

**Going Gothic: Spanish Unity and Blame in The Legend of Rodrigo
and Florinda**

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ABSTRACT

The Legend of Rodrigo and Florinda is used to explain the causes for the successful Muslim invasion of Spain. My dissertation discusses six medieval versions of this legend, three Muslim and three Christian. I trace variations in blame to identify the different strata of society that are described as the corrosive catalysts for the Visigoths' divine punishment. I also analyze each source's presentation of the Visigothic kingdom prior to the invasion and examine how they assess the fracture of Spain into smaller kingdoms after the invasion. Identifying the Muslim invasion as a form of divine chastisement inherently includes the idea that once the Christians return to orthodoxy, control of Hispania will be returned to them. This implied rhetoric plays an important but neglected role in the centuries long appeal for Spanish unity and a return to the integral kingdom of the Visigoths.

Keywords: Legend of Rodrigo and Florinda, Visigothic Spain, al-Andalus, Reconquest, Hispania, divine judgment

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda la Cava is used by both Christians and Muslims to explain the Islamic conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the early 8th century. According to the legend, King Rodrigo falls in love with Florinda while she is being raised and educated at his court in Toledo. She refuses to reciprocate his interest in her, so Rodrigo eventually resorts to force in order to fulfill his desires towards her. When Florinda communicates the king's actions to her father, Count Julian, he decides that the only way to get revenge is to help the Muslims conquer Spain. Rodrigo and his army confront the invaders and are defeated despite far outnumbering the Muslims.

The Visigothic kingdom is described by both Muslim and Christian versions of the legend as being comprised of a single unit under the rule of one king. It is also very prosperous because of its large population and desirable goods. This creates the belief that a unified Christian kingdom is Hispania's natural state. It represents the height of Visigothic strength and accomplishments because they are the first to bring all of Hispania under their control. The legend describes regional kingdoms as a post-Islamic invasion phenomenon

and as broken pieces of the Visigothic realm. This rhetoric of unity turns the Reconquista (the eight century Christian reconquest of Islamic Spain) into a fight to restore the idealized Visigothic kingdom of the legend, one that is Christian, prosperous, and united. Another important feature of the legend is the identified cause of the Visigothic demise. Both Christian and Muslim versions of the legend present the Muslims as victorious because they are divinely aided. Muslim chroniclers interpret this victory as approval for their expansion efforts and for the leadership of the Umayyads. In contrast, Christian writers describe the Visigothic defeat as a punishment for moral failure. Exactly whose moral failure incited celestial correction varies. Several versions of the legend blame Florinda without explaining why she is at fault and simultaneously presenting her as a victim. Some versions present Rodrigo as the lone bearer of responsibility for being an unethical leader while others also criticize the nobles and clerics for behaving unethically. My dissertation will examine different versions of the legend to see who is blamed for causing the invasion and why those individuals are identified as morally corrosive agents.

Several versions of the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda exist. I will focus on six of them: three are by Muslim writers in al-Andalus and three are by Christian writers from the Spanish kingdoms. One of the earliest written versions of the legend is the anonymous 11th century

History of Early al-Andalus (Akhbār majmū'a), an Arabic chronicle that contains information dating back to the 8th century. Very little is known about this source, and its sole manuscript is bound with *Early Islamic Spain (Tarīkh Ibn al-Qūṭīya)*. This second Arabic source, which is also from the 11th century, is a collection of teachings from a descendant of King Witiza, Ibn al-Qūṭīya (885-955). Both of these sources represent early Muslim accounts of the legend, describe Spain as a unit, and identify Rodrigo as a wicked king. The third Muslim source, the Spanish translation of the *Crónica del Moro Rasis (Akhbār mulūk al-andalus)* by Ahmad ibn Mahammad ibn Mūsà al-Rāzī (885-955), is the only surviving work by this eminent historian. It is the first version to develop the legend at length.

I also analyze three Christian versions of the legend. The *Crónica de 1344* by Pedro Alfonso preserves the Portuguese version of the legend. In this version, part of Rodrigo's demise is due to a pact that Witiza's sons make with Tarife and Julian to withdraw both wings of the army and abandon Rodrigo's central column during the heat of the battle in order to dishearten the Christians soldiers. The *Crónica de 1344* and the *Crónica del moro Rasis* go the furthest in spreading the blame for Spain's fall among the various main characters, and as a result, the legend becomes a medium to critique society. Pedro de Corral's *Crónica sarracina* (1430) presents a totally different view of

Rodrigo. Here the king is a very pious though passionate regent who dedicates his reign to preventing the division of Spain. This version of the legend emphasizes that Spain can only be strong when it is unified. Lastly, I discuss Miguel de Luna's *La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo* (1592). Luna was a Morisco (a Christian who originally came from al-Andalus or had an Arabic heritage) and an Arabic translator for Felipe II. He presents his fictional work as if it were a translation of an eyewitness account of the conquest. Due to Luna's official role as a translator to the king, his book was accepted as history through the eighteenth century. Luna's version (1592) dates to shortly before the expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609. It anachronistically emphasizes a Castilian-centered Visigothic kingdom and unity that is focused on social, not political, integration.

Describing the history of Spain as cycles of divine punishment and favor reflects the medieval Christian historiographical practice of creating parallels with Biblical Israel. Using this perspective to interpret medieval Spain's history is part of what Peter Brown identifies as the ideology of the Spanish micro-Christendom. As Brown points out, the fall of the Roman Empire forced its former territories to regroup and re-identify themselves. Most of them did so by emphasizing their Christian culture. The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda describes the Muslim invasion as a judgment for the moral

laxness in the Visigoth kingdom, and this depiction creates the need for the Reconquista and reunification of Spain as a sign of the restoration of divine favor. The legend fits Mock and Renan's description of stories of loss because it builds solidarity among the Spanish kingdoms by reminding them of their common past. The rhetoric of unity in the Spanish kingdoms places an obligation on them to work together for a common Christian goal, and it perpetuates the idea that they have a shared past that predates their regional kingdoms' identities. In fact, the partitioning of Spain is discouraged as harmful in all of the Christian versions of the legend. From the Christian point of view, the legend shows the dangers of excess and internal strife. It posits that if the Visigoth kingdom had been ruled well, and if Rodrigo had controlled his passions, the kingdom would not have been fragmented. The legend works to promote the idea that a divided Spain is one that has fallen under divine judgment due to moral corruption. This push to return to the unity of the Visigoths is a theme in the legend that has not yet been fully examined by scholars. It is an important element in understanding Spanish history because of the legend's popularity throughout many centuries.

The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda crystalizes an idealized view of the Visigothic kingdom that does not reflect historical reality. It promotes a dynastic view of the Visigothic kings by creating tension

between Witiza's descendants and Rodrigo and then legitimizing Pelayo's kingship by making him Rodrigo's nephew. However, the historical Visigoths elected their kings instead of having dynasties. This lack of a hereditary kingship is often cited as causing instability and bloody competition among the Visigothic nobility. There are many examples of Visigothic kings who were murdered by their own men, and towards the end of the seventh century, there appear to have been several rival kings who were ruling different sections of Hispania concurrently. This is very different than the idealized view of the Visigothic political unity in the legend.

The prosperity purported to accompany that unity is also questionable. In the legend, Rodrigo's reign is marked by opulence. He has a large household, raises the nobles' children at his court in Toledo, holds frequent jousts, and has extensively jeweled battle regalia. These qualities make it sound like Visigothic Spain was prosperous. The Muslim versions of the legend speak of large quantities of booty gained during the conquest, which reaffirms the association of riches with the Visigothic kingdom. In contrast, archaeologists and historians point to the droughts, pestilence, and famines that occurred frequently during the fifth through eighth centuries. Archeologist Karen Eva Carr uses the Ebro valley as a case study of living conditions during the Visigothic period, and she points

out a shift towards smaller houses, less diversified farming, and high infant mortality rates as examples of a reduction in the quality of life from the previous Roman period. The symbolic importance of the Visigothic kingdom in the legend is divorced from historical reality in order to transform the kingdom into a model of unity and prosperity against which later Spanish leaders would compare their dominions. It is this symbolic representation that I focus on in my analysis of the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda.

In addition to examining the legend's rhetoric of unity, I will analyze who is blamed for causing the Muslim invasion and why they are blamed. The unethical leadership of the Visigoths is identified as the main contributing factor in the Muslim victory by both Christian and Muslim authors. However, one of the major sources of variation among the legend is the extent to which that corruption permeates Visigothic society. The societal position of each character helps symbolize the strata that each author holds accountable for causing Spain's fragmentation. Each main character represents a different level. For example, Julian portrays the nobles while Bishop Opas depicts the religious leaders. Florinda figuratively represents the general population of Hispania because the connection between woman and land is a literary archetype and a "well-established homology" (Rosário Ferreira 193). In the early versions of the legend, Florinda is

presented as an innocent victim. This can work to reflect the suffering that the corrupt rulers inflicted upon society. However, later medieval versions of the legend begin to accuse Florinda and the other characters according to the different levels of society being held responsible for the demise of the Visigothic kingdom.

Of all of the characters presented in the legend, Florinda undergoes the most dramatic change; however, the shift from presenting her as innocent to partially guilty is not clearly explained. I pay particular attention to examining why Florinda is censured for the fall of Spain. As a result, I have chosen to refer to Julian's daughter as Florinda instead of her more common title of la Cava even though only two of my sources, the *Crónica del moro Rasis* and *La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo*, refer to her by that specific name. The two earliest Muslim sources I reference do not name her at all, and the remaining sources all have variations of la Caua, Caba, and Cava. "U," "b," and "v" are consistently interchanged during medieval and early modern times and essentially represent the same sound. In whatever form it appears, "la Cava" is a name that is immediately associated with prostitution. This seems to be due to a connotative interpretation. Al-Rāzī and Luna both say "cava" is Arabic for "mala mujer," although al-Rāzī's chronicle mentions that it also means "desaventurada" (360). Covarrubias goes beyond that in his dictionary

by saying, “los Moros llamaronla Caua, que vale cerca dellos tanto como muger mala de su cuerpo que se da a todos” (464). This meaning of “cava” is the one that is accepted in popular culture, and it inspired Elizabeth Drayson to title her book on the legend *The King and the Whore* (2007).

