Mansur is the arbitrator on both sides of the feud, and his role is crucial to the unfolding of events.

Later in the narrative, al-Mansur's power is invoked once more, bringing about a resolution to the quarrel among the Castilians. It is through Mudarra, the son of Gonzalo Gústioz, that the deaths of the *siete infantes* are avenged. As the *Estoria* tell us, the

¹⁶⁸ *EED*, E₂: 749 (86r-87r).

¹⁶⁹ *EED*, E₂: 754 (91r).

¹⁷⁰ *EED*, E₂: 749 (86v).

young Mudarra is empowered by the *hagib*. Mudarra is made a *cavallero* and is given two hundred squires and attendants:

Pues que [Mudarra] ouo complidos .x. annos de quando nasçiera fizol Almançor cauallero, ca assi como cuenta la estoria, amauual mucho, ca era muy su parient [...] e aquel dia que Almançor le fizo cauallero, armo otrosi con el bien .cc. escuderos que eran de su linnage dell de parte de su madre, quel siruiessen yl aguardassen yl catassen por sennor.¹⁷¹

Here the *Estoria* shows how al-Mansur is the key to Mudarra's strength. We read that Mudarra became the most powerful warrior among the Moors, save for al-Mansur himself:

Este Mudarra Gonçalez pues que crescio e ueno a mayor edat por ello, salio tan buen cauallero e tan esforçado que si Almançor non era, no auie mejor dell en todos los moros.¹⁷²

As in earlier sections of the *Siete Infantes*, al-Mansur is a highly influential protagonist in the narrative. He exercises his power in a covert manner, playing a direct role in the internal affairs of Castile.

Elsewhere, the *Estoria* is far more explicit in its presentation of al-Mansur's hold on power. Drawing on Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, the readership is offered a portrait of al-Mansur as a skilful politician and effective shadow caliph. The redactors of the *Estoria* offer an accurate portrayal of politics at the heart of the caliphate. The *Estoria* accurately tells that Muhammad Ibn Abi Amir became *hagib* of the caliph Hisham, who was barely ten years old. It fully captures the dynamic of power that existed: Ibn Abi Amir exerted power on behalf of the caliph, acting as second-in-command to Hisham.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ *EED*, E₂: 762 (96r).

¹⁷² *EED*, E₂: 762 (96r).

¹⁷³ 'Pues que aquell Jssem rey de Cordoua ouo recebida la onrra del regno, porque era aun ninno – ca assi cuemo cuenta la estoria no auie aun de edad de quando nasçiera mas de .x. annos et ocho meses – dieron le los mas poderosos e sabios omnes de la corte por ayudador con quien mantouiesse el regno, un moro muy esforçado e muy

The *Estoria* offers a long description of the ways in which al-Mansur usurped the power of the caliph. The chroniclers are fully aware that Hisham reigned in name only.¹⁷⁴ They explain that behind this, al-Mansur isolated Hisham from his government and gave order with the cover of a caliphal mandate: 'esto e esto uos manda fazer Yssem'.¹⁷⁵ The *Estoria* states that al-Mansur received wide public support for his management of the caliphate, alongside the many military victories over the Christians. Crucially, al-Mansur had the opportunity to take the seat of power from Hisham, but refused to do so.¹⁷⁶ This is a sophisticated and detailed analysis of the *hagib's* command over *al-Andalus*. Alfonso X and his team of historians deemed al-Mansur's effective control of government to be a valuable addition to their history.

The *Estoria* remarks upon al-Mansur's personal traits that supported his success. Across the narrative, there are assertions of the attributes that provide a positive depiction of the tenth-century *hagib*. Taking from a number of different sources, the *Estoria* presents us with a rich characterisation of al-Mansur, with a particular unity in its portrayal. Regarding his role as chamberlain to Hisham, al-Mansur is described as 'determined' (*esforçado*), 'diligent' (*aguçioso*) and 'wise' (*sabio*).¹⁷⁷ This reiterates Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, who describes how stability was maintained under the reign of Hisham II.¹⁷⁸

Elsewhere in the narrative, we read that his personal qualities allowed him to command influence over the Christian minorities:

aguçioso e sabio, que auie nombre Mahomat Ynbeabdenhamir, quel ayudasse a mantener el regno e a defender le, e que fuesse a las batallas por ell. Et de estonces a aca fue llamado aquel moro alhagib, que quiere dezir en su arauigo tanto como en el castellano 'pestanna', o 'omne que tiene logar de rey'. *EED*, E₂: 745 (82r), based on *Historia Arabum*, XXXII, p. 128.

¹⁷⁴ 'Yssem non auie al de uer en el regno si non en nombre sola mientre que auie de rey.' *EED*, E₂: 745 (82v). Taken from *Historia Arabum*, XXXII, p. 128.

¹⁷⁵ *EED*, E₂: 745 (82v); 'Ista precepit uobis Hyssem' (*Historia Arabum*, XXXIII, p. 128).

¹⁷⁶ 'Et tanto le amauan yl preciauan los moros por esto, que muchas uezes le quisieron dar el regno, mas el nunqual quiso teller a Yssem.' *EED*, E₂: 745 (82v).

¹⁷⁷ *EED*, E₂: 745 (82r).

¹⁷⁸ The *Historia Arabum* describes him as 'uir strenuus, industrius atque prudens' (XXXII, p. 128).

De Almançor cuentan las estorias que era omne muy sabio e muy atreuido e alegre e franque, e assi sabie falagar e auer a los cristianos, que semeiaua que mas los querie que a los moros. Et amaua tanto otrossi a los suyos que todos se trabaiauauan quanto mas podien en fazer le seruicio.¹⁷⁹

This is incorporated from *De Rebus Hispanie* and is an expansion upon Latin chronicle tradition. Earlier chronicles held that al-Mansur won over Christians by favouring them with his administration of justice.¹⁸⁰ In the thirteenth century, the tradition evolved and adopted a new meaning. In Lucas, al-Mansur is described as 'benevolent' (*largus*) and 'good-humoured' (*ylaris*).¹⁸¹ Jiménez de Rada reiterates these qualities stated by Lucas, adding a further two: al-Mansur is said to be 'wise' (*prudens*) and 'vigorous' (*strenuus*) as well.¹⁸² These qualities are the reason for his popularity among all those who served him, including Christians. Furthermore, his strength of character is such that his troops give their utmost service to their lord. These are very much ideal traits.

There is a second instance in which we see the evolution of al-Mansur's characterisation over the course of historiographical tradition. As we have previously discussed, the *Silense* and the *Najerense* recount a moment of frustration for the powerful *hagib*. In the thirteenth century, this episode is focused less on al-Mansur's frustration, and instead far more on the dedication of his troops. In the face of the ambush by Leonese troops,¹⁸³ al-Mansur throws his crown on the floor, and his Christian and Muslim troops are visibly ashamed at their lord's disappointment:

¹⁷⁹ *EED*, E₂: 758 (94v).

¹⁸⁰ According to the *Historia Silense*, al-Mansur would give special treatment to Christians, in the case of disputes involving Muslims. Owing to his favouritism of Christians, many were won over by him and joined the ranks of his armies.

¹⁸¹ *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 37, p. 268.

¹⁸² *DRH*, V, XIII, p. 163.

¹⁸³ In the *Estoria*, *De Rebus Hispanie* and the *Chronicon Mundi* it is Vermudo who leads the ambush; the *Silense* and the *Najerense* hold that it was Ramiro.

Mas Almançor como era muy esforçado e de grand coraçon, quando uio a los suyos uençudos e foyr tan mala mientre, con el grand pesar que ende ouo, dio a tierra con un sombrero que traye en la cabeça en lugar de corona [...] Et quando los caualleros de Almançor esto uieron, pesoles mucho por ende. Et por el grand amor que auien con ell yl querien todos bien, assi la grand caualleria de los condes e de los otros caualleros cristianos que andauan con ell como los sus moros, dieron tornada a la batalla muy de coraçon...¹⁸⁴

The episode places emphasis on the reaction of his soldiers. Al-Mansur's forces – Christian mercenaries and Muslim troops alike – are said to regroup and fight back 'muy de coraçon', out of the 'grand amor que auien con ell'. There is a visible idealisation of al-Mansur's ability to command respect and instil fighting spirit in his troops.

In another episode, al-Mansur is shown to be merciful when facing his Christian adversaries. Incorporating material from Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, the *Estoria* narrates a dramatic scene in which al-Mansur and his forces face off with Castilians, during a campaign of devastation. According to the narrative, the Muslim army is returning to Cordoba, and en route they reach a mountain pass. The way is blocked by winter snows, and is occupied by Christians. Al-Mansur asserts his power and devastates the surrounding land, forcing the Castilians into submission. They sue for peace, offering him goods and wealth, which al-Mansur duly accepts:

Almançor, segund cuenta la estoria, recibio ell auer quel dauan, e non ya por cosa que lo ouiesse mester, mas por mostrar contra ellos su piadad e su mesura.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ EED, E₂: 758 (94v-95r). This is a translation *De Rebus Hispanie* (V, XIII, p. 163), which closely follows Lucas de Tuy (IV, 37, p. 268).

¹⁸⁵ EED, E₂: 745 (82v-83r). There are additional details in this episode that complicate the exact reason for the *aver* that the Christians provide. Al-Mansur appears to plough and sow the land – where his army is camped – with oxen stolen from the Christians earlier on campaign. This seems to suggest that al-Mansur was resourceful enough to be able to withstand the impasse, for however long the mountain pass was blocked. After inflicting 'tanto mal en la cristiandad', the Castilians offer to help clear the mountain pass of snow, and offer the *aver* as the price for the agricultural work that he undertook. This episode offers a peculiar contrast of destructive and constructive behaviours, along with conflict and peaceful resolution. In any case, al-Mansur comes out on top, and is presented as merciful to the capitulating Christians.

Here, al-Mansur is presented as honourably accepting the capitulation of the Castilians. It is clearly stated that the Cordobans receive the *aver* as a courteous acceptance of the Christian's surrender, though they have no need for the goods offered to them. As Rodrigo writes, al-Mansur demonstrates 'pietatis clemencia'.¹⁸⁶ This is incorporated into the *Estoria* to enhance the chivalric qualities demonstrated by al-Mansur.

Alfonso's chroniclers make known that al-Mansur's achievements were unmatched by his successors. The *Estoria* carefully presents this historical reality in its treatment of the two successive Amirid rulers, Abd al-Malik and Abd al-Rahman Sanchuelo. Though Abd al-Malik is described as a good ruler, the *Estoria* explains that he could not count on the support of Christian mercenaries who had previously served his father. Following a period of reconciliation between Leon, Castile and Navarre, exiled Christian nobles now returned to the north. The chroniclers assert that as a result Abd al-Malik could no longer count on these skilled mercenaries, and saw his military capability reduced.¹⁸⁷

A far more telling contrast to al-Mansur is the characterisation of the third Amirid *hagib*, Abd al-Rahman Sanchuelo. He stands as the antithesis of effective rule, and is presented with negative and immoral traits, notably lust and insobriety:

Hic pessimus et peruersus fornicationibus et ebrietatibus insistebat...¹⁸⁸ ...fue omne malo e trauiesso esso que el duro en el regnado. Et non se trabaiaua de otra cosa tanto como de pleyto de mugeres e de uino, assi que era muy luxurioso e bebdero.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ *Historia Arabum*, XXXII, p. 129.

¹⁸⁷ 'Estonces el rey de Leon e el rey de Nauarra e el conde Garçi Fernandez de Castiella enuiaron por el conde don Vela, del que dixiemos ya suso ante desto, e por todos los otros caualleros que eran con los moros – los que ellos echaran de tierra –, e tornaron les sus heredamientos e los derechos que deuien auer, por razon que los moros no se pudiesen enfestar contra ellos con la su ayuda. Et fueron ellos d'alli adelante muy fuertes e muy rezios contra los moros, e lidiaron con ellos muchas uezes, e trabaieronse mucho en defender la cristiandat.' *EED*, E₂: 767 (98v); based on *DRH*, V, XVII, p. 166.

¹⁸⁸ *Historia Arabum*, XXXII, p. 129.

¹⁸⁹ *EED*, E₂: 770 (100r).

Furthermore, where al-Mansur has been careful to uphold the rule of caliph Hisham II in name, Sanchuelo instead seeks to remove Hisham from power. The *Estoria* presents Sanchuelo as a blundering aggressor, threatening to kill Hisham 'si non le diesse el sennorio'. As a consequence of his foolish and reckless ways, the chroniclers explain that Abd al-Rahman Sanchuelo swiftly met his end:

Mas Abderrahmen non duro en el sennorio mas de quatro meses e medio assi como dixiemos ya, cal mataron los sus uassallos mismos.¹⁹⁰

This completes the chronology of the Amirid chamberlains under Hisham II, leading up to the collapse of the caliphate. The negative portrayal of Sanchuelo is a stark contrast to the ideal qualities of al-Mansur: the latter is presented consistently with positive traits, contributing to his political and military success as ruler of *al-Andalus*.

B.3.2 Al-Mansur's military might

A second important aspect of the characterisation of al-Mansur is that of his tremendous military capability. There is a degree of inconsistency in the narrative, owing to the anachronistic content of the *PFG*, which recounts spectacular Castilian victories against al-Mansur. In contrast, Lucas de Túy and Jiménez de Rada present a narrative of his crushing defeats over Christian Iberia. In spite of the varying quality of the source material, the composite narrative offers a single portrayal of his extraordinary military power.

¹⁹⁰ *EED*, E₂: 770 (100r), based on *Historia Arabum*, XXXII, p. 129.

Using the *PFG*, the *Estoria* asserts that al-Mansur was a strong military commander, 'el mas poderoso moro' under caliph Abd al-Rahman III.¹⁹¹ The epic poem correctly identifies the presence of North African contingents that joined the ranks of the regular army of the caliphate. We read the following in the *Estoria*:

[Almançor] paso a allend mar a tierra de Affrica, e mando predicar por toda la tierra que uinjessen a acorrer a el e a los moros de Espanna contra los cristianos. Los moros cuando lo oyeron, unieron se todos pora ell, asi como a perdon, muchos caualleros almohades e turcos e alaraues, e ayunto grand poder e passo con ellos la mar, e torno se pora Espanna.¹⁹²

Though it is plagued by anachronisms – with the mention of Almohads, for example – it captures the reality of Berber mercenaries participating in the *jihad* effort during the tenth century.

Similarly, the sections of the *Estoria* based on the *Siete Infantes* echo the historical reality of al-Mansur's military capability. Whilst it does not mention Berber militias, it does point to the co-operation of Christian nobles. This is captured in the figure of Ruy Velázquez, who presents himself as an 'amigo' of the *hagib* and combines forces with al-Mansur.¹⁹³ Furthermore, during the battle in which the *siete infantes* are killed, the *Estoria* tells of the enormity of the Cordoban forces that have come to devastate the Castilians. Al-Mansur's forces are repeatedly referred to as a 'multitude' (*muchedumbre*). The small Castilian force is heavily outnumbered and is faced by an intimidating mass of Muslim troops:

Los moros luego que uieron a los infantes en el campo, firieron los atamores e unieron sobrellos tan espessos como las gotas en la lluuia que cae.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ *EED*, E₂: 699 (52v).

¹⁹² *EED*, E₂: 709 (58v-59r).

¹⁹³ *EED*, E₂: 749 (86v).

¹⁹⁴ *EED*, E₂: 753 (90v).

This contributes to the *Estoria's* depiction of the enormous strength associated with the Andalusí leader.

Alongside these vernacular sources, the *Estoria* chroniclers draw on the accounts offered by Lucas and Jiménez de Rada. This echoes the content of earlier Latin historiographical tradition, identifying the widespread devastation of the north, and highlighting specific campaigns against Leon, Astorga, Coyanca and Santiago. In each of these campaigns, al-Mansur is said to return to Cordoba in triumph and with honour. Echoing Lucas and Rodrigo, the *Estoria* explains that al-Mansur 'siempre uencie et tornaua onrrado'.¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, Alfonso's history clarifies the meaning of the regnal title 'al-Mansur':

Et por que siempre las mas uezes fue despues uencedor en todas las batallas que se acerto, fizo se llamar d'alli adelant Almançor, que quiere dezir tanto como 'defendedor'.¹⁹⁶

This explanation strengthens the wider portrayal of al-Mansur's prowess and military brilliance.

Despite the destruction, the tone of the *Estoria* narrative is one of continued idealisation of al-Mansur's chivalric behaviours. In one of his campaigns against Leon, we read that the *hagib* destroys much of the city's defences, but purposefully leaves one gate standing:

Almançor mando luego crebantar e destroyr todas las puertas de la villa que eran obradas de marmol [...] Et otrossi fizo derribar e destroyr todas las otras torres de los muros e desfazer las fasta los cimientos. Pero mando dexar una que estaua a la puerta de contra septentrion. Et aquello dexo por remembrança de los que uernien despues.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ 'Sempre uictor reuenteretur Cordubam' (*Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 38, p. 270); 'Semper inuictus rediit cum triumpho' (*DRH*, V, XV, p. 164).

¹⁹⁶ *EED*, E₂: 745 (82r), taken from *DRH*, V, XIII, p. 162.

¹⁹⁷ *EED*, E₂: 760 (95v), based on *DRH*, V, XV, p. 164.

This act is a mark of nobility, showing restraint towards his enemies. Rather than razing the city entirely, he leaves the gate as a mark of the city's former strength, in the wake of its destruction. It is also symbolic of the *hagib*'s own strength, to be remembered for generations to come. In contrast, Abd al-Malik does not exhibit the same qualities as his father: years later the second Amirid *hagib* tears down the remaining city gate.¹⁹⁸

Naturally, there are aspects of the narrative that express a degree of hostility towards the Andalusí ruler. After all, the ruin of the north was not in itself something to be celebrated. Incorporating earlier tradition, the *Estoria* presents the Santiago campaign as an offence that was worthy of divine punishment. Al-Mansur is frightened away from Santiago's tomb by a ray of light, and he and his company are afflicted with an outbreak of 'diarria'.¹⁹⁹ Based upon the account of Lucas de Túy, it is used by the *Estoria* chroniclers as an assertion that the Muslims' violation of the tomb was unacceptable. Owing to the importance of Santiago in Lucas' eyes, al-Mansur had to be seen to suffer. Alfonso's historians judged that this divine intervention would appear as a welcome sign that the Christians, despite their weakness, were still God's favoured people.

The will of the divine is a crucial feature of the narrative. Despite his many virtues and ideal qualities, al-Mansur's victories over Christian Iberia are suggested to be a divine punishment. Drawing on the *Chronicon Mundi* and *De Rebus Hispanie*, the *Estoria* points to God as the ultimate authority over all things, as an explanation of the ruin of Christian Iberia by al-Mansur:

Et esto non uinie por [Almançor], mas por la sanna de Dios que era sobre los cristianos. Ca despues que el prez de los godos fue amortiguado en Espanna, fue luego la iglesia

¹⁹⁸ *EED*, E₂: 767 (98v). This draws on *DRH*, V, XVII, p. 166.

¹⁹⁹ *EED*, E₂: 765 (97v). The *Estoria* is following the *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 38, p. 270.

despreciada e abaxada e afontada, e leuaron los moros los tesoros della. Et el crebanto que fuera del rey Rodrigo recudio otra uez en tiempo deste rey Almançor.²⁰⁰

Rodrigo, and by extension Alfonso, are insistent upon the notion of divine order. Al-Mansur's victories are explained as a continued punishment for the sins of the Goths and their lack of respect for the Church. It is in the framework of Gothic history that Rodrigo offers this explanation, and this is treated as an authoritative source by the *Estoria* chroniclers. Though al-Mansur's strength of character is noteworthy, towards the close of the narrative the *Estoria* asserts that the intense suffering of the Christians was to be attributed to God. For all the strength and brilliance of al-Mansur's person, he is still subject to the divine order of things. Ultimately, the strength of the Christian faith will determine the success or decline of the Christian kingdoms, by the hand of the Almighty.

B.3.3 The death and legacy of al-Mansur

The close of the narrative of al-Mansur provides us with a striking image of the rapid demise of the strongman of Cordoba. The *Estoria* draws on the dramatic account of Lucas, in which the *hagib* is finally defeated by a united Christian front. The account presents this as a notable triumph on the part of the Christians, and recognises that with the death of al-Mansur, their fortunes would begin to change. In acknowledging the

²⁰⁰ *EED*, E₂: 764 (97r-97v). Both Lucas and Rodrigo assert that God allowed al-Mansur to ravage Iberian Christianity, as retribution for the state of sin and moral decay (*Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 37, pp. 269-270; *DRH*, V, XV, p. 164).

decline of *al-Andalus* after the death of al-Mansur, the readership is presented once more with the reality of a strong and capable leader.

The *Estoria* recounts that Vermudo II sought an alliance with his Christian neighbours, in the face of the continued destruction of Leon. Appealing to Count Garci Fernández of Castile, and king García of Navarre, the Christians form a united front against al-Mansur. They combine forces and face off with the Cordobans at Calatañazor, on the frontier between Castile and *al-Andalus*. After a day of intense fighting the battle is not yet over, and the two sides return to their encampments for the night. Al-Mansur contemplates the possibility that he may be captured or killed the following day. Feeling that he has lost the campaign, the *hagib* is consumed by despair and dies:

Almançor quando uio ell astragamiento de su huesta que perdiera, non oso atender la batalla pora otro dia, e fuese de noche fuyendo. Et quando llego a un lugar que dizen Borgalcoray, adolecio con pesar d'aquello quel contecio, e nin quiso comer nin beuer, e murio assi.²⁰¹

Al-Mansur's lethal sense of failure is driven by the fact that, until that moment, he had an unblemished record of military success. His overwhelming loss of heart is a direct contrast to earlier assertions of his cheerful and lively nature. For the *Estoria* chroniclers, this is a tremendous victory on the part of the Christians. By incorporating the narrative of Lucas, Alfonso X's readership is presented with an important lesson: the unity of the Christians helped them overcome the moment of great duress.

The significance of al-Mansur's death is marked by the inclusion of an intriguing supernatural event. The *Estoria* tells us that at the time of his passing, a strange figure

²⁰¹ *EED*, E₂: 766 (98r); *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 39, pp. 270-271.

resembling a fisherman appears at the banks of the river Guadalquivir at Cordoba, lamenting the defeat of the *hagib*:

Mirabile est dictu quod ipsa die, qua in Canatanazor succubuit Almazor, quidam quasi piscator in ripa fluminis de Guadalquivir quasi plangens modo Caldayco sermone, modo Yspanico clamabat dicens: 'En Canatanazor perdio Almazor el tambor', id est, in Canatanazor perdidit Almazor timpanum siue sistrum, hoc est, leticiam suam.²⁰²

Esse dia en que Almançor fue uençudo andaua un omne en guisa de pescador por la ribera de Guadalquivir dando uozes como que llamasse e fiziesse duelo. Et dizie una uez por arauigo e otra por castellano en esta manera: 'en Cannatannaçor Almançor perdio ell atamor.' Et quiere esto dezir, segund departen los sabidores: *en Cannatannaçor perdio Almançor su alegria e su brio e la su loçania.*²⁰³

The figure then vanishes into thin air, only to rematerialise nearby and continue this apparent mourning ritual. The *Estoria* explains that this was a demonic spirit, bemoaning the defeat of the Muslims.²⁰⁴ It is a premonition, as the chronicle reads:

Era diablo que lloraua el crebanto de los moros e ell astragamiento que les uernie e ueno, e lo soffrieron dalli adelante.²⁰⁵

The legend of the grieving demon is a clear reminder of the historical significance of al-Mansur. It asserts that al-Mansur stood as the highpoint of Cordoban supremacy throughout Iberia. He held the reins of power as an authoritative ruler of *al-Andalus*, dominating the Christian kingdoms. With al-Mansur's passing, *al-Andalus* fell into a state of decline, and Islamic *señorío* progressively waned throughout subsequent centuries.

