

Mozarab Perseverance of Identity and Faith Amid Islam

By Stephen Chappell



Quoniam robor
equi sedebat
super eum habebat
blasphemia.

Quoniam robor
equi sedebat
super eum habebat
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Quoniam robor
equi sedebat
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Equum nitens equum de
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During the centuries of Muslim rule in medieval Spain most Christians converted to Islam. The vast majority of citizens living in al-Andalus became Muslim within a century of their invasion. But unlike in other Muslim conquered lands, a notable amount of Christians did not convert. This paper will seek to demonstrate why the Mozarab Christians of al-Andalus did not convert to Islam during the centuries of Muslim rule and dominance of the Iberian Peninsula. Despite the inconveniences and persecutions that befell those who did not seek conversion, there continued existing a significant number of non-Muslims living in al-Andalus. The main reasons why Mozarabs did not convert to Islam included often negative treatment of non-Arab Muslims, the influence from Muslim leaders on Christian bishops, the teachings of Christian leaders and polemic writings from other Christians, how Islam and Mozarabs viewed each other, and the way they identified themselves within the multi-cultural peninsula.

The historiography of Mozarabs in medieval Spain has shifted over time according to popular fields of study. Mozarabs, as Aaron Michael Moreno describes them, are “individuals who can be identified at a most basic level as Christians with lineal roots in al-Andalus.”[1] Mozarabs defined under the current historiography are the descendants of the culturally Arabicizing Christians of al-Andalus.[2] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Spain’s search for historical identity led historians to identify Mozarabs as the “candle bearers” of Spanish Catholic faith, which held strong under the Muslim conquest of the peninsula in 711. Historians viewed Mozarabs as a symbol of Spain’s multi-cultural past which separated them from the rest of European history.[3] In the context of Spain’s search for historical identity, Mozarabs, for the most part, have been studied purely on a multicultural coexistence of the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian faiths in al-Andalus. Recent increased attention towards the Mozarabs is due to a spike in ethnic and identity studies, which focus on immigration and minorities on a global scale.[4] Most approaches to the history of the Mozarabs have focused on narratives of assimilation, examining Mozarab language, legal status, liturgical rites and religious practices, as a base for measuring vitality of their identity.[5] With regards to the conversion, or non-conversion among the Christians in medieval Spain, there has not been sufficient research and analysis. Little devotion has been given to researching why Mozarabs did not convert. I will use the traditional approaches by scholars[6], examining Mozarab identity under Islam, to find the likely reasons Mozarabs had for persevering in Christianity.

Mozarabs in medieval Spain probably saw the negative treatment towards Muwalladun and Berbers as second class citizens, and this acted as a deterrent

for conversion to Islam. Muwalladun was the name given to those Christians who had converted to Islam. Berbers were from North Africa and had converted to Islam not too long before the invasion of the Iberian Peninsula, of which they did almost all the “leg-work” in the establishment of Islam in al-Andalus. During the ninth century, al-Andalus had experienced numerous Muwalladun uprisings. Roberto Marin-Guzman suggests that the “society in al-Andalus was highly stratified, and religion was the major element for identity and social differences and opportunities.”[7] Jessica A. Coope expresses “one motive for converting to Islam would be the understandable desire to enjoy full social and legal status in the community.”[8] They may have desired full social and legal status, but due to the many revolts of the non-Arab Muslim population, I will respectfully disagree. Even though the Muwalladun had converted to Islam, it was not necessarily the case that they experienced full social and legal status. Although there were government positions only those who were Muslim could hold, this did not mean that in reality Muslim elites gave these positions to non-Arab Muslims. In fact, the revolts portray Muwalladun and Berbers as second class citizens to the Arab Muslims, and Mozarabs could have seen this as an undesirable status to be identified with.

