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Introduction

The present volume, *The Latin Qur'an, 1143–1500: Translation, Transition, Interpretation*,¹ highlights some of the methodological principles aimed at better understanding the process behind the genesis, spread, reading, annotation and interpretation of the Latin Qur'an translations made between 1143 and 1500 by Latin Christian authors. Our goal is to offer an extensive overview of how out of this process emerged the kaleidoscopic European Qur'an, with its multiple angles and perspectives depending on each particular historical moment in premodern Latin Europe.²

In the eastern Mediterranean, geographical proximity and diverse channels of political and cultural exchange between Christian and Islamic communities early on fostered, among Christians living in that region, an in-depth knowledge of the Qur'an and the traditions on the life of the Prophet. By contrast, in the western Mediterranean it is not until the twelfth century that we find the first systematic endeavours to study and disseminate – with polemical intent – the laws and traditions of Islam. Until then, all that was available were an array of legends about the figure of Muhammad, which historians and poets had been circulating since the mid-eleventh century. The Benedictine monk Guibert de Nogent (1055–1124), author of the *Gesta Dei per Francos* (1109), remarked that Latin Christendom lacked the sort of solid information on the law of Muhammad that could make for sound refutations of it, himself indicating that he could only relay the information that had reached his ears.³ This idea expressed by Guibert is absolutely novel if we compare it with the stance voiced by the Mozarabic clergy in thriving ninth-century Córdoba. Despite the city's abundance of knowledge about Islam, the surviving Christian texts merely paraphrase or reference a handful of ayas, as in the short treatise “*Historia de Mohamed Pseudopropheta*,” transmitted via the

1 This volume brings together the results of the workshop held at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona on 9–11 March 2020 within the framework of the project “The European Qur'an: Islamic Scripture in European Culture and Religion 1150–1850.” The project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Grant Agreement no. 810141).

2 Thomas E. Burman, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom, 1140–1560* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

3 As pointed out by John Tolan in *Mahomet l'euro péen. Histoire des représentations du Prophète en Occident* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2018), 84, based on the quotation from Guibert (*Gesta Dei per Francos*, I, III).

work of Eulogius of Córdoba (ca. 857),⁴ and in abbreviated form via the work of Paulus Alvarus of Córdoba (ca. 800–860), included in his *Indiculus Luminosus*,⁵ “*Adnotatio Mammetis Arabum principis*,” as well as in the development of the *Indiculus* itself.⁶ However, these authors refused to engage with the Qur’an itself, rejecting it outright, refusing even to refer to Muhammad (calling him merely *Pseudopropheta*) or the Qur’an (*Psalmi*) by name. Although Eulogius and Alvarus must have known more about Islam than that which appears in their writings, their attitude, in contemporary terms, could be described as one of radical activism, and perhaps, given their monastic isolation, this really was the extent of their knowledge. However, it is highly possible that Mozarabic Christians were perhaps more directly familiar with Eastern Christian texts, as evidenced by the contemporary Latin translation of the *Epistula Leonis*.⁷

This method of using an Arabic anti-Muslim polemical source was also followed by the Judeo-Convert Petrus Alfonsi,⁸ whose *Dialogi contra Iudaeos* (1110) contains the chapter “*De Sarracenorum lege destruenda, et sententiarum suarum stultitia confutanda*,” based on his reading of the *Risālat al-Kindī*,⁹ a work which was subsequently translated into Latin in full as part of a project initiated by the abbot of Cluny, who was to undertake the first systematic approach to the Islamic textual tradition. This foundational event has informed the methodological principle adopted in this book, which proposes an in-depth study of the period spanning from 1143–1500, beginning with the completion of the first complete Latin translation of the Qur’an, commissioned

4 Juan Gil Fernández, *Scriptores muzarabici saeculi VIII-IX*, (Turnhout: Brepols [Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis 65B], 2020), vol. II, 892–895. For further information on manuscripts, editions and studies see BICORE (Biblioteca Ibérica Digital), hosted by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (IP’s Fernando González Muñoz and Cándida Ferrero Hernández), <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=22> (accessed March 11, 2021).