²⁰² *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 39, p. 271.

²⁰³ *EED*, E₂: 766 (98r).

²⁰⁴ This demonisation of Muslims is another instance of anti-Islamic polemic, in which the forces of evil have conspired with the Prophet Muhammad to lead souls away from the True Faith. Refer to the first part of this chapter for earlier discussions of Islam and demonic forces.

²⁰⁵ *EED*, E₂: 766 (98v). Based on *Chronicon Mundi*: 'Hunc credimus diabolum fuisse, qui Sarracenorum plangebat deiectionem' (IV, 39, p. 271).

As we have already seen, al-Mansur's successors were unable to match his assiduous government: Abd al-Malik was faced with a united front between Leon, Castile and Navarre; Abd al-Rahman Sanchuelo was a bad ruler and was assassinated in his fifth month as *hagib*. With the benefit of hindsight, thirteenth-century historiography is in a position to reflect on the dominance and prowess of al-Mansur. It could do so without fear or loathing, with the knowledge that the fortunes of Christian Iberia decidedly improved after al-Mansur's death.

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The narrative of al-Mansur, in contrast to that of the Prophet Muhammad, is markedly a respectful and idealised characterisation. Though the *Estoria* draws on four different sources for this narrative, there is a consistent display of positive character traits. Al-Mansur is the revered adversary of Christian Iberia, rather than a loathed enemy. Alfonso X was comfortable with a broadly positive portrayal of the Andalusí ruler, hoping that his readership might take example from the behaviours exhibited.

B.4 Understanding the portrayal of al-Mansur

In an attempt to make sense of the complexities of the *Estoria* portrayal of al-Mansur, let us ask ourselves the following: why should Alfonso include a more positive

portrayal of the tenth-century champion of Spanish Islam? Why did the *Estoria* and its multiplicity of sources pour no scorn whatsoever on this 'defendedor' of Islam, when compared with the contempt and hostility found in the depiction of the Prophet Muhammad? In order to answer these questions, we will reflect briefly upon thirteenth-century responses to the historical reality of Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur, and his lasting reputation. In light of the idealising tendencies across the sources, we will consider Alfonso X's own motivations for presenting his readers and listeners with a more favourable portrayal of al-Mansur.

In contrast to the case of the Prophet Muhammad, scholarship has paid very little attention to the presence of al-Mansur in the *Estoria*. As we have seen earlier in this chapter, scholars have remarked Alfonso X's use of hostile polemic against the Prophet and the teachings of Islam.²⁰⁶ Our previous analysis has shown that Alfonso X reflected the wider practice of employing demeaning and disparaging rhetoric against the faith of Islam. However, in the case of Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur, there is a very different approach to Spanish Islam. Al-Mansur, like the Prophet Muhammad, is seen to play a decisive role in the history of Spain, appearing across some fifteen chapters. However, the prism through which the Muslim leader is viewed is that of political and military affairs.²⁰⁷

As we have seen in this section, al-Mansur is characterised in a far more respectful and dignified manner. He is portrayed as commanding influence across the Peninsula, standing as the dominant power in tenth-century Iberia. Furthermore, the *Estoria* shows that he possesses enormous military resources, and exemplifies strong leadership. His subordinates strive to serve him, and his military ventures leave his enemies intimidated

²⁰⁶ Scholars included Márquez Villanueva, Salvador Martínez and Tolan. See section 3.A of this chapter.

²⁰⁷ See section 3.B.1 of the current chapter of this thesis.

and in perpetual fear of destruction. The *Estoria* also indicates that al-Mansur's achievements were unmatched by his successors, and that al-Andalus immediately fell into decline after his death. This portrayal was the product of multiple sources. Yet despite the heterogeneity of the source material, the tone is remarkably even: al-Mansur was a strong leader and military commander, and was worthy of respect.

The tone shared by these diverse sources, as captured in the *Estoria*, is evidence of al-Mansur's enduring reputation. Herein lies a major difference between the tenth-century *hagib* and the seventh-century Prophet of Islam: Ibn Abi Amir was not a distant, abstract figure, but a well-remembered and popular presence in thirteenth-century Spain. First and foremost, al-Mansur was "Spanish", and his legacy continued well into the late Middle Ages. He had left a discernible mark on Spanish history, and transcended memory on both sides of the frontier as a "lived life" two hundred and fifty years previously. It was far easier for Alfonso's readers and listeners to conceive of this important Muslim personality with an immediate stake in the recent past.

The centuries that separated the authors of the *Estoria* from the historical figure did, admittedly, constitute distance nonetheless. That is to say, Iberian chroniclers of the thirteenth-century portrayed al-Mansur with the benefit and comfort of hindsight. This is a crucial factor that helps us understand the *Estoria*'s depiction of the Andalusí *hagib*. Alfonso X, following the accounts of Lucas de Túy and Jiménez de Rada, appears 'comfortable' with al-Mansur, despite the enormous damage he had inflicted upon Iberian Christianity. In the 1230s, Lucas' *Chronicon Mundi* is able to reflect upon the reality of al-Mansur's domination of Leon and its Christian neighbours, without deriding or vilifying the strong Cordoban adversary. Instead of attacking al-Mansur, Lucas points to the sins of Vermudo II and the errors of the Christians: these were the reasons

for the ruin of the north in the tenth century. Lucas accepted that this period of intense destruction at the hands of the Muslims was a historical reality, and felt that the weakness of the Christian faith was to blame. Lucas is able to express this standpoint, with the knowledge that Christian Iberia recovered after al-Mansur's rule came to an end. Al-Mansur was not an imagined villain, but a historical reality, as the Latin historians of previous centuries had recounted.

Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada was even more comfortable with that historical past, and afforded al-Mansur a larger degree of respect in his histories. The Archbishop of Toledo presented the Andalusí ruler with a wide range of positive qualities: determination, diligence, wisdom, vigour, piety and mercy. Now, we must bear in mind that Rodrigo was a high-ranking politician, who clearly valued these qualities. Furthermore, his use of Arabic sources for the *Historia Arabum* gave him access to the more detailed accounts of al-Mansur from an Islamic viewpoint. This manifests in his own historiography, which recognises his skilful handling of power during the minority of Hisham II, and the *hagib's* widespread popular support. We can infer from the Archbishop's favourable portrayal that he was able to demonstrate respect for Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur's successful leadership and military prowess. In much the same way as Lucas, Rodrigo was not intimidated by the idea of al-Mansur's notorious destruction of Christian Iberia. At the time of writing *De Rebus Hispanie* and the *Historia Arabum*, Cordoba had already fallen, and Seville was about to be conquered: Islamic *señorío* of Spain was vanishing rapidly into the confines of history.

In the early thirteenth century, we can see evidence of a certain idealising tendency towards the figure of al-Mansur. As we have seen in chapter one of this thesis, the

notion of the gallant and noble Moor is a recurring formula in historical writing.²⁰⁸ Scholars have noted the tendency towards positive portrayals of al-Mansur elsewhere in the historical writing of Christian Iberia. Regarding the *Siete Infantes*, Deyermond recognised that al-Mansur is portrayed sympathetically, despite also suggesting that he embodies the 'ogre' motif common in medieval literature.²⁰⁹ Viguera has noted that the elevation of the enemy was often used as a literary device, in order to glorify the victory over the strong adversary. Viguera notes that the *PFG* employs this to enhance the Castilian victory over al-Mansur. Interestingly, this device is also employed on the other side of the frontier: Arabic poetry appears to elevate the figure of Garci Fernández, in order to lavish greater praise upon al-Mansur for defeating the Castilian count in 995.²¹⁰

Montgomery has also commented on the positive depiction of the Andalusí *hagib* in the *Siete Infantes*. He affirms that al-Mansur is 'a totally reasonable man', in contrast to the vengeful Christians of the poem, and that he shows generosity and love for Mudarra González.²¹¹ Furthermore, the poem overlooks that many devastating campaigns waged upon the Christians – this would have formed the backdrop to Mudarra's childhood. Montgomery sees this as an early example of idealisation of the Moor, akin to the later *maurophilia* of the sixteenth century.²¹² More recently, Bariani has considered the way in which Christian historians responded to al-Mansur. She asserted that later chroniclers treated the Andalusí ruler with a degree of chivalric esteem. This, she claims, was similar to the way in which Christians treated Saladin as a noble and virtuous opponent

²⁰⁸ See sections 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

²⁰⁹ 'Folk-motifs in the medieval Spanish epic', *Philological Quarterly*, 51(1) (1972), 36-53 (p. 48). Deyermond suggests that al-Mamun also takes on the 'ogre' motif, in the case of the exile of Alfonso VI in the eleventh century. See section 3.C.4 of the current chapter of this thesis.

²¹⁰ M. J. Viguera, 'Versos al triunfo sobre el conde Garci-Fernández', *Al-Andalus*, 43 (1978), 467-473.

²¹¹ Montgomery, 'Probing the background of the leyenda de los Siete Infantes', p. 885.

²¹² Montgomery, 'Probing the background of the leyenda de los Siete Infantes', p. 885.

in Crusade historiography.²¹³ Bariani also points to the literary value of honouring al-Mansur, so that the Christian victory over him appeared all the more triumphant.²¹⁴

These observations certainly help us make sense of earlier depictions of al-Mansur in Latin and Romance historiographical writing. But was Alfonso's own interest in reproducing these ideas simply one of 'scissor and paste', in Procter's words?²¹⁵ It is worth considering how and why a positive depiction of al-Mansur was appropriate in the *Estoria de España*, in the context of Alfonso X and those who continued his historiographical project. With regards to the readership, the representation of a strong, virtuous, chivalric figure was extremely useful. The king and his chroniclers desired a strong and cohesive nobility, and a professional military class that would rally around their king. By presenting this composite narrative of al-Mansur in the *Estoria*, its readers and listeners – the political and military elites of Castilian-Leonese society – were presented with a firm example of chivalry, leadership and the need for Christian unity.

Furthermore, Alfonso draws on the moral example of al-Mansur from epic tradition. By including sections of the *PFG*, the *Estoria* allows readers to celebrate the emergence of Castile, in the face of adversity. This takes the form of an immense struggle against a valiant Muslim enemy. At the same time, the *Estoria* looks beyond that enmity with *al-Andalus*, by presenting the co-operation and political dealings between al-Mansur and the Castilians, in the legend of the *Siete Infantes*. This further expounds the reputation of the famed *hagib*, and provides greater depth to his character, as a model of leadership and military prowess. Like Lucas and Rodrigo, Alfonso X was comfortable highlighting

²¹³ See, for example: M. J. Aisles, 'The admirable enemy? Saladin and Saphadin in Ambroise's *Estoire de la guerre sainte*', in *Knighthoods of Christ: Essays on the history of the crusades and the Knights Templar, presented to Malcolm Barber*, ed. by N. Housely (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007) pp. 51-64; A. M. Eddé, *Saladin*. Trans. by J. M. Todd (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), ch. 26 (pp. 478-485).

²¹⁴ Bariani, *Almanzor*, p. 229.

²¹⁵ See section 3.0 of the current chapter of this thesis for the context of this comment.

the virtues and qualities of al-Mansur to his readership. A positive depiction was entirely complementary to his wider political objectives of internal stability, political cohesion and Castilianisation of his dominions.

* * *

The *Estoria* narrative of Ibn Abi Amir al-Mansur is, as we have seen, a nuanced portrayal of the Muslim adversary. Though Islam continues to stand as a major opponent of Christian claims to the Peninsula, al-Mansur is treated with dignity, respect and admiration. This depiction is a product of the *hagib's* enduring reputation, on both sides of the frontier. His reputation was captured in Latin chronicles and epic poetry, with each of these traditions demonstrating similar attitudes towards the Muslim leader. These portrayals were subject to the process of idealisation. By the thirteenth century, readers were presented with a strong and powerful leader. The Andalusí ruler displayed many virtues, and commanded respect from Christians and Muslims alike. For Alfonso X, al-Mansur played a valuable role in the recent history of Castile-Leon, and he was to be celebrated as a worthy adversary.

After the ravages that al-Mansur unleashed upon Christian Iberia, the northern kingdoms witnessed a dramatic upwards trajectory in their fortunes. The Amirid dynasty was short-lived, and barely seven years after al-Mansur's death, *al-Andalus* was shaken at its core by political upheaval. As we shall see in the last part of this chapter,

the caliphate rapidly fractured into a number of petty kingdoms, presenting new financial and strategic opportunities for Christian Iberia. It is during this transition period for Spanish Islam that we see the emergence of military co-operation and mutual protection pacts between Christian and Muslim rulers. We shall now turn our sights to the portrayal of one such relationship: the alliance between Alfonso VI of Leon and al-Mamun of Toledo. The *Estoria* presents us with a very different portrayal of Christian-Muslim relations, in a remarkable narrative of friendship and love across the frontier.

C. AL-MAMUN OF TOLEDO

The final case study of interest examines the *Estoria* portrayal of Yahya al-Mamun ibn Dhi-l-Nun, the eleventh-century King of Toledo. Al-Mamun features across a wide section of the *Estoria* narrative, and he stands as a significant protagonist during the reign of Alfonso VI of Leon. The Christian Kingdom of Leon and the Muslim Kingdom of Toledo were close allies for a period during the late eleventh century, and this is reflected in the positive depiction of King al-Mamun in the *Estoria*. He is treated with dignity and respect, exhibiting great loyalty towards Alfonso VI.

This section will explore the historical context of the eleventh century – a period during which strategic alliances between Christians and Muslims were particularly frequent. Following this, the key historiographical and political factors behind the composition of the narrative will be examined. The source-critical and redaction-critical approach will be applied to this narrative, just as in the two previous cases. Last, the value of the narrative will be shown to relate to the social and political realities of the world of the thirteenth-century reader, in which alliances between Christians and Muslims were not uncommon.

C.1 Christian-Muslim co-operation and strategic alliances in the eleventh-century

Our third and final case looks at the portrayal of an eleventh-century Muslim king and his relationship with Alfonso VI. This narrative is distinct from the two previous cases we have explored in this chapter. Where the narratives of Muhammad and al-Mansur bear the marks of opposition and conflict between Christianity and Islam, the portrayal of al-Mamun is founded on co-operation and friendship. In order to understand this narrative, we must consider the historical context of the eleventh century. This was a period in which strategic alliances and protection pacts were common between Christian and Muslim kings. This reality was reflected in the historical record, acknowledging that Muslims had been close allies and protected clients, in spite of the traditional rivalry at the frontier.

As we have already seen in chapter one, there were many different forms of co-operation between Christian and Muslim kingdoms. Trade and commerce across the frontier was a significant part of the economy of medieval Iberia. In spite of the frequent hostilities among kingdoms, trade was vitally important for local economies, and for the supply of luxury goods in elite society. Furthermore, history is peppered with instances of military co-operation between Christians and Muslims. This chapter has already highlighted the service that Christian nobles rendered to al-Mansur during the tenth century. Strategic alliances appear right across the record, from the early centuries of Umayyad rule, right up to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.²¹⁶

The eleventh century in particular witnessed a proliferation of political and military alliances between Christians and Muslims. The particularities of the century saw the emergence of many peace treaties and mutual protection pacts across the frontier. This was a period of intense political instability in *al-Andalus*, and this significantly altered relations between North and South. There was a significant increase in the supply of Christian mercenaries to central and southern regions, in addition to the widespread use of mutual protection pacts between Christian and Muslim kings. Viewed in hindsight, the eleventh century came to represent a turning point in the history of medieval Iberia, as power shifted from South to North, redefining the political landscape of the Peninsula.

As we saw earlier in this chapter, the Caliphate of Cordoba was in a state of crisis in the late tenth century.²¹⁷ The institution had become anaemic under Hisham II, and the deathblow came finally in 1009. After the turmoil created by the assassination of Abd al-Rahman Sanchuelo, a military coup was staged against the ruling Umayyads. The

²¹⁶ See chapter 1 for discussion of trading relations and strategic alliances in early and late medieval Iberia.

²¹⁷ My previous case study on al-Mansur indicates the historical context of political crisis and the weakening of the caliphal institution in 976.

coup was incited by a Berber faction led by Sulayman al-Mustain, and was supported by Castilian mercenaries supplied by Count Sancho García.²¹⁸ In return for his support, the count demanded vast sums of gold from the Berbers, in addition to over two hundred fortresses along the Duero Valley.²¹⁹ The overthrow of central authority in Cordoba was met with renewed efforts by the Umayyads to counter the Berbers. The following year, the Umayyads enlisted the support of Catalan troops in a bid to take back control of the capital. The Catalans, like the Castilians, charged a high price for their services. Although the campaign failed, the Catalans continued to support Umayyad campaigns against the Berbers in 1013, 1017 and 1024.²²⁰ *Al-Andalus* had begun to fracture uncontrollably; any chance of a return to unity and stability quickly faded.

As the caliphate slowly disintegrated, a multitude of splinter kingdoms – known as *taifas* –²²¹ formed throughout Islamic Iberia. Over the course of the century, some thirty *taifas* came and went.²²² These Islamic polities competed for territory, forming an uneven mosaic of stronger and weaker kingdoms. Some were effectively city states; other urban centres saw their influence extend over large regions of *al-Andalus*, acquiring vast territories and sometimes absorbing smaller *taifas*. Amongst the largest and most powerful *taifa* kingdoms to emerge were Seville, Granada, Badajoz, Toledo and Zaragoza.

When the caliphal superstructure dissolved, the *taifa* kings found themselves with limited military resources to defend themselves. Whilst militarism had long been

²¹⁸ The ensuing *fitna* (civil war) that emerged after the turmoil of 1009 has been explored in detail by Peter Scales.

See: *The fall of the Caliphate of Cordoba: Berbers and Andalusis in conflict* (Leiden and New York: Brill, 1994).

²¹⁹ For the transfer of frontier outposts to Castile see: P. Scales, 'The handing over of the Duero fortresses: 1009-1011 A.D. (399-401 A.H.)', *Al-Qantara*, 5(1) (1984), 109-122.

²²⁰ T. Bruce, 'An intercultural dialogue between the Muslim Taifa of Denia and the Christian county of Barcelona in the eleventh century', *Medieval Encounters*, 15 (2009), 1-34 (pp. 4-9).

²²¹ The term in Arabic means 'party', 'section' or 'faction'. The term was accordingly used to describe the entities that broke away from the caliphate.

²²² David Wasserstein's comprehensive study of the period includes a comprehensive list of dates and rulers for the mosaic *taifa* states: *The rise and fall of the party kings: politics and society in Islamic Spain 1002-1086* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) pp. 83-98.

entrenched in the frontier society of Christian Iberia, military structures in *al-Andalus* were considerably more fluid. The caliphate had relied heavily on troop purchases – particularly of foreign contingents of Berbers and Slavs – unlike the self-sufficient military societies of the north.²²³ Consequently, many *taifa* kingdoms were forced to rely on Christian mercenaries for survival. This vulnerability was recognised by the Christians, and was systematically exploited. By the middle of the century, the northern kingdoms had begun demanding large quantities of gold and luxuries – termed as *parias* – from neighbouring *taifas*. They were initially the fees for providing mercenary support, but were increasingly demanded as the price of peace. Christian kings competed for clients, offering alliances to the *taifa* kings under the pretext of mutual protection. It effectively became an elaborate system of extortion, even accompanied by military aggression in the case of Fernando I.²²⁴

A number of documents from the period provide us with direct evidence of this curious climate. Two peace treaties from 1069 and 1073 have survived, detailing the mutual protection pact between al-Muqtadir of Zaragoza and Sancho IV of Pamplona. These first-hand sources point to Sancho's exclusive offer of protection and the considerable price demanded of al-Muqtadir.²²⁵ The Catalan *Liber Feodorum* is a principal reference to the *paria* payments received by Christian rulers. The financial

²²³ Lourie, 'A society organised for war', pp. 54-56.

²²⁴ Scholars have generally come to the conclusion that the *paria* system contained a substantial element of coercion. See: Mackay, *Spain in the Middle Ages*, pp. 15-21; J. M. Lacarra, 'Algunos aspectos económicos de la sumisión de los reinos de taifas (1010-1102)', in *Colonización, parias, repoblación y otros estudios* (Zaragoza: Anubar Ediciones, 1981) pp. 43-76; Bruce, 'Intercultural dialogue', p. 6. For details of Fernando I's aggressive pursuit of Muslim gold see: F. Mateu y Llopis, 'Oro toledano y andaluz en el reino de Fernando I de León y Castilla (1037-1065) releiendo el Monachi Silensis Chronicon', in *Estudios en homenaje a don Claudio Sánchez Albornoz en sus 90 años* (Madrid: Instituto de España, 1983) pp. 215-226.

²²⁵ J. M. Lacarra, 'Dos tratados de paz y alianza entre Sancho el de Peñalén y Moctadir de Zaragoza (1069 y 1073)', in *Colonización, parias, repoblación y otros estudios*, pp. 77-96.

records indicate the payments received by the Catalan counts, sent by the Muslim rulers of neighbouring Zaragoza, Tortosa and Lerida.²²⁶

Scholars have also retrieved correspondence between Ali Iqbal al-Dawla of Denia and Count Ramon Berenguer I of Barcelona. The documents point to a relationship of commercial co-operation, in which Denia and Barcelona focused on developing a strategic alliance to support their maritime trade interests.²²⁷ Perhaps the best evidence of the dynamic of power in eleventh-century Iberia comes from the *Memoirs* of Abd Allah Ibn Buluggin al-Muzaffar of Granada. The writings reflect upon his time as ruler of Granada between 1073 and 1090, and point to the coercion tactics used by Alfonso VI to exact tribute. Abd Allah wrote that the Christian king intimidated him into paying the annual tribute of 10,000 dinars per year: paying up appeared to be the only means to guarantee immunity from attack.²²⁸

These documents provide us with an idea of the much wider context of co-operation and strategic alliance among Christian and Muslims kings in eleventh-century Iberia. Historians of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, meanwhile, captured many other details, focusing on specific regions, dynasties and actors of that century. Andalusí writers such as Ibn Hazm and Ibn Hayyan tried to make sense of the civil war that had unfolded all around them, destroying the unity of Spanish Islam.²²⁹ The *Crónica Anónima de los Reyes de Taifas* provided a fragmented chronology of the numerous dynasties that came and went throughout al-Andalus.²³⁰ Of particular importance for Christian-Muslim co-operation was Ibn al-Qama's *Historia de Valencia*. The narrative

²²⁶ See Lacarra, 'Algunos aspectos económicos', pp. 52-58.

²²⁷ See: Bruce, 'Intercultural dialogue', pp. 23-33.