Patricia E. Grieve points out yet another negative connotation for Julian’s daughter. Grieve says the name “Cava,” sounds very similar to the Hebrew and Arabic names for Eve. This turns la Cava into an Eve-like figure and “a seductive bad woman” who causes the end of a golden era (Carr 25). The Eve/la Cava association is also mentioned in Pedro Manuel Jiménez de Urrea’s *Penitencia de amor* (1514), when Angis states: “Mira la primera muger, Eva, en qué puso el mundo; mira a Cava, que por ella se perdió España; pues mira a Helena, que por ella se destruyó Troya y aunque de cosas tan gruessas no aya muchos exemplos, muchos otros casos acaecen por ser las mugeres ocasión d’ellos” (38). La Cava is turned into a parallel of Eve and Helen for being both extremely beautiful and for bringing about the destruction of a land. Eve actively chooses to eat of the forbidden fruit, which leads to her and Adam’s expulsion from Eden. The *Illiad*’s Helen chooses to run away with Paris instead of staying with her husband, Melenaus, resulting in the devastation of Troy. However, while both Eve and Helen are willing participants in their

destructive activities, la Cava is usually presented as a victim. This detail is masked by Jiménez de Urrea's inclusion of la Cava's name after Eve and before Helen. The names are not chronologically ordered, and the middle placement, which by nature receives less attention than initial and end positioning, leads to the assumption that all three women played active roles in causing calamities. It glosses over the fact that as a victim, Florinda does not belong in the list.

Sources like the *Crónica de 1344* call Julian's daughter la Cava while still lauding her as discrete and hard working. They use "la Cava" as her proper name and not a derogatory nickname. None of the versions of the legend that I have read identify Florinda as a prostitute. In order to understand exactly what Julian's daughter did wrong and to avoid the stigmas attached to "la Cava," I have used her more neutral name "Florinda." This name choice is supported by Covarrubias, who identifies la Cava as: "la hija del Conde don Iulian, por cuya causa se perdio España, como es notorio de lo que las historias assi nuestras como de los Arabes cuentan, y su verdadero nombre dizen auer sido Florinda" (464).

The issue of Florinda's blame is complicated because it seems to be accepted as a fact although the reason why she is accused is unclear. The only charge explicitly aimed at her is that she wrote to tell her father of Rodrigo's actions, and the result of that letter was the

Muslim invasion. However, there is nothing inherently wrong in a victim's reporting her abuse or asking her family for justice. Simply telling her father about the rape cannot be the condemning action. Medieval Spanish law codes, based on the earlier Visigothic codes, allow families to seek retribution against rapists. The *Fuero juzgo* book 3 title 3.3 commands that rapists be publicly whipped and title 3.6 declares that a family member who kills a rapist is not guilty of murder because he is defending chastity. Alfonso X's *Siete partidas* are even stricter by commanding capital punishment against rapists in book 3 title 3. As a result, there do not seem to be legal grounds to blame Florinda for speaking out about her abuse.

David Fogelquist has analyzed the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda specifically to determine Florinda's guilt. He believes Florinda shows weak character when she decides to wear immodestly short clothing, allows herself to be seen unveiled, and when she effectuates what he believes is a sexual transaction with the king. He bases these conclusions on his analysis of the *Crónica de 1344* and the *Crónica sarracina*. Nevertheless, these texts describe Florinda resisting the king. As I will explain, I disagree with Fogelquist's accusation that Florinda wears immodest clothing because the lack of a veil in Visigothic and medieval Spain distinguished a woman as unmarried, and the Visigoths wore short tunics when they did field work.

Fogelquist's conclusions are not supported by either textual or historical information.

My dissertation focuses on the topics of the rhetoric of unity and who is blamed in order to understand the legend's implied ideology. Throughout the Middle Ages historians described political unity as Spain's natural and prosperous state. This persistent desire for unity reflects the impact the idealized Visigothic kingdom has had on the way leaders believe Spain should be organized and the values that should be promoted among its people. The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda plays a large part in propagating this vision in Spain.

My dissertation is organized in the following manner. In my second chapter, "Rhetoric of Unity," I review the rhetorical importance of the legend by analyzing the legend's implied messages. I discuss the unifying value of the legend as a story of loss using Steven J. Mock's theory regarding symbols of defeat and Ernest Renan's ideas about the creation of unity through shared suffering. I also use Peter Brown's theory of micro-Christendoms to explain how the Visigothic kingdom is able to create a sense of unity and shared identity in Spain through religious ideology. I provide a brief history of the Visigoths' tumultuous history in Hispania to show the contrast between their rhetorical and historical presentations. The goal of this chapter is to demonstrate that the justification for seeking unity among the Spanish

kingdoms is rooted in this legend's rhetoric, which is conveniently silent about the historical reality of the Visigothic kingdom.

My third chapter, "Visigothic Division and Muslim Preservers of Order," will examine two 11th century Muslim sources. The *History of Early al-Andalus* (*Akhbār majmū'a*) is an anonymous anthology of texts ranging from the 8th to the 11th century. *Early Islamic Spain* (*Tarīkh Ibn al-Qūṭīya*) is a collection of teachings from Ibn al-Qūṭīya (895-977), a descendant of Visigothic King Witiza. These sources represent some of the earliest written versions of the legend during the transition away from oral traditions. In both works, Rodrigo is described as a prideful, illegitimate ruler. Through his corruption, he betrays his subjects' trust, as symbolized in the rape of innocent Florinda, and forces the nobility of Spain to seek help from the Muslims in order to restore order. Rodrigo's conduct contrasts with the order and loyalty depicted between the Muslims and their caliph to the extent that the caliph will not even risk endangering his soldiers on the sea. He shows more thought for his distant subjects than Rodrigo does for the people in his palace. The Muslims are successful because they are morally strong and have divine favor. Both versions present the legend as an example of a great Muslim victory and imply the Christians' loss is the result of a moral judgment.

Chapter four, “Corruption and Manipulation in the *Crónica del moro Rasis*,” examines the most influential version of the legend: Ahmad ibn Mahammad ibn Mūsà al-Rāzī’s *Crónica del moro Rasis* (*Akhbār mulūk al-andalus*). Al-Rāzī lived in Córdoba from 885-955 and is considered to be the model historian of al-Andalus. In his version, Rodrigo is now descended from a king, and he is elected regent in order to prevent the kingdom from being divided among the previous king’s sons. Like Florinda, the general populace is held partially responsible for the divine judgment because they are morally weak and doing what they pleased: “andaban todos metidos en sus vicios a su voluntad e non buscaron la enmienda E los biejos dezian queria Dios castigar a España e non sopieron como buscar la enmienda (351).

This version also asserts that regional kingdoms are the result of survival tactics and fear: “obieron muy gran miedo, e ficieron rreyes en las villas principales de España que assi lo contaban, e que assi lo ficieron en Cordoua, Seuilla, Toledo y Elibera” (353). It presents the didactic message that corruption fractures kingdoms. While this version does not go so far as to present the Muslim invasion as desirable or beneficial, it does present their presence as a call to morality for all levels of society. Unity becomes a goal because it takes on the quality of a return to divine favor. Even among the

Muslim characters, religious integrity is presented as necessary in order to prevent division.

Chapter five, “Immodesty, Misogyny, and Treasonous Coronations,” will examine the Count of Barcelos’ *Crónica de 1344*. Despite being a Christian version, it preserves a positive view of Tarife and also presents Musa as an admirable, astute warrior. Rodrigo is elected regent to preserve the unity of the kingdom, but this time the moral laxity is all his since Florinda recovers her innocent behavior. This return to virtue helps reinforce the idea that the moral corruption is not shared by the general public. They, like Florinda, are victims of Rodrigo’s excesses. This version posits the idea that if Rodrigo had been a good ruler, he would not have lost the kingdom. As Brown and Cawsey point out, in the Middle Ages, part of the king’s duty was to be a spiritual leader to his people as the ruler of a micro-Christendom, and the legend didactically shows the devastating effects the neglect of this duty can have.

Chapter six, “Anticipated Unity in the Face of Impending Judgment,” focuses on Pedro de Corral’s *Crónica sarracina* (1430). Corral emphasizes the fact that Rodrigo is elected regent of “todas las Españas” and assumes the kingship of “toda España.” Rodrigo is presented in a very religious manner and is elected as regent in order to prevent the split of Spain. Throughout his reign, he has to fight

against nobles who threaten to fragment the kingdom and expose it to outside invasion, which is exactly what happens with Julian. Count Julian, who in previous versions is described in a neutral or positive light, now becomes a traitor who is more responsible for Spain's loss than Rodrigo. His brother-in-law, Bishop Opas, is also corrupt and allies himself with Julian. Florinda, like the general public, suffers more due to her aristocratic and religious relatives' unyielding thirst for revenge than from what she endures during her encounter with Rodrigo. The choice to spread the blame to the noble and clerical classes reflects the bad influences and lack of justice of Corral's fifteenth century Castile during the minority and reign of Juan II of Castile. The legend is used as a vehicle to warn of the possibility of impending judgment if the unethical practices in Castile are allowed to continue unchecked.

The many Biblical allusions in Corral's work invite the comparison of Spain with Biblical Israel. This reinforces the rhetoric that the Christians suffer an invasion due to their moral laxness. However, just like Biblical Israel, an invading force used for divine judgment does not get to stay forever. When the people return to moral obedience, they are allowed to return to their land because this is part of the blessings and curses cycle. As a result, the Reconquista becomes a call to collective moral penitence, and the reunification of

Spain turns into a symbol of the return to divine favor. Corral uses the legend as a medium to promote unity, and this concurs with Renan and Mock's theories that stories of loss and suffering work to promote a need for unity in order to correct a wrong.

Chapter seven, "Castilian Visigoths, Invited Arabs, and the New Look of Unity," explores Miguel de Luna's *La verdadera historia del rey Don Rodrigo* (1592). Luna presents his text as the translation of Abulcaim Tarif Abentarique. This Muslim soldier is described as an eyewitness and participant in the Muslim invasion of Spain. For centuries, the fictitious novel was accepted as history because of Luna's role as an official interpreter for Felipe II. In this version, Rodrigo is a wicked king who kills everyone who will not support him. The former king's widow has to protect Prince Sancho from Rodrigo's plots to kill him, and eventually she is forced to flee to Africa and seek an alliance with the Arabs. In the meantime, Rodrigo sets up his palace in the Castilian capital of Toledo. The association of Toledo with Castile is anachronistic and noteworthy because it foregrounds Castile as a dominant region. Luna, writing shortly before the expulsion of the Moriscos, goes out of his way to try and promote the rhetoric of unity, with the new emphasis being on a social unity which would include his people group. He presents Arabs in a positive

manner, not as invaders but as invited guests who helped eliminate a wicked tyrant.

My concluding chapter will review the role the legend has played in promoting the ideal of a unified Spain as its natural state despite the fact that this imagery is not historically based. In regards to blame, the shifting guilt associated with Florinda and the other characters reflects which levels of society are considered responsible for Spain's fall. This plays a strong didactic role in showing the dangerous trickle-down effect corruption can have and the speed with which it can threaten stability.

The rhetoric of unity in the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda presents the Visigothic kingdom as an idealized past that Spain should strive to restore. This ideology permeated medieval Spanish thinking for centuries.