5 Juan Gil Fernández, *Scriptores muzarabici saeculi VIII-IX* (Turnhout: Brepols [Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis 65A] 2020), vol. I. 585–645 (496: *Adnotatio Mammetis*). See BICORE: <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=9> (accessed March 11, 2021).

6 Fernando González Muñoz, “El conocimiento del Corán entre los mozárabes,” in *Sub luce florentis calami. Homenaje a Manuel Díaz y Díaz*, ed. Manuela Domínguez García et al. (Santiago de Compostela: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, 2002), 390–409.

7 See Thomas Burman’s contribution to the present volume.

8 John Tolán, *Mahomet l’Européen*, 84–86. For more information see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=45> (accessed March 11, 2021).

9 Fernando González Muñoz, Fernando, *Exposición y refutación del islam. La versión latina de las epístolas de al-Ḥašimi y al-Kindi* (A Coruña: Universidade da Coruña, 2005), 1–148. For more information see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=81> (accessed March 11, 2021).

by the abbot of Cluny, Peter of Montboissier, better known as Peter the Venerable (ca. 1092–1156).

Indeed, as preparations for the Second Crusade (1147–1149) were underway, the abbot travelled to the Iberian Peninsula (1141–1143) in order to inspect various Cluniac monasteries and inquire into their finances.¹⁰ During this trip, out of a desire to provide Christian scholars with a corpus of Islamic texts to help them understand and refute Islam,¹¹ the abbot encouraged and financed the first Latin translation of the Qur'an, along with other Islamic texts, which would prove immensely important in shaping and articulating Western refutations of Islam. These texts were the *Alkoranus*¹² (translated by Robert of Ketton); the aforementioned *Risālat al-Kindī* (translated by Petrus Magister Toletanus, with the help of Muhammad the Moor), which offers a polemical Christian-Muslim dialogue; the *Doctrina Mahumet*¹³ (translated by Hermann of Carinthia), an Islamic 'catechism' for new converts to Islam; *De generatione Mahumeth*¹⁴ (translated by Hermann of Carinthia), which tells of Muhammad's family background, birth and progress as a means of legitimising the history of Islam; and the *Chronica mendosa et ridicula Sarracenorum*¹⁵ (translated by Robert of Ketton), which discusses the expansion of Islam. These last three works were brought together under the title *Fabulae Sarracenorum*.¹⁶ Therefore, the abbot's journey proved fruitful, not only for the Order of Cluny's coffers, but also in terms of the far-reaching intellectual impact it was to have in its own time and after, constituting a decisive event in the intellectual history of Europe, and wherein it is important to highlight the contribution of the expert translators, trained in the finest Latin rhetoric of the twelfth century, and with a wealth of experience in the translation of Arabic scientific texts.

10 James Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).

11 Dominique Iogna-Prat, *Ordonner et exclure: Cluny et la société chrétienne, face à l'hérésie, au judaïsme et à l'islam, 1000 – 1500* (Paris: Aubier, 1998; 2nd corr. ed. Champs / Flammarion, 2000).

12 For more information on the translator and on the nearly thirty manuscripts that have transmitted the work in full or in part, as well as various editions and studies, see BICORE: <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=121> (accessed March 11, 2021).

13 Ulisse Cecini, *Masā'il 'Abdallāh ibn Salām (Doctrina Mahumet)*. Kritische Edition des arabischen Textes mit Einleitung und Übersetzung. Mit einem Anhang zur lateinischen Doctrina Mahumet von Concetta Finiello und Reinhold F. Gleis. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2021).

14 *Ibid.*

15 Óscar De la Cruz Palma and Cándida Ferrero Hernández, "Robert of Ketton: *Chronica mendosa et ridicula Sarracenorum*," in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History (1050–1200)*, ed. David Thomas and Alex Mallet (Leiden: Brill, 2011), vol. 3, 508–519.

16 The overall resulting corpus has been retitled *Corpus Toletanum*, *Corpus Cluniacense* and *Corpus Islamolatinum*; see: <https://grupsderecerca.uab.cat/islamolatina/> (accessed March 11, 2021).