²²⁸ Abd Allah Ibn Buluggin, *Memoirs*, in E. Lévi-Provençal, 'Les "mémoires" de Abd Allah, dernier roi ziride de Grenade', *Al-Andalus*, 4 (1936-1939), 35-36. In A. MacKay, *From frontier to empire, 1000-1500* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1977), p. 18.

²²⁹ Scales, *The fall of the caliphate*, pp. 209-213.

²³⁰ *Crónica anónima de los reyes de Taifas*. Edited and translated by F. M. Salgado, Serie Historia Medieval, 149 (Madrid: Ediciones Akal, 1991).

attests to the alliance between Alfonso VI and Yahya al-Qadir, in which the King of Leon-Castile installed al-Qadir into power in Valencia.²³¹

Christian historiography focused heavily on military affairs and the expansion of Castilian-Leonese influence throughout Muslim Spain. The *Historia Roderici* provided a detailed biography of the famed mercenary Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, otherwise known as El Cid. This was an important testimony to the role of Christian mercenaries and adventurers in *al-Andalus*, and the expansionist ambition that drove them across the frontier.²³² The *Historia Silense* and the *Crónica Najerense* recount the campaigns by Fernando I into the Taifa of Badajoz, in which he annexed Viseu, Lamego and Coimbra.²³³ These histories pointed to the progressive subjugation of neighbouring Muslim territories by Castile and Leon, and the increasing power wielded by the Christian kings. Of great historical significance to Latin chroniclers was the conquest of Toledo in 1085 by Alfonso VI.²³⁴ This stood as a highly symbolic victory for Christian Iberia and left a visible imprint on historiographical tradition. As we shall see in this final case study, the dealings of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun of Toledo caught the attention of thirteenth-century historians. The close relationship between the two kings appeared significant to later chroniclers: they highlighted the value of their alliance and the mutual benefits that this produced. It is precisely this that drives the positive characterisation of al-Mamun in the *Estoria*, as we shall see in this final case study.

²³¹ See: A. Huici Miranda, *Historia musulmana de Valencia y su region: novedades y rectificaciones*. Vol. 1 (Valencia: Ayuntamiento de Valencia, 1969), p. 13.

²³² For the Cid's service to the King of Zaragoza, see section 1.6 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

²³³ *Historia silense*, 85-87, pp. 188-191; *Crónica Najerense*, III, 21-22, pp. 97-100.

²³⁴ For historical discussion of the conquest of Toledo, see: B. Reilly, *The kingdom of León-Castilla under king Alfonso VI, 1065-1109* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 161-171; J. M. Mínguez, *Alfonso VI: poder, expansión y reorganización territorial*, Serie Media, 11 (Hondarribia: Nerea, 2000), pp. 99-107.

C.2 *The significance of al-Mamun in the Estoria*

In contrast to the Prophet Muhammad and al-Mansur, al-Mamun was a rather more obscure figure in history. The King of Toledo was one among many other *taifa* rulers, at a time when *al-Andalus* had fragmented into two-dozen splinter kingdoms. However, al-Mamun features across many chapters of the *Estoria*, with significant attention paid to him. In order to explain the significance of this figure in Alfonso X's history, we will consider the question from two key perspectives. First, we will consider how the historiographical tradition of Castile-Leon helped to determine al-Mamun's presence in the *Estoria*. Second, the broader social relevance of *amor* and strategic relations between Christian and Muslim lords will help shed light on the relevance of al-Mamun in the *Estoria*.

As outlined at the start of this case, during the eleventh century, *al-Andalus* had fractured into a complex mosaic of splinter kingdoms. Many Christian kings developed pacts with the *taifa* kings, offering protections and alliances in return for *parias*. A number of *taifa* kings are mentioned in the *Estoria*, however it is al-Mamun who received the most attention in the late eleventh century, across ten chapters.²³⁵ Specifically, chroniclers were interested in the relationship between al-Mamun and Alfonso VI of Leon. The lineage of the kings of Leon and Castile being the principal structure for the *Estoria*, chroniclers judged al-Mamun's involvement in Castilian-Leonese affairs to be relevant. As such, al-Mamun was of far greater interest than many

²³⁵ *Taifa* kings of Zaragoza (al-Muzaffar and Suleyman Ibn Hud, both anachronistically identified in the adventures of the Cid), Seville (al-Mutamid) and Granada (Abd Allah Ibn Buluggin al-Muzaffar) feature alongside al-Mamun in this section of the *Estoria*. However, these rulers do not receive the same degree of attention and characterisation as the King of Toledo.

other *taifa* kings at this time, the majority of whom were entirely anonymous in the *Estoria*.

For the depiction of this Muslim king, the writers of the *Estoria* selected and arranged content from earlier histories – just as they did for the narratives of the Prophet Muhammad and al-Mansur. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century chroniclers had paid particular attention to al-Mamun of Toledo, as the Muslim ruler had been influential during the early reign of Alfonso VI. Following the death of Fernando I, the Kingdom of Castile-Leon had been divided among his three sons: Sancho (who received Castile), Alfonso (who inherited Leon) and García (given to rule Galicia). Infighting ensued, with Sancho emerging as the victor, eliminating his brothers from their kingdoms. According the *Historia Silense*, and later in the *Crónica Najerense*, Alfonso fled into exile in Toledo, living in the court of al-Mamun. The chronicles assert that after the assassination of Sancho, Alfonso of Leon returned to power, inheriting Castile and Galicia and reunifying his father's kingdom.²³⁶

Lucas de Túy and Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada built upon this tradition, adding greater detail surrounding Alfonso's period of exile with al-Mamun. Furthermore, Lucas included an episode in which Alfonso provided military support to al-Mamun, who was engaged in warfare with neighbouring Cordoba. Jiménez de Rada also incorporated this episode into his history, based upon Lucas' earlier initiative. Both historians presented Alfonso's assistance as a return favour to al-Mamun, echoing the protection that the Leonese king had received during his exile in Toledo. In both histories, the relationship between the two kings was built upon a mutual protection pact of non-aggression, faithfully upheld by both parties. The *Chronicon Mundi* and *De Rebus Hispanie* also

²³⁶ *Historia silense*, 12-13, pp. 122-125; *Crónica Najerense*, III, 39-48, pp. 113-116.

recount the conquest of Toledo, as a significant event during Alfonso's reign. Lucas and Rodrigo sought to explain this as a function of both prophecy and Divine Will, closely related to Alfonso's time living in Toledo during his exile.²³⁷ The *Estoria* chroniclers considered these elements as relevant to Alfonso X's new history, helping to recount the chronology of the kings of Leon and Castile in as much detail as possible.

Alongside this, we can also discern the broader social relevance of the favourable portrayal of al-Mamun's friendship with Alfonso VI. The narrative is centred on the strong bond that ties the Muslim and Christian kings into a productive alliance. A close analysis of the text reveals that it is a relationship founded on trust, loyalty and *amor*. As Antonella Luizzo Scorpo's monograph on this topic has shown, there was no clear distinction between the concepts of 'love' and 'friendship' in the emerging vernacular historiographical traditions of late medieval Europe. In medieval Castilian, *amistad* indicated a wide range of relationships built on the foundational bond of love (*amor*), including spiritual love, ties of kinship, companionship, alliances, mutual protection pacts and brotherhood. The terms *amigo* and *amiga* could be used unproblematically to designate a male and female in a sexual relationship.²³⁸ The terminology of love and friendship converged, as Scorpo termed it, into 'the same, at least semantic, melting pot'.²³⁹

Elsewhere in his writings, Alfonso X reveals his concern for the importance of friendship and *amor* in the political context. The *Partidas* outline a broad political philosophy indicating that *amor* is the social fabric of the kingdom, uniting man and

²³⁷ We will explore each of these episodes in greater detail over the course of this case study.

²³⁸ A. L. Scorpo, *Friendship in medieval Iberia: historical, legal and literary perspectives* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 26-28.

²³⁹ Scorpo, *Friendship in medieval Iberia*, p. 191.

God, as well as bringing individuals together to form a cohesive society.²⁴⁰ The strength and integrity of the kingdom was predicated upon the cohesion of its component parts: cohesion within the aristocracy and the nobility was vital for political stability.²⁴¹ These were the very individuals who formed the readership of the *Estoria*. A narrative presenting *amor* was therefore entirely practical for Alfonso X to include in his history, exemplifying his own philosophy of government as laid out in his legal code.

Furthermore, the portrayal of *amor* between Alfonso VI and al-Mamun can be viewed in light of Christian-Muslim relations in the thirteenth century. The king's role was not only the administration of those entities within the realm, but also the management of relations with foreign kingdoms. Kings could find themselves over-extended if they waged war on too many fronts. In addition to this, struggles with neighbouring Christian rivals and with a king's own nobility were a constant risk. It was therefore inevitable that a Christian king might need to seek cordial relations, or even an alliance, with kings in neighbouring Granada and North Africa. This did not only apply to the monarch, but to magnates and frontier lords too: effective relationships and oaths of fidelity with Muslim vassals and foreign counterparts would have been a necessity. The narrative of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun was therefore an example of how a productive strategic alliance with a Muslim could be achieved, based on steadfast friendship and *amor*. It was a fully relevant episode of the Spanish past, and was instructive for its readership in the present.

²⁴⁰ Whilst the first *Partida* outlines the importance of loving God, the second *Partida* outlines the role of *amor* in regulating interactions between all members of society. *Partida* 2.1.3 (vol. 2, p. 6) states that love is the greatest power possessed by emperors. In a similar vein, the king is referred to as the 'heart' of the realm (*Partida* 2.1.5, vol. 2, p. 7) and must strive to be loved by his people (*Partida* 2.5.18, vol. 2, p. 38). Crucially, *Partida* 2.12.6 (vol. 2, p. 98) proclaims that all men must love their neighbours through their love of God.

²⁴¹ See: M. I. Pérez de Tudela y Velasco, 'Ideario político y orden social en las Partidas de Alfonso X', *En la España Medieval*, 14 (1991), 183-200; C. Heusch, 'Les fondements juridiques de l'amitié à travers les Partidas d'Alphonse X et le droit médiéval', *Cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale*, 18-19 (1993), 5-84.

C.3 *The Estoria de España narrative of al-Mamun*

Across a wide range of chapters, the *Estoria* presents al-Mamun as a close ally and trusted friend of Alfonso VI. The compilers tell of al-Mamun's guardianship of Alfonso whilst he is in exile, their on-going alliance after Alfonso is restored to power, and the high esteem that the two kings hold for one another. Across the narrative, the notions of *amor* and loyalty are embedded in the characterisation of the Muslim king. By combining the accounts of Lucas de Túy and Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, the *Estoria* shows how this strong alliance held fast, until Alfonso found himself released from his obligations to al-Mamun and moved to conquer the city of Toledo.

The *Estoria* presents the *taifa* king as a dignified and honourable character. Chroniclers are comfortable with the historical reality of a strategic alliance between Leon and Toledo in the late eleventh century, out of which they develop a narrative of loyalty and mutual friendship. According to the compilers of the *Estoria*, al-Mamun's devotion to Alfonso VI was worthy of note, and this was duly included in Alfonso X's history of Spain. Three sections of the narrative will be explored in detail: first, al-Mamun's protection of Alfonso VI during his period of exile; second, the continuing co-operation between the kings after Alfonso's return to power; third, the contrasting portrayal of al-Mamun's successor al-Qadir, and the conclusion of the non-aggression pact.

C.3.1 Alfonso VI in exile at the court of al-Mamun

Al-Mamun holds a crucial role in the *Estoria*, as the guardian and protector of Alfonso VI of Leon. This curious situation arises out of the struggles between Alfonso and his brother Sancho II of Castile. Alfonso is forced into exile, retreating south and taking up residence in the Kingdom of Toledo. The *Estoria* portrays al-Mamun as a gracious host and a doting protector of the Christian king. It is in this context that the *Estoria* presents the emerging bond of love and trust between the two kings.

After Alfonso is ejected from his kingdom, Sancho permits him to live a quiet and confined existence at the monastery of San Fagund. Then, with the help of Count Pedro Ansúrez, Alfonso audaciously escapes from the monastery and flees across the frontier into the Kingdom of Toledo. Upon arrival Alfonso is treated with great esteem and honour. The *Estoria* paints the following picture of the escape, and the warm reception from al-Mamun:

Ouo don Alffonso su conseio con don Per Assurez, e el conseio fue aqueste: que se salio de noche de la mongia a furto, e fuesse para Toledo a Almemon rey de los moros. El moro plogol mucho con don Alffonso e recibiol muy onrrada mientre, e diol muchos de sus dones e quanto al ouo mester. Et uisco don Alffonso con esse rey Almemon fasta que el rey don Sancho fue muerto.²⁴²

The *Estoria* chroniclers are translating Jiménez de Rada's *De Rebus Hispanie* for this part of the narrative. At the outset, this shows very clearly that Alfonso VI was an esteemed guest at the court of al-Mamun.

Furthermore, Jiménez de Rada offers an extremely important dynamic to the relationship between exile and protector, which is also incorporated into the *Estoria*:

²⁴² *EED*, E₂: 838 (147v).

Et Almimum in eo²⁴³ gracias tot inuenit, quod eum quasi filium diligebat.²⁴⁴

Almemon rey de Toledo pagosse tanto del rey don Alfonso quel amo como si fuesse su fiyo, e diol muy grandes aueres e fizol mucha onrra.²⁴⁵

Here the narrative conveys the profound notion of paternal love of al-Mamun towards Alfonso VI, indicating that the *taifa* king loved Alfonso as if he were his own son. For the history to depict al-Mamun's treatment of Alfonso in this way suggests this was a relationship of great value and enduring loyalty. This is a vital notion around which the *Estoria* maintains the narrative of al-Mamun and the King of Leon. Later in the narrative, Alfonso VI even utters the same formula of paternal love when acknowledging al-Mamun's graciousness and protection.²⁴⁶

Following Alfonso's arrival in Toledo, both kings swear a pact of mutual protection.

The *Estoria* again incorporates details from Jiménez de Rada:

Don Alfonso iuro [a Almemon] e fizol pleyto que siempre le onrasse yl guardasse mientras que con el fuesse. Et cuenta la estoria que este pleyto fizo don Alfonso al rey Almemon, e este mjsmo dize otrossi que fizo Almemon a don Alfonso. Et assi se yuraron e se abinieron amos.²⁴⁷

This oath binds the two kings together securing their relationship and ensuring that their co-operation is mutually beneficial.

The *Estoria* develops the favourable depiction of al-Mamun, indicating his gracious treatment of the exiled Leonese king. The narrative indicates the luxurious and privileged living arrangements made for Alfonso VI:

Et desy fizo luego a don Alfonso aquel rey Almemon grandes palacios e buenos a cerca dell alcaçar fuera del muro, por quell non fiziesse ninguno de la çibdat pesar a

²⁴³ This pronoun refers to Alfonso VI (Aldefonso).

²⁴⁴ *DRH*, VI, XV, pp. 196.

²⁴⁵ *EED*, E₂: 838 (147v).

²⁴⁶ See section C.3.2 of the current chapter of this thesis.

²⁴⁷ *EED*, E₂: 838 (147v), taken from *DRH*, VI, XV, p. 196.

el, nin a njnguno de su companna. Et esto era a cerca de una su huerta, a que saliesse don Alfonso con sus caualleros e su companna a solazarse quando quisiesse.²⁴⁸

The detail strengthens the impression of al-Mamun as a caring and attentive host. Alfonso VI is treated with esteem and respect: he is provided with the finest lodgings, away from the hustle and bustle of Toledo, along with exclusive rights to al-Mamun's hunting grounds. The *taifa* king ensures that his guest can enjoy a dignified, kingly lifestyle throughout his residence in Toledo.

In spite of the oath of protection and the great honour bestowed upon Alfonso, a degree of tension pervades the relationship. This is an inevitable product of Alfonso VI's residence in the *taifa* kingdom: he is a guest, but nonetheless he is a Christian king, and thus a potential challenger to Muslim rule of Toledo. The tension manifests itself in a number of occurrences across the narrative, with each pointing to the potential conquest of Toledo. Both kings, the narrative suggests, realise the high stakes. On the one hand, Alfonso quietly longs to see the ancient Visigothic capital return to Christian rule.²⁴⁹ Meanwhile, al-Mamun consults his advisors to discuss the potential fall of Toledo. Alfonso overhears the conversation, and learns that a seven-year siege would deprive the townsfolk of sustenance, and upon the eighth year the city would be forced to capitulate.²⁵⁰ There are also a series of premonitions that foretell of Alfonso's future annexation of Toledo. As recounted in the *Chronicon Mundi*, Alfonso rides out beside al-Mamun during an Islamic feast day.²⁵¹ When Alfonso appears beside al-Mamun, the former's hair stands on end, and cannot be tamed.²⁵² The *Estoria* adds further

²⁴⁸ *EED*, E₂: 838 (147v-148r), based on *DRH*, VI, XV, p. 196.

²⁴⁹ *EED*, E₂: 838 (148r).

²⁵⁰ *EED*, E₂: 839 (148r-148v).

²⁵¹ *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 64, pp. 298. The festival is referred to as 'magno festo barbarorum'.

²⁵² *EED*, E₂: 839 (148v).

embellishments, recounting that two anonymous Muslims admire Alfonso VI and predict his coming lordship of Toledo.²⁵³

At this stage in the narrative, al-Mamun is fully aware that his guest will one day capture Toledo, and is faced with a major decision. Muslim advisors urge him that the only option is to assassinate Alfonso. Instead al-Mamun refuses their counsel:

Los moros sabios quando esto oyeron, entendieron segund las sennales d'aquellos auenimientos que este don Alffonso auie a seer sennor de Toledo, e conseiaronle [a Almemon] quel matase. Estonces el rey Almemon dixo que en la su fe e en la su lealtat uiuie ell alli, e que lo non farie, mas que se seruirie dell en guisa quel non uiniesse ende danno. Et de mas quel non querie crebantar la yura que auie fecha, lo uno por quel *amaua muy de coraçon*, lo al por quel auie fecho muy grand serujcio en batallas que fiziera contra sus enemigos, e los uenciera yl defendie el regno.²⁵⁴

The reasons al-Mamun gives for refusing to stop Alfonso VI in his tracks are particularly revealing. On the one hand the Toledan king considers it to be of his own benefit to have Alfonso as an ally. Here the chronicle is clearly pre-empting Alfonso's return to power and the advantage that the *taifa* kingdom gains from being allied to the Kingdom of Leon. In due course, the decision to keep Alfonso alive bears fruit and the Muslim king's loyalty is indeed vindicated. On a second level, al-Mamun refuses to assassinate Alfonso out of principle. Here the chroniclers return to the question of the oath of mutual protection. The *Estoria* narrative cannot be clearer in its esteem for the integrity and observance of a verbal contract. In line with the *Chronicon Mundi* and *De Rebus*, the Muslim king upholds his promise to protect the exiled King of Leon.²⁵⁵ The third and most profound aspect relates to the notion of 'amor'. The *Estoria* chroniclers reassert that al-Mamun loves Alfonso 'de coraçon'. This is an expanded interpretation of the source material from Lucas and Jiménez de Rada, building greater depth into the

²⁵³ *EED*, E₂: 839 (148v).

²⁵⁴ *EED*, E₂: 839 (149r).

²⁵⁵ *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 64, p. 299; *DRH*, VI, XVI, p. 197.

account of al-Mamun and Alfonso. *Amor* is the strength behind their loyal relationship, and influences the *taifa* king against his advisors, ensuring that his captive will eventually fulfil his divine duty.

In order to underpin their mutual protection pact – no doubt as an attempt to mitigate the conquest of Toledo in the near future – al-Mamun and Alfonso renew their oath of protection. The *Estoria* follows Lucas de Túy's account in which the kings swear a new agreement of non-aggression and protection from other hostile kingdoms.²⁵⁶ This pact is designed to also protect al-Mamun's sons and heirs into the future, in order to diffuse the possibility of conquest under Alfonso VI. Following Lucas de Túy's account, the oath strengthened the relationship further:

Et hoc factus est Adefonsus Almemone regi familiarior et ipsum tenerrime diligebat. ²⁵⁷	Et d'aquella ora adelante fue el rey don Alfonso mas su priuado del rey Almemon, e mas su amigo. ²⁵⁸
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The *Estoria* develops the importance of this second mutual protection pact, indicating the enduring nature of the friendly relations between Toledo and Leon. A coherent narrative is established in the vernacular history, as the specific parameters of the agreement read consistently over the course of the chapters. At this point in the narrative, the second *postura* provides guarantees of non-aggression to al-Mamun and his second-generation successors (i.e. his sons). Implicitly, his third-generation successors do not enjoy protection from hostility. This is the clinch point, which later justifies Alfonso's annexation of Toledo much later into the narrative. The *Estoria* identifies this early on in the narrative, and thereby upholds the concept of sincere

²⁵⁶ *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 64, p. 299; *EED*, E₂: 839 (149r).

²⁵⁷ *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 64, p. 299.

²⁵⁸ *EED*, E₂: 839 (149r).

friendship and *amor*, despite the obvious conflict of Alfonso's eventual conquest of Toledo.

Alfonso's period in exile comes to an end with an important test of friendship. Upon the death of Sancho II, Alfonso VI has the opportunity to return to the north and claim the vacant thrones. In doing so he would become considerably powerful as the lord of Leon and Castile. This leaves al-Mamun with two options. The first is to keep Alfonso under his guardianship; the second option would be to allow him a safe passage north and allow Alfonso to become even more powerful than previously. The question is the ability to trust that Alfonso will remain a close ally and protect the interests of the Kingdom of Toledo.

Lucas de Túy and Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada treat this matter in different ways, using different traditions. According to the *Chronicon Mundi*, Pedro Ansúrez intercepts the message of Sancho's death before it can reach al-Mamun. When Alfonso finds out he keeps this detail to himself, but tells the *taifa* king that he wants to return to Leon with Toledan military support. Al-Mamun – at this point unaware of Sancho's death – refuses to let him go on the grounds that Alfonso may come to harm, something the Muslim king had sworn he would not allow to happen. This appears to be a moment in which al-Mamun proves his integrity, for Alfonso responds by revealing the truth of his brother's death as his motivation to leave. Knowing that al-Mamun is true to his word, Alfonso is satisfied that he can trust his loyal host with the sensitive information surrounding the vacant kingdoms of Leon and Castile. Nonetheless, the Muslim king remains wary, concerned that Alfonso may still come to harm if the news of Sancho's death is inaccurate. Careful not to break the oath of protection, al-Mamun continually rebuffs Alfonso's requests to leave. The Muslim king becomes weary and growls at Alfonso,

telling him to 'go away'.²⁵⁹ Alfonso takes the command to go away as grounds to leave the *taifa* kingdom, scaling the palace walls and escaping under the cover of darkness. The following morning al-Mamun sends troops to seize Alfonso and bring him back to the confines of Toledo; Alfonso yet proves elusive and reaches Leon successfully. This version of events appears more circumspect of al-Mamun's intentions, indicating that in spite of their good relations, Alfonso was practically being kept a prisoner in Toledo.

Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada follows a different tradition to narrate Alfonso VI's return from exile. The Archbishop offers a much more cordial resolution than Lucas' version. Whilst the knowledge of Sancho's death is once again treated as highly sensitive, Alfonso decides that he owes al-Mamun complete honesty.²⁶⁰ Whilst Alfonso's envoy fears for the exiled king's safety, Alfonso reasons with his entourage, placing his faith in God and in the paternalistic *amor* of al-Mamun. *De Rebus Hispanie* and the *Estoria* read as follows:

Et dum ipsi tali dubio tenerentur, rex Aldefonsus confidens in Domino sic respondit: 'Honorifice me receipt et necessaria liberaliter ministravit et *ut filium me tractavit*; quomodo eum celare potero que dominus michi fecit?' Et accedens ad eum [Almemum], quod per nuncios acceperat, reuelavit.²⁶¹

Ellos estando en esta dubda, el rey don Alfonso fiando en Dios recudio les d'esta guisa a lo que ellos tenien asmado e ge lo dixieron: 'amigos, bien sabedes uos de como quando yo uin a este moro, que me recibio el onrada mientre, e dio me complida mientre todas las cosas que me fueron mester, e *cato me en logar de fijo*. Pues ¿como le podria encobrir la merced que Dios [me] fizo? Ca el me esto a fecho, aun me fara mas, segund que yo en el fio.' Et fuesse luego pora el rey Almemon e conto gelo todo.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Lucas' account uses the term 'recedere' which the *Estoria* translates as 'vet agora'. (*Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 66, pp. 300-301; *EED*, E₂: 852, 157r).

²⁶⁰ We are told that Alfonso's sister Urraca fears that al-Mamun will detain Alfonso at the news of the vacant kingdoms of Leon and Castile.

²⁶¹ *DRH*, VI, XVIII, p. 200.

²⁶² *EED*, E₂: 852 (156v).

Jiménez de Rada's account states that al-Mamun had already caught word of Sancho's death. Now that Alfonso has come to him and revealed the truth, it is the Leonese king who has proven his sincerity. Al-Mamun feels confident that their friendship and their non-aggression pact will hold true, and thus allows Alfonso to leave. The Muslim king makes clear that had Alfonso withheld the truth, the consequences would have been grim: the exile would have faced imprisonment, or even death.²⁶³

In parallel with Lucas' account, Rodrigo's version also features a major test of friendship. Both accounts portray an information gap, exploited by one party to assess the reaction of the other. In the *Chronicon Mundi* Alfonso has the grounds to test al-Mamun: unaware of Sancho's death, al-Mamun refuses to let Alfonso leave fearing he may come to harm. This is proof that the King of Toledo has upheld the protection pact. Meanwhile, *De Rebus Hispanie* places the Muslim king in the position of testing Alfonso. The exile volunteers his knowledge of Sancho's death before attempting to leave the kingdom, showing his sincere respect and fidelity to al-Mamun. The *taifa* king expresses great joy at Alfonso's truthfulness, admitting he would have punished him severely for not doing so.

The stakes are extremely high for al-Mamun. He is aware that he has a significant advantage over the exiled Christian king, and that the affairs of Castile and Leon are a matter of security for the Taifa of Toledo. This is particularly clear in Rodrigo's account: when the *taifa* king grants Alfonso leave to recover his kingdom, the mutual protection pact is renewed. Al-Mamun compels Alfonso to come to his aid in the event that neighbouring *taifas* engage in hostilities with Toledo. Ensuring a coherent

²⁶³ The *Estoria* translation reads: 'Almemon, por el grand plazer que ouo de lo quel descubrio la uerdad don Alfonso, dixol assi: 'Gradescolo a Dios del cielo por que tu feziste lealdad en dezirme que tu queries yr, e que guardeste de yerro a ti e a mi que non ouiesse los omnes en que me trauar. Ca si te fueras yo non lo sabiendo de ti antes, tu non escaparas de muerte o de prision. Mas pues que assi es, uete, e toma tu regno si pudieres.' *EED*, E₂: 852 (157r), based on *DRH*, VI, XVIII, p. 200.

narrative, it is made clear that al-Mamun's third-generation successors would not be covered by the non-aggression pact.²⁶⁴

The *Estoria* includes two accounts of how Alfonso travels out of the *taifa* kingdom on his way back to Leon. Lucas de Túy's account ends rather abruptly with Alfonso's escape and fruitless pursuit by al-Mamun's soldiers. In contrast, *De Rebus Hispanie* paints a picture of a grand and affectionate farewell, in which al-Mamun accompanies Alfonso to the edges of his territory. This is translated in the *Estoria* as follows:

...Salio [Almemon] con [Alfonso] onrrandol con todos los mayores de su palacio, e fue con el fastal puerto que llaman agora Vala tome [...]. Et diz quel dio alli muchos de sus dones que leuo alla consigo a aquella entencion, e de su auer quanto le era mester. Et espidieron se alli ell uno dell otro con grand amor.²⁶⁵

Alfonso VI is once again showered with gifts and the two friends part with 'grand amor'. Though the *Estoria* includes the accounts of both Lucas and Rodrigo, the *Estoria* chroniclers appear to show a preference for Jiménez de Rada's portrayal of the warm and friendly farewell. Both the Alfonsine *Versión Crítica* and the Sanchine *Versión Amplificada* assert that Rodrigo's version is a better account.²⁶⁶ The *Estoria* compilers appear inclined towards a portrayal of a stronger bond between Alfonso and al-Mamun, consistently referring to the oaths of protection and their loyalty to one another.

²⁶⁴ *DRH*, VI, XVIII, p. 201; *EED*, E₂: 852 (157r).

²⁶⁵ *EED*, E₂: 852 (157v).

²⁶⁶ De la Campa Gutiérrez, *Versión crítica desde Fruela II hasta Fernando II*, CCLXVII, p. 454; *EED*, E₂: 852 (157v). See section 4.3 of chapter 4 of this thesis for further discussion of the versions of the *Estoria* and variation across the three narratives studied in this chapter.

C.3.2 Al-Mamun and Alfonso VI against Cordoba

After Alfonso VI returns to power as King of Leon and Castile, the *Estoria* credits the king for his loyalty to al-Mamun. He is referred to as 'good and sincere' in his faithfulness to the mutual protection agreement with the Taifa of Toledo. Ensuring consistency with the earlier phase of the narrative, the compilers of the *Estoria* indicate that Alfonso continued to uphold the oath to al-Mamun and his second-generation successor. The King of Leon-Castile, we are told, did not overlook his obligations and offered his help to al-Mamun and his son whenever they needed it.²⁶⁷ This is developed in the *Estoria*, through the detailing of the joint campaign by Alfonso and al-Mamun against Cordoba.

The *Estoria* incorporates an episode occurring in the *Chronicon Mundi*, which Jiménez de Rada also compiled in *De Rebus Hispanie*. According to the tradition, some years after Alfonso's restoration to power, the kings of Toledo and Cordoba enter into war.²⁶⁸ When Alfonso VI hears this he gathers a large force and sends his military south, in order to provide military support to the Taifa of Toledo. The *Estoria* asserts that Alfonso gave military backing to al-Mamun 'por la postura que auie con el'.²⁶⁹ However, for a second time in the narrative, a significant information gap between the two allies appears. This time, al-Mamun rather misunderstands the motive behind the arrival of Leonese forces. Thinking that Alfonso's troop movements are hostile, the Muslim king reminds his Christian ally of the non-aggression pact, and importantly of his *amor*:

²⁶⁷ See section 4.3 of chapter 4 of this thesis for further discussion, concerning the *Estoria's* phraseology 'bueno et uerdadero' as an interpretation and expansion of source material.

²⁶⁸ The episode has been shown to be historically inaccurate. See section 3.C.4 of this case study.

²⁶⁹ *EED*, E₂: 860 (162v).

Almemon quando lo oyo, non sabiendo en que razon lo fazie el rey don Alffonso, ouo miedo que uinie contra el. Et enuiol dezir por sus mandaderos *que se acordasse dell amor quel mostrara* e de la onrra quel el fiziera, e de la postura que auie con ell, e quel rogaua que oujesse paz entr'ellos.²⁷⁰

The *Estoria* compilers build upon the source material to emphasise al-Mamun's *amor*. The vernacular history creates a more coherent narrative, referring back to the Muslim king's gracious treatment and 'onrra' of Alfonso during his exile and the all-important *postura* of non-aggression.²⁷¹ The *Estoria* narrative therefore accentuates al-Mamun's love and dedication to an enduring alliance with Leon-Castile.

Alfonso sends a response to the King of Toledo explaining that he had in no way forgotten the oaths of mutual protection during his time in exile:

Estonces el rey don Alffonso enuiol dezir por aquellos mandaderos mismos quel enuiara que uinie en su ayuda por la postura que auie puesta con el. 'Ca bien me acuerdo', dixo el rey don Alffonso, 'de como me coniuero un dia quando yo era con el en Toledo, e me pregunto quel dixiesse uerdad que faria si yo el reyno de mio padre ouiesse todo. Et yo respondil que llegaria muy grand hueste, e quel uernia ayudar contra todos sus enemigos. Et desto fiz mi postura con el assi como el sabe'.²⁷²

The reaction of the *taifa* king is one of great relief. With the knowledge that the friendship and co-operation is mutual, al-Mamun's gladness is visibly written into the narrative:

Almemon quando lo oyo fue muy alegre, e gradescio gelo mucho, e saliol a recibir con todos sus moros. Despues fueron se amos pora Cordoua, e quemaron e astragaron e destruyeron quanto fallaron. Et desi tornaron se con muy grandes ganancias e muy onrradas pora sus tierras.²⁷³

²⁷⁰ *EED*, E₂: 860 (162v).

²⁷¹ The *Chronicon Mundi* states that al-Mamun was fearful and asked for peace (IV, 69, pp. 303); *De Rebus Hispanie* even omits Toledo's request for peace, only mentioning the *taifa* king's fear (VI, XXI, p. 203).

²⁷² *EED*, E₂: 860 (162v).

²⁷³ *EED*, E₂: 860 (162v-163r).

Though this episode is a historical inaccuracy, it is nonetheless a valuable and significant portrayal of the Muslim King of Toledo. The Latin chronicles and the *Estoria* fully capture the notion of an enduring alliance between al-Mamun and Alfonso. Importantly, both parties are anxious to see their agreement upheld, on the basis of their personal commitment and loyalty to one another. In particular, we can read the emotional response of al-Mamun, who is presented as 'muy alegre' when discovering that the alliance stands firm. The emotion of the *taifa* king can be read as a sense of relief. In terms of security, al-Mamun is relieved to know that the powerful King of Leon-Castile has not come to invade his territory. But more profoundly, he is reassured that he has not been personally betrayed by the younger man that he had taken in and treated like a son. The original source material makes clear that al-Mamun implored Alfonso to recall everything that the *taifa* king had done for him whilst he was in exile in Toledo.²⁷⁴ This *Estoria* compilers fully capture this dynamic, show that on Alfonso's part this has not been forgotten, and he will continue to stand by the *taifa* king.

C.3.3 Al-Qadir in the shadow of al-Mamun

The *Estoria* chroniclers continue to present al-Mamun in a positive light, as both a noble and respected figure, after his death and succession. It is through the character of al-Qadir that we see an enormous contrast in personal character and ability to govern the kingdom. Al-Qadir is, furthermore, an opportunity for Alfonso VI: he is no longer

²⁷⁴ Lucas writes: '[Rex Almemon] misit nuncios ad Regem Adefonsum, qui ei ad memoriam reducerent bona, que fecerat ei barbarus Toletanus.' *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 69, p. 303.

bound by the oath of non-aggression to the *taifa* kingdom. The chroniclers carefully shape the course of events leading to the capture of Toledo, taking care to show that Alfonso does not break his promise to al-Mamun, but instead waits until he is properly released from his obligations. As such, the *Estoria* maintains a narrative of trust and loyalty between Alfonso and al-Mamun, founded on sincere *amor*.

Following al-Mamun's death, the *Estoria* recounts that his son Hisham came to rule Toledo. However, it was barely a year before Hisham had died and al-Mamun's grandson al-Qadir took power. The *Estoria*'s description of al-Qadir immediately places him in contrast to the virtues of al-Mamun:

Este rey Yahia fue mal rey e auol, e muy alongado de las mannas e de las costumbres de su auuelo el rey Almemon, e de su padre el rey Yssem.²⁷⁵

The poor governance of al-Qadir quickly leads to an atmosphere of discontent in the *taifa* kingdom. His subjects implore him to show better leadership, threatening to replace him if he continues to prove a liability. Al-Qadir appears completely intransigent to these criticisms:

Mas Yahia, segund cuenta la estoria, como era omne mucho de mugieres e de malas costumbres, non preciaua nada aquello que sus moros le dizien, nin meioraua ninguna cosa en si.²⁷⁶

Notably al-Qadir is presented as a womaniser, a common *topos* for the characterisation of an immoral man. His poor leadership and weakness of character is very much the contrary of al-Mamun's graciousness, loyalty and strategic thinking.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁵ *EED*, E₂: 878 (175v). Based on *DRH*, VI, XXII, pp. 203-204.

²⁷⁶ *EED*, E₂: 878 (175v). Based on *DRH*, VI, XXII, pp. 203-204.

²⁷⁷ For further discussion of al-Qadir's portrayal, see my discussion of the broader characterisation of Muslims in section 4.5 of chapter 4.

The incompetence of the new *taifa* king proves to be so great that the people of Toledo, we read, directly appeal to Alfonso VI to free them from al-Qadir's abuses. Following the account of Jiménez de Rada, the *Estoria* cites the expired protection pact, thereby legitimising the annexation of Toledo by Alfonso:

[Los de Toledo] enuiaron luego otrossi los mandaderos a este rey don Alffonso en grand poridad que los uiniesse a acorrer, ca eran en grand periglo, et que cercasse la villa, pues que passado era el plazo de la postura que ell ouiera con el rey Almemon su auuelo.²⁷⁸

Emphasis is placed on the expiry of the agreement that Alfonso had held with al-Mamun. The narrative had made clear much earlier that only al-Mamun and his second-generation successor would be protected. By reiterating that al-Qadir, a grandson and third-generation successor, was not covered by the agreement, the chroniclers are showing that Alfonso was 'correct' in his approach to Toledo. Alfonso is shown to have worked within the parameters of the agreement, as initially agreed with al-Mamun. As such, the earlier narrative of the trust and loyalty between al-Mamun and Alfonso is preserved.

The legacy of al-Mamun survives through the narration of al-Qadir's on-going dealings with Alfonso VI. Alongside the very explicit articulations of al-Qadir's poor kingship, there are more subtle indications that present him in the shadow of his grandfather. The name of al-Mamun is invoked throughout the remainder of the narrative: al-Qadir is often referred to as the 'nieto de Almemon'. The chroniclers of the *Estoria* have a tendency to identify the last King of Toledo in relation to his grandfather al-Mamun of Toledo. The vernacular historians' use of this formula reveals their perception of al-Mamun as a more prominent and prestigious figure in the history of

²⁷⁸ *EED*, E₂: 878 (175v).

eleventh-century Castile and Leon. Earlier representations of him in the narrative point out his strengths of character and sincere *amor* towards Alfonso VI. In later sections, the continued references to al-Mamun after his death help to strengthen his legacy as a significant and noble figure in history. In contrast, al-Qadir is presented as an obnoxious and immoral figure. By identifying him as the 'grandson of al-Mamun', al-Qadir is further undermined, made to appear in the shadow of his noble predecessor.

*

The *Estoria* portrayal of al-Mamun is markedly dignified, and portrays the *taifa* king in a singularly affectionate light. The king is presented as a close ally and loyal friend to Alfonso VI, committed by his sincere *amor* for the Christian king. Alfonso X assented to this depiction of the *taifa* king, recognising its value in the history of Castile and Leon, and as an appropriate narrative for the readers and listeners of his vernacular history.

C.4 Understanding the portrayal of al-Mamun

In light of my analysis of al-Mamun and Alfonso VI, how do we make sense of this narrative? Why did Alfonso X include the story of a profound bond of *amor* between

the kings of Leon and Toledo? How can we explain the representation of a strong alliance between the two, when Muslims were so frequently held to be military and political rivals of Christian Iberia? The answers to these questions can be found by returning to the question of historiographical tradition and the importance of the conquest of Toledo. Furthermore, the depiction of al-Mamun in a positive light brings its own moral guidance for the readers and listeners of the *Estoria*, preparing them for the reality of friendship and alliance with Muslim lords far and wide.

Considering the representation of the Prophet Muhammad and al-Mansur in the *Estoria*, al-Mamun stands as a third example of how Christian historiographers' depictions of Muslims could vary. The previous case has shown how al-Mansur was presented in an admirable light in the *Estoria*, owing to his fame and reputation in Christian historiography, and as a model of chivalry and leadership among the thirteenth-century readership. In contrast, the depiction of al-Mamun is centred on the close alliance between the Kingdom of Leon and the Taifa of Toledo, and of the *amor* and loyalty between its kings. The *Estoria* narrative is one of a uniquely strong friendship – one in which a Muslim king has the opportunity to eliminate his Christian neighbour at his most vulnerable, but out of loyalty chooses to protect him, loving him as if he were his own son. It is a narrative that focuses on the strong bond between al-Mamun and Alfonso VI, and the mutually beneficial outcomes for both individuals.

The mark left on the chronicle tradition by the alliance between Alfonso VI and al-Mamun has been noted by scholars. Relying on the accounts of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Latin chroniclers, Menéndez Pidal was in no doubt of the warm reception that Alfonso VI received in Toledo. He asserted that Alfonso had lived in great comfort during his exile, and that the Muslim king enjoyed the benefits of a mutual protection

pact with the King of Leon.²⁷⁹ Reilly has taken a more cautious approach to the historical record, recognising that later chronicles greatly elaborated the basic account of the *Historia Silense*. He points out that – in historical terms – very little is known about the nature of Alfonso's sojourn in Toledo.²⁸⁰ Moreover, regarding the joint campaign against Cordoba, Reilly has pointed out that Lucas de Túy's account was confused and historically inaccurate.²⁸¹

Beyond the quest for the historical truth of their alliance, scholarship has also considered the wider tradition associated with Alfonso VI and al-Mamun. Menéndez Pidal suggested that the epic tradition of Carlos Mainete and Toledo was based upon the life of Alfonso VI and his dealings with Toledo. In the epic of Carlos Mainete, the young Frankish prince Carlos (the future Charlemagne) leaves his father's realm and seeks refuge in the Muslim Kingdom of Toledo. After serving King Galafre of Toledo for a period of time, Carlos Mainete returns to claim the Kingdom of the Franks as his own. Menéndez Pidal cited parallels in the Mainete *chanson* and the story of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun: exile to Toledo, service to its king and the return to power and glory.²⁸² Jules Horrent refuted this proposition, arguing that the earliest version of Carlos Mainete had been composed in France, independently of Spanish influences. The French version then came to be reformulated by a Spanish *jongleur* in Toledo in the twelfth century, incorporating the influences of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun.²⁸³ Cristina González also looked to the traditions of Mainete and Alfonso VI, considering their presence in the *Estoria de España* to be an expression of Alfonso X's imperial

²⁷⁹ R. Menéndez Pidal, *La España del Cid*. Vol. 1 (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1947), pp. 176-177, 189-190.

²⁸⁰ Reilly, *The kingdom of León-Castilla*, p. 68.

²⁸¹ Reilly, *The kingdom of León-Castilla*, p. 84. For a more detail on the historicity of this episode, see: Mínguez, *Alfonso VI*, ch. 6 (pp. 87-97).

²⁸² R. Menéndez Pidal, "'Galiene la belle" y los palacios de Galiana en Toledo', in *Historia y epopeya* (Madrid: Imprenta de Librería y Casa Editorial Hernando, 1934), pp. 263-286 (pp. 281-284).

²⁸³ J. Horrent, *Roncesvalles: étude sur le fragment de cantar de gesta conservé à l'Archivo de Navarra (Pampelune)* (Paris: Les Belles lettres 1951), pp. 186-193.

aspirations. She argued that both traditions reflected Alfonso's aims in the thirteenth century. First, Alfonso VI's conquest of Toledo mirrors the desire to vanquish Spanish Islam. Second, the epic of Carlos Mainete – who in later life is crowned the first Holy Roman Emperor – echoes Alfonso X's own aspirations to be crowned Emperor of Rome.²⁸⁴

Despite the interest in this tradition, less focus has been paid to the narrative's significance for Christian representations of Muslims. Deyermond, in his discussion on folk motifs in medieval literature, saw a parallel between the figures of al-Mansur and al-Mamun. Though he considered both to embody the motif of the 'ogre' – as the captors of Gonçalo Gústioz and Alfonso VI, respectively – he recognised that they were portrayed sympathetically.²⁸⁵ Elsewhere, Scorpo has acknowledged that the Alfonsine redactors built on the chronicle tradition of Alfonso VI's exile in Toledo, enhancing the narrative to show that, despite the inherent tension between the Christian and Muslim kings, Alfonso VI and al-Mamun's alliance proved stable and mutually beneficial.²⁸⁶

Returning to the key question: what value did Alfonso find in the continued transmission of this narrative? What lesson did the example of al-Mamun present the thirteenth-century readers and listeners of the *Estoria*? In the broadest sense, this narrative was the transmission of historiographical tradition of Lucas de Túy and Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada. This was highly significant in the history of Castile-Leon, as it detailed the tremendous achievement of Alfonso VI: the return of Toledo to Christian rule.

It is important to recognise that thirteenth-century chroniclers had the benefit of hindsight, when shaping the reign of Alfonso VI. Assessing the historical record –

²⁸⁴ C. González, 'Alfonso X y la conquista de la otredad', *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, 1 (2003), 205-212.

²⁸⁵ 'Folk-motifs in the medieval Spanish epic', p. 48.

²⁸⁶ Scorpo, *Friendship in medieval Iberia*, pp. 140-144.

namely the *Historia Silense* and the *Crónica Najerense* – the chroniclers could see that Alfonso had been in exile during the early 1070s. By their own calculations, both al-Mamun and his second-generation successor had died only a few years after Alfonso VI left exile. Afterwards, al-Mamun's grandson al-Qadir had come to power. Their records suggested that Toledo had been captured by Alfonso a decade or so after leaving exile. With this knowledge, the medieval historians accommodated the idea of a loyal and sincere friendship between the Christian and Muslim kings. There was undoubtedly a historical basis for the strategic alliance: as has been shown earlier in this case study, there was widespread documentation showing military alliances and protection pacts between the Christian kingdoms and the *taifas* throughout the eleventh century. When compiling their histories, the thirteenth-century chroniclers clearly encountered the memory of some form of alliance between Alfonso and al-Mamun.

As the *Estoria* compilers developed the tradition, they accentuated the notion of *amor*, graciousness and trust across faith boundaries. Yet, in presenting such close fraternisation, weren't the chroniclers running the risk of legitimising Christian-Muslim fraternisation? With the knowledge that Alfonso would end up conquering Toledo only a few years later, they were able to show that the alliance fitted into the Divine Plan for the conquest of Toledo. Alfonso swore an oath of non-aggression towards al-Mamun and his second-generation successor. However, history showed that Alfonso only had to uphold this oath for a few years, before he was free to conquer the city. The past could therefore be shaped into a narrative of love, friendship and loyalty between Alfonso VI and the King of Toledo, without excluding the possibility of a Christian victory over Islam.