Chapter 2

Mandar e Tener Toda España: Spanish Unity in the Legend of Rodrigo and Florinda

The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda la Cava is the only Visigothic tale that has been preserved in Spanish literature, and it is also one of the earliest examples of Spanish rhetoric against regionalism. The legend is used by both Christians and Muslims to explain the Muslim conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the early 8th century, and both the Muslim and Christian versions of the legend present a unified Visigothic kingdom that is under the control of only one regent. In the legend, Count Julian is one of Rodrigo's most powerful nobles. He is in charge of the African territories centered in Ceuta, and as a result of his high rank, Julian's daughter, Florinda, has the honor of being raised by the king at his court in Toledo. However, while she is there, Rodrigo rapes her. When Florinda communicates this news to her father, he becomes enraged and decides that the best means of getting even is to join the Muslims in Africa and help them conquer Spain. Rodrigo and his army are completely defeated in the confrontation with the Muslims, and a divided realm is the undesired result of Rodrigo's defeat.

While the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda describes events that occurred in the 8th century, the six written versions that I analyze date

from the 11th -16th centuries, the period of the Christian reconquest of Islamic Spain and preparation for the expulsion of the *Moriscos* (Christians who had converted from Islam or had an Arabic heritage). The legend's rhetoric that the invasion is a judgment for sin creates the embedded expectation that Visigothic unity can be recovered, which justifies the Reconquista efforts as a necessary step in the restoration process. As a result, the legend's Visigothic kingdom becomes a symbol of the benefits unity entails. The legend's vision of a centralized Spain promotes the notion that regional kingdoms are harmful because they are a post-invasion phenomenon that delays the Reconquista and the unification of the kingdoms. I will begin this section by briefly mentioning the historical context of conflict and division among the Christian kingdoms in medieval Spain, which is the period when the written versions of the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda are circulating. Afterwards, I will discuss the living conditions in the Visigothic kingdom and the figure of the regent in order to create a point of comparison between the historical Visigoths and the rhetoric the legend presents. Finally, I will analyze the rhetorical context of the legend and the expectation it creates of unification in the future.

In contrast to the united Visigothic kingdom presented in the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda, the regional Spanish kingdoms of the Middle Ages were divided and embroiled with each other. For

example, in 1068 Sancho II of Castile went to war against his cousins Sancho of Navarra and Sancho of Aragon due to border disputes. In the 1158, an inheritance dispute between brothers Sancho III of Castile and Fernando II of Leon brought them to the brink of war. From 1356-1375 Peter IV of Aragon and Peter I of Castile battled for control of Murcia. Despite the long war, no resolution was reached. During the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, rivalries with Alfonso V of Portugal and later disagreements with John II of Portugal forced the Catholic Monarchs to delay their war against Granada until they reached an understanding with Portugal. These examples demonstrate the tensions between the Christian kingdoms despite the blood ties among its leaders. The legend's rhetoric makes a point of describing division as harmful and implying that the regional kingdoms are part of the judgment that accompanied the Muslim invasion.

This lack of unity also existed in the historical Visigothic kingdom although the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda makes a point of not describing this reality. While it is true that the Visigoths were able to conquer all of Hispania and set up a single law code for the entire kingdom, they were not able to consistently maintain a peaceful, stable realm. The first set of kings who fully conquered Hispania were Euric (r. 466-84) and his son Alaric II (r. 484-507). This was the first period of peace and prosperity under the Visigoths, and during this

time Alaric II ruled over “the largest political unit in western Europe” (Thompson 2). However, the gains made by Euric and Alaric II could not be maintained by the Visigoths once Alaric II died. The next four Visigothic kings all died at the hands of their own men, which reveals the instability of the leadership. One of the kings, Agila, even had a competitor who managed to set up a rival kingdom for three years.

Eventually a second period of prosperity and stability occurred from 568-601, and interestingly, it involves another set of related kings. In general, the kingship went from the dead king to either one of his men or a competitor and not from father to son. Luvia and his relatives became the next rulers and reunited the peninsula under their authority. Luvia set up his brother, Leovigild, as a co-regent. After Luvia’s death, Leovigild ruled with his sons, and it is suspected that Leovigild tried to establish his family as a dynasty with the goal of replacing the Visigothic custom of electing their kings. According to E. A. Thompson, Leovigild worked hard at centralizing his power, and he began the practice of using royal clothing, a crown, and a throne in order to distinguish himself from the other Visigoths (114). He made Toledo the permanent capital and had coins minted with his name instead of the name of the Roman emperor, which eliminated the dependence on Roman heritage for legitimacy and established a stronger Visigothic identity (Thompson 114). Leovigild was a strong

proponent of centralized authority, and he even went to war against one of his dissenting sons in order to maintain the unity of the kingdom. After Leovigild died in 586, his son Reccared succeeded him and instituted changes to standardize religion within the realm. Reccared initiated the practice of reading the creed of Constantinople before the Lord's Prayer when communion was being served as a way to help teach orthodoxy to the people (Thompson 96-97). The reigns of Leovigild and Reccared mark the second highpoint in Visigothic unity and centralization.

Unfortunately, after Reccared's death, his son was unable to maintain control of the crown. Luvia II was murdered by a challenger, and the instability of the Visigothic leadership resurfaced. Between 601-21, there were a total of five kings, two of whom ended up being murdered. The remaining kings of the Visigothic period were all plagued by rivals. Rodrigo eventually became king after Witiza, but he may not have had control of the region of Narbonne in France. This region had always been important to the Visigoths and was their center of power and capital before the move to Toledo.

Archaeologists have found coins from a King Achila who might have started ruling Narbonne as early as Witiza's death, a date that would make him Rodrigo's rival (Miles 39). This evidence contradicts the image the legend presents of Rodrigo as the sole leader of the

Visigothic kingdom when the Muslims arrived, and it reveals a lack of unity in the realm. In addition to competition for the crown and the ever-present threat of murder by their own men, the Visigothic kings had to quell insurrections arising from the Basques and cities such as Cordova and Merida because all three populations tended to ally themselves against the official kings of Toledo. The Visigoths continually had to defend their borders from Frankish incursions, especially in the heavily contested regions of Narbonne and Barcelona. The historical Visigothic kingdom does not represent a time of unity and prosperity. The numerous murdered regents and rival kingdoms paint a completely different picture than the unity described in the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda.

Taking a closer look at the living conditions during the Visigothic period, Montgomery Watt proposes that life was challenging for the lower and middle classes because they lost many privileges they had enjoyed under the Romans (17). For example, the senatorial class retained their title in name only, and the Visigothic kings quickly passed marriage laws to curtail their power and place them on equal footing with other hispano-romans (Thompson 116). According to Karen Eva Carr, another example of a decline in the quality of life was the shift from diversified farming, which is more pest and drought resilient, to subsistence farming due to lack of resources (186).

Plagues were a problem during the Visigothic period due to patterns of droughts, locust infestations, and famines towards the end of the 6th century, middle of the 7th century, and beginning of the 8th century (García Moreno 220-21). These long bouts of plague and famine do not create an image of Visigothic prosperity. Additionally, Carr says that the houses built in the 5th and 6th centuries were smaller, had fewer gardens, and were built of a less permanent material than had been used during the Roman period. This indicates a decrease in affluence because people could not afford the same amenities they previously enjoyed. Death records also list high infant mortality rates, which marks a decline in the quality of health (Carr 186-98).

The reality of the Visigothic kingdom is very different than the prosperous ideal the legend promotes. The total dissociation of the symbolic Visigoths from their historical counterparts emphasizes the legend's rhetorical purpose to promote an image of unity as if it were the Peninsula's natural state. For the Christians, the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda creates the idea that Spain should be centralized and unified, the way it used to be, even though this is contrary to history. The legend justifies the Reconquest as a struggle to regain the lands that belonged to the Christians but were temporarily lost due to divine judgment for moral deviations.

Interestingly, the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda also was used to promote unity rhetoric in Muslim Spain. The Muslims focus on the incredible conquest of al-Andalus by the Umayyad caliphs and their men, less than 10,000 Muslim soldiers defeat Rodrigo's 100,000 man army. Muslim writers emphasize the divine aid received in this conquest in order to legitimize the Umayyad rulers as the rightful leaders of al-Andalus. Their advantageous leadership contrasts with the immorality of the Visigothic leaders as well as the later divided Muslim kingdoms within al-Andalus. It also presents the idea that the Umayyads (not the 'Abbasids, Fatimids, or Christians) are the rightful rulers of al-Andalus. This is a topic I will discuss in more depth in the third chapter.

Both Muslim and Christian versions agree that Visigothic corruption and divine aid were important factors in the Muslim conquest, but Christians interpret the successful invasion as a temporary judgment that will eventually be reversed once they return to divine favor. The Christian rhetoric proposes that the return to favor and restoration of the pre-invasion kingdom includes reunification under one king just as the legend's King Rodrigo was the one ruler over the Visigoth kingdom. This is the legend's rhetoric of unity.

In the legend, Visigothic Spain is consistently described as being under the control of one ruler and enjoying a time of prosperity

prior to the Muslim invasion. Both the *History of Early al-Andalus* (*Akhbār majū'a*) and *Early Islamic Spain* describe Rodrigo as a king who is ruling the Goths when the Muslims conquer Spain. There is no mention of any co-ruler or rival kingdom: Rodrigo is the one leader who is in charge of the Visigothic unit. The *Crónica del moro Rasis* says Rodrigo is elected regent in order to avoid parceling the kingdom among the previous monarch's sons. The *Crónica de Espanha de 1344* repeats the idea that Rodrigo is elected king in order to prevent division. After the previous ruler's death, the nobles become divided as each faction supports the election of their favorite son. Nominating Rodrigo as regent is a successful alternative that reunites the nobles under one leader. Rodrigo's election disbands the two factions and preserves the integrity of the kingdom. Pedro de Corral's *Crónica sarracina* emphasizes that Rodrigo, like the previous king, is elected ruler of all of Spain and of all of its kingdoms: "mandar e tener en vuestro poder a toda España" (95). The king's control over "toda España," is stressed as much as the idea that a divided Spain will cause its destruction and make it susceptible to invasion. Luna's *La verdadera historia del rey Don Rodrigo* also presents Rodrigo as the sole regent of Spain. Unlike the situation that existed after the invasion, where each Christian kingdom had its own king, the legend

of Rodrigo and Florinda presents Rodrigo as the sole regent of Hispania.