In 806 AD, a Muwalladun rebellion against Arab rule occurred in Cordoba, and one year later the same thing happened in Toledo. Again in 814 the people of Cordoba were not happy with the discriminatory policies of al-Hakam I, the Arab Amir. Umar ibn Hafsun, a Muwalladun, started his own revolt against Arab rule regarding equality, better conditions of life, a greater share in power, better lands for agriculture, and fair distribution of wealth in 880 which lasted several decades. The Berbers for the most part were a non-Arab speaking people. Muslim Berbers did not share in many commonalities with their Arab leaders, and in fact, held resentment towards Arab privilege.[9] All of these rebellions were violently suppressed by the Arab armies.[10] A fundamental aspect of status in the Cordoban courts centered on the extent that someone could identify as Arab. This means not just simply converts to Islam like the Muwalladun or Berbers, but Arab, which are those in ninth-century Cordoba that could trace their family’s history, or blood line back to the aristocratic Arab families. These Arab families which were at the top of the social hierarchy in medieval Spain, enjoyed a certain “social precedence”. [11]

The examples of not only Muwalladun uprising, but also Berber revolts, show that Arab-Muslims really did view all other Muslims in al-Andalus as second class citizens. If it were true that converts to Islam in al-Andalus experienced a genuine equal opportunity in economics, power, and ownership of land, then I could say with confidence that there were no benefits for remaining a

Christian. In light of these examples we see that it was not the case. Mozarabs probably believed this treatment of the Muwalladun would cause a total loss of their identity. The Mozarabs may have recognized that if they converted, they would go from being a significant member of their religious cultural identity, to being an insignificant member in the mass Islamic religion. They might have also considered that the Muwalladun were not treated as equals with the same opportunity, and this probably contributed to the Mozarab perseverance to Christianity.

The Mozarabs felt their religious and cultural identity, within the context of medieval Spain was an essential part of who they were and what role they played in society. Having examined the possibility that Mozarabs did not want to convert because it would mean a total loss of identity in the Christian community, it is imperative to now look at how they connected their identity to the rites and liturgies of their Arabicized Christianity, and how Mozarabs identified themselves through the way they practiced their faith and culture in Muslim Spain. Analyzing how the Mozarabs identified their livelihood through religious culture/faith, which in fact had alterations from the Roman Catholic Church at the time, allows possible insights into the reasons why Mozarabs did not convert to Islam.

It is conceivable to assert that Mozarabs continued to exist and resist conversion during the centuries of Muslim dominance, due to a sense of identity they felt they needed to preserve through religious rites. Some Mozarabs felt such a strong identity towards their Visigothic-Mozarabic rite that it defined who they were and under what conditions they related to one another. As the Reconquista continued to develop, interactions between northern Christians, who had direct ties with the Roman Catholic Church, and Mozarabs became more frequent. When some of these encounters took place, it was clear that the Mozarabs had distinct identities with each other that were separate from Muslim, Jewish, and northern Christian identities. In one of the encounters during the re-conquest of the peninsula, Mozarabs living in Toledo would have rather fled the city with al-Qadir, who was the Muslim leader, when Alfonso VI and the northern Christians conquered it in late eleventh century.[12] Why would these Mozarab Christians rather live under Islamic rule instead of staying in the newly re-conquered Toledo? It would only make too much sense that the Mozarabs would be aching to live under Christian rule again. If we analyze how Mozarabs in Toledo identified themselves with each other through their religious practices, compared to how they viewed some changing practices of the Northern Christians, the result might end up being something different altogether. If we can understand this, then we have a

possibility of understanding how Mozarabs resisted conversion in the centuries before.

Prior to the invasion of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula, Christians used a Visigothic rite. The Visigothic rite was the way in which the Christians would practice their faith, for example: what was said during the Christian Mass, or at what point certain prayers were said. After the invasion and installation of power from Islam, the Christians of al-Andalus adopted much of their culture from the Arabs and even some aspects of how they practiced their faith. This type of “rite” as explained, is called the Mozarabic Rite due to the adoptions made by Christians living under Islam.[13] The Mozarabic Rite was different than the universal rites of the Catholic Church because of the separation al-Andalus had experienced from the rest of European developments during Muslim control.