There is certainly a lot that can be inferred from this particular narrative regarding friendship and love. As previously outlined, in the *Siete Partidas* Alfonso X had explained the importance of *amor*. The bond of love between man and God, and between man and man, was the tough fabric that helped to create a strong society.²⁸⁷ The narrative of al-Mamun is a further display of that notion: the *taifa* king demonstrates great loyalty to Alfonso VI, and the King of Leon is equally loyal in return. The *amor* between the two kings endured, despite the tensions and conflicting interests that might have led one man to betray the other. The steadfast and sincere *amor* between al-Mamun and Alfonso VI was the centre of the alliance between Leon and the Taifa of Toledo, at a time of political instability and competition between kingdoms north and south of the frontier. For the readers of the *Estoria*, this narrative presented the ideal *amor*, and how it stood as the anchor holding two individuals in a productive relationship, founded on trust and honesty.

We must also consider the interfaith aspect to this narrative, and how its example of *amor* was relevant in the Alfonso X's Castile. It is vital to bear in mind that Alfonso X was seeking to maintain the territorial integrity of the realm. Andalusia and Murcia had only recently been incorporated into the possessions of the crown, and the retention of these newly acquired lands was a major challenge. The same social fabric that bound his Christian subjects together also now extended to his Muslim subjects in the south. Within the hierarchy of territorial administration, local Muslim lords and community leaders across the south answered to Christian superiors. The social fabric of *amor* of Alfonso's Spain therefore extended to the minority Muslim communities of the south.

²⁸⁷ See section 3.C.2 of this case study.

The example of al-Mamun and Alfonso VI's sincere friendship and loyalty was thus particularly relevant in the thirteenth century.

Among the readership of the *Estoria*, there were likely to have been Christians who actively maintained productive relations with Muslim subjects and foreign counterparts. Many of the readers and listeners of the *Estoria* were integral to the government of Castile-Leon: a significant number would have been administrators and landowners in the newly conquered territories. These frontier lords could therefore read the example of al-Mamun and Alfonso VI as a model for their own relationships with Muslim administrators, diplomats and rulers. In the narrative, the strong bond of *amor* was the cement for the alliance between Leon and Toledo: this provided an immediate mutual benefit to both partners. Crucially, the narrative exemplified the longer-term advantage to Christian Iberia. By seeking to build productive and sincere ties with Muslim counterparts, Alfonso X's readers could help to further the interests of Castile and Leon in the long run. The question of Christian-Muslim alliances was extremely pertinent at the time: Alfonso X maintained close relations with Muhammad I of Granada, and desperately agreed a pact with the Marinids against Sancho in the twilight of his reign.²⁸⁸

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²⁸⁸ See: *Crónica de Alfonso X*. Ed. by M. González Jiménez (Murcia: Real Academia Alfonso X el Sabio, 1998). See also section 4.4 of the final chapter of this thesis.

The portrayal of al-Mamun of Toledo presents a new dimension to the attitudes towards Muslims in the *Estoria*. Here, the eleventh-century *taifa* king is presented as a close friend of the Kingdom of Leon, and a model of loyalty and sincerity in an unstable world. The strong bond of *amor* between al-Mamun and Alfonso VI is incorporated from Lucas de Túy and Jiménez de Rada, providing an extended account of the lead up to the conquest of Toledo. The fraternisation between the two kings, and the military service Alfonso offers to al-Mamun do not appear to contradict Leonese interests: instead, the alliance supports the territorial aggrandisement of Christian Iberia, and is a testament to the virtues of both men. Al-Mamun is celebrated as a gracious host and committed father figure to Alfonso during the misfortune and exile of the latter. The narrative responds to Alfonso X's own context of political relations with Muslim lords within and outside of the kingdom. By incorporating material from both Lucas and Rodrigo, the readers of the *Estoria* are presented with a model of a personal, strategic alliance across faith boundaries, as may be expected of Christian kings and lords in the thirteenth century.

This final case concludes the close analysis of representations of Muslims in the *Estoria de España*. The application of *source-redaction criticism* has allowed for a detailed exploration of the compilation process involved in shaping these narratives. The method has also helped reveal the historical meaning of these narratives, in light of the authors and readers of the text, as well as Alfonso X's political ambitions for the kingdom. Each of the cases in turn have offered very different attitudes to Muslims throughout history, ranging from disdain and vilification to respect and admiration. The final chapter of this thesis will now tackle the question of the broad ambivalence towards Muslims in Alfonso's historiography. As will be revealed, there is a great deal

to be said for the contrasts that appear in the text. A variety of factors can be seen to drive divergences within the text, and it is the isolation of these features that will provide greater clarity to the overall ambivalence of Christian writers.

CHAPTER FOUR
AMBIVALENCE IN THE
HISTORIOGRAPHY OF ALFONSO X

Medieval historiography provides us with many varied and intriguing narratives. These captivating stories, as told by medieval historians, are a window into a long distant past. The previous chapter has provided a detailed insight into the portrayal of three Muslim figures of particular significance in Alfonso X's history of Spain. Together, these three cases reveal a great deal about the thoughts and attitudes of medieval Christians towards the Muslim 'other'. The richness of the *Estoria de España* narratives allows us to observe the wide spectrum of feeling among Christian historians in the Iberian Middle Ages. Alfonso's texts are testimonies to a remarkable ambivalence towards Islam; his manuscripts are the surviving relics of a world of conflict and co-operation between the two faiths.

The final chapter of this thesis will offer a thorough explanation of the wide contrasts in the portrayals of Muslims in the *Estoria*. I will take an overview of the narratives of Muhammad, al-Mansur and al-Mamun, to illustrate the range of attitudes recorded by Alfonso X's historiographers. I will also place the *Estoria* in relation to the *Siete Partidas* and *Cantigas de Santa María*, to illustrate further the culture of ambivalence towards Muslims and Islam in the scriptorium. In order to make sense of the contrasting historical narratives, I will undertake a systematic and concise breakdown of the factors driving this apparent ambivalence. I will address the role of textual tradition and the agency of the redactor in the compilation process. Furthermore, I will consider the fundamental historicity of the narratives, as well as the importance of moral guidance – an essential aspect of characterisation in historical narrative. Finally, I will bring together the reading of the text and the study of the interfaith encounter at the Iberian frontier, returning to the notion of *convivencia* and its implications in my analysis of the *Estoria de España*.

4.1 *Contrasting attitudes to Muslims in the works of Alfonso X*

The previous chapter has offered an in-depth study of three cases of Muslim figures in Alfonsine historiography. The Prophet Muhammad, the Amirid *hagib* al-Mansur and the King al-Mamun of Toledo have proved to be prime examples for exploring Christian attitudes to Islam. My close analysis has revealed the finer details of the way in which these narratives were compiled. Digging below the surface of the narrative, I

have investigated the use of source materials, and the selective arrangement of these materials by Alfonsine redactors. I have considered how this was driven by the political agenda of the scriptorium, responding to the personal ambitions of Alfonso X. The aim now is to "zoom out" from these finer aspects of these narratives, and consider the broader picture of attitudes to Islam across his writings.¹ When we look at his historiography, legislation and poetry as a whole, we see a wide range of acceptable assertions pertaining to Muslims. Importantly, this broad range of attitudes carries the seal of approval of the king himself.

The biography of Muhammad reveals a fundamentally hostile and disdainful attitude to the Prophet and his teachings. The principle of this narrative is that the Prophet of Islam is a liar, a charlatan and a great manipulator of the masses. He is presented as a sly individual, who appropriated Judeo-Christian doctrines to create an evil sect, through which so many souls continue to be lost in the thirteenth century. The redactors of the *Estoria* wrote that Muhammad was a magician who cast a spell over all those around him; he was in leagues with Satan and invoked demonic powers to further the cause of this "deceitful" Revelation.

In contrast, the narrative of al-Mansur – a true champion of tenth-century Islam – receives a very different treatment from Alfonso's historiographers. The Amirid ruler of Cordoba is well respected and admired in the *Estoria*. His enormous power and prowess are marked; al-Mansur commands large armies and is a worthy rival of Christian Iberia. More precisely, al-Mansur is a figure of great endeavour. He is daring, bold, wise and charismatic. He is skilful in holding office, by subtly usurping the caliph's authority, yet

¹ In section 1.1 of chapter 1, and section 3.B.1 of chapter 3, I laid out the importance of understanding the term 'Islam' beyond its theology. Again, I am using the term 'Islam' throughout this chapter to refer more broadly to the administrative communities and legal jurisdictions adhering to the Islamic faith (including Mudejar communities in Christian Iberia), as well as political and military entities (emirates, caliphates, *taifa* kingdoms, sultanates and other Islamic dynasties).

simultaneously maintaining the integrity of the caliphal institution. The *Estoria* even confesses that al-Mansur's victories against the Christians helped him win the support of his people.

Thirdly, king al-Mamun of eleventh-century Toledo is presented as a loyal ally and close friend of the Kingdom of Leon. At a moment of crisis for Alfonso VI, al-Mamun graciously welcomes the king in exile into the court of Toledo. He honours Alfonso and swears to protect him throughout his exile. Al-Mamun faultlessly upholds this oath, and is said to love Alfonso as if he were his own son. The King of Leon does not forget the kindness and loyalty of his Muslim protector: when Alfonso returns to power, he continues to support al-Mamun and his kin in battle. The narrative is marked by the depiction of a friendship that survives significant tests of loyalty, a relationship that is productive for both Alfonso and al-Mamun.

On the face of it, these are three very different depictions of Muslim rulers. Each narrative has a particular focus, leaving the reader with opposing impressions of Islam. Through Muhammad, Muslims are seen to be in state of moral and theological error; through leaders such as al-Mansur, Muslims can be seen to display formidable military prowess; through the narrative of al-Mamun, Muslims can be gracious hosts offering a legitimate place of refuge, and there are opportunities to be found in alliances with Islamic rulers.² Of course, when we consider these narratives in relation to one another, there is every potential for determining any shared features. A continued assessment of metanarrative suggests there is in fact some degree of overlap: there are a small number of similar concepts that transcend otherwise contrasting narratives.

² Depictions such as these have previously been observed in wider literary tradition of medieval Iberia: see sections 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7 of chapter 1, and section 4.6 of the current chapter.

Much credit is given to al-Mansur for his leadership qualities. As we have seen, the *Estoria* points to his tight hold over the young caliph Hisham, allowing him to rule *al-Andalus* in all but name – he is effectively the shadow caliph. Al-Mansur's political and military successes are underpinned by his intelligence, with Alfonsine redactors referring to him as 'sabio'.³ Throughout the chapters pertaining to the Amirid, we learn of the extensive power and his many victories on the battlefield. When we look closely at the narrative of the Prophet Muhammad, we find some crossover, despite the overtones of disdain and scorn. The Prophet, even as a young man, was 'uno de los mas sabios de Arauia e Affrica'.⁴ Even before his birth, it was prophesised that Muhammad would become 'omne mucho esforçado e alçado e poderoso'. Many terms appear in the narrative acknowledging Muhammad's power and ability to dominate the region.⁵ The crossover between the narratives becomes very clear when we consider the common terminology for the political successes of al-Mansur and Muhammad:

<p>...alçaron y a Mahomat por su rey a plazer e a uoluntad de todos los de la tierra. Ca mucho lo amaúan yl preciaúan...⁶</p>	<p>[Almançor ouo este nombre e este sennorio] con consentimiento e a plazer de todos. [...] Et tanto le amaúan yl preciaúan los moros.⁷</p>
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The narratives of Muhammad and al-Mansur demonstrate a shared terminology for representations of power and leadership. Precisely, we see similarities in the expression of strong popular approval – even adoration – and a solid mandate for power. As the

³ '...un moro muy esforçado e muy aguçioso e sabio, que auie nombre Mahomat Ynbeabdenhamir' (*EED*, E₂: 745, 82r); 'De Almançor cuentan las estorias que era omne muy sabio...' (*EED*, E₂: 758, 94v).

⁴ *EED*, E₁: 487 (165r).

⁵ 'Dalli adelant fue Mahomat rico e poderoso, e rey e sennor de tierra' (*EED*, E₁: 487, 165v); 'estaua esforçado e apoderado [...] e tomo ell estonces en esto grand esforço e fuesse luego pora tierra de Arauia, e de Siria e de Mesopotamia, e conquirio la toda' (*EED*, E₁: 496, 168r).

⁶ Referring to Muhammad's conquest of Damascus. *EED*, E₁: 496 (168v).

⁷ Referring to al-Mansur's regnal title and his governance of the caliphate. *EED*, E₂: 745 (82r-82v).

above extract shows, Muhammad is not excluded from exhibiting ideal leadership qualities.⁸

There are some hints that al-Mamun is held in esteem for his qualities as ruler of Toledo. When Alfonso VI settles in the *taifa* kingdom, he is covetous of the high standing that al-Mamun holds as the ruler of Toledo:

El rey don Alffonso ueyendo el bien e la onrra d'aquel rey Almemon, e de como era sennor de grand caualleria de moros e de la mas noble çibdad que en tiempo de los godos fue...⁹

The term 'sennor de grand caualleria de moros' suggests al-Mamun wields an impressive military force. This is complemented by the status he receives as the 'sennor' of the of the ancient Visigothic capital. Furthermore, we read the legacy of al-Mamun's good name and virtues during the reign of his grandson and successor. Al-Qadir proves to be an incompetent ruler, who did not share the 'buenas maneras' and 'buenas costumbres' of his grandfather.¹⁰ Whilst al-Mamun is certainly no Conqueror, he does enjoy a certain degree of prestige and status as the last of the strong, Muslim rulers of Toledo.

The most defining aspect of al-Mamun's presence in the *Estoria de España* is the productive alliance between Leon and the Kingdom of Toledo. The possibility of Christian-Muslim pacts is also presented in the narrative of al-Mansur. The strongman of *al-Andalus* is also shown to have courted counts and knights from the northern kingdoms. We read that disaffected noblemen crossed the frontier and signed *posturas* with the shadow caliph, fighting alongside him during military campaigns in the north

⁸ Muhammad's leadership qualities and military achievements were explicitly recognised in the writings of Diego de Valera in 1441. See section 4.5 of the current chapter.

⁹ *EED*, E₂: 838 (148r).

¹⁰ *Versión crítica desde Fruela II hasta Fernando II*, CCXCIII, p. 483; *EED*, E₂: 878 (175v).

of the Peninsula.¹¹ The exile of these Christian nobles, their allegiance to a Muslim lord and their defence of the cause of Islam are something of a parallel to the narrative of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun. At face value, both narratives faithfully attest to the commonplace alliances between Christians and Muslims. Alfonso VI is absolved of any compromise of Christian interests: the strength of his loyalty to al-Mamun is viewed positively, since it paves the way for the conquest of Toledo. However, the Christian allies of al-Mansur are effectively compromised, because their actions run counter to Christian interests. We read that al-Mansur's successes are facilitated by the 'grand desacuerdo' among the Christian kingdoms. By participating in al-Mansur's *jihad*, the Christians are failing to form a united front against the caliphate.¹² Their alliances with al-Mansur contribute to the continued destruction of Leon, Castile and Navarre. Unlike the case of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun, there is no real virtue to be found in the Christian knights' *posturas* with al-Mansur.

Doubtlessly there are many other finer details that we could compare and contrast within the three narratives. However, the above examples are sufficient to show the breadth of possible attitudes towards Islam that may be read in the text. This is significant, as we must bear in mind that the *Estoria* is above all a communication to a readership. Accordingly, readers and listeners are presented with an array of portraits of Islam. In practical terms, these three narratives are sufficiently spaced apart in the text to presume that the medieval reader would not encounter two of these narratives in one sitting. Nonetheless, on aggregate these three figures appear as prominent Muslim protagonists in Alfonso's history. Each has a meaningful stake in the Spanish past, and

¹¹ *EED*, E₂: 758 (94v).

¹² *EED*, E₂: 758 (94v-95r).

the overall impression is entirely mixed: the spectrum of attitudes ranges from the severely negative to the avowedly positive.

Stepping beyond the confines of the *Estoria de España*, contrasting attitudes to Islam in Alfonso X's works are far greater. When we incorporate assertions regarding Muslims in legislation and poetry, the picture becomes even more complex. The *Siete Partidas* legislate a wide variety of stances towards Mudejars and neighbouring Muslim kingdoms. At the core, Muslims have erred in their choice of doctrine, following a false prophet. This certainly concurs with the *Estoria's* hostile portrayal of Muhammad. In spite of the "moral misdemeanour", Muslims are to be fully accommodated into Christian society. They are to enjoy minimum guarantees of free practice of religion, community autonomy, safety and security. The rights of Muslim diplomats and traders are also protected. Any Christian who infringes on these rights will be punished. At the same time, the law ensures that religious minorities are second-class citizens. Jews and Muslims are penalised in a number of different ways, including restrictions on inheritance, marriage and court testimony. Their conversion to Christianity is treated as a priority. That conversion effort is to be led with kind words and open arms, and under no circumstance by coercion or force. There is a marked sensitivity that a Muslim or Jewish convert to Catholicism leaves behind family, friends, culture and the joys of their former life.¹³

The *Cantigas de Santa María* equally offers us a mixture of sentiments towards Mudejars and foreign Muslims. Owing to the historical dimension of the *Cantigas*,

¹³ See section 2.2 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

Muslims often emerge as rivals and enemies to Christianity. In these instances, they are in conflict with Christianity, and therefore against the interests of the Virgin Mary. She intervenes to defend Christianity from its great rival. Elsewhere, there are *cantigas* in which Muslims show profound respect for the Virgin; there are a number of instances of shared devotion to Mary between the two faiths. Muslims are seen to convert to Christianity, in awe of the Virgin's intervention. The *Cantigas* even entertain the notion that Muslims are the "friends" of Saint Mary. Where she sees fit, she is seen to act in their interests, where their interests are aligned with those of Alfonso X. Most extraordinarily, one *cantiga* suggests that the Lord is capable of forgiving Christians, Jews and Muslims, provided their intentions in Him are true.¹⁴

When we consider the range of attitudes in these texts, it is clear that the *Estoria* is not alone in its very varied portrayals of Muslims. Across these three works, Christian thought towards Islam is multi-faceted, resulting in a broad scope of positive and negative depictions. The authorship of each of these compositions is attributed to King Alfonso X: by extent, this range of attitudes carries his direct approval. As we have stressed earlier in this thesis, we should be wary of treating them as Alfonso's personal views.¹⁵ However, the ownership of such views sits firmly with the author of these three works. On a case-by-case basis and with a focus on contextualisation, we find some clarity in the texts' assertions. History carries its lessons, and includes good *and* bad examples. The law also demonstrates its own logic of managing religious minorities. As for the *Cantigas*, we find that in the context of court troubadours, there are many creative ways to portray Muslims as friends and foes.

¹⁴ See section 2.3 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

¹⁵ This is discussed in section 2.5 of chapter 2.

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Faced with this very complex picture of Alfonso's writings, this chapter will examine a number of factors that drive the appearance of such diverse views within the text. Contextualisation alone does not answer the fundamental question: why are there so many contrasting attitudes to Muslims? We will lay out a series of key considerations when addressing this question, and demonstrate their effects within the text. My work has focused heavily on the *Estoria de España*, and accordingly much of my explanation will follow on from my systematic analysis of Alfonso's historiography. However, I will continue to refer to legislation and poetry to highlight how techniques of composition, authorship, textual tradition and historical reality give rise to a variety of attitudes.

4.2 *Textual tradition*

A first means to explore the contrasts among representations of Muslims is through the vein of technical composition. How does source material influence the content of Alfonso's writings? As we have seen in the previous chapter, the narratives of Muhammad, al-Mansur and al-Mamun came about from the careful and purposeful arrangement of source material.¹⁶ Accordingly, source material is a principal

¹⁶ See chapter 3.

determining factor that gives rise to an enormous range of acceptable attitudes towards Islam right across Alfonso's works. The question of source material is key to understanding inconsistencies and irregularities in content. The transmission of diverse source materials across an established textual tradition stands as a major factor explaining Alfonso's significant contradictions regarding Islam. Finally, we shall consider how religious polemic can in fact transcend textual traditions, allowing for parallel depictions of Islam across the scriptorium.

The importance of textual tradition is most marked in the narrative of al-Mansur. The composite nature of his presence in the *Estoria* is very visible, and is revealed when we bear in mind source material. Of the *Estoria's* the four sources, the *Poema de Fernán González* poses a key problem within the narrative. The poem itself contains a significant error, in that it mistakenly identifies the ruler of *al-Andalus* at the time of Fernán González as 'Almozor', rather than Adb al-Rahman. The *PFG's* inaccuracies give rise to an identifiable incongruence within the *Estoria*. It is only in a later redaction of the *Estoria* that this anachronism is addressed. Redactors of the *Versión Amplificada* asserted that there were two Andalusí rulers who had taken that regnal title.¹⁷ The "first" al-Mansur is defeated repeatedly by Fernán González: divine intervention ensures that the Castilians vanquish the forces of the caliphate. Meanwhile, the "second" al-Mansur is recognised as having led numerous successful campaigns throughout the north, laying waste to each of the Christian kingdoms. Each time, according to Jiménez de Rada, al-Mansur returned to Cordoba bathed in glory. Despite the divergences among the sources, there is in fact a strong consistency in the portrayal of the Andalusí ruler. Discounting the *PFG's* anachronism, al-Mansur is associated with military might,

¹⁷ '[Mahomat Ybneabdenhamir fizo se llamar 'Almançor'.] Et este fue el segundo Almançor a quien los moros este nombre llamaron. Ca el primero Almançor, el fuerte otrossi e bueno, aquel fue con quien lidio el cuende Fernand Gonçalez, yl uencio dos uezes'. *EED*, E₂: 745 (82r).

dominance and prowess.¹⁸ The Amirid musters enormous armies, threatens destruction and commands respect throughout the Peninsula and beyond.

The chapters pertaining to al-Mamun offer a deeper insight into the role of textual tradition, governing attitudes to Muslims. The *Estoria* relies heavily on Rodrigo and Lucas for details of Leonese relations with the Taifa of Toledo. These sources are broadly in step: both uphold the close alliance between Alfonso VI and the King of Toledo. The *Chronicon* and *De Rebus* present al-Mamun as unerring in his promise to keep Alfonso safe during his exile. These sources also reveal the military support that Leon and Toledo offered one another in times of war.

Yet there is one anomaly in the *Estoria* narrative that offers a markedly negative portrayal of the Muslim king. In the section that deals with Alfonso's predecessor, we are told that al-Mamun offered false promises to Fernando I. The *Estoria* explains that after Fernando's aggressive campaigns into neighbouring *taifa* kingdoms, al-Mamun agreed to submit to Castile-Leon, but that this communiqué was pure deceit.¹⁹ Here, Alfonso's chroniclers were translating the *Chronicon*. When we investigate one step further, we find that Lucas had incorporated material originating in the *Historia Silense*:

Porro Fernandus rex barbarum, quamuis, ficta loquutum intelligebat...²⁰ Fernandus rex quamuis barbarum fecte loqui intelligebat...²¹

In this particular case, we can retrace the more distant origin of this assertion. Whilst it appears at odds with the much more dignified portrayal of al-Mamun throughout the rest of the *Estoria*, we can clearly observe the transmission process within the chronicle

¹⁸ See chapter 3 above for full analysis of al-Mansur's military might.