The idealized Visigothic kingdom is not only depicted as ruled by one regent but it is also described as possessing wealth, a large army, and classically educated nobles. This reinforces the rhetoric of unity by associating it with prosperity. Most of the versions of the legend describe Rodrigo as having a large household because he raises all of the nobles' children at his court in Toledo. The *Crónica sarracina* says Rodrigo starts this practice as a way to show off his wealth and generosity: "E bien cuidava cobrar fama del mejor ombre del mundo por esta guisa, ca después que las gentes del torneo fuesen llegadas a su corte e viesen el su estado tan grande e los grandes gastos que hazía que no preciarían a rey ni a señor que en el mundo fuese en comparación dél" (Corral 175). This practice also implies the king's opulence because the people who wait on him are of high rank—the higher the status of the servant, the greater the clout of the master. The *History of Early al-Andalus* stresses that only the children of nobles serve Rodrigo (48). This reveals that he must be very wealthy in order to have servants of such high status and to maintain a household of people who are used to luxury. The *Crónica sarracina* describes many jousts and banquets where the king is able to show off his opulence to guests from different countries. These

extravagant events further support the image of the wealth that can be attained in a united kingdom. The readers of the legend lived in regional kingdoms that were frequently engaged in wars and were not enjoying the prosperity the unified, Visigothic kingdom presents. The legend's rhetoric encourages its readers to be dissatisfied with their current situation and dream about the benefits a restoration of the Visigothic unity could bring.

Another example of the unified kingdom's wealth is the king's battle regalia. The *History of Early al-Andalus* describes Rodrigo's golden saddle which is covered in rubies and emeralds. Rodrigo also has a golden cloak decorated with pearls and rubies (51). The *Crónica del moro Rasis* is more even descriptive:

¿E que vos contaremos de como iba el rrey a la batalla, e sus vestiduras e nobleza que llebaba? . . . Ca iba vestido de vna arfolla, que en esse tiempo decian purpura, que vestian los rreyes por costumbre; e segun asmamiento de los que lo vieron, valia mill marcos de oros. E las piedras e los adobes non a que lo podiese dezir que tales eran e quanto su precio. E venia en un carro...e non era el carro otra cosa si non plata y oro e piedras preciosas, e tanto sotilmente labrado que marauilla era. . . . nunca fallamos

de rrey nin de señor que a batalla saliesse tan bien
guisado. (Rāzī 349)

These descriptions of Rodrigo's battle gear are not just arbitrary examples of rich decorations. Sancho IV's *Castigos e documentos* (1293) explains the symbolism of a king's equipment. A seat that is made of gold, silver, and precious stones represents the regent's power and authority. Golden saddlebags display the ruler's capacity to compensate his men's good deeds. Gold in general reflects the king's ability to rule because without wealth he cannot maintain his power, and rubies are symbolic of wisdom (Sancho IV 83). Rodrigo's regalia identifies him as someone who has wealth, power, and influence. The monetary value of this equipment also reflects the kingdom's prosperity because a king's armor is bought using the taxes collected from his domain. This description of affluence helps create a desire for unification.

The amount of wealth in the kingdom is enough to make the legend's Visigothic nobility very powerful. In the *Crónica de Espanha de 1344*, Rodrigo commands Julian to defend the African territories against Musa. Julian is able to do so using only the aid of his personal allies and relatives because Rodrigo is unwilling to provide any soldiers to help him. This implies Julian possesses the wealth needed to raise a strong enough army to protect those territories and to pay

the soldiers. In the *Crónica sarracina*, Julian's wife is described as being very affluent because she threatens that by using her personal riches and relatives she can wage a war against Julian and kill him within one year if he will not avenge their daughter (474). The legend's nobles are very prosperous, which increases the image of the Visigothic kingdom's opulence and also helps enhance the desire among the noble class for the material benefits provided by a united kingdom.

The common people in the legend also benefit from Visigothic unity. The *Crónica sarracina* describes Rodrigo giving gifts to his subjects: "tanta era la su bondad e los bienes que a cada uno hazía e prometía; e desta guisa començó de hazer tanto bien que maravilla era que en cuerpo de un ombre oviese tanta bondad E nunca fue rey ni señor que en tan poco tiempo la voluntad de las gentes pudo cobrar para sí como éste fue" (167). The general population profits from the material strength of the unified kingdom. Corral also methodically describes the payment of soldiers after each battle. This indicates wealth because the armies he describes are very large, and making monetary payments to soldiers is expensive.

The treasures the Muslims acquire through the conquest also reflect the prosperity of the kingdom. The *Crónica de Espanha de 1344* relates that Tarife's soldiers brought back so much wealth from

Spain during their initial probe that the general population asked the caliph to let them conquer Spain (Alfonso 121). According to the *History of Early al-Andalus*, after the battle with Rodrigo all of Tariq's remaining foot soldiers receive mounts. The Muslims who participate in the early conquest of Spain quickly are able to rise in social standing through the acquisition of horses, which are a sign of riches and rank. This points to the military strength and wealth of the population that exists in the legend. Both the *Crónica del moro Rasis* and the *Crónica sarracina* state that Rodrigo's army was at least 100,000 men strong during the confrontation with Tariq. Additionally, the *Crónica sarracina* enumerates a minimum of 416,000 Visigothic soldiers prior to the confrontation between Tariq and Rodrigo, which does not include the 100,000 men that fight with Rodrigo. In order to have that many soldiers, the legend's Visigoths must be able to feed a large population, which evokes an image of the food and population a unified kingdom can generate. The united Visigothic kingdom is associated with material wealth, large populations, and abundant food. It turns the Visigothic period into a golden age that was cut short as a result of corruption and lascivious living.

The immoral behaviors of rape, pride, and avarice in the Visigothic kingdom cause it to fall from favor, and this opens the door for it to be defeated via divine means. *Early Islamic Spain* states the

Visigoths lost the battle against Tariq because “God defeated Lūdhariq” (Ibn al-Qūṭīya 51). The *Cronica de 1344* describes the Muslims’ victories as a result of God’s grace having departed from the Christians (Alfonso 127). This idea is echoed in the *Crónica sarracina*. In the preliminary battle between the Muslims and Prince Sancho, the Christians are defeated because the day of the confrontation is two hours shorter than a normal day, and this provides the Muslims with an advantage over the Christians. The author interprets this as a sign that God is displeased with the Goth’s pride and has decided to let them all die (498). Prior to the decisive battle against the Muslim forces, Rodrigo sees a vision of four people who represent his four weaknesses: covetousness, pride, avarice, and lust. The figure who represents the fourth flaw looks like Florinda and explains that Rodrigo’s relationship with Florinda “fue la causa de tu mal comienzo” (Corral 592). The idea that the Muslims are victorious because the Visigoths are being judged is consistent among the different versions of the legend. Also consistent is the idea that the relationship between Rodrigo and Florinda precipitates the invasion, or, as the *Early History of Islamic Spain* says, “the invasion happened because” the king “seduced” Julian’s daughter (53).

This connection between moral deviation and punishment is what Alan Deyermond calls a *flagellum Dei*, which is a punishment

that is meant to purge corruption (345). This view agrees with the Christian historiography used in medieval Spain and all of the former Roman territories. Spain's historians viewed their kingdoms' roles as miniature preservers of Christianity. As a result, they interpreted their individual histories as that of a chosen people paralleling the relationship between Biblical Israel and God (Brown 171). The idea that Biblical references to Israel can symbolically refer to the Church dates back to the early Church Fathers and is known as Covenant Theology or Replacement Theology. For example, in his "Dialogue with Trypho," Justin Martyr (c. 114-165 A.D.) states, "For the true spiritual Israel, and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham (who in uncircumcision was approved of and blessed by God on account of his faith, and called the father of many nations), are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ" (ch. 11). Augustine of Hippo echoes this interpretation of the symbolism of Israel and the Church in his *On Christian Doctrine* (397 A.D.) when he explains: "thus the spiritual Israel is made up, not of one nation, but of all the nations . . . spiritual Israel, therefore, is distinguished from the carnal Israel which is of one nation, by newness of grace, not by nobility of descent, in feeling, not in race" (69). As a result, Biblical Israel's cyclical history of blessings resulting from morality and curses for immorality formed the basis of Christian historiography (Breisach

94). Medieval historians created parallels between the Old Testament and the belief that “proper religious faith and rites fortified the welfare of a state” (Breisach 80) and deviation from these accounted for a people group’s destruction.

This system of thought is evident in the legend’s description of events. According to the *Crónica del moro Rasis*, the creation of the individual Christian kingdoms is part of the judgment for the:

males que a España por el rrey Rodrigo e por la fuerza de la fixa del conde Julian e por otros malos fechos que se facian e non los castigaba, nin los obispos facian el deber con los suyos E los biejos dezian queria Dios castigar a España obieron muy gran miedo, e ficiéron rreyes en las villa principales de España que assi lo contaban, e que assi lo ficiéron en Cordoua, Seuilla, Toledo y Elibera. (Al-Rāzī 351-53)

Although some versions of the legend do not link these ideas as clearly as al-Rāzī does, the connection between the two events is understood and appears in Christian works. For example, Alfonso X’s *Estoria de Espanna* (1270-84) describes the Muslim invasion as a result of Julian’s treason, incited by Rodrigo’s rape of Julian’s daughter, and the division of Christian Spain into kingdoms is presented as a harmful and undesirable post-invasion phenomenon:

“passaron los dAffrica et ganaron todo lo mas dEspanna; et como fueron los cristianos despues cobrando la tierra; et del danno que unio en ella por partir los regnos” (3-4). Sancho IV’s *Castigos e documentos* (1292-93), which is a book that describes how a wise king should carry himself, also identifies division as wrong: “Non cae al rey de menguar su regno ni pararle entre sus fijos para despues de sus dias; nin le cae bien de enajenar nin malapara los bienes del su regno. El regno que es partido e menguado conuiene que sea desollado por rayz, segund que deixo Jesu Cristo en el euangelio” (88). While the narrow context may refer to the practical implications of the loss of wealth related to partitioning an inheritance, there is an understood larger context that refers to the divided Christian kingdoms. The author already referred to the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda in an earlier chapter about the importance of ruling one’s passions: “Para mientes quanto mal vino en Espanna por lo que fizo el rey don Rodrigo con la Caba, fija del conde don Jullan” (Sancho IV 60). The harm he refers to is not only the loss of territory to the Muslims; it also refers to the regional kingdoms. One of the adverse results of Rodrigo’s affair with Florinda is the division of Hispania into small kingdoms instead of remaining united as one solid unit under one ruler. This is an important idea that is embedded in the rhetoric of the legend and diffused throughout the Christian kingdoms.