Later on, in 1210 the archbishop of Toledo, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (1170–1247), sponsored and encouraged the anti-Islamic crusade, especially through his support for the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (1212) and by instructing Mark of Toledo (fl. 1191–1216), canon of the Cathedral of Toledo, to undertake what would be the second Latin translation of the Qur'an.¹⁷ Like Robert of Ketton, Mark's prior experience had been in the translation of scientific texts, but where the former had specialized in astronomy, the latter had focused on medicine. This was to influence how each of them approached the task of translating the Qur'an, relying on linguistic strategies related to each of their respective fields of expertise.¹⁸ This is not the only difference between their translations, as they both follow different methods: Robert, steeped in the elegant rhetoric of the twelfth century, employs all its figures and turns of phrase, while Mark's translation adopts a word-for-word approach.

However, in addition to these full translations of the Qur'an, it is also important to consider cases where authors provide their own translations of specific *ayas* and *suras*, as in the *Liber denudationis siue ostensionis uel patefaciens*,¹⁹ the Latin translation of a Arabic original (Būluṣ ibn Rajā', *Kitāb al-Wāḍiḥ bi-al-ḥaqq*), which paraphrases numerous passages from the Qur'an, and provides transliterations of many *sura* titles. This seminal work was used profusely by Dominican friar Riccoldo da Monte di Croce in his *Contra Legem Sarracenorum* (1300),²⁰ along with selections from Petrus Alfonsi and from the translation by Mark of Toledo.²¹ However, Riccoldo was also able to read the Qur'an in

17 The full translation can be found in Nàdia Petrus Pons, *Alchoranus Latinus, quem transtulit Marcus canonicus Toletanus* (Madrid: CSIC [Col. Nueva Roma, 46], 2016). For more partial editions and studies see BICORE [<https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publicques/obra.php?bicoreid=121>].

18 Julian Yolles, "Scientific Language in the Latin Qur'ans of Robert of Ketton and Mark of Toledo," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 22.3 (2020): 121–148.

19 Edited by Thomas E. Burman, *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs, c. 1050–1200* (Leiden-New York-Köln: Brill, 1994), 240–385. For more information see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publicques/obra.php?bicoreid=46> (accessed March 11, 2021).

20 Edited by Jean-Marie Mérigoux, "L'ouvrage d'un frère precheur florentin en Orient à la fin du XIIIe siècle. 'Le Contra legem Sarracenorum' de Riccoldo da Monte di Croce," *Fede e Controversia nel '300 e '500*, *Memorie Domenicane*, Nuova Serie 17 (1986): 69–142.

21 None of these sources are actually credited, as is also true of the passages drawn from the works of Peter the Venerable; see Mérigoux's study, in his critical edition of the work, "L'ouvrage d'un frère precheur florentin en Orient," on pp. 28–30 and 40. Of particular interest is Riccoldo's autograph note in ms. BnF Arabe 384. For more details see Thomas Burman, "Two Dominicans, a Lost Manuscript, and Medieval Christian Thought on Islam," in *Medieval Exegesis and Religious Difference. Commentary, Conflict, and Community in the Premodern Mediterranean*, ed. R. Szpiech (New York: Fordham Univ. Pr., 2015), 79–87.

Arabic himself, and thus in other instances offers his own translations of certain passages.²² Among other sources, Riccoldo also uses²³ the *Explanatio Symbolum Apostolorum ad institutionem* (1256–1257)²⁴ by Dominican friar Ramon Martí²⁵ (after 1280), also the author of *Capistrum Iudaeorum, fidelium*,²⁶ of *Pugio fidei aduersus Mauros et Iudaeos*²⁷ and of *De Seta Machometi*,²⁸ all of which contain passages of Qur'an, and, in the case of *De Seta*, of Hadith, in his own translation. Another key figure is Ramon Llull, since, although his statements about the Qur'an are dispersed throughout his vast oeuvre, it has been proven that he directly consulted Arabic sources when writing the speech given by the Saracen in Book IV of his *Liber de gentili et tribus sapientibus*.²⁹ Another relevant work is Dominican friar Alfonso Buenhombre's (d. 1353) *Disputatio Abutalib Sarraceni et Samuelis Iudei* (1340), which contains fragments

22 Of the forty-three Qur'an references, twenty-one are indirect, via the *Liber Denudationis*, while the remaining twenty-two are his own, cfr. Jean-Marie Mérioux. "L'ouvrage d'un frère precheur florentin ...," 28, note 128.