¹⁹ 'El moro le dezíe todo aquello con engaño', (*Versión crítica desde Fruela II hasta Fernando II*, CCXXX, p. 409);

'Tod esto le dezíe el moro a enganno' (*EED*, E₂: 820, 135v).

²⁰ *Historia silense*, 93, p. 197.

²¹ *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 53, pp. 289.

tradition. The result is that this initial hostility to al-Mamun in earlier chronicles such as the *Sampiro* and the *Silense* contrasts with later chronicles. As a result, the compilation process allows for the transmission of a number of different works, and to an extent generates some unevenness and inconsistency in the narrative as a whole. Broadly speaking, then, historical compilation gives rise to highly contrasting representations of Muslims.

If there are diverging portrayals of Muslims within Iberian historiographical tradition, there are even greater divergences across unrelated traditions. Let us consider the very different claims about the origins of the Muslims and their relation to Judeo-Christian tradition. This topic appears in the *Estoria* and the *Siete Partidas*: both make assertions about the nature of Islam, and attempt to explain its presence in relation to Christianity. However, these two works make very different claims, and their content appears to be entirely at odds. As we have previously seen, the origins of Islam can be found in the *Estoria's* detailed biography of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, relying principally upon Jiménez de Rada's *Historia Arabum*. Meanwhile, *Partida* 7.25 includes a brief classification and background of the term 'moro'. The source used in this case was Ramon de Penyafort's *Summa de Poenitentia*.²²

Partida 7.25.1 suggests there are two types of Muslim, who differ in their adherence to Judeo-Christian teaching. The explanation given is rather confused: on the one hand, Islam rejected the Old and New Testaments; on the other hand, some Muslims adopted the *Pentateuch*, but rejected the teachings of the Old Testament prophets:

Sarraceni dicuntur, qui nec nouum, nec vetus Sarracenus en latin tanto quiere decir en
reipiunt testamentum; [...] Sunt tamen inter romance como moro [...] Et son dos maneras

²² Ramon de Penyafort. *Summa de Poenitentia et matrimonio* (Rome, Sumptibus Ioannis Tallini, 1603; reprinted in Farnborough: Gregg, 1967).

Sarracenos quidam, qui receperunt libros
quinque Moysi, sed Prophetas respuerunt...²³

de moros: la una es que non creen en el nuevo
testamento nin el viejo; et la otra es que
recibieron los cinco libros de Moysen, mas
desecharon los profetas et non los quisieron
creer...²⁴

In contrast, the *Estoria* offers a very different breakdown of the origins of Islam. Regarding Islam and Judaic tradition, we are told that during his early years, Muhammad came into contact with Jews and Christians, and became well acquainted with their doctrines. Crucially, the *Estoria* explains that the authority of the Old and New Testament was incorporated into Islamic doctrine. Muslims acknowledged the virgin birth, and that Muhammad had even travelled to the Seven Heavens and met Jesus and the prophets. Meanwhile, Jews converted to Islam, thinking Muhammad was the long-awaited Messiah.²⁵ When we compare Alfonso's historiography and legislation, the difference is clear. On the question of Muslim beliefs, the *Partidas* is more than just over-simplified: it is entirely lacking in coherence and accuracy. Admittedly, the legislation did not intend to offer a detailed historical background of the rise of Islam. Nonetheless, even its most basic claim about Muslims – their rejection of the Old and New Testaments and the prophets – is entirely opposed to the learning found in the *Estoria*.

One significant historical claim about the emergence of Islam does appear in the *Partidas*. According to Penyafort, the group of Muslims who rejected the prophets were known as Samaritans:

Hi dicuntur Samaritani a Samaria Ciuitate: & Estos atales [moros] son llamados samaritanos,
ideo, quia prophetas respuerunt, dicitur in porque se levantaron primeramente en una

²³ *Summa de Poenitentia*, 1.4.1 (p. 32)

²⁴ *Siete Partidas*, 7.25.1 (vol. 3, pp. 675-676).

²⁵ This is laid out in detail in my case study of the Prophet Muhammad in chapter 3 of this thesis.

Euangelio Io. 4. non coutuntur Idaei cibdat que ha nombre Samaria: et destos fabla Samaritanis.²⁶

en el Evangelio do dice que non deben vevir nin usar en uno los judios con los samaritanos.
²⁷

When we compare this assertion to the *Estoria* narrative of early Islam, we find no corroboration at all. Instead, Alfonso's historians wrote that a number of different peoples from Arabia, Syria and Africa rallied around Muhammad. Amongst his early followers we are told that there were Jews, Ismaelites and Arabs: there is no reference whatsoever to "Samaritans".

At face value, the *Estoria* and the *Partidas* offer highly contradictory statements about the foundations of the faith of Islam. How can we explain such significant differences in content? After all, weren't both of these works overseen by Alfonso X? Were his jurists simply less well informed about Islam, with relation to his team of chroniclers? The answer ought to be far more nuanced: it firmly relates to the issue of textual tradition within the redaction process. When considering the compilation of the *Partidas*, we must bear in mind that Alfonso's jurists were bound to follow their legal *auctores*. Carpenter has highlighted this, recognising that biblical tradition features more prominently in a legislative text dealing with sacraments, the clergy and Christian society.²⁸ By extent, classifying Muslims through the prism of the Bible – Muslims as 'Samaritans' – would be acceptable in this context. The content was acceptable, then, because Penyafort's *Summa* was a principal authority among jurists. For Carpenter, many of Alfonso's laws are 'couched in hackneyed theological verbiage'. This ought to

²⁶ *Summa de Poenitentia*, 1.4.1 (p. 32)

²⁷ *Siete Partidas*, 7.25.1 (vol. 3, p. 676).

²⁸ 'Alfonso el Sabio y los moros', pp. 236, 240.

be seen as owing to the theologico-legal tradition that compilers used as their guide, as opposed to authentic religious zeal on the part of the redactors.²⁹

As for the *Estoria*, a very different picture of the origins of Islam emerges. Alfonso's team of history writers adhered to an entirely different tradition of annals, chronicles and histories. Whilst these texts determinedly hold a Christian worldview, erudite history did not exclude the possibility of including Arabic source material. For the redactors of the *Estoria*, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada was the chief source of reference for the origins of the Muslims. His *Historia Arabum* broke with biblical tradition and instead recounted the life of the Prophet based upon Islamic tradition. The result of this rupture is the marked difference in accuracy, for even the most basic details on the subject of Islam. The factor driving this is the redactors' conventional adherence to their respective textual traditions.

Despite this potential for significant contradiction, elsewhere we find evidence of a broader symmetry across different textual traditions. In the case of the Prophet Muhammad, the *Partidas* and the *Cantigas* offer negative portrayals, matching the sentiment of the *Estoria*. All three traditions denounce both his person and his Revelation. According to legislation, Muhammad led an unsaintly life. His preaching was entirely false, and was akin to blasphemy.³⁰ The *Partidas* assert, then, that the ignorance of the Muslims must be rectified:

Queremos aqui decir de los moros, et de la su nescadat que creen et por que se cuidan salvar...³¹

²⁹ *Alfonso X and the Jews*, p. 103.

³⁰ See section 2.2 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

³¹ *Partida 7.25 "De los moros"* (vol. 3, p. 675).

Likewise, the *Cantigas* take a hostile approach to Muhammad, and use derogatory terms to undermine the foundations of the faith of Islam. In *Cantiga* 192, a Christian master invites his Muslim slave to renounce Islam and embrace Christianity:

'Pagão,
se queres guarir,
do demo de chão
t' ás a departir
mui louco, vilão
Mafomete cão,
que te non valer
pode, e crischão
te faz e irmão
nosso, e loução
sei e sen temer.'³²

The diatribe 'mui louco, vilão Mafomete, cão'³³ is a slur on the central figure of Islam, and follows the hostile attitude that we find in the *Estoria*. Polemical attacks on Muhammad appear to transcend each of these different traditions. Furthermore, *cantiga* 192 demonstrates a concern over the loss of Muslim souls, and a conviction to bring them into the Catholic Church.³⁴ This sentiment is consistent with the attitudes of the *Partidas* and the *Estoria*.

In order to understand the wide variety of attitudes that we find in the writings of Alfonso X, we must be well aware of the role of textual tradition in the formation of new texts. The composition of the *Estoria de España* was highly dependent upon the received wisdom from *auctores* such as Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada and Lucas de Túy, amongst many other sources. The breadth of this intertextuality allows us to make sense of some aspects of the narratives of key Islamic figures. As we have seen, this does not

³² 192, vv. 99-109 (p. 232).

³³ Salvador Martínez has discussed the interpretation of the term 'cão'. The meaning here is ambiguous, potentially brandishing the Prophet as a 'dog', or chiding him as 'old'. Either way, the assertion is derisive. See: *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII*, pp. 323-324.

³⁴ A number of other *cantigas* depict Muslim conversion to Christianity. See section 2.3 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

exclude the possibility of corroboration among the sources: in the case of al-Mansur, there are similarities across four different sources, capturing the strength and dominance of the Andalusí chamberlain. Furthermore, we have seen that in the case of historiography and legal canon, textual traditions can diverge significantly in matters of detail. Despite this, Alfonso's historians, jurists and poets were consistent in their use of polemic against the Prophet Muhammad. Textual tradition therefore stands as an important driving factor behind Alfonso's diverse attitudes towards Islam.

4.3 *The agency of the redactor*

The compilation of different sources and their opposing content is crucial to explaining the ambivalence towards Muslims in the works of Alfonso X. A related factor for consideration is the action of the redactor upon the source material. Whilst Alfonso's historiographers were often faithful in their reproduction of textual tradition, they actively shaped source material and exercised their own will upon the text. Ambivalence towards Muslims is therefore not only a product of the contrast between sources: it is also a product of the contrast between redactor and source material. On the one hand, the writing of the *Estoria* involved different teams of compilers. On the other hand, large sections of the *Estoria* were re-formulated over the course of the years. As a result of multiple instances of writing, we find further contrasts in the way in which Muslims were presented in history. The redactors themselves often introduced an

additional layer of ambivalence: sometimes they encouraged disdain for Islam; other times they augmented the qualities and virtues of Muslim figures.

From a purely technical point of view, we must bear in mind that Alfonso X did not single-handedly compose the *Estoria*. The *General Estoria* makes this quite clear, indicating that Alfonso's role was that of directing the project, rather than drafting and writing the text *per se*.³⁵ As such, we can be fairly confident that Alfonso did not likely comment on the minutiae of how, for example, the *Historia Arabum* and the *Chronicon Mundi* were intertwined to craft the biography of the Prophet Muhammad in the *Estoria*. Throughout many sections of narrative, compilers drew on two or more sources. As we have seen in the case of al-Mansur, chroniclers had four different sources at their disposal. The compilation process involved the choice of one source over another, or the juxtaposition of the two. The process also included the act of suppression and amplification. This was guided by the value judgements of the compilers: deciding how source material should be used *best* in the new text. These decisions would have been taken by different individuals, working on separate sections of the *Estoria*. On this basis, there was no *single* redactor working on the *Estoria de España*: instead there were many different hands and minds contributing to Alfonso's narrative history.

Owing to the multiplicity of redactions and the mixing and merging of these writings into single codices, the *Estoria de España* sees further juxtaposition of different redactors. With the production and reproduction of multiple versions, there were different *Estorias* circulating throughout the Peninsula over the centuries. That is to say, there were multiple interpretations of the same history. The readership *as a whole*

³⁵ See section 2.5 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

therefore consumed the work of many different redactors writing in different moments in time. These redactors modified source material in their own ways, altering the representations of Muslim figures in history. Their agency can be perceived through the way in which historical details have been suppressed and amplified. These reinterpretations subtly change the way in which Muslims are portrayed, heightening the ambivalence found in the *Estoria* narratives.

Evidence for this can be found in the narratives of each of the three Muslim protagonists we have explored. In the case of the Prophet Muhammad, there are a number of small but significant differences between the *VP* and the *VC* portrayals. The nuances of these variations subtly emphasise different aspects of the life of Muhammad, whilst still closely adhering to the same textual tradition and scheme of history. In the description of the Prophet's early life, we are told that Muhammad was among the most erudite and wise men in Arabia and Africa.³⁶ The *VC* amplifies this detail, clarifying the weight of this attribute:

En aqueste tienpo era el ya vno delos mas sabios de Arauia e de Africa, e de si por su sabiduria e su adeuinança llego despues a tienpo de seer rrey e sennor dela tierra.³⁷

This addition places greater emphasis on the attributes that helped Muhammad achieve his *señorío* throughout the East. There is a second instance in which the *VC* emphasises his kingship:

Este Mahomat otrossi uinie del linnage de Ysmael fijo de Abraham, assi como lo auemos ya contado ante desto en esta estoria, e començo de seer mercador.³⁸ Este Mahomat vinie del linaje de Ysmael fijo de Abraham, e ante que el rregnase començo de ser mercador.³⁹

³⁶ See my case study of the Prophet Muhammad in chapter 3 of this thesis.

³⁷ *EED*, Ss: 487 (30v).

³⁸ *EED*, E₁: 487 (165r).

³⁹ *EED*, Ss: 487 (30v).

Both redactions are faithful to Lucas' assertion that Muhammad was in league with the Devil. However, the *VP* is more emphatic on this:

[Mahomat] trabaiosse por sus [Mahomat] trabajose por sus encantamentos e enca[n]tamientos e sus artes magicas e con la ayuda del diablo *por quien se el guiaua* de fazer ante ella asi commo sennales e fazer antella assi como sennales e miraglos.⁴⁰ miraglos.⁴¹

Whilst these are seemingly minor differences, overall the *VC* marginally relieves some of the hostility to the Prophet. These subtle differences highlight the role of the Christian compiler in the shaping of attitudes towards Muslims.

This phenomenon is far more striking in other sections of the narrative. In the case of al-Mansur, one amplification stands out in particular. Chronicling the reign of Vermudo II, the *Estoria* recounts that the king made efforts to repair damages to the cathedral of Santiago, inflicted during al-Mansur's raid on the city. The *VA* qualifies this detail with a strong condemnation of the faith of Islam:

[Uermudo] trabaio se luego de fazer la iglesia dell apostol Sant Yague, e los otros logares que Almançor derribara e ensuziara *con las suzias costumbres de la su suzia ley, en que non a pro ninguno*.⁴²

Islamic customs and jurisprudence are attacked as 'dirty' and the faith is branded as a system 'en que non a pro ninguno'. This condemnation is nowhere to be found in the *VP* and *VC* redactions; nor does it appear in *De Rebus Hispanie*, the original source for this detail. Earlier redactions of the *Estoria* simply restated Jiménez de Rada's enunciation

⁴⁰ *EED*, E₁: 487 (165v).

⁴¹ *EED*, Ss: 487 (31r).

⁴² *EED*, E₂: 768 (99r-99v).

that the cathedral was 'profaned' by al-Mansur, and nothing more.⁴³ In the case of the VA, the redactor used this as an opportunity to introduce an additional layer of polemic, contrasting an otherwise admirable depiction of the triumphant ruler of *al-Andalus*.

It is in the portrayal of al-Mamun that we find the most interesting variations in the *Estoria* tradition. We can observe the agency of the redactor in the shaping of the narrative in ways that depart from original source material and historiographical tradition. The various chroniclers of the *Estoria* frequently amplified aspects of the relationship between Alfonso VI and the King of Toledo, expanding upon the accounts recorded by Lucas and Jiménez de Rada. Whilst the *Estoria* broadly upholds the inherited tradition from source material, subtle modifications amplify the strength of the *amor*, warmth and loyalty between the Christian and Muslim kings.

Central to the notion of loyalty is al-Mamun's refusal to have Alfonso assassinated, once it becomes clear that Alfonso is prophesied to become King of Toledo.⁴⁴ When his wise men advise that Alfonso be eliminated, al-Mamun declines to do so, and instead implores Alfonso to swear an oath of non-aggression. Both the *Chronicon Mundi* and *De Rebus Hispanie* attest to this:

Rex uero Alememon noluit oes audire, ne fidem solitam frangere uideretur, sed uocato ad se Adefonso dixit ei: 'Iura, inquit, michi per Deum tuum, ut me uiuente nec mihi neque regno meo inferas malum'.⁴⁵ Almemon uero noluit fedus promisse fidei uiolare, set iurari peciit ne eo uiuente sui regni terminos infestaret...⁴⁶

⁴³ The original Latin reads 'Tunc rex Veremudus corde compunctus, ecclesiam beati Iacobi et cetera loca que Almançor diripiens prophanarat, prout potuit, restaurauit.' (*DRH*, V, XVII, p. 166).

⁴⁴ See section 3.C.3 of chapter 3 of this thesis.

⁴⁵ *Chronicon Mundi*, IV, 64, p. 299.

⁴⁶ *DRH*, VI, XVI, p. 197.

The *Estoria* tradition expands upon the sources, explaining the basis for al-Mamun's loyalty to Alfonso in clear prose. The *VC* and the *VA* indicate that there was a combination of strategy and love for Alfonso driving his decision:

[Almemon] les dixo que non lo faria; <i>mas que se seruerie del de guisa que le non veniese ende dapño</i> , et el rrey Almemon non quiso quebrantar la jura que avie fecha, <i>lo vno por que lo amaua muy de coraçon, lo al porque le avie fecho grant seruiçio.</i> ⁴⁷	Estonces el rey Almemon dixo que <i>en la su fe e en la su lealtat uiuie ell alli</i> , e que lo non farie, <i>mas que se seruirie dell en guisa quel non uiniesse ende danno</i> . Et de mas quel non querie crebantar la jura que auie fecha, <i>lo uno por quel amaua muy de coraçon, lo al por quel auie fecho muy grand serujcio en batallas que fiziera contra sus enemigos, e los uenciera yl defendie el regno.</i> ⁴⁸
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The amplifications in the *Estoria* accordingly enhance the narrative of the close relationship between al-Mamun and Alfonso. There is greater detail surrounding the strategic alliance: the Kingdom of Toledo benefits politically and militarily from Alfonso's presence. Equally, we can read the strong bond that tied al-Mamun to Alfonso: 'amaua muy de coraçon'.

Furthermore, the redactors of the *VC* are seen to be sceptical of Lucas' account of Alfonso's escape from Toledo under the cover of darkness. They qualify the source material as 'not to be believed'.⁴⁹ They prefer Rodrigo's account of Alfonso's departure from exile, in which al-Mamun gives full permission for him to leave and accompanies him out of the *taifa* kingdom in great pomp and ceremony. Nonetheless, they honour the historiographical tradition and include Lucas' account, though the redactor's objection to it is clear. The resulting effect on the narrative is the augmentation of the cordiality between al-Mamun and Alfonso. This can be seen further along in the narrative. Both

⁴⁷ *Versión crítica desde Fruela II hasta Fernando II*, CCLIV, p. 438.

⁴⁸ *EED*, E₂: 839 (149r).

⁴⁹ The addition reads: 'Mas esto non fue asi nin es de creer, si non aquella que contamos primero en el comienço del capitulo, pero quesimos la aqui poner por quel fallamos quela cuentan asi algunos.' *Versión crítica desde Fruela II hasta Fernando II*, CCLXVII, p. 454.

the VC and the VA are more assertive than Rodrigo in stating the virtue of Alfonso's loyalty to al-Mamun. Expanding upon tradition, *Estoria* chroniclers refer to Alfonso as 'good and sincere' in upholding the non-aggression and mutual protection pact with the *taifa* kingdom.⁵⁰ No such terms as 'good' and 'sincere' appear in the original Latin source, the virtue being only implicit.⁵¹ This is made explicit in the *Estoria*, enhancing the idea of loyalty within the narrative.

However, not all of the amplifications in this narrative are of the above tone and disposition. There is another opportunistic insertion of anti-Islamic polemic in the VA. Aware that there is such close fraternisation between the kings of Toledo and Leon, the chroniclers insert a cutting remark to denigrate the Islamic festival of Eid, in which Alfonso participates alongside al-Mamun:

Un dia por una pasqua de los moros que es quando ellos matan el carnerno
*segund la su ley de Mahomat, que non es nada...*⁵²

The slur is not present in earlier tradition. This anti-Islamic rhetoric echoes the VA redactors' earlier use of polemic when recounting Vermudo's restoration of Santiago cathedral. In this case, the polemic responds to the close relationship between Alfonso and al-Mamun. The redactor seeks to rule out the interpretation of Alfonso's participation in the Eid celebration as a legitimisation of the Islamic faith. At the same time, it ironically betrays their recognition of the close relationship between the

⁵⁰ In the VC we read: 'Et seyendo asi bueno e verdadero, nunca se lo oluido la postura que feziera con Almemon rrey de Toledo e con su fijo, mas ayudoles sienpre de mientra que viuieron en toads las cosas que ovieron menester.' (*Versión crítica desde Fruela II hasta Fernando II*, CCLXXII, p. 460); In the VA we also find this formula: 'Et seyendo bueno e uerdadero, nunqua se lo oluido la postura que fiziera con Almemon rey de Toledo e con su fijo, e siempre los ayudo mientras uisquieron en las cosas que ouieron mester.' (*EED*, E₂: 858, 161v).

⁵¹ 'Cumque, ut diximus, Almemoni et filio primogentio federe tenerentur, eum iuxta fedus adiuuit in omnibus quoad uixit.' The virtue is implicit, since the title of the chapter reads 'De virtutibus Aldefonsi'. *DRH*, VI, XXI, p. 203.

⁵² *EED*, E₂: 839 (148v).

Christian and Muslim kings: their use of polemic is rhetorical aggression, a sign of intimidation by Alfonso's blatant fraternisation with Muslims during Eid.

The hand of the redactor in the *Estoria* tradition is even more visible in later decades. The *Crónica de Castilla* was a continuation of the vernacular historiographical tradition initiated by Alfonso X. Composed during the reign of Fernando IV (1295-1312), the redactor of the chronicle further modified the narratives originally compiled under Alfonso X.⁵³ In particular, the story of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun is substantially reformulated. The redactor of the *Crónica de Castilla* makes an effort to build on the consistency and impact of the narrative. Through a number of significant modifications, the redactor creates a more intense and dramatic account of the close relationship between Alfonso and al-Mamun.

Importantly, the *Crónica de Castilla* removes the single negative reference to al-Mamun that the *Estoria* inherits from historiographical tradition.⁵⁴ As we have seen in the previous chapter, al-Mamun is presented as offering false promises of submission to Fernando I.⁵⁵ This is the transmission of detail from the *Historia Silense*, which was incorporated into Lucas de Túy, and again into the *Estoria de España*. By suppressing this detail, al-Mamun's character is rendered more consistent. Modifications of a similar purpose are found in later sections of the chronicle, surrounding Alfonso's dispute with the Çid after the misguided raid into the Taifa of Toledo. The *Crónica de Castilla* cites

⁵³ See 'Introduction' in *Crónica de Castilla*. Ed. by P. Rochwert-Zuili, *Livres d'e-Spania, Sources*, 1 (Paris: SEMH-Sorbonne, 2010), especially pp. 18-42.