The Christian historiographical view of the invasion as a judgment also includes implications for the future reunification of the regional kingdoms. Again, this approach to history is focused on cycles of blessings and curses, and it includes the hope that judged people can regain divine favor and return to their former situation if they begin to live within their religious mores. This perspective is described in the following Biblical description of the cycle of blessings and curses:

When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come on you and you take them to heart . . . and when you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you He will bring you to the land that belonged to your ancestors, and you will take possession of it. (*New International Version* Deut. 30:1-5)

When the deviation that caused the judgment is corrected, the punished people group can expect a return to their former prosperity. For the Christian kingdoms, these verses create the anticipation of a restoration of the lands lost to the Muslims during the invasion. This worldview makes the idea of reestablishing the Visigothic kingdom

something that can be expected and relied on. In other words, *flagella Dei* are considered temporary situations that can be reversed. This idea is important in justifying the Reconquista fights the regional kingdoms are engaged in when the written versions of the legend are circulating. The battles are evidence of a penitential return to morality through the reestablishment of Christian dominance in the recovered territories.

According to Maria do Rosário Ferreira, the Reconquista period is a symbolic era of expiation with the kings engaging in warfare as a sign of cleansing their guilt as heirs of Rodrigo and the Visigoth's sins (191). For medieval kings in Aragon, Catalonia, and Castile, participation in the Reconquista was part of their required spiritual duty (Cawsey 102). José Luis Corral Lafuente points out that the king's participation in the recovery and repopulation efforts of the Reconquista was part of what legitimized his rule (55). The perspective of divine judgment present in the Christian historiography of the Middle Ages presumes that the Reconquista will culminate in a reunification of the Spanish kingdoms since this represents the pre-judgment situation.

In Corral's *Crónica sarracina*, the connection between the invasion as a judgment and the Reconquista as a period of restoration is established through the fact that the same monk who helps Rodrigo

perform his penance also helps Pelayo spiritually prepare for his battles against the Muslims. In fact, the Christian versions of the legend do not actually end after the telling of the story of Rodrigo and Florinda. They continue describing the history of Spain until they can end with a victorious presentation of the Reconquista, whether that means concluding with Pelayo's initiation of the Reconquista in the *Crónica sarracina*, the victories of the Cid in the *Crónica de 1344*, or the successful reign of king Alfonso and his heir Fruela in the *Verdadera historia del rey Don Rodrigo*. The Christian versions of the legend close with hope of the restoration of Muslim lands to Christian hands and the expectation that there will one day be a single Spanish Christian kingdom. This same desire can be observed in other medieval works that refer to the Muslim invasion and Reconquista efforts. In the *Crónica de Alfonso III* (c. 990), Pelayo, the initiator of the Reconquista declares

Spes nostra Christus est, quod per istum modicum
monticulum, quem conspicias, sit Spanie salus et
Gothorum gentis exercitus reparatus. Confido enim quod
promissio Domini impleatur in nobis, quia dictum est per
Dauid: *Visitabo in uirga iniquitates eorum et in flagellis
peccata eorum; misericordiam autem meam non auferam*

*ab eis. Et nunc ego fidens in misericordia Iesu Christi,
hanc multitudinem despicio. (112)*

The well-being of Spain refers to its unity just like its harm refers to its division. The allusion to returning to mercy, or favor, aligns with the Christian worldview that a return to the pre-conquest state is indeed possible. The Visigothic kingdom in the legend is consistently presented as a unit, so there is an understood goal that a return to Visigothic prosperity includes the reunification of the Christian kingdoms.

The anonymous 9th century *Chronica profetica* also supports the idea of restored unity. It prophesies the upcoming restoration of the Gothic kingdom and the return to only one king ruling over all of Spain: “the kingdom of the Goths will be restored by our present prince. Also, this our prince, the glorious lord Alfonso, is . . . on the verge of ruling over all of Spain in the near future” (par. 6). It also describes the creation of different monarchies as a survival tactic after the Muslim conquest: “they were to tear down all of the cities and inhabit fortifications and villages and all of the inhabitants of the land were to be assembled under the pact of their king and elect counts from their own regions” (par. 10). It is an understood idea in the legend that the division of Hispania into various Christian kingdoms is a consequence of divine judgment and the Reconquista fight to return the conquered

lands to pre-conquest Christian rule also includes a restoration of unity. This unity was eventually accomplished by the Catholic Kings after they ended the Reconquista.

However, it is important to remember that the idea of a unified and prosperous Visigothic kingdom that needs to be restored is only the legend's rhetoric of unity. The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda presents the Visigoth's prosperous unity as if it had once really existed and was lost through judgment ergo it was a state that could be recovered through the Reconquista. It is strategically silent regarding the rival kingdoms that existed during the Visigothic period, focusing instead on the immediate events leading to the invasion. Stephen J. Mock proposes that stories of defeat create an image of its people as able to withstand difficult times, and this motivates them to correct injustices and confirm their collective allegiance (92). The Reconquista was a shared goal among the Christian kingdoms and had the aim of restoring the Peninsula to Christian hands. According to Ernest Renan, one of the best ways to foster unity among people is the memory of collective suffering: "el sufrimiento en común une más que la alegría . . . los duelos valen más que los triunfos, pues imponen deberes, ordenan el esfuerzo en común" (Renan 83). The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda creates a shared feeling of obligation among the Spanish kingdoms towards the Reconquista by presenting the loss of

unity as a situation that can and should be reversed because it is a temporary judgment. The Christian kingdoms have the hope that they can become strong, prosperous, and unified.

The rhetoric of unity in the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda presents the regional kingdoms as undesirable because they are a manifestation of punishment. Contextualizing this ideology within a story of loss creates a feeling of commonality among the regional kingdoms because it describes a shared trauma. The Christian historiography in place in the Middle Ages adds force to the rhetoric of unity by creating an expectation of a future reintegration of the kingdoms. The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda is an early example of the centuries deep rhetorical appeal for Spanish unity.

Chapter 3

Visigothic Division and Muslim Preservers of Order

Background

The *History of Early al-Andalus* is an anonymous anthology of texts ranging from the eighth to the eleventh century. *Early Islamic Spain* is a collection of the teachings of the Ibn al-Qūṭīyya (895-977), a descendant of the Visigothic King Witiza. The manuscripts of these two texts are bound together, and they represent some of the earliest written versions of the legend (James 4). Although the manuscripts themselves date to around the eleventh century, they record traditions that originated in earlier centuries. The seventh to eleventh centuries were a period of transition in Arabic culture when written communication slowly gained equal footing with oral transmissions (Sayeed 108). Earlier, oral traditions had been considered more reliable than written ones because of the value of face-to-face communication and the prestige this lent to the information (Sayeed 88). As a result, the fact that the written versions of these sources date to the eleventh century does not disqualify their ability to narrate information from earlier centuries because of the accuracy with which

information used to be transmitted in oral societies prior to being recorded in writing.

These two sources describe the conquest from a Muslim point of view with the rhetorical purpose of legitimizing Umayyad control of al-Andalus. The Umayyads had created a caliphal regime based in Damascus beginning in 661 (Hijra 41). However, in 750 (Hijra 132), the Iraqi 'Abbasids rebelled against the Syrian Umayyads. The uprising gained widespread support due to tensions over the unequal treatment of new converts, the heavy taxes imposed on non-Arabs, and the use of public funds to purchase lands that were only given to Umayyad supporters instead of being more equally divided among the different tribes (Marín-Guzmán 73-75). The 'Abbasids seized power and managed to kill all but one of the Umayyad princes, 'Abd al-Raḥmān I. He escaped Damascus, made his way to Africa, and eventually entered al-Andalus in 756. 'Abd al-Raḥmān I and his successors ruled al-Andalus as emirs until 'Abd al-Raḥmān III's declared himself caliph in the tenth century. By this time, 'Abbasid power had weakened and the African Fatimids had also declared their own caliphate. 'Abd al-Raḥmān III claimed that the Damascan Umayyad caliphate had continued in al-Andalus and was the true caliphate. This move was calculated to undermine the 'Abbasids and warn the Fatimids from attempting any incursions into Umayyad

territory. An important part of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III’s legitimizing efforts lay in emphasizing the Muslim conquest of al-Andalus as an event that happened under the leadership of the Umayyads, which was a period of great expansion of the Muslim territory into Asia, Africa, and al-Andalus. These successes created an influx of material wealth and land for the Muslims—at least that is the positive way of viewing those events. According to Marín Guzmán, the motivation for these impressive expansions was overpopulation, lack of food and resources, and limited opportunities (61). This point of view is usually hushed in favor of presenting the conquests as examples of the Umayyad caliphate’s prosperous leadership, and certainly there were significant economic benefits reaped from the military successes during Umayyad rule in Damascus and al-Andalus (Ardzrooni 438). The successful annexation of new territory is implied as a sign that the stewardship of these caliphs was divinely favored, ultimately meaning the ‘Abbasid rebellion was not sanctioned. This is the aspect ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III focused on, and his patronage of al-Andalus’ historians ensured they would highlight the benefits of Umayyad leadership. The final compiler of *History of al-Andalus* and Ibn al-Qūṭīyya belonged to this period of historical efforts.

Both versions use the legend as an example of a great Muslim victory and imply that the Christians’ loss is the result of a divine

judgment for moral corruption. They create a set of contrasting foils between Rodrigo and the caliph Khalid ibn al-Walīd. Rodrigo is presented as a prideful ruler. Through his corruption, he betrays his subjects' trust and forces the Visigothic nobility to seek help from the Muslims in order to restore justice and order. Rodrigo's conduct contrasts with the morality and loyalty depicted between the Muslims and their caliph al-Walīd. The caliph is hesitant to risk the lives of soldiers he has never even met, but Rodrigo does not mind abusing the people around him. The Muslims are presented as successful in the conquest because they are morally strong and have divine favor.

A History of Early Al-Andalus

Introduction

The only extant copy of the anonymous *A History of Early Al-Andalus* (The *Akhbār majū'a*) dates to the eleventh century (James, *History*). However, most scholars agree that the text comes from a collection of sources from the eighth to the eleventh century. Although the author is unknown, historian Dolores Oliver Perez posits the idea that the text may have been written by Tammam B. Alqama's and his relatives as a family archive. She bases this theory on internal references to Tammam and the access he and his relatives had to the Cordovan court. There is a lot of speculation surrounding the

manuscript, but little is known for sure. Nevertheless, Luis Molina points out that it is valued for its historical weight because of its detailed narration of what happened in the first century of Muslim presence in the Iberian Peninsula and because it has yet to be replaced with more reliable sources from the 8th century (“Ajbar” 513).

Summary

To briefly summarize this version of the legend, Musa, the leader of the Muslim armies in Africa, experiences difficulties annexing Ceuta. This is because Julian, its governor, receives supplies and reinforcements from the king of al-Andalus, Witiza. However, once Witiza dies, the people elect General Rodrigo as king. This is because they dislike Witiza’s sons, Sisbert and Oppa. Regretfully, Rodrigo improperly uses his position to take advantage of one of his nobles’ daughters. According to Visigothic custom, the aristocracy send their children to the royal court in Toledo to serve the king, and the sovereign is then in charge of educating them and arranging their marriage to suitable spouses. Rodrigo, “forces himself” on Julian’s daughter instead of arranging her marriage (49). This incident is reported to Julian through a letter, and he decides to get revenge and “deprive the king of his kingdom” (49). As a result, Julian gives his allegiance to Musa and invites him to add al-Andalus to his territory.