Rodger Collins, a scholar of Spanish history, points out that there were many factors in the “isolation of the Church in al-Andalus that kept it immune from the influence of virtually all of the developments in ecclesiastical thought and organization elsewhere in Europe”.^[14] Firstly, the separation of contact between the Christians in al-Andalus and developments occurring in the Catholic Church in the rest of Europe, means that the Mozarabs continued operating under “older” rites and practices. Maria Rosa Menocal suggests that Pope Gregory VII “had understood that the Arabocentric culture of the Iberian Muslim had become, in many ways, the culture of the Mozarab, and the ancient Visigothic-Mozarabic rite was the emblem of that culture.” Pope Gregory called it the “superstitio Toletanae,” which is Latin for “the ancient liturgy”, and wanted to ban its use in Spain. Instead, he wanted to “ensure the predominance of the Roman rite”.^[15] The implementation of this desire to ban the old Visigothic-Mozarabic rite occurred when Toledo was taken by Northern Christian forces.

Alfonso VI conquered Toledo after he set out on this mission in May 1085.^[16] French clergymen were instituted in the Catholic churches of Toledo that were sympathetic towards the views of Pope Gregory VII. Northern Christians attempted to tell the Mozarabs that they essentially could not practice their faith and culture in the way they had been for so long, and some Mozarabs opted to follow the beaten Muslim ruler of Toledo, al-Qadir, into exile.^[17] This piece of evidence gives a possible look on how strongly Mozarabs felt connected with each other through religious practices, and evidently identified themselves separately from not just Muslims, but also Northern Christians. It also exemplifies the notion that Islamic rulers at

certain points allowed Christians to practice their faith in a manner that pleased the Christians living under Islam.

The fact that some Christians preferred to practice their faith under Muslim, instead of northern Christian rule, is one of the reasons Mozarabs of al-Andalus did not convert to Islam. If the Mozarabs in Toledo would rather leave than give up their religious rites, it is likely that what mattered to them was a sense, or perhaps, a belief, in an identity through their religious rites which include Mozarab culture and their way of life. More so, because they were able to practice their faith in times of peace, in the manner they felt best under Islam, it follows that Christians would not feel the necessity to convert or flee Muslim Spain. The perseverance of Mozarab populations in al-Andalus likely had to do with an identity defined through their specific practice of faith, which Islamic rulers allowed them to fulfill. Mozarabs, and the Christian clergy, especially the bishops, must have been unified in their acceptance of Islamic rule under the conditions in which they stayed in al-Andalus. The convictions of the regular people that “fill the pews”, are directly connected to the teachings of the leaders of that particular faith. In the case of the continuity of Mozarabs in al-Andalus, Christian leaders played a fundamental role. Having analyzed the identity some Mozarabs felt through their religious rites and practices, it is important to speak about the Christian leaders in al-Andalus and how they may have influenced the majority of Mozarabs to coexist under Islam, and how it was possible that Muslim leaders had an influence on Christian bishops.

The separation of the Mozarab Christians from contact and influence by the rest of European Christianity, the involvement of Muslim leaders in appointing some bishops, and the influence that bishops had over the population of Christians, resulted in Mozarab perseverance in Christian identity. The Christian church in al-Andalus experienced different changes and adaptations under Islamic rule. When Islam had taken over the Iberian Peninsula, a separation between the Catholic Church in Rome and in Spain had begun to take shape. Islam had conquered the Visigothic kingdom and had altered the status of the Christians, in the sense that they were no longer connected to state power, but this did not exactly abolish state involvement in Christianity.

The Umayyad amirs did in fact have an interest in controlling the appointment of bishops in al-Andalus, and any council that convened between the Christians living in the peninsula had to have the approval of the amir before it could take place.[18]One example of these bishopric appointments was Reccimund who was given the position as bishop of Grenada from Abd al-

Rahman III as a reward for accomplishing a diplomatic meeting with Otto I of Germany.[19] Muslim leaders and Christian bishops also worked together in the events of the Mozarab Martyr Movement. Kenneth Baxter Wolf points out that Abd al-Rahman II had worked closely with a Christian bishop named Reccafredus, in the hopes of putting a stop to the Christians who were looking for martyrdom.[20] Analyzing the relationships between state officials and religious leaders, enlightens the probability of influence that one had on the other.