⁵⁴ *Crónica de Castilla*, p. 76.

⁵⁵ See my case study of al-Mamun in chapter 3 of this thesis.

the *amor* between Alfonso and al-Mamun as the reason for the king's ire towards the Çid, with a precision not found in earlier tradition:

Los ricos omnes que eran con ell, auiendo muy grand enuidia al Çid, trabaiaronse de mezclarle otra uez con el rey don Alffonso, e dixieronle: 'Señor, Roy Diaz que crebanto las pazes que uos auiedes firmadas con los moros non lo fizo por al sino por que matassen a uos e a nos.'⁵⁶

Estonçes los ricos omnes que le querían mal al Çid ovieron carrera para le buscar mal con el rey diziéndole: 'Señor, Ruy Días quebrantó *la vuestra tregua e la vuestra fe e la vuestra jura e paz que avíades con el rey de Toledo, que vós tanto amáuades*, et non lo fezo por ál saluo por que vos matassen acá a vós e a nós.'⁵⁷

This aligning of the exile of the Çid with earlier historical episodes improves the consistency of the narrative as a whole, and reinforces Alfonso's loyalty to al-Mamun.⁵⁸

A more noticeable expansion of tradition is the rich description of the warmth and affection between al-Mamun and Alfonso. In the episode of the hostilities between the *taifas* of Cordoba and Toledo, the redactor presents an entirely novel account of Alfonso VI's intervention in the affair. In the *Chronicon Mundi*, *De Rebus* and the *Estoria de España*, we are told that al-Mamun misinterprets the arrival of Alfonso's troops as a hostile incursion.⁵⁹ This is quickly resolved when Alfonso sends a message to al-Mamun, reassuring him that he has come in peace. The *Crónica de Castilla* breaks with this tradition, and develops a dramatic take on the event. The moment of resolution is prolonged, as Alfonso detains al-Mamun's envoy and travels into Toledo himself with a small company of riders, turning up at the doors of the *alcázar*. Al-Mamun, feeling greatly betrayed by his friend and ally, rushes to meet the arrivals in order to tackle the diplomatic crisis. However, when he sees that Alfonso VI has come to see him in person, the reunion is one of profound joy and intimacy:

⁵⁶ *EED*, E₂: 862 (164r).

⁵⁷ *Crónica de Castilla*, p. 118.

⁵⁸ A second amplification of this type can be found in p. 126 of the *Crónica de Castilla*.

⁵⁹ See section 3.C of chapter 3 of this thesis.

E fuéronsse besar e abraçar amos a dos. Et el rey de Toledo besaua mucho al rey don Alffonso, et fablaron amos en vno, e fézole mucha honrra. Et el rey Alimaymón besáuale mucho en el onbro con grande plazer e alegría que con él auía de coraçón. Et essa noche fincó ende el rey don Alffonso. E fablaron amos en vno, e fézole mucha honrra. Et el rey Alimaymón gradesçió a Dios mucho lo que fiziera el rey don Alffonso, otrosí la lealtat d'él en cómo le acorriera et en cómo se le menbrara de la jura e de la postura que con él pusiera. Et toda aquella noche ovieron grande plazer e grande solaz, et fue grande el alegría que ovieron todos los de Toledo por el amor que el rey don Alffonso auía con su señor.⁶⁰

Alongside the imagery of their affection and fondness, it is the reaction of observers that is extremely interesting. When Alfonso leaves his army and travels with minimal protection right into the hands of al-Mamun, his actions are perceived as 'ludicrous' by his troops.⁶¹ To onlookers, only a fool would offer himself to the Muslims in such a fashion. But such is the strength of Alfonso's bond with al-Mamun that there is no danger whatsoever in travelling with scant protection into the heart of the Moorish kingdom.

The episode is further amplified in the *Crónica de Castilla*. Alfonso invites al-Mamun to dine with him where his army is camped outside of Toledo. This is none other than a ploy to formally bring an end to their *postura* and renew it with an updated mutual protection pact.⁶² Nonetheless, the two kings enjoy a meal together in Alfonso's royal tent.⁶³ The sharing of a meal between adherents of different faiths was a significant mark of intimacy and closeness – so much so that legislators prohibited Christians from

⁶⁰ *Crónica de Castilla*, p. 115.

⁶¹ 'Mas muy grande fue la tristeza de los de la hueste del rey don Alffonso, ca nunca cuidaron cobrar su señor, et touieron que fiziera grande locura en se meter ansí en poder de los moros.' (*Crónica de Castilla*, p. 115).

⁶² See pp. 115-116.

⁶³ See pp. 115-116.

eating with Mudejars, in a bid to reduce fraternisation and friendly contact.⁶⁴ The principal aim of the amplification is to emphasise the shifting power dynamic in their relationship. In an episode of true dramatic tension, Alfonso's troops encircle the tent, leaving al-Mamun trapped inside, as a symbol of how the Leonese exile had once been at al-Mamun's mercy. Alfonso demands that their oath of mutual protection be re-forged, with the King of Leon as the superior. The *taifa* king agrees, and shows great *alegría* at his on-going pact with Alfonso.⁶⁵

The embellishments that we find in the *Crónica de Castilla* are a prime illustration of how individual redactors departed from textual tradition in their portrayals of Islam. The chronicler continues to transmit source material but also acts an agent, adding new layers of interpretation and meaning to the historiographical continuum. This is crucial to bear in mind for the reception of *Estoria de España* throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As a result of multiple authorship, various redactions and the evolution of Alfonso X's historiographical project, the readership was presented with diverse and nuanced versions of history. The *Estoria* is, in short, a multiplicity of interpretations of the historical past, as transmitted via source material. Alfonso's chroniclers were keen to present the historical record in clear and concise prose, and amplified the accounts that they retrieved from Lucas and Jiménez de Rada. This augmented the portrayals of Muhammad, al-Mansur and al-Mamun. Notably, the redactors of the VA were inclined to use additional anti-Islamic polemic in their portrayals of al-Mansur and al-Mamun. Meanwhile, the redactor of the *Crónica de Castilla* presented the *amor* between Alfonso VI and al-Mamun with greater

⁶⁴ Ladero Quesada, 'Los mudéjares de Castilla en la Baja Edad Media', pp. 373-374. For faith boundaries see section 1.1 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

⁶⁵ This significant evolution of historiographical tradition as seen in the *Crónica de Castilla* has been noted previously by scholars. See: M. Lacomba, 'Enjeux discursifs de l'historiographie castillane à la fin du XIII^e siècle: aux limites de la chronique?', in *Poétique de la chronique*, pp. 229-239 (pp. 237-238); Rochwert-Zuili, 'Introduction', p. 41.

consistency and to greater effect. The hand of the redactor adds another layer of ambivalence towards Muslims, intensifying the simultaneous disdain and admiration for Islam and its champions.

4.4 The text as a reflection of historical reality

As we have seen earlier in this thesis, the ambivalence of the written word is very much a reflection of the historical reality of medieval Iberia.⁶⁶ If the text presents a wide spectrum of attitudes and relations between the faiths, this is ultimately the testimony of a world that practised these paradoxes. This is very much what we find in Alfonso's written word: a degree of reality. More precisely, his historiography is a reflection of the historical reality of Christian-Muslim relations: in the past *and* in the present. Both authors and readers of Alfonso's works engage with that reality, and are able to accept the paradoxes of the text, as it was their world too. Furthermore, Alfonso's legislation and poetry are additional evidence of how the backdrop of society contributed to the wide-ranging portrayals of Islam in the thirteenth century.

As Fermín Miranda-García has previously identified, the medieval chronicler could not deny the paradoxes that he encountered in the historical record.⁶⁷ Over the centuries, conflict had been commonplace between Christian and Muslim kingdoms. Cross-border raids were routine; warfare was the order of the day. At the same time, there were many instances of peaceful relations, characterised by alliance, friendship and intermarriage.

⁶⁶ See sections 1.1 and 1.7 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

⁶⁷ See section 1.7 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

The chroniclers of the *Estoria* are no exception: their compilation of sources and respected *auctores* meant the on-going transmission of the many productive and destructive relations between Christians and Muslims in the past.

The conflict and co-operation dichotomy is entirely visible in the text, from the very arrival of Islam in the Peninsula in the eighth century. Throughout the account of Islamic *señorío* and the persistence of King Pelayo and his successors, there is no shortage of accounts of raiding, devastation and pillage. These are frequently captured in such formulae as 'saco su hueste muy grande' and 'corrio la tierra', accompanied by verbs such as 'astragar' and 'quemar'. There is no shortage of hostile encounters between the two faith groups. Adjacent to these hostilities we find many other cases of co-operation. We read of the Mozarabic Christians who assimilated into Andalusí culture and lived alongside Muslims.⁶⁸ The *Estoria* equally tells of the intermarriage of Christian noblewomen and Andalusí princes, in order to maintain peace and stability between kingdoms.⁶⁹ Military pacts are not the reserve of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun: joint campaigns of Christian and Muslim troops are found in many other chapters of the *Estoria*.⁷⁰

As we have already explored in detail, the transmission of these narratives is a product of the historiographical technique of those compilers. Furthermore, the redactors of the *Estoria* introduced their own interpretations and variations into historiographical tradition. However, we must consider that on a broader note, these texts were compiled in a world in which there were many striking contrasts in attitudes towards Islam. In

⁶⁸ The Mozarabs of Toledo receive specific mention in the *Estoria*: 'Fincaron los cristianos mezclados con los alaraues, e aquellos ouieron nombre dalli adelante 'moçaraues' por que uiuen de buelta con ellos, e este nombre e el linnage dura oy en dia entre los toledanos' (*EED*, E₁: 568, 193v). The *Estoria* later describes the Mozarabs as living 'en uno con los moros', keeping their Christian faith and dwelling 'en paz e en bien' (*EED*, E₂: 582, 4v).

⁶⁹ Examples include King Aurelius of Asturias (*EED*, E₂: 612, 14r) and Alfonso V (*EED*, E₂: 772, 100v).

⁷⁰ Examples include Odo Duke of Aquitaine and Munuza (*EED*, E₂: 593, 7v); Count Sancho of Castile and Suleiman (*EED*, E₂: 777, 103r-104r); Alfonso IX and the Almohads (*EED*, E₂: 1014, 288v).

short, the text is a reflection of the wider historical and political environment of both authorship and readership: ambivalence was very much the reality of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The reign of Alfonso X is very much reflective of this varied contact with Islamic kingdoms: Castilian-Leonese relations with Andalus and North Africans were characterised by a wide spectrum of policies, including clientage, strategic alliance, usurpation, open hostility and conquest.⁷¹

The popularity and wide circulation of the *Estoria* is also indicative of the reception of these contrasting depictions of Islam. Alfonso's successors continued his historiographical initiative, eager to present their own version of history to their subjects. The likely readership, as we have seen, was the collective ruling class: the court and members of the political and military elite.⁷² The contradictions of Christian-Muslim relations throughout history were part and parcel of those at the top of society. These elites had a stake in political and diplomatic affairs: there was every chance that the lords and knights who enjoyed these histories had Muslim enemies *and* allies at some point during their military careers. The readership was expected to take example from history, as we shall see in further detail shortly. The simple facts of conflict and co-operation with Islam constituted one aspect of that lesson: it was very much the reality of the readership in the present.

Furthermore, Alfonso's legislation attests to societal ambivalence, in accordance with the mixed political environment. The *Siete Partidas* represent the challenges of managing a significant religious minority: the result is a combination of punitive and protective statutes for Muslims. The legislation is seen to meet two key interests: the

⁷¹ Key illustrations include: the clientage of the Emir of Granada; the conquests of Tejada and Niebla; the Mudejar uprising; strategic alliance with the Beni Ashqilula of Granada; Marinid hostilities and the expedition to Salé. See: *Crónica de Alfonso X*; A. Ballesteros Beretta, *Alfonso X el Sabio*.

⁷² See section 2.5 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

defence of the Faith and the stability of society. However, there is a small degree of conflict among these competing interests. At its core, the Church was opposed to Islam on theological grounds. Yet society at large benefitted economically and socially from stable, productive relations among all individuals and communities.⁷³ The *Partidas* are the very manifestation of those opposing interests. Alfonso's jurists were bound by their *auctores* to build a legislative framework that *officially* denounced the practice of Islam and encouraged conversion to Christianity. At the same time, to be of any practical use the law code had to ensure the rule of law and order throughout the kingdom. This meant protecting against spontaneous violence and social unrest: the fundamental rights of Muslims and their property had to be protected. Furthermore, trade and commerce was essential to stability and prosperity. Accordingly, foreign traders from Islamic kingdoms required basic legal provision. These competing interests are the drivers of the varied attitudes that we read in the *Partidas*, as a reflection of the reality of thirteenth-century society.

The *Cantigas* equally serve to highlight the social reality of contrasting relations between Christians and Muslims. The voices of the troubadour poets relate another layer of ambivalence among the performers and song-writers of Alfonso's court. Many of the *cantigas* have a historical dimension to them. In the same way as the *Estoria*, they represent the historical reality of the inconsistencies of the past. Furthermore, some of the *cantigas* include details from Alfonso's own reign, indicating the conflicting interests of the present. As we have seen previously, although Alfonso was engaged in

⁷³ See section 1.1 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

an on-going political and military struggle against North African Islam, he was also keen to protect their Muslim merchants who ventured to his fledgling trade hub at El Puerto de Santa María.⁷⁴

Perhaps most intriguing and enigmatic of the *cantigas* is number 305, which suggests that the Lord is forgiving of Jews and Muslims of true intent.⁷⁵ On the spectrum of Christian-Muslim relations as presented in Alfonso X, this is perhaps the greatest display of openness and reconciliation among the faiths. Certainly, the troubadour poets of the court seem to display significant freedom of expression, exempt from the constraints of presenting an *official* legal framework and the *official* history of Spain. The composer here represents a point on the spectrum of attitudes that is remarkably accepting of Jewish and Islamic worship: as long as the believer's heart is pure, the Almighty will provide redemption. The enigma stands in our ability to discern the function of this theme in the *cantiga*. It is possible to take this as an expression of at least one poet's "liberal" attitude towards the three Abrahamic faiths. Another possibility is that the expression is not to be interpreted literally, but as a figurative illustration of God's immense grace. Elsewhere in medieval literature we find such formulae as 'cristianos e moros' to mean "everybody". In this sense, the idea may represent a mere literary device, rather than a thought or feeling owned by the author. Either way, the composer has incorporated a thoughtfully "liberal" concept into the composition. There is a degree of sensitivity in this *cantiga* that sets it far apart from the more hostile turns of phrase that we find elsewhere in the works of Alfonso X.

Alfonso X's legacy of historiography, legislation and poetry effectively captures the breadth of attitudes in the thirteenth century. By virtue of their appearance in the text,

⁷⁴ See section 2.3 of chapter 2, discussing the Virgin Mary and the protection of Muslim traders at El Puerto de Santa María in the *Cantigas*.

⁷⁵ I discuss this in greater detail in sections 2.3 and 2.4 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

they were to be seen as representative of the king's worldview and designs for society. The account of history, the promulgation of law and the intervention of the Virgin in earthly events held currency and sway in the thirteenth century. Conflict and co-operation with Islam were noticeable themes in Alfonso's works: the encounter with Islam was extremely relevant in the present, and was not simply an echo of source material. The text displays many significantly contrasting depictions of Muslims and Islam: this was indeed the reality of society's own ambivalence at the time.

4.5 *Historiography as moral guidance*

In order to understand the practice of medieval historiography, we must consider the literary dimension to histories such as the *Estoria de España*. As we have previously seen, the content of the *Estoria* is fundamentally grounded in the historical reality of conflict and co-operation in medieval Iberia: war, peace and alliance were part-and-parcel of Christian-Muslim relations. However, there was an additional dimension to the recounting of history. The preservation of memory was a source of moral guidance for readers and listeners. In such a culture, writers introduced legendary and literary embellishments to enhance the moralising dimension of the narrative. This moralising quality introduced another layer of contrasts. Muslims were not just friends or foes: they were also morally upright or wicked.⁷⁶ This additional dimension helped enrich the characterisation of Muslim figures in history. Islamic rulers were imagined in different

⁷⁶ Just as Christian kings and lords might be judged as moral or immoral in their deeds.

ways, according to the moralising agenda of the narrative. Characterisations of Muslims are therefore complex and multifaceted. The literary dimension of medieval historiography is a further motor for contrasting portrayals of Muslims, and helps to explain the prevailing ambivalence of the written record.

The second chapter of this thesis has highlighted how the preservation of memory was a fundamental aspect of medieval culture. The importance of memory is made clear in the prologue to the *Estoria*, outlining the vision of the interaction between past, present and future. As with other histories and chronicles, the *Estoria* was likely destined to reach the eyes and ears of political and military elites. The function was entertainment, but also moral guidance.⁷⁷ Moral guidance could be found in the record of past events, through the observation of the deeds of men: Christian and Muslim alike. The moralising agenda of the *Estoria* does not exclude the possibility of learning from the deeds of the Muslim 'other'. The accounts of Muslims in Iberian history were therefore considerably more than the presentation of historical reality: a unique moralising dimension developed beyond the underlying historicity of the narrative.

How did chroniclers drive the moralising dimension of the historical narrative? It was through the act of literary embellishment that a new layer of moral guidance was added. As this chapter has shown, historiographical tradition evolved over time. Chroniclers frequently amplified the assertions of source material, enhanced the characterisation of historical figures and reshaped narratives at their own will. The narrative of Alfonso VI and Toledo is perhaps the best example of the gradual amplification and embellishment of the historical narrative. The twelfth-century *Historia Silense* stands as one of the earliest accounts of Alfonso's exile in Toledo, yet it provides only limited details of the

⁷⁷ See section 2.5 of chapter 2.

relationship between Alfonso and al-Mamun. A century later, Lucas de Túy and Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada offer further detail, developing a narrative of friendship, co-operation and trust. The *Estoria* gathers both accounts and introduces further qualifications and amplifications of the sources. By the turn of the fourteenth century, the redactor of the *Crónica de Castilla* reworks much of the material to provide greater consistency, but also greater depth and intensity to the account.⁷⁸ Over the course of the centuries the narrative underwent a marked process of expansion and reformulation, driven by the dynamics of the redactors' moralising agenda.

From a modern perspective, it is tempting to articulate this process with such terms as "distortion", "falsification", "fabrication" or "corruption" of the account. Certainly, by twenty-first-century standards, the authenticity of the historical account is of transcendental importance: inauthentic details, inaccuracies and wilful invention have no place in academic history. Embellishments may therefore be seen as mere literary devices that do not reflect what, among today's historians, would be considered historical Truth. It must be stressed here that modern and medieval notions of "truthfulness" and "accuracy" are quite different. As Ward points out, the concept of "truth" in medieval Iberian chronicles does not equate to our own standards in today's world.⁷⁹ Ward looks to Chris Given-Wilson, who suggested that truth was not solely reliant on the notion of historical "fact", but on two further criteria by which an account could be considered truthful. That is to say, if a historical account appeared to conform to universal truth, and if it seemed plausible, then the historical episode could be viewed as truthful and accurate.⁸⁰ Furthermore, Funes has emphasised that history and literature were not

⁷⁸ See section 4.3 of the current chapter for greater detail on this.

⁷⁹ *History and chronicles in Late Medieval Iberia*, pp.13-15.

⁸⁰ C. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: the writing of history in medieval England* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2004) ch. 1.

considered discrete disciplines until the end of eighteenth century.⁸¹ As such, history was inherently "literary": historical writing fully accommodated for artistic and creative features – embellishment was not the sin it might be considered today. The *Estoria* was no exception to this culture. Much of its content can be considered ahistorical and inaccurate by today's historians. However, for the listeners and readers of Alfonso X's history of Spain, the accounts would have been considered truthful.

Awareness of this paradigm shift is in fact central to explaining the contrasting portrayals of Muslims in the *Estoria*. By recognising the creative aspect of the narrative, we find the driver of the moralising dimension of the work. Myths, legends and embellishments outside of the basic historical record develop the texture and substance of the narrative. The more detail in the historical episode, the deeper the narrative. Details including the characteristics, actions and speech of historical figures strengthen the effect of the narrative – though many of these details would be disputed by modern historians as ahistorical and inaccurate. However, with a more elaborate narrative beyond the simple facts, the "lesson" from history is reinforced. It is precisely this process that has shaped the narratives of Muhammad, al-Mansur and al-Mamun in the *Estoria*. The bare facts about these distant figures in history would have only limited moral guidance for the readership. Instead, the *Estoria* narratives of Muslims showed a variety of qualities and characteristics – desirable and undesirable – beyond the baseline historical "fact". These Muslims figures demonstrate a wide variety of positive and negative traits, owing to the moralising agenda of the *Estoria*.

How exactly does this equate to ambivalence within the *Estoria*? First of all, we must recall that Muslims in the *Estoria* appear on a basic spectrum of friendship or enmity. In

⁸¹ "Elementos para una poética del relato histórico", p. 241. See section 2.6 of chapter 2 of this thesis.

addition to this dichotomy, significant Muslim personages fall onto a second spectrum: morality. The deeds and characteristics of Islamic rulers are presented as honourable or dishonourable. This is read in the finer details and assertions of the *Estoria* – those that modern historians may tend to discount as stuff of legend, inauthentic or as mere literary devices. These two dichotomies concurrently shape the portrayal and overall narrative of the historical Muslim figure. The resultant characterisation gives rise to four rudimentary archetypes: the enemy who is immoral; the enemy who is virtuous; the friend who is immoral; lastly, the friend who is virtuous.

Briefly retracing the narratives of the Muslims protagonists that we have studied, we can observe these elementary characterisations. Firstly, the Prophet Muhammad stands as a highly developed narrative of an "immoral enemy". He is broadly characterised as an opponent of Christianity, based upon the growth of Islam throughout the East, across North Africa and into Spain. The narrative is concerned with the ideological and theological conflict between Islam and Christianity. Secondly, the characterisation of the Prophet exemplifies immoral behaviours. As we have seen earlier in greater detail, Muhammad is depicted as a liar, a womaniser, a manipulator, a magician and an ally of Satan, among other dishonourable traits. To the medieval chronicler, Muhammad's legacy stood as the perversion of the True Faith, the loss of countless souls and the Fall of Visigothic Spain.

The Amirid ruler al-Mansur could be described as the as the "virtuous enemy". Throughout the many chapters of the *Estoria* in which he appears, al-Mansur is predominantly in a state of conflict with Christian Spain. At the very least, he represents a constant military threat to the north, in spite of the occasional truces and alliances with Christian lords. He is the Goliath taken on by Fernán González; he is the devastator of

Christian towns and cities throughout northern Iberia. Delving deeper into the narrative, we read the many enviable traits that al-Mansur possessed: he was a spirited man of great endeavour and intelligence. According to the *Estoria* he was an astute and clever politician, skilfully governing the caliphate with widespread support. On the battlefield he led many victorious campaigns, and won the approval of his subjects. The characteristics were a good example for the readership, many of whom were expected to display the ideal chivalric qualities.⁸²

Yahya al-Mamun stands as the "virtuous friend".⁸³ The *taifa* king was a historical ally of the Kingdom of Leon, a recognised client of Fernando I and Alfonso VI. As the *Estoria* recounts, Alfonso sought refuge in Toledo during the fratricidal wars, and maintained a strategic alliance with the *taifa* after he was restored to power in 1072. Admittedly, there is an underlying tension between the Kingdom of Leon and the Taifa of Toledo: they are fundamentally two separate kingdoms, with separate interests. Nonetheless, the virtue of the two kings is seen to overcome this latent tension. Alfonso and al-Mamun's friendship is underpinned by a firm bond of *amor*, and their loyalty ensures that their relationship is productive and mutually beneficial. This narrative exemplifies an ideal arrangement between an upright Christian lord as his loyal Muslim friend. Such pacts would allow for peace, stability and the sharing of military resources – if only in the short or medium term.⁸⁴

A fourth and final archetype remains: the "immoral friend". Such a personage seems to be a peculiar outcome of the two concurrent polarities that we have identified.