After receiving Julian's offer, Musa writes to the caliph al-Walīd, but the caliph does not want to put the lives of the Muslim soldiers at risk. The caliph instructs Musa to first send Tarife with 400 men and 100 horses as a scouting party to determine the safety of the crossing. Tarife's landing is successful and he returns home in 710 (Hijra 91). Musa then sends Tariq with an army of 7,000 soldiers. Rodrigo hears of Tarife's raids while he is in the far north attacking Pamplona, so he gathers his 100,000-man army and moves south to meet Tariq's forces. In preparation for the encounter, Rodrigo places Sisbert and Oppa, Witiza's sons, in charge of his left and right flanks. However, when they see the Muslim forces, they meet with the aristocrats in the army and decide to defect. They resent Rodrigo because he is not of royal blood and because they think the Muslims will only plunder the land and then leave: "This son of a whore overthrew our lord. He is not from the royal family only one of our menials. Now this band are not interested in taking over our land: they only want booty and then they will leave us. Let us desert this son of a whore when we meet him in battle" (50). Consequently, Rodrigo and his middle column are defeated. After the fighting ends, the king is nowhere to be found. The Muslim army finds his horse, cape, and boot stuck in mud, but they never find Rodrigo's body.

Analysis

The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda and the conquest of al-Andalus only makes up a small portion of the text. The rest of it describes the intrigues, civil wars, and frequent revolts in al-Andalus prior to the arrival of Umayyads. These years of instability are contrasted with the cultured and orderly presentation of the Umayyad emirate and caliphate in order to promote Umayyad rule. This civilizing view is created through the text's inclusion of administrative letters, love poems, and literary contemplations written by Umayyad leaders. It also is promoted through the description of the successful conquest of al-Andalus, which takes place while the Umayyads are the caliphs in Damascus. The text is quick to note that the political instability that led to civil wars in al-Andalus occurred under the leadership of men who had not been personally appointed by Umayyads: "all were appointed by Bishr ibn Safwan without the authority of the caliph" (59). The conquest story is instrumental to reinforce the legitimacy and benefits of Umayyad leadership. One way this theme is developed is through the contrast between the caliph and Rodrigo in order to demonstrate the results of good and bad leadership.

In this version of the legend, Rodrigo is presented as an unethical leader. Medieval Muslim leaders were expected to behave in a manner that agreed with religious mores because their worldview

interpreted events as signs of divine favor or punishment. In fact, within the *History* is an example of this rationale. The Muslim Governor Yusuf connects his moral failure of arranging the deaths of two of his men, in essence murdering them, and his divinely arranged defeat: “I fear God has sent a disaster upon us [himself and his supporters] for killing those two” (89). This contrasts with the good leadership of Umayyad emir Hisham ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān , who is described as “virtuous, liberal and generous; dealing with his subjects well and protecting the Marches” as well as sending money bags to mosques on rainy days in order to encourage attendance (113-14). According to the text’s rationale, good leaders follow the religious mores in place, and bad leaders are divinely punished for deviating from those standards. This makes the reference to the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda a didactic lesson about the negative effects of moral laxness. Rodrigo’s lasciviousness opens the door to the destruction of his people, and this allows the legend to function as a very strong prohibition against immorality.

Rodrigo’s defeat also describes the problems that accompany governments that do not command the loyalty of their subordinates. While Julian was loyal to Rodrigo, Musa could not conquer Ceuta. It is only after Florinda is abused that Julian capitulates and proposes the idea of invasion to Musa. Julian’s new alliance works against

Rodrigo's sovereignty proving the impact one defection can have on a leader's power structure. Witiza's sons also abandon Rodrigo, and this highlights the importance of gaining the support of subordinates in order to foster order and maintain a leader's control of his territory. Rodrigo's nobles withdraw from the battle, and this literal lack of order among the troops causes Rodrigo's defeat. It didactically represents the destructive effects of chaos on the Visigothic people and supports the Umayyad promotion of order as essential to civilization (Safran 129). The reason Witiza's sons give for their defection is Rodrigo's illegitimate rule. They claim he usurped the throne, and they encourage other nobles to abandon Rodrigo based on this.

According to the Visigothic religious code, Article III of the Fifth Council of Toledo (636), kings needed to come from good families, be of good character, and they specifically needed to be elected by the people or be given the kingdom by the Gothic nobles. The *History* states that Rodrigo is elected by the people over the choice of Witiza's sons; however it does not explicitly say whether the Gothic nobles are involved in this election or not. Therefore, it seems Rodrigo legally complies with the requirements for being elected king even if Witiza's sons do not approve. Regardless of whether or not the Gothic nobles specifically elected him as king, Rodrigo should have worked to gain

their loyalty in order to maintain order. Instead, he succeeds in alienating them.

The manner in which Rodrigo treats his ward, Florinda, demonstrates a disregard for the people under his care. Rodrigo's actions against Julian's trust lend themselves to the insinuation that the king may have been in the habit of placing his personal goals above the allegiance of his aristocracy. That would explain his inability to garner their loyalty and the ease with which they desert him. Rodrigo cannot keep the fidelity of subordinates who have had personal contact with him, yet the caliph considers the safety of soldiers he does not know: "Do not endanger the Muslims on a sea of terror!" (49). In reality, al-Walīd's fear of losing troops loyal to the Umayyads was probably due less to a sincere concern over his soldiers' lives than the threat to his power which could result if he over-taxed his armies which already stretched from Asia to Africa (Marín Guzman 17). Nevertheless, the caliph is presented as a much better leader, and a more desirable ruler, than Rodrigo. The concern the caliph al-Walīd expresses for his men, the example of Hisham ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān , and King Witiza exemplify that loyalty can be created through showing care for subordinates. This agrees with both Muslim and Christian teaching that leaders are stewards. The Umayyad caliphs comply with this leadership philosophy and their

domains are expanded. Rodrigo does not follow this teaching and he loses his kingdom. Rodrigo's faulty leadership skills and morals lead to his defeat. This reinforces the ideology that unorthodox leaders will be judged and removed from power.

The care the caliph demonstrates for his troops and the consequent miraculous conquest of al-Andalus present the Umayyads in a good light in this legend. The text's description that the largely outnumbered Muslim forces defeats the 100,000-man Visigothic army demonstrates they were divinely helped. According to Safran, the description of the incredibly large Visigothic army that fought against the comparatively few Muslim troops helps augment the glory of the conquest and of the Umayyad caliph al-Walīd I who authorized it (115). For the Muslims, the legend appeals to the Umayyad's previous rights to rule, especially given the fact that the conquest of al-Andalus originally occurred under their leadership.

Despite the disgruntled nobles, the text presents Rodrigo as the sole leader of the Visigothic kingdom. It describes Hispania as a very populous unit which still has a 100,000-man army even after half of the population has died in a recent famine: in 709 "there was a plague in which half or more of the population died" (*History* 50). This makes Hispania an attractive place to settle because it can support a large amount of people. The mention of a recent famine that killed half of

the population agrees with historical data that frequent famines and pestilences affected Hispania towards the end of the Visigothic kingdom, but the reference to it seems to serve rhetorical purposes apart from simply conveying historical data. One interpretation of this information is that if the Visigoth population had recently been halved, the conquest would be easier to accomplish than if the Muslims had confronted a strong, healthy Visigothic force. However, this interpretation does not fit the rest of the text's context of presenting the taking of al-Andalus as a miraculous show of divine favor. What is more likely to be the goal is to further critique Rodrigo's weak leadership in not preventing the death of such a large portion of his people. Such a staggering loss of life works as an indictment against him. Because of the uncontrollable nature of famines, they are often associated with heavenly retribution, and this again works to make the Umayyad presence in al-Andalus appear beneficial. It includes the implication that their assumption of power in the region was divinely arranged in order to rid the area of the ineffective, despotic rule of Rodrigo.

With respect to blame associated with the other main characters, Julian is presented fairly neutrally. He is loyal to the good King Witiza, and initially he is also obedient to Rodrigo. He only changes allegiance once the king takes advantage of his daughter.

Witiza's sons have a more problematic position. They conspire for the armies to abandon Rodrigo during the battle due to what appears to be jealousy. This creates a negative presentation of them. In fact, none of the characters who are described as suffering from jealousy end well. Musa, whose envy over the successes of Tariq and Mughith leads him to mistreat them, is heavily fined and imprisoned for his abuses. Musa, like Rodrigo, is presented in a negative light and as a leader who is removed from power. Interestingly, the caliph al-Walīd also suffers from jealousy, and this leads him to recall Musa, but he dies before Musa, Tariq, and Mughith arrive at his court. Apparently even good leaders can be corrupted by jealousy and end up being removed.

Early Islamic Spain

Introduction

David James describes Muhammad Ibn Umar Ibn al-Qūṭīyya's untitled manuscript as a history of *Early Islamic Spain* (Tarīkh Ibn al-Qūṭīyya). The manuscript dates to the eleventh century, but the text is based on the oral teachings of Ibn al-Qūṭīyya (895-977/Hijra 282-367). According to José Antonio Maravall, this text represents one of the oldest descriptions of the conquest from a Muslim point of view (204). It is unknown if this history was copied from a manuscript that Ibn al-

Qūṭiyya read aloud to his students while he was teaching or whether it is a compilation and summary of notes collected by his students (James, Early 29).

Ibn al-Qūṭiyya describes himself as the descendant of the last legitimate Visigothic king, Witiza, via his son Almund and his granddaughter Sara. Although Roger Collins casts doubt on the veracity of this by stating that Ibn al-Qūṭiyya is “a self-proclaimed descendant of the Visigothic king Wittiza,” this lineage is most likely true and is accepted by several historians such as David James, José Antonio Maravall, and Dolores Oliver Perez (Collins, Arab 35; James, Early 24). Ibn al-Qūṭiyya lived during a time when the history of al-Andalus had recently started to be collected and studied under the patronage of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III (912-61/300-50 Hijra) and al-Hakam II (961-76/350-66 Hijra). These histories were important not only to promote the cultural heritage of al-Andalus but also to spread ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III’s political agenda. Ibn al-Qūṭiyya’s teachings are anecdotal and morally didactic; James states “Ibn al-Qūṭiyya wants to show the power of the Umayyads is divinely given, but can only be maintained if they govern with justice” (41). This focus is nearly the same as the one *A History of Early al-Andalus* uses to promote the Umayyad’s successful expansions, making them good moral examples. In this source, as in the previous one, the prosperous

Umayyad leadership is contrasted with the results of Rodrigo's disastrously amoral one.