If state officials, or secular leaders, have power to influence bishops, or sway the appointment of any religious leader, there is always a certain measure of probability that the person appointed to the leadership position is under the “thumb” of the state leader. If then, Muslim leaders played a part in appointing the heads of Christian churches in medieval Spain, it follows that Muslim leaders helped influence the attitudes of bishops that sued for peace and coexistence with Islam. It is well known that the majority of Muslim leaders during this time were willing to let Christians practice their faith as long as it did not interfere with Islamic law. For this reason we must look at the attitudes of the Mozarab leaders under the rule of the Caliphs in Cordoba in early-tenth century. Some Christian leaders were willing to sacrifice social and cultural infusion with Islam for the sake of practicing their faith. Understanding attitudes of Christian leaders is a key element to the perseverance of Mozarab continuity.

Perhaps the reason for Mozarabs to stay faithful to Catholicism depended on the acceptance of Muslim rule, and an allowance to practice their law and faith. What this focuses on is the advice given to a man named John of Gorze from the bishop of Cordoba. If we can understand how the Christian leaders viewed being ruled by Islam, it is likely that those who they led will not only be told to consider it in the same way, but it is probable that they actually regarded it in the same manner. The bishop writes: “Consider he said under what conditions we exist. Through our sins we have been reduced to this, that we are subject to the sway of the pagans. The Apostle forbids us to resist legitimate power. There is only one consolation in this calamity, that they do not forbid us our law... In the circumstances, therefore, it seems wise to us to comply with all things which do not hinder our faith ...”[21] This piece of evidence gives us an insight of the attitudes of Mozarab leaders, and a probable reason why they did not convert to Islam.

John of Gorze was sent from King Otto’s court to bring letters to Abd al-Rahman III. The letters were a reply to Abd al-Rahman’s insults regarding a dispute that had risen among himself and Otto. The issue centered on some

attacks carried out by Muslim pirates on Otto's lands. When John arrived in Cordoba, he was unsettled by the moral standards of the Christians in Muslim Spain. John did not hand over the letters from Otto to Abd al-Rahman III on arrival which the Caliph had ordered, and was beginning to cause a disturbance in Muslim-Christian relations. The bishop asked him to comply with the will of the Caliph because John was putting the Christians in danger by disobeying, and so we have the advice given to John of Gorze by the Bishop of Cordoba.[22]

The majority of Christians converted to Islam between the invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 711, and the Christian Reconquista. More devotion needs to be directed towards the reasons why Mozarabs stayed true to Catholicism. This advice given by a Mozarab Bishop opens a path into the minds of Christians in al-Andalus. A Christian community is led by a bishop, and the bishop is charged with the teaching and faith of his community. If the bishop understood that the best way to live under Islamic rule was to comply with all things, as long as Islamic leaders did not take away their law, and that which does not hinder the practice of their faith, it follows that the bishop taught his community to live their faith with the same attitude. This means that those Christians who were not just exteriorly Christian, but had a conviction to their faith, were accepting of Islamic rule as long as those requirements said by the bishop were met. They did not convert or leave Muslim Spain, but in fact assimilated with the culture.

The advice from the bishop is one facet that cannot be ignored when considering the non-conversion of Mozarabs. Muslims actually did allow Mozarabs to operate somewhat freely as long as it did not interrupt the Islamic culture, way of life, or religion as in the case of the Mozarab Martyrs of Cordoba. Between 850 and 859 nearly fifty Mozarabs who "intentionally courted death by proclaiming their faith in public, insulting Islam, apostatizing, or proselytizing" were executed by Muslims.[23] The Andalusian Christians who were involved in the martyr movement and encouraging it, was not necessarily the view of the majority of Mozarabs, but the impact it had on the Muslim-Christian relationship and the strengthening of Christian and Muslim faith is important. It is quite essential to recognize the outcomes of the Martyrs of Cordoba, on both the Christian side, and the Islamic side, because the result in inter-relationships between Christians and Muslims can enlighten the question of the non-conversion of Mozarabs.