23 Thomas Burman, "Two Dominicans, a Lost Manuscript."

24 Edited by Joseph M. March, "En Ramón Martí et la seva *Explanatio symboli apostolorum*," *Anuari de l'Institut d'Estudis Catalans* (1908), 442–496. For more information see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=77> (accessed March 11, 2021).

25 Ángel Cortabarría Beitia, "La connaissance des textes arabes chez Raymond Martin, OP, et sa position en face de l'Islam," *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 18 (1983): 279–324.

26 Adolfo Robles Sierra, *Raimundi Marti Capistrum Iudaeorum, vol. I: Texto crítico y traducción*, (Würzburg-Altenberge: Echter, 1990). *Vol II*, (Würzburg-Altenberge: Echter, 1993). For more information see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=78> (accessed March 11, 2021).

27 Göрге K. Hasselhoff and Alexander Fidora, eds., *Ramon Martí's Pugio Fidei. Studies and Texts* (Santa Coloma de Queralt: Obrador Edendum, 2017 [Exemplaria Scholastica 8]). More references on BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=79> (accessed March 11, 2021).

28 Josep Hernando i Delgado, Josep, "Ramon Martí (s. XIII) *De seta Machometi* o *De origine, progressu et fine Machometi et quadruplici reprobatione prophetiae eius*," *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Medievalia* 4 (1983): 9–63; Joaquim Chorão Lavajo, "Cristianismo e Islamismo na Península Ibérica: Raimundo Martí, um precursor do diálogo religioso" (PhD diss., Universidade de Évora, 1988). For a study on the model/source for the *Seta*, see Pieter Sjoerd Van Koningsveld, *An Arabic Source of Ramon Martí. Al-Saif al-Murhaf fī al-Radd 'alā al-Mushaf* ("The Whetted Sword in Refutation of the Koran."). Introductory Study with Text and Translation of its Surviving Fragments (Leiden: Aurora, 2018). More references on BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=80> (accessed March 11, 2021).

29 Óscar de la Cruz Palma. *Raymundi Lulli, Liber de gentili et tribus sapientibus* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015 [Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 264 – ROL XXXVI]), Introduction. See: BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/autor.php?autorid=46> (accessed March 11, 2021).

of various ayas.³⁰ Lastly, this overview of fragmentary parts of the Qur'an should also mention Pedro de la Cavallería (ca. 1415–1461), of Aragon, whose treatise *Zelus Christi contra Iudaeos, Sarracenos et Infideles* (1450)³¹ recommends reading the Qur'an in order to understand it and, in turn, reject it.

Cardinal Juan de Segovia (1390/5–1458),³² in collaboration with Yça Gidelli, faqīh of Segovia, 'Īsā ibn Jābir, worked on a trilingual Arabic-Latin-Spanish version of the Qur'an, of which all that has come down to us is Juan de Segovia's prologue.³³ This project, born in 1453 out of the desire to achieve a more faithful translation than that of Robert of Ketton, must also be regarded against the backdrop of the expansion of the Ottoman Empire and the fall of Constantinople that same year. In the early sixteenth century, at the end of the period under study in this volume, a partial translation³⁴ was made by Judeo-Converter scholar Flavius Mithridates (1450–1489), as well as a complete translation (1518)³⁵ by the convert and former *faqīh* of Teruel, Juan Gabriel, commissioned by cardinal Egidio da Viterbo. Of course, it is impossible to bring up the figure of Juan Gabriel of Teruel without also mentioning the work of Iberian Christian authors who translated fragments of the Qur'an from Arabic into Spanish, as demonstrated by the works of Juan Andrés of Xàtiva (fl. 1487–1515), *Confusión o*

30 The *Disputatio* contains ten references to the Qur'an, three to the Hadith of Al-Bukhari, and three to the Hadith of Muslim; Antoni Biosca i Bas, *Alfonsi Bonihominis Opera omnia*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020 Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 295]), 121–170. For more information see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=195> (accessed March 11, 2021).