⁸² As previously discussed, the idealisation of Muslim foes increased over time, as Christians became more confident in their victory over Spanish Islam. See chapter 1 and especially section 3.B.4 of chapter 3 of this thesis.

⁸³ This archetype exists elsewhere in Iberian historiographical tradition, with scholars often referring to the notion of the "noble" or "friendly" Moor. The best examples of this archetype include Abengalgón (*Cantar de Mio Cid*) and Zafadola (*Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*). See sections 1.5 and 1.6 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

⁸⁴ Arrangements such as these were impermanent by nature. They were pacts between individuals, and lasted only as long as the two rulers consented. Pacts often had a limited lifespan of months, years or reigns; there was no guarantee that they would be renewed in the future. See section 3.C.1 of chapter 3 of this thesis.

However, further scrutiny of the *Estoria* does in fact present us with a genuine case of both Christian-Muslim co-operation and poor moral example. It is none other than al-Qadir, the hapless successor of al-Mamun and puppet ruler of Valencia, who encapsulates both friendship and moral weakness. Whilst the narrative of al-Qadir is by no means as extensive as the others we have seen, there is sufficient material to illustrate the "immoral friend" archetype. The *Estoria* asserts that al-Qadir was superbly deficient in character. The king was a womaniser and was a man of 'malas costumbres'; he mismanaged his kingdom, frustrated his subjects and ignored their advice.⁸⁵ His incompetence was so great that his subjects staged a coup, installing the King of Badajoz as the ruler of Toledo.⁸⁶ Whilst the baseline historical reality supports much of this detail, the characterisation no doubt carries a literary dimension exemplifying the antithesis of the ideal ruler. The moral judgement of the historian is very severe in the assertions that 'non auie en el bien ninguno' and that he was 'flaco de coraçon e de mal seso'.⁸⁷

Nonetheless, the historical record is inescapable: Alfonso VI maintained a strategic alliance with al-Qadir, offering military support and working in alliance with the last Dhunnunid King of Toledo. As the *Estoria* recounts, al-Qadir handed Alfonso control of Toledo, in exchange for kingship of Valencia. Using the lost history of Ibn al-Qama, the *Estoria* recounts the military support that Alfonso offered al-Qadir, capturing Valencia and installing him as the ruler. The *Estoria* asserts that there was a *postura*

⁸⁵ The *Estoria* narrates how al-Qadir frustrated his subjects: '[Yahia Alcadir] començo de ser muy esquiuo e muy brauo contra los meiores de sus moros, e desi contra todo su pueblo, e fazeles muchos pesares e muchas fuerças, de guisa que todos cobdiciauan su muerte.' In the same chapter, we read that al-Qadir rebuffed the grievances brought against him by his people: 'Pues los de Toledo, seyendo maltrechos d'aquel su rey Yahia [...] ayuntaronse todos en uno, e uinieron a ell e dixieron le: 'rey Yahia, conuienete que defendas tu pueblo e tu tierra, e que te trabages ende. Si non, bien te dezimos que uuscaremos quien nos deffenda.' Mas Yahia, segund cuenta la estoria, como era omne mucho de mugieres e de malas costumbres, non preciaua nada aquello que sus moros le dizien, nin meioraua ninguna cosa en si.' *EED*, E₂: 878 (175v).

⁸⁶ *EED*, E₂: 878 (175v).

⁸⁷ *EED*, E₂: 878 (175v); *EED*, E₂: 889 (184v).

between the two kings, and that Alfonso saw the strategic advantage of using al-Qadir as a puppet to weaken the Kingdom of Valencia, and surrounding *taifas*.⁸⁸ This is another instance of military co-operation and strategic alliance between Christians and Muslims. Although al-Qadir is a friend and ally, he is also a source of moral guidance through his bad example and weakness of character. Through the depiction of his incompetence and negative traits, the readership is presented with thoroughly undesirable behaviours.⁸⁹

These four simple archetypes are by no means infallible. The characterisation of Muslims in the *Estoria* is complex and multifaceted: there is always room for alternative interpretations. As we have seen at the start of this chapter, Muhammad can be recognised as possessing some of the key traits and behaviours of a successful *señor*. He is depicted as both wise and powerful, ruling Arabia and beyond 'a plazer y a voluntad de todos', with widespread popular support. Whilst the portrayal of the Prophet is broadly negative, he does demonstrate some ideal traits to a small degree. Such an interpretation is in fact offered over a century later in the writings of Diego de Valera. The fifteenth-century historian recognised the nobility of the Muslims, and among them looked to Muhammad as an example of wisdom, valour and triumph:

Pues si queremos la nobleza en los moros considerar, ¿quién es que non sepa cuántos Rreyes, cuántos Principes e grandes varones entrellos ha auido? E sy los otros queremos olvidar, ayamos syquiera memoria de algunos cuya fama de gente en dente para suempre durará. Quién es que ignore aquel falso profeta Mahomat, que fué començador de la dañada seta de los moros por su sabiduría e ardidez en actos de guerra, seyendo de baxo e pobre linaje aver cobrado la primera corona de reyno entre

⁸⁸ 'Salio de Toledo este nieto del rey Almemon [...] por la postura que dixiemos que ouiera con el rey don Alfonso quel ayudasse a cobrar Valencia. Et aun diz [la estoria] quel prometiera el rey don Alfonso quel ayudarie a uer Denia e Santa Maria de Aluarrazin. Ca diz que bien tenie el rey don Alfonso que por esta carrera serie toda la tierra suya, e se apoderarie el della, sola mjentre que Alcadir ouiesse los logares que auemos dichos, por que ueye que los moros estauan todos desacordados.' *EED*, E₂: 889 (184v).

⁸⁹ The caveat, admittedly, is that al-Qadir's weaknesses were ultimately beneficial to the territorial aggrandizement of Leon-Castile. Alfonso's manipulation of a weak partner allowed him to extend his influence at the frontier.

los moros, aver sojudgado a su señorío toda la generación africana, aviendo contra los rromanos muy grandes victorias?⁹⁰

Whilst Diego de Valera is writing many decades after Alfonso X, there remains a shared culture of chivalry and virtue among politico-military elites that spanned the Iberian Middle Ages. Muhammad is held in great disdain, yet there is also an undertone of grudging respect for his strengths and ideal traits.

We must also consider the fundamental moral implication facing each and every Muslim figure in history: the question of faith. By virtue of their adherence to the teachings of Muhammad, Muslims are held to be in state of "moral error" – such was the prevailing thought in Latin Christendom in the Middle Ages. Certainly, some Muslims figures in history demonstrate exemplary behaviour and help further the moral guidance for a Christian readership. Nonetheless, their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah was seen as a great "moral error", denying them Salvation. This was a primordial concern for the medieval man. Consequently, in the theological context Muslims had very little to offer as moral guidance in Christian historiography.⁹¹

When we discount the "theological error" of Islam, we find that Muslims can be interpreted as a source of moral guidance. They represent examples of desirable or undesirable behaviours for the readership. Their moral example stands independently of whether they were enemies or strategic allies. The conceptual divide between historical reality and literary embellishment for the purpose of moral guidance has helped elucidate the multifaceted characterisation of Muslims. The *Estoria* presents us with

⁹⁰ Diego de Valera, *Espejo de la verdadera nobleza*, in *Sociedad de Bibliófilos Españoles* (Madrid, 1878), XVI, pp. 212-213. In K. Scholberg, 'Minorities in medieval Castilian literature', *Hispania*, 37(2) (1954), 203-209 (pp. 206-207).

⁹¹ One exception to this is the interesting mention of the piety and saintliness of the Umayyad caliph Yazid II (720-724), acknowledged in the *Estoria* as follows: 'E por que Yzid, hermano deste Omar, era mucho amado de todos por sus buenas mannas e costumbres que auie, e era tenuto entre los moros como por sancto por su ley que guarda mucho, tomol consigo por compannero e ayudador del regno.' *EED*, E₂: 581 (4r).

narratives of Muslims with various possible combinations: the immoral enemy, the virtuous enemy, the virtuous friend and even the immoral friend. The two competing spectra of enmity-alliance and morality-immorality give rise to rich narratives. The overall result is a diverse range of portrayals of historical Muslim figures. With this multiplicity of characterisations, attitudes towards Muslims are polarised on multiple levels of positive and negative. This complex narrative outcome is yet another factor to help explain the ambivalence towards Muslims in the historiography of Alfonso X.

4.6 *Convivencia and the Estoria: reading society and the text*

In order to draw this chapter to a close, it is necessary to relate the question of ambivalence in the historiography of Alfonso X to the wider concept of Christian-Muslim contact in medieval Iberia. How can we draw together the interpretation of historical writing and the study of the interfaith encounter on the Iberian frontier? Let us turn finally to the notion of *convivencia*, and the long debate over the nature of interactions between Christians and Muslims. Scholars have reflected on the validity of Castro's *convivencia*, as we have seen in detail at the start of this thesis. It provides us with some important reflections for the interpretation of the attitudes captured by medieval writers. In essence, the interpretation of the Iberian frontier experience is a reading of past events. Scholars such as Robert Burns, H. Salvador Martínez, Francisco García Fitz and María Rosa Menocal have offered their own readings of Christian-

Muslim contact.⁹² As we shall see, approaches to *convivencia* are relevant to reading the *Estoria*. Where the history of Christian-Muslim contact is marked by great paradoxes, the past must be read carefully in order to draw meaning from it. Throughout this thesis we have attempted to do the same with Alfonso X's historiography, through an attentive reading of the text. The text is a veritable artefact of medieval Christian thought, and through this we can glimpse a small aspect of how Christians viewed Muslims in centuries past.

Burns' valuable reflections on the topic of *convivencia* are useful to bear in mind when attempting to understand the culture of ambivalence towards minorities. Burns contested the vision of a single model of *convivencia* on the grounds that multi-faith communities were not homogenous. That is to say, Christian-Muslim coexistence varied from the north to the south of the Peninsula. Contact also varied over time, and according to individuals' position in society. Burns therefore recognises the wide spectrum of conflict and co-operation across the Iberian Middle Ages. In response to this, he asserts that the time, space and social context of Christian-Muslim contact must be carefully delimited. Otherwise we are lost in the complexity, size and scale of that society, which broadly appears paradoxical and ambivalent towards Islam. Simply put, the panorama of medieval Iberian society is a blur of different components of space, time and people.

When considering this reflection of historical interpretation, allusions can be drawn to the interpretation of the text. The panoramic view of the text is an equally blurring scene: it is a complex of multiple attitudes, narratives, sources, authors, redactors, realities and moral examples. Just as Burns contests the idea of a single *convivencia*, we

⁹² Sections 1.2 and 1.3 of chapter 1 of this thesis discuss these scholars' approaches to *convivencia*.

must ask ourselves: to what extent does the *Estoria de España* offer us a "single" depiction of contact with Islam? Broadly speaking, the *Estoria* is observably ambivalent. Muslims are frequent rivals of Christian kings and counts; they also appear as allies and as examples of moral decency. The text, as a single entity, seems to be a paradox of hostility and alliance, disdain and admiration, virtue and immorality. This panoramic view of the text poses the same problems as for Iberian society: the *Estoria* is a complex of narratives, each of which must be delimited and contextualised appropriately.

Salvador Martínez has proposed a different qualification of *convivencia*. Rather than a *tolerancia* that pervaded society as a whole, Salvador Martínez has suggested that a courtly *convivencia* existed among Alfonso X and his associates at the highest echelon of society and learned culture. This coexistence at court level among elites, litterati and scholars of all faiths was the environment in which Alfonso's *tolerancia* can be observed – read primarily in the *Cantigas* and the *Partidas*. It is certainly the case that the composition of Alfonso's historiographical, legislative and lyric works was the reserve of a literate, elite sector of society. It is clear that for these individuals, the adjacency of positive and negative attitudes to Islam and Muslims was entirely acceptable. Disdainful stereotypes as polemical attacks coexisted with positive depictions and the reality of Christian-Muslim alliance.

However, it must be recognised that this culture of ambivalence is by no means unique to Alfonso X's historiography. There are many other examples of the coexistence of positive and negative attitudes towards Muslims in historical writing across the Iberian Middle Ages. There are many virtuous and noble Muslims: Abengalbón (*Cantar de Mio Cid*), Zafadola (*Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*), the

Marinids (*Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI*) and the Muslims of Alhama (*Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*).⁹³ That is to say, writers from the twelfth century to the fifteenth century presented Muslims in a constructive light in certain instances, in the same manner as the chroniclers of the *Estoria*. Against a backdrop of historical conflict at the frontier, there was nonetheless room for positive depictions. Without doubt, the wider tradition of medieval historical writing demonstrated a spectrum of attitudes towards Islam. We cannot know the very personal inclinations of the authors for sure, but the written record ultimately betrays an inherently ambivalent mind-set among the literates of Christian Iberia across the centuries.

Moreover, the notion of *convivencia* has become something of a popular narrative in itself in recent years. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks and the Madrid train bombings, *convivencia* has given way an idealisation of the Spanish past as an era of peace and harmony among Christians, Muslims and Jews. Writers such as Menocal and Lowney led the popularisation of "tolerance" in the Spanish past, as a source of moral guidance in today's world.⁹⁴ In the academic context, however, García Fitz has noted the enormous subjectivity of *convivencia*. Historical interpretations of a "harmonious" coexistence rely on the sewing together of vignettes of peaceful co-operation in the past to weave an ideal story. This process creates a narrative of "face value" fragments of interfaith contact that have been decontextualised. García Fitz shows that we can neutralise the idealising tendency of *convivencia*, by fully contextualising instances of "harmonious" interfaith contact in the Spanish past.

This perspective resonates with our efforts to make sense of the ambivalence in Alfonso X's historiography. When reading the enunciations of the *Estoria*'s authors, it is

⁹³ See sections 1.5 and 1.6 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

⁹⁴ See section 1.3 of chapter 1 of this thesis.

crucial to take on board the full context of composition. Precisely, we must contextualise the technical process of compilation. If readings are decontextualised from wider historiographical tradition, an interpretation of the narrative can easily become distorted.⁹⁵ Through a rigorous analysis of the text with a source-critical and redaction-critical method, this thesis has sought to restore the full context of the narratives. This method of historical interpretation has shed light on the agenda of medieval writers and has taken into account the intended authorship of the *Estoria*. This thorough analysis of the text, *in context*, has helped make sense of the apparent ambivalence towards Islam and Muslims – just as contextualisation helps elucidate the true nature of interfaith contact in medieval Iberia.

Among all these reflections upon the reading of society, Menocal suggested that medieval Iberian culture carried the mark of "first-rate" intelligence – that is to say, opposing ideas of animosity and love could coexist quite comfortably at the frontier. Such was the nature of medieval Iberian society; such was the nature of medieval historical writing.

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⁹⁵ Take, for example, the prologue to the *Estoria*. The prologue mentions a number of concepts in its foreword, including memory, wisdom, language, astronomy-astrology and señorío. The case could be made that this was the articulation of Alfonso's original, personal concerns and interest in writing a history of Spain: the mention of science – especially the references to stars and planets – looks like the mark of Alfonso el Sabio. However, this would be a decontextualised reading of the text. The great majority of the prologue is a translation of Jiménez de Rada's prologue to *De Rebus Hispanie*. Furthermore, it is largely a continuation of historiographical practice in the Middle Ages, which frequently refers to the importance of memory, writing, knowledge and the threat of oblivion. This is a prime example of the importance of fully contextualising the content of the *Estoria* in relation to wider historiographical tradition. See chapter 2 of this thesis.

At the close of the thesis, we have at last come full circle. The *Estoria de España*, as a vessel of Christian thought, has allowed us to observe the mind-set and attitudes of the thirteenth century. The text presents a variety of narrative portrayals of historical Muslims figures, under the supreme authority of King Alfonso X of Castile and Leon. My study has taken into account the authorship of the text, the sources used and the redaction process, the intended readership, and the wider historical background of medieval Iberia. The reasons for the overall ambivalence of the text are complex, with many different factors at work, as we have seen in this chapter. Ultimately, the dichotomy of conflict and coexistence that characterised medieval Iberia is firmly fossilised in the historical writings of Alfonso X.

CONCLUSION

This thesis sought to explore Christian attitudes to Islam in thirteenth century historiographical tradition, and to understand why medieval writers presented Muslims in certain ways. Specifically, it examined images of Muslims as presented in Alfonso X's *Estoria de España*. It revealed a range of positive and negative attitudes within the work, inherited from source material and wider historiographical tradition. Furthermore, this thesis placed the *Estoria* in relation to Alfonso's legislation and poetry, exposing a similar trend of ambivalence towards Muslims in oral and legal tradition.

Chapter one explored the historical record of conflict and co-operation between the faiths in order to contextualise the *Estoria* in its wider setting at the Iberian frontier. Logically, this gave rise to the discussion of the large body of scholarship pertaining to *convivencia*. Where *convivencia* was originally a theoretical-nationalistic notion of fruitful coexistence of Christians, Muslims and Jews, it has now evolved into something of an idealising narrative in recent decades. Historical narratives of interfaith contact

have been reformulated by the historians of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: recognising this was a valuable starting point for the critical evaluation and interpretation of historical writing in medieval Spain. Chapter one also provided an overview of representations of Muslims in historical writing of Christian Iberia. The range of attitudes towards Islam was found to be greatly influenced by the historical reality of conflict and co-operation initially outlined at the start of the chapter: Muslims were both friends and foes. Furthermore, it revealed idealising tendencies presenting Muslims as noble and virtuous warriors, alongside more antagonistic and disdainful portrayals occurring elsewhere in historiography.

Chapter two laid out the methodology for exploring the study of interfaith relations in the *Estoria de España*. As a starting point, I set out to retrace traditional veins of exploration of attitudes to Islam in the works of Alfonso X: the *Siete Partidas* and the *Cantigas de Santa María*. The scholarly debates around these works revealed the prevalence of the historical paradigm for interpreting images of Islam in Alfonso's legislation and poetry. It became apparent that many of these studies lacked explicit methodologies and interpretative frameworks. In order to strengthen my own thesis, I sought to clarify my case for the historical interpretation of the *Estoria de España*, defending the ability to retrieve knowledge of the authorial intent, the likely audience of the text and its original meaning. Furthermore, I considered the contending literary paradigm that has governed much of the scholarship of the *Estoria*, engaging with the scholarship of Spiegel and post-structuralist approaches to medieval historiography.

I looked to learn the lessons from biblical scholarship, which has already witnessed the opposition between the historical and literary paradigms for the interpretation of pre-modern historical writing. Drawing on discrete methods of biblical scholars, I chose

an appropriate methodological approach that allows for historical criticism of the *Estoria*, which substantiates the argument defending the stability of meaning and intent in the text. I adopted a source-critical and redaction-critical method, to dig deep into the composition and arrangement of the *Estoria*. This method takes into account the intent of King Alfonso and the likely readers and listeners of the history in the thirteenth century. It also emphasises that there was no single writer of the *Estoria*, and instead multiple hands at work in the authorship of Alfonso's texts. This proved crucial for making sense of the ambivalence of the *Estoria* towards Muslims, later discussed in chapter four.

Chapter three applied this interpretative framework to explore three different narratives and the way in which they were composed. I initially detailed the importance of Jiménez de Rada and Lucas de Túy as the foundations of Alfonso X's history, reiterating the importance of textual tradition and the compilation process in the *Estoria*.

The first of the three *Estoria* narratives explored was the representation of the Prophet Muhammad. This was largely characterised by disdain and contempt for Muhammad and his teachings. The hostile portrayal was largely inherited from the wider tradition of polemic, but also served to reinforce faith boundaries as Castile moved to assert itself as the new ruler of Andalusia and Murcia. The second narrative explored was that of al-Mansur. Unlike the representation of Muhammad, the *Estoria* portrays al-Mansur in a more favourable light. He is treated with respect and admiration for his political successes, in line with his enduring reputation in Christian historiographical tradition. This portrayal was influenced by the need to exemplify the virtues and qualities of the victorious military commander, as well as celebrating al-Mansur's reputation as a worthy adversary of Christian Iberia. The third and final narrative explored was that of

King al-Mamun of Toledo. This narrative portrayed the *taifa* king as a close and loyal friend of Alfonso VI of Leon. In the context of strategic alliances and co-operation in the eleventh century, the narrative showed that Christian and Muslim rulers could form productive relationships with mutually beneficial outcomes – an inevitable aspect of diplomacy and politics for Alfonso X and his readers in the thirteenth century.

Chapter four brought together the three previous chapters to highlight and explain the profoundly contrasting attitudes to Muslims in the *Estoria de España*. I also returned to my analysis of the *Siete Partidas* and the *Cantigas* to demonstrate further these contrasts. The wide range of attitudes was explained by a number of different factors driving the text and its compilation in different ways. They included: textual tradition, the multiplicity of redactors composing the text, the historical reality of the content presented in the text and the moralising tendency shaping the portrayals and characterisation of Muslims in historical writing. Each of these factors contributed to the overall ambivalence of the *Estoria* towards Muslims and Islam. Finally, I returned to the discussion surrounding *convivencia*, to consider the way in which the reading of the *Estoria* allows us to glimpse the ambivalent nature of medieval Iberian society. Ultimately, attitudes of enmity and friendship found a way to coexist at the frontier, as expressed in the *Estoria* narratives explored in this thesis.

This study opens up a number of other avenues for further study. My thesis has been limited to only three Muslim protagonists in the *Estoria*, where many other narratives might be explored. In light of the portrayal of al-Mansur, there is every opportunity to study the *Estoria* representations of other Muslim leaders throughout history, for example: Tariq and Musa (the leaders of the eight-century Muslim conquest), or the Almoravid commander Ibn Tashufin. Further to the study of Alfonso VI and al-Mamun,

there are other examples for narratives of Christian-Muslim co-operation, including: Carlos Mainete and King Galafre of Toledo, Alfonso VI's relations with the other *taifa* kings, or even the relations between El Cid and the kings and lords of *al-Andalus*.

My work has also demonstrated the inherent ambivalence towards Muslims in Christian writing. Whilst previous scholars have acknowledged this in more general terms, this thesis represents the first full-length exploration of a single text's internal ambivalence towards Islam. Beyond the *Estoria de España*, other chronicles such as *De Rebus Hispanie* or the *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI* appear as ideal candidates for further detailed study of this matter. There are other opportunities to examine texts with shared internal ambivalence towards Muslims, further demonstrating the paradoxes of interfaith conflict and co-operation in medieval Iberia.

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