The responsibility for one reason Mozarabs did not convert or flee Muslim Spain was due to the outcomes of these events in Cordoba in the ninth century. These events propelled Mozarab identity to mature and strengthen

regarding Mozarab acceptance of Islamic rule, and their willingness to coexist amid a religion and culture that was not their own. Under the Umayyad regime, the Christian liturgy remained for the most part in Latin, but in almost all other aspects of life, Mozarabs adopted the Arabic language to communicate. Rodger Collins pointed out that even the Christian Bible, and other works from the Visigothic period, were translated into Arabic sometime in the tenth century and the use of Arabic was clearly growing under the Umayyad Caliphs.^[24]

For the Christians who held the value of literary tradition in Latin on a high standard, language was conceived as a representation of loyalty to your culture. Coope compares this loyalty to the symbol of circumcision. She expresses very clearly that these Christians considered “a true Christian to study Latin; a man who studied Arabic had gone over to the enemy.”^[25] Paul Alvarus, who was a Christian in al-Andalus during the time of the martyrs’ movement, deeply opposed the fact that the majority of Christians were acculturating to Islamic and Arabic culture. Alvarus writes on the Mozarab youth who he sees as losing Christian culture. He says, “They are ignorant of the beauty of the Church and look with disgust upon the Church’s rivers of paradise as something vile. Christians do not know their own law, and Latins do not use their own tongue”.^[26] Paul Alvarus and other Christians in Cordoba in the mid-ninth century expressed a significant concern for the decline of traditional Christian Latin culture and the growth of Arabicizing.^[27]

The beginning of this essay discussed the uprisings of non-Arab Muslims in the early part of the ninth-century. As a result of these revolts, taxes increased under al-Hakam for non-Arab Muslims.^[28] Under the rule of al-Hakam’s son, Abd al-Rahman II, Cordoba experienced a time of economic prosperity and political peace. Cordoba during the rule of Abd al-Rahman II was a time where Muslim leaders were making efforts to transform the capital into an international center of Islamic culture. Musicians, philosophers, and many merchants bringing luxury items such as jewelry and spices from the east, were often found at the Umayyad court.^[29] In relation to the events of Islamic prosperity, and higher poll taxes (Jizya) on non-Muslims, Cordoban Christians were converting to Islam very rapidly, which brought intense grounds for concern among Mozarab Christians. This concern prompted a number of Christians in al-Andalus to write works which were intended for the encouragement in strengthening and separating Christian faith from Islam.

The strategy in polemic writings from Paul Alvarus and Eulogius and other Christians is something that requires further analysis when discerning reasons for the non-conversion of Mozarabs. Christian writers would use a strategy

focused on delegitimizing Islam and Muhammad. Christians would use many angles to get their readers to believe their religious supremacy. During the massive conversions to Islam and in the wake of the Mozarab Martyr Movement, Alvarus and Eulogius understood that the actions of the martyrs' were signs of Christian resistance to Islam. They viewed the movement not only as a protest against acculturation and conversion, but also as a clear message to all Christians in al-Andalus, that "unless they resisted such trends vigorously, their religion and culture would be absorbed by Islam."^[30] So, understandably, Alvarus and Eulogius, along with other Christian writers, urged the continuity of the Christian faith among Mozarabs through their polemic works. One of these works is the comparison of Christ to Muhammad. Al-Quti and Alfonsi were two strategic polemic writers during this time.

In comparing Christ to Muhammad, polemic writers expressed on which levels Muhammad had failed and Christ triumphed. Alfonsi writes that Muhammad failed, after three days, to be resurrected as he said he would. This "failed" resurrection would be seen then as not only inferior to Christianity and Jesus, but also would be considered as a belief in a false prophet. As Christians believed it, false prophets are always around in some form or another, and belief in them will lead you away from Christ's teachings, and ultimately salvation. Charles L. Tieszen suggests that Christians followed Christ because of his successful resurrection.^[31] Eulogius, writes at the time of the Martyrs of Cordoba that King Muhammad who was relentless in his determination to eliminate Christians in Spain, used his "unbelievable rage", and "unbridled fury".^[32] These examples of comparing Christ to Muhammad, and Eulogius' expression of how he views the character of Muhammad, show us the type of separation that Mozarab writers wanted to convey to their reader.

The strategy of polemic writing most likely contributed to the way Mozarabs of al-Andalus kept their identity, and the need for it to be completely separate from Islam. Charles L. Tieszen expresses that this type of polemic writing could also be used to stabilize the relationship between Mozarabs and Muslims. By defining what acculturation was acceptable, and on what grounds religiously and morally Christians should isolate themselves, these texts helped Christian readers to exist in a multi-religious al-Andalus.^[33] Tieszen's idea could have possibly played a role in regards to the non-conversion of Mozarabs. It is important to note that during the martyr movement, two types of Christians living in Cordoba developed; Christians that supported and encouraged this movement such as Paul Alvarus, and Eulogius, and others who wanted this small group of Christians to stop seeking martyrdom because

it was causing too much friction within society, propelling an unbalanced society in a very delicate coexistence with Islam.