31 Preserved in four manuscripts and published in 1592 by Martín Alonso Vivaldo; references on BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/autor.php?autorid=223> (accessed March 11, 2021).

32 For more detailed information on his work on Islamic topics see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/autor.php?autorid=190> (accessed March 11, 2021)

33 Editions of the prologue in Darío Cabanelas, *Juan de Segovia y el problema islámico* (Madrid: Universidad Complutense 1952. 2nd. ed.: Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2007), 279–302 and José Martínez Gázquez, “El Prólogo de Juan de Segovia al Corán (Qur'an) trilingüe (1456),” *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch: Internationale Zeitschrift für Mediävistik* 38/2 (2003): 389–410. For more information see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=140> (accessed March 11, 2021).

34 Benoît Grévin, “Le Coran de Mithridate (ms. Vat. ebr. 357) à la croisée des savoirs arabes dans l'Italie du XVe siècle,” *Al-Qantara XXXI* 2 (2010): 513–548.

35 Although the manuscripts contain revisions and corrections by the convert Leo Africanus and by Scottish clergyman David Colville, which would extend their chronology until 1621; for more details see Katarzyna Krystyna Starczewska, *Latin Translation of the Qur'an (1518/1621) Commissioned by Egidio da Viterbo. Critical Edition and Introductory Study* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018).

confutación de la secta mahomética y del Alcorán (1515),³⁶ and Joan Martí Figuerola (1457- after 23/7/1532), *Lumbre de fe contra el Alcorán y la Secta Mahomética*,³⁷ which reveal the complex intertwining of Islamic and Christian texts and identities throughout the Hispanic lands.

The sixteenth century marks the consolidation of the printing press, which would enable texts to spread quickly and efficiently, while at the same time ushering in different approaches to Islam, whose apogee in this moment corresponds to the period of Ottoman expansion deep into Europe, and to a mutation in Christian perspectives, imbued with the principles of Humanism and the tools of philology, which together led to the study of Semitic languages, giving rise to the field of Orientalism at European universities and among religious orders. But it is also a time of imperialist policies, from a position of power over newly encountered territories that helped to reconfigure the *Orbis terrarum*, with new religious interests and polemics at the heart of Christianity, building up to the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and thus giving Islam a new role within intra-Christian conflicts. In fact, the first printed book containing diverse and numerous texts that amounted to a veritable encyclopaedia of Islam from a European perspective was composed by the Protestant reformer Theodore Bibliander (1543),³⁸ who argues in his preface to the book in favour of Islam's value as a tool in the fight against the Papacy. Apart from the many other texts it contains, what stands out above the rest is the *editio princeps* of the first Latin translation of the Qur'an and the rest of the works making up the *Corpus Islamolatinum*, to which were added the texts written about Islam by the abbot of Cluny following his own reading of the works in the *Corpus*, thus closing the circle begun in 1143, and enabling Robert of Ketton's first Latin translation of the Qur'an to reach a wider readership. If in the premodern period it had already been profusely read and commented upon in manuscript form, the printed edition was to prove a great success, thus finding its way to a broader and more diverse public.

Indeed, the intense circulation of manuscripts, readings, annotations, interpretations and polemical rewritings during the four centuries that passed from

36 Elisa Ruiz García and María Isabel García-Monge, *Confusión o confutación de la secta mahomética y del Alcorán* (Mérida: Barcarrota, 2003). For studies and references see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/autor.php?autorid=181> (accessed March 11, 2021).

37 Elisa Ruiz García, "Joan Martí Figuerola," in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History Western Europe (1500–1600)*, ed. David Thomas and John Chesworth (Leiden: Brill, 2014), vol. 6, 89–92. For more information see BICORE <https://bibliotequesbh.uab.cat/bicore/publiques/obra.php?bicoreid=86> (accessed March 11, 2021).

38 Theodor Bibliander (ed.), *Machumetis Saracenorū principis, eiusque successorū vitae, ac doctrina, ipseque Alcoran* [...] (Basel, Johannes Opporin, 1543). 3 vols.

the completion of the first Latin translation of the Qur'an in 1143 until the publication of Bibliander's encyclopaedia in 1543, constitute the material at the heart of this present volume.

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