Summary

According to Ibn al-Qūṭīyya's text, the last king of the Goths is Witiza. When Witiza dies, he is survived by three young sons: Almund, Rumulu, and Artabas. Because they are too young to rule, their mother becomes regent, but Rodrigo, the army's commander, rebels and seizes Cordova. When Rodrigo comes to power, he does two things that are forbidden: he places a crown on his head and he opens the temple in Toledo. This temple is where the ark containing the four Gospels used for royal oaths is kept and where the names of the dead kings are inscribed. It is kept locked because of its sacredness. When Rodrigo opens the temple, he sees pictures of turbaned Arab archers and an inscription foretelling that, upon the temple's desecration, al-Andalus will be conquered by the people depicted in the pictures.

Julian is a widower and Christian merchant who buys animals from North Africa for Rodrigo. Because he does not have anyone with whom to leave his beautiful daughter while he is away, Rodrigo allows her to stay at the palace. He then falls in love with her and seduces her. When her father returns, she tells him what happened. Once Julian returns to Africa, he contacts Tariq to try and convince him to

enter al-Andalus by describing all of its weak points. Tariq writes to Musa and receives permission to go. Tariq also sees Mohammed in a dream and interprets this as a good omen of his success. After his first victory, Tariq orders that some of the prisoners be put to death and their bodies cooked in a large pot. He then releases the rest of the prisoners in order to allow them to go out and spread stories of what appear to be anthropophagi (51).

When Rodrigo hears that Tariq is in al-Andalus, he writes to the sons of Witiza to ask for their help. They go to Secunda but do not enter the city because they do not trust him and consider him as nothing more than their father's underling. That night, the three brothers contact Tariq requesting safe conduct and the assurance of being allowed to possess their father's estates. Their request is granted. The next morning, during the battle, the brothers switch their support to the Muslim side. Rodrigo's demise at the Guadalete River is described in this manner: "God defeated [Rodrigo]. Weighed down with weapons he threw himself in the river and was never found" (51). The outcome of the battle was divinely influenced against Rodrigo.

Analysis

This source is very specific in stating that Witiza, not Rodrigo, is the last king of the Goths and does not refer to Rodrigo as king. The

illegitimacy of Rodrigo's reign is emphasized by the two acts first associated with his ascension. The sacred place Rodrigo enters is a temple in Toledo whose treasure is specifically described as an ark containing the Gospels used to swear in kings. The identification of the temple as the one in Toledo is very important because Toledo was established as the Visigothic capital by Leovigild, and it became the one place where legitimate kings could be crowned (Collins, *Medieval* 71). It was also an important intellectual and religious center because it was where kingdom-wide church councils, known as the Councils of Toledo, met to review doctrinal beliefs and sacred rites including kingly election. As a result, Rodrigo's swearing in and crowning at Toledo would symbolically legitimize his rule. However, Rodrigo's illegal entry into the temple desecrates it, and this would logically annul the validity of his crowning. Ibn al-Qūṭīyya's text describes Rodrigo's vow upon the Gospels as weightless, sacrilegious, and not in keeping with the standard procedures for kingly election.

An additional profanation is Rodrigo's donning of a crown. In the previous version, *A History of Early al-Andalus*, Rodrigo's widow marries Musa's son and convinces him to wear a crown because she says it is the manner in which he can identify himself as king: "a king who has no crown is a king who has no realm" (*History* 56). 'Abd al-Azīz's acquiescence to wear a crown leads to his identification as a

Christian convert and to his eventual murder for apostasy. In that source, the wearing of crowns is associated with Christian kings. However, the Visigothic tradition of votive crowns is historically controversial with respect to whether or not crowns were made expressly for the purpose of donation to churches or whether they also were worn by regents prior to their dedication to the church. However, there is agreement that votive crowns were widely used by the Visigoths. Revelation 4:10 includes a scene where twenty-four elders take off their crowns and throw them down in front of the throne of God in acknowledgment of their dependence. This led to the tradition in many Christian kingdoms of consecrating crowns in recognition that “el monarca es, efectivamente, un servidor de Dios y sólo por su voluntad divina está sentado en el trono” (Molina Gómez 465). Among the Visigoths, the donation of crowns predates the wearing of crowns as a monarchical marker, a practice that is associated with Leovigild’s attempt to create a hereditary kingship by distinguishing his family from other noble families (Miles 22). Visigothic coins portray regents wearing crowns; therefore, Rodrigo’s mere assumption of a crown cannot be the censured action here. However, Rodrigo’s right to wear a crown, a mark of divinely invested leadership, is questioned.

In fact, Rodrigo’s arrogance closely parallels the sacrilege Julian of Toledo (642-90) ascribes to the dux Paul during his rebellion

against King Wamba in his *Historia Wambae regis*, a source to which authors of the conquest narratives and the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda had access. Paul's "election" by the people in Narbonne is presented as invalid because it is preceded by force and because Paul is nominated by one of his fellow traitors. Julian of Toledo goes on to call Paul sacrilegious because he steals from the churches in order to fund his rebellion and irreverently appropriates for himself the crown that King Reccared had donated to Saint Felix (215). It is possible that Ibn al-Qūṭīyya is claiming that Rodrigo not only forced his swearing in but also took a donated crown to wear as a sign of his kingship. This would be a supreme religious infraction because it would take a symbol of subservience to heavenly authority and turn it into a sign of Rodrigo's spiting of both celestial and terrestrial election. The description of these two actions points to Rodrigo's violation of Visigothic and religious laws in order to leave no question about Rodrigo's illegitimacy. The use of force to attain illegal investiture of power also parallels the Umayyad view of the 'Abbasid revolt. This presentation of Rodrigo's ascension may have been expressed to elicit emotional connections between the two regimes.

Rodrigo's death also works to vilify him because it is related to his pride. He drowns due to his choice to jump into a river. This action is cowardly and desperate. Visigothic kings were expected to be

strong warriors; those who proved to be weak in battle were often murdered by their own men (Collins, *Medieval* 36). Jumping into a river to escape portrays Rodrigo as both a weak king and an incompetent general. That he drowns because his weaponry weighs him down again emphasizes his cowardice in valuing his life over his mobility. Soldiers are expected to be able to carry the weight of their weapons and armor. Rodrigo's inability to do so insinuates that he is wearing a lot of protective gear, and this would have limited his ability to effectively do battle. It paints the picture that Rodrigo is preoccupied with his survival and depends on his soldiers to do most of the fighting. Unfortunately for him, Witiza's sons also value their survival and decide they have more to gain by siding with the Muslims and regaining control of their father's estates than they do by helping Rodrigo. This decision implies that Rodrigo did not give Witiza's sons their inheritance, something that frequently occurred when a competitor replaced a Visigothic king. The first thing new regents tended to do was to seize the lands of the previous king's family and relatives in order to weaken their political standing and prevent retaliation. The devastation this caused to the widows and children of the deceased kings became so severe that a law was passed to try and remedy the situation. According to Article II of the Fifth Council of Toledo, the inheritance and lands that a previous king left to his family

and servants could not be taken from them by force (320).

Nevertheless, this law did not prevent new regents from lashing out against the families of dead kings.

Unlike the previous source, which describes Witiza's sons as plotting against Rodrigo out of jealousy, this version shows them receiving justice at the hands of the Muslims because it is through them that they regain control of their inheritance. Their defection, as well as that committed by Julian, is described as a result of Rodrigo's mistreatment of them. While the acts of treason that Witiza's sons and Julian commit are not applauded, they also are not condemned. Rather, they seem to be depicted as examples of the chaos that can result from lack of good leadership. This version of the legend agrees with the *History of Early al-Andalus* in presenting Muslims as people of order and justice. The Muslim assumption of control in the Iberian Peninsula works in favor of the Visigothic nobles.

Although Rodrigo is an illegitimate ruler, Hispania is presented as a single unit, and no concurrent rulers are mentioned. This description of a unified Visigothic kingdom is consistent throughout the different versions. From a Muslim perspective, their successful conquest of an entire kingdom adds to the value of their exploit. However, the integrity of the kingdom becomes a very important ideal

in the Christian versions of the legend as a call to arms with the goal of restoring the Visigothic realm.

One interesting detail in this version is the identification of Cordova as Rodrigo's center of power and first seized city. In contrast, *History of Early al-Andalus* says Toledo is the citadel and place of the royal court, which is historically true, but it also says Cordova is the strongest city and the location of the main garrison (51). It makes sense then, that Rodrigo, a military commander, would first establish control of the main base in order to obtain military support before moving to Toledo, the religious and legislative center. Historically, Cordova has a record of supporting Visigothic insurgents and of separating itself from the Visigothic kingdom. For example, the city successfully rebelled during Agila's reign (549-54) and was not regained by the Visigoths until Leovigild's campaigns in 572. In 584, the renegade Hermengilio briefly settled there. The *Crónica de Alfonso III* (c. 990) describes Cordova as Rodrigo's home and the location of his palace, because he and his father, the exiled Prince Teodofredo, lived there (164-65). Calling Cordova an important city is valid and not simply an effort on behalf of Ibn al-Qūṭīyya to magnify his hometown's importance or to rhetorically promote his caliph's efforts to increase the city's renown.

In terms of blame, Rodrigo is described as culpable. His removal from an illegal position of authority and replacement by orderly Muslims is described as justice. Returning to the parallel between Rodrigo and Paul's seizures of power, during Paul's rebellion, Wamba "the pious king" successfully quells the rebellion because he is a just and moral king (Julian of Toledo). The description of Paul's irreverent actions creates the anticipation that he will be defeated. The same expectation exists of Rodrigo. The medieval Muslim worldview teaches that immoral actions will be punished, so Rodrigo's behavior immediately marks him as a responsible party. What is interesting is Ibn al-Qūṭīyya's declaration that the catalyst for the invasion was Rodrigo's rape of Julian's daughter. Rodrigo's implied desecration of a votive crown is enough to merit divine condemnation, yet the action that cinches his demise is the abuse of Julian's daughter. In an allegorical sense, she can represent Rodrigo's abuse of the Visigoths. She, like the Visigothic people, finds herself left in his care, and his leadership results in her harm. Likewise, Rodrigo violates Visigothic law by illegally assuming the throne, and the long-term effects of his arrogance are destructive to the Visigothic kingdom.

In this version Witiza's sons continue to play a key role in Rodrigo's military defeat by defecting from him with all of their

supporters. This remains the same in both sources. However, Julian's role diminishes. He is not described as the governor of Ceuta, and his participation in the conquest is not mentioned even though the text does say that Julian told Tariq "of its splendor and the weaknesses of its people and their lack of courage" (52). In *History of Early al-Andalus*, Julian is in Hispania during the conquest, and he is associated with Tariq's progress: "they also had Yulīyān with a force of locals who could inform them of the enemy's weak points and supply them with information" (50). However, Ibn al-Qūṭīyya's description of the conquest and the events leading up to it are not presented in chronological order and are very brief. What is emphasized instead is Tariq's ingenuity. He comes across as an Odysseus due to his cunning. Tariq employs the use of physiological scare tactics in his warfare to make the Goths think the Muslims are cannibals. This works to inspire the fear and respect his numerically small troops would not have been able to produce. It prevents small-scale skirmishes and confrontations with the numerous locals. Muslim success is highlighted through this astute trick, and it augments the prestige of their conquest.

Discussion

Although the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda only makes up a small portion of the two texts described, both sources concur in their negative presentation of Rodrigo. They contrast his corrupt rule, which results in the destruction of the entire Visigothic kingdom, with the miraculous victory accorded to the Muslims under the orderly leadership of the Umayyads. For the Muslims, the Umayyad role in the annexation of al-Andalus becomes symbolic of their divine election as caliphs and as the rightful rulers of al-Andalus. Interestingly, the Christian versions also use this legend to legitimize their claims to the conquered lands as the contrite heirs to the Visigothic kingdom. Both sides agree that the Visigoths were defeated due to divine judgment, and the Muslims interpret this as a sign that they have been appointed as the rulers of the new territory. Rodrigo is named as the responsible party for the invasion due to his abuse of Julian's daughter. Julian's description is neutral, and Witiza's sons, though guilty of jealousy, are not entirely vilified. Both they and Julian belong to the noble class, and they benefit from the Muslim arrival by being released from Rodrigo's tyranny. It is also important to note that in both sources, Julian's daughter is presented as an innocent victim and symbolically represents the harm done to the Visigoths under Rodrigo's leadership. These early accounts of the Muslim conquest describe the same core

events that the later versions will describe. However, the spreading of blame changes significantly in al-Rāzī's chronicle.

Chapter 4

Preservation of Unity and Shared Blame

Background

The *Crónica del moro Rasis* is the Spanish translation of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Mūsá al-Rāzī's *Akḥbār mulūk al-andalus*, a lost Arabic chronicle by al-Rāzī (885-955) who is considered the model historian of al-Andalus and the earliest official Spanish Arabic historian. According to Menéndez Pelayo (93), al-Rāzī's work is the most important Arabic source related to the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda because of its close relation to the later versions and the fact that medieval chroniclers, both Muslims and Christians, had access to al-Rāzī's work and frequently used it as a source material in their writing.

Al-Rāzī lived in Cordova and was the first Muslim historian to focus his attention specifically on al-Andalus as a topic of research (Pellat 121). Al-Rāzī based his history on the information he collected from "old people and transmitters of reports," (Pellat 119) and he was the first one to codify the rules of historical writing in al-Andalus. Al-Rāzī's reliance on primary sources appears internally in the *Crónica del moro Rasis* when it refers to one of his sources as the eyewitness record-keeper, Belacin (348). This man not only is identified as

someone who lives in Rodrigo's palace but also as a person who never lies: "ome que non mentia e siempre estaba en la corte con el rrey Rodrigo" (348). In another section, the sources for the descriptions of pre-invasion plagues and omens are said to come from both written documents and from captives (351). Even within his chronicle, al-Rāzī emphasizes the importance of using primary sources.

Al-Rāzī, his son, and his grandson all played important roles in molding the new focus on the history of al-Andalus, and his son, Isa, continued in his footsteps as the official historian for al-Hakam II. Unfortunately, none of al-Rāzī's writings has survived although later historians have quoted sections of his writing. The closest thing to a complete work is the Spanish translation of his 10th century *Akhbār mulūk al-andalus*, the *Crónica del moro Rasis*.

The *Akhbār mulūk al-andalus* was translated from Arabic to Portuguese in the early 1300s under King Dinis. It is interesting that King Dinis had the *Akhbār mulūk al-andalus* translated into Portuguese instead of the *Estoria general de España* of his grandfather, Alfonso X. The *Estoria general de España* was the first Christian history of the kingdoms of Spain written in a Romance language instead of Latin. King Dinis was the first monarch of Portugal who ruled after the completion of the Portuguese conquest of Muslim

territories and after its permanent borders with Castile and al-Andalus were set. His decision to translate al-Rāzī's work instead of Alfonso X's may have been done to avoid promoting a Castile-centered mentality in his kingdom. His son, Pedro Alfonso, Count of Barcelos, continued the work of defining Portugal's history when he created the first Christian history of Portugal in his *Crónica de 1344*.

The *Akhbār mulūk al-andalus* underwent an unusual translation process because the scribe who transcribed the Portuguese edition, Gil Perez, did not directly access the Arabic text. Instead, Mahomad, an Arabic scholar, orally translated from Arabic into Portuguese, and Gil Perez wrote down what Mahomad read. In the past this translation process has caused scholars to doubt the fidelity of Perez's work to al-Rāzī's, but Catalán and Soledad de Andrés, Pascual de Gayangos, Sánchez-Albornoz, Menéndez Pidal, and Sánchez Martínez demonstrate that the *Crónica del moro Rasis* is indeed based on al-Rāzī's history and is not merely Gil Perez' literary expansion of al-Rāzī's text. However, like the Arabic manuscripts, no copies of the Portuguese text exist. There are only Spanish translations of Gil Perez' Portuguese version; the *Crónica del moro Rasis* is twice removed from the Arabic *Akhbār mulūk al-andalus*.

No one knows for sure when the Spanish translation was made, but three manuscripts (Santa Catalina de Toledo, El Escorial, and

María Brey Mariño) were bound with manuscripts of Pedro de Corral's *Crónica sarracina* (c. 1430), and the last sections of al-Rāzī's work were written in the same handwriting as Corral's manuscripts (Catalán and Soledad de Andrés xiii-xiv). This suggests that the translation from Portuguese to Spanish was done around the same time Corral was preparing his historical novel.

The three manuscripts bound with the *Crónica sarracina* declare in the prologue that they describe all of Spain's regents including its caesars and Gothic kings through Tarife and Musa's arrival and ending with al-Hakem's son: "quales fueron los rreys e los çesares e los godos que moraron en ella, e de los moros e alarbes, e como antes d'estos entro Tarif . . . e de como vino despues Abdurrahame, el hijo de Moabia; e quales de sus fijos moraron en España hasta que vino el hijo de Aliaquin" (8-9), yet they only discuss the kings until the death of the Visigothic King Acosta. They end before describing Rodrigo's crowning and are missing the rest of the advertised content. A fourth manuscript (Copenhagen) does include information about Rodrigo's reign and later rulers through the death of Elenquer in al-Andalus. Catalán and Soledad de Andrés date the manuscript to the seventeenth century (xv). They believe an editor added to the manuscript based on information from the other three manuscripts, Corral's *Crónica sarracina*, and Miguel de Luna's *La verdadera*

historia del Rey don Rodrigo. Nevertheless, Saavedra, Menéndez Pidal, Sánchez-Albornoz, and Catalán and Soledad de Andrés consider the section dealing with the legend and Rodrigo's reign to be original to al-Rāzī and not the invention of a later editor.

I base my analysis on the edition of the Copenhagen manuscript that Catalán and Soledad de Andrés include in the appendix to their critical edition of the *Crónica del moro Rasis*. It is the first version of the legend that clearly explains why Florinda is considered both a victim and an instigator of destruction. She is a victim because Rodrigo rapes her; however, at some point the relationship seems to become consensual because she only thinks of writing to her father once Rodrigo moves on to other mistresses. Her letter is carefully worded in order to elicit a strong reaction from Julian. Florinda is blamed because her letter sets in motion the events that will lead to Spain's destruction, and the letter seems to have stemmed from a manipulative and vengeful attitude. In contrast, the *Crónica sarracina* and *Verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo* both state that Florinda rejects Rodrigo's offers and never willingly gives in to him. In both of those texts, Florinda informs her father of her abuse via a letter, yet neither of those versions describes Florinda's missive as manipulative.

The *romances* collected by Juan de Timoneda in his *Rosa de romances* (1573) also identify the notification of her father as

Florinda's mistake. For example, the "Romance del Rey don Rodrigo" describes Florinda as "discreta" for dismissing the king's attention as a joke even though he offers her half his kingdom. It is only after the rape, when the king takes advantage of her "por fuerza," that she suddenly becomes villified: "la maluada de la Caua / a su padre lo ha contado" (xv). The *Crónica del moro Rasis* is the only version which clarifies why she is blamed for telling her father because it describes her letter as manipulative. The authors of the other versions do not explain this detail. They seem to assume that the audience is already familiar with al-Rāzī's version in order to justify the blame they attribute to her even when they do not describe any wrong-doing. This makes the *Crónica del moro Rasis* an essential source for understanding the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda.

Crónica del moro Rasis

According to the *Crónica del moro Rasis*, Witiza is a wicked king who does not keep any counselors because he does not want to be contradicted. He even goes so far as to surround himself with "malos omes" to protect him. Witiza takes what belongs to his vassals, including their wives: "e forzaba a las mugeres, e facia matar a sus maridos . . . e queria que los clerigos las tubieran, e que non fueran

de la obediencia del que los christianos llaman Papa” (344). He also replaces church bishops with Jews. When Witiza finally dies, the Goths decide to elect the next king using a council made up of clergy and nobles. They also create the requirement that the king consult them before making decisions. The council elects Acosta, one of Witiza’s good sons, as their next regent. Acosta is a good king who keeps many wise men in his palace to help him rule. He is so loved by the people that neighboring kings are afraid to attack due to the extreme loyalty he commands. When he dies, he leaves behind two underage sons: Sancho and Elier. Their two guardians want to divide the kingdom in order to give each son part of the inheritance. Others dislike this idea fearing it will leave them susceptible to attacks from Constantinople and Rome.

Eventually a council is called, and they elect Rodrigo because he is from the king’s bloodline and they believe he will rule well. The people are pleased with this decision because Rodrigo has a good reputation as an “ome esforzado e de buen sesso” (346). Rodrigo keeps many good men in his palace to advise him and, because he treats everyone well, there is peace in the kingdom. His queen, Eligena, has several ladies in waiting in her palace, including one called Florinda. She is Count Julian’s daughter, and she is so beautiful that everyone marvels at her good looks. One day when all of the

ladies are having fun and dancing, the king falls in love with her. At first he does not know what to tell her, but when he can no longer contain himself, he confesses his love for her. Florinda disregards what he says and will not give in to him. Eventually, Rodrigo becomes overcome with his desire for her and “la forzo mal de su grado e la tobo por