Some Mozarabs probably viewed these martyrs as fanatics whose actions were too dangerously radical for them. Olivia Constable suggests that the martyrs could have been influenced by preachers who were very charismatic, through penitential practices, and by the dramatic deaths of others in their group.[34] Other Mozarab Christians that supported mixing cultures and Arabicizing, felt the assimilation with Islamic culture was a necessary means of making a living. Jessica A. Coope expresses that some merchants saw it was not necessary to make such a big deal about their “second class status as dhimmi”, but that other Christians “saw the practices of passing for a Muslim or conforming to Islamic law as deeply significant”. [35]

The point is that Christian identity was in a crisis. The martyr movement, and polemic writings, helped Christians define their identity. The remaining Christians, who did not convert, established “ground rules” if you will, for survival in al-Andalus. By adhering to all things that Islamic rule demanded of them which did not prevent them their faith, Mozarabs created for themselves their identity. Even though the number of Mozarab Christians dropped dramatically during the time of Muslim prosperity in al-Andalus, due to the vast conversions to Islam, those who remained redefined Christianity for themselves, which in turn contributed to the continuity of the Christian faith under Islam in medieval Spain.

The rapidity of conversions to Islam also fueled Muslim fears of “innovations” or “corruption” from acculturation with non-Muslims, especially Christians. Seeing how the events during mid-ninth century Cordoba brought changes in the Christians’ view of Islam, it is also important to discuss some of the changes in Islamic identification. The martyr movement in ninth-century Cordoba did not only affect how Christians redefined themselves, but largely prompted Muslims to also “redefine their identities and clarify their relations.” [36] Islamic religious authorities felt the need to address the anxieties from the acculturation, intermarriage, and conversions between Muslims and Christians. The possibility that there were going to be corruptions to the Islamic faith encouraged redefined rules of cultural mixing for Muslims with the Christians.

It is likely that Mozarab continuity was connected to laws which promoted the separation of contact between Muslims and Christians in every-day life. As a result of certain laws created by Muslims which prohibit interaction with Christians, Mozarabs probably interacted with other Mozarabs in their

personal and social lives more so than with Muslims. Mozarab separation through Islamic law helped define and solidify Mozarab identity, and acted as a catalyst for continuity. Therefore, it is essential to understand and identify some of the methods used by Muslims to separate and limit contact with Mozarabs. One method the Muslim jurists used to prevent more problems with acculturation and assimilation was to emphasize the boundaries of contact between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Caliph Umar II created a series of laws which were issued in hopes of preventing dhimmis from assuming certain Arab styles of clothes or hair, as well as ordering all non-Muslims to wear a certain type of belt called the zunnar, so that they were clearly identifiable from Muslims.^[37] This division that existed in al-Andalusian society did not only concern the exterior appearance of non-Muslims. The purity of your faith was seen as an essential aspect for Muslims, and mixing your faith based rituals with Christians at this time was seen as intolerable. Emphasizing the boundaries of contact between Muslims and non-Muslims was essential to prevent “corruptions” in Islamic practices. As Janina M. Safran points out “the articulation of the rules of ritual purity did so in extreme terms.”^[38] Ritual purity was an important interest for jurists because if one was ignorant about purity and pollution it could invalidate all ritual actions.^[39]

Abd al-Malik ibn Habib, who was a Muslim scholar and jurist in ninth-century al-Andalus, wrote many works regarding prophecies of the “end times” including the decline of Muslim dominance and the flourishing of other religious communities, mainly Christians and Jews.^[40] Abd al-Malik expressed no objection for a Muslim to use water left over by a woman who is menstruating, or by another Muslim who is in a state of ritual impurity. Nevertheless, he forbids any Muslim from using water a Christian had used or put his hand in, for ablutions.^[41] This opinion creates separations between Christians and Muslims and establishes a barrier for interaction. If we take into consideration that the Muslims discouraged, to some extent, social interaction for fear of “innovations” it follows that Muslims separated themselves from Mozarabs. This separation can likely have the consequence of Mozarab continuity. Muslims put up some social and religious barriers that would inhibit a Mozarab to convert even if he or she wanted to, as in the case of Abd al-Malik ibn Habib’s opinion. As a result, the Mozarabs preserved their social networks and relationships to other Christians, which would in turn be a reason why there continued to exist Mozarabs within al-Andalus. In addition to Maliki teachings, regarding the separation of Muslims from Mozarabs on a social and religious level, it is important to observe the Koranic doctrine regarding intermarriages between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Islamic doctrine expresses that it is better for a Muslim man to marry within his religion, though intermarriage from Muslim men to Christian women was not all that uncommon. Marriage to a Mozarab or Christian woman was viewed as legal and considered honorable among Islam, because traditionally the wife is expected to eventually take on the religion of her husband and raise her children as Muslim.^[42] Malik, on the other hand would not have agreed with intermarriage to a Christian woman. His writings warn against intermarriage out of fear that the children might end up following the religion of their mother, which would have been Mozarab Christian, instead of their father which would have been Islam. Malik was weary of the fact that mothers have their own aspect of influence on the children. If mothers are not Muslim, the children run into the danger of eating certain impure foods like pork, and being secretly raised in the faith of the non-Muslim mother.^[43] Muslim women on the other hand, were not under any circumstances, allowed to marry a non-Muslim man for the reason that women were expected to take on the religion of their husband. In the context of this topic we must look at the affects this had on Mozarab continuity.

Muslim legislation on intermarriage may also have played a role in the non-conversion of Mozarabs. Since the beginning of Islam, anxieties over “innovations” have been present. Ever since they began conquering lands and peoples in the east with the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanian Empire, and then further expansion both east and west under the Umayyad Caliphs, Muslims found themselves as a minority community in areas with developed cultures and heavy monotheistic traditions.^[44] There were warnings about Christian and Jewish beliefs corrupting Islam in some of the earliest juridical texts dating back to the time of the Prophet.^[45] What this means is that by the time Islam took over the Iberian Peninsula they had already established some of their legislation regarding intermarriage and corruption to the faith. This is one reason why, for the most part, Islam did not allow Muslim women to marry Christian, or Mozarab men. The majority of intermarriages in al-Andalus were one sided; Christian women to Muslim men.

Muslim legislation on marriage helps explain why there continued to be a Mozarab population which did not convert to Islam. However involuntary this consequence was, Muslim legislation on marriage created a protection for Mozarab families. My point is that Mozarabs men could not marry Muslim women, which in turn makes the probability of Mozarab men and women continuing unification through marriage and having children more likely. It is normally the case that children are raised with the faith of their parents. If then, there were laws prohibiting the unification of Muslim women and Mozarab men through marriage, one of the reasons why Mozarabs persevered

in their Christian faith amid Islam was simply through repopulation. Thus we have a continuing population of Mozarabs in al-Andalus, and we can assume that Mozarab children maintained this cycle.

In light of these aspects, we cannot know for sure why the Mozarabs of al-Andalus stayed faithful to Catholicism throughout the centuries of Islamic rule because we were not present, and have very little writings from Mozarabs during this time. What we must do is to analyze the sources of what little evidence we can gather from Mozarabs and Muslims in medieval Spain. I have analyzed the different events and laws concerning the Mozarabs and have discussed the likelihood of their reasons for not converting to Islam. These different aspects of Christian and Muslim acculturation and separation along with the treatment of non-Arab Muslims, and influence from Muslim and Christian leaders in the Iberian Peninsula, shed light on the phenomena of the Mozarab continuity and perseverance of identity and faith amid Islam. There is still room for research in this field, and if space allowed, I would develop my research to focus on specific time periods as well as other religious groups. I believe I could take my method of approach for studying the continuity of Mozarabs, and apply it to the Jewish community under the inquisition, or perhaps the Muslims during the Reconquista. These applications to other religious communities in the Iberian Peninsula, could enlighten even further research towards the relationship and coexistence of the three major religious cultures living in medieval Spain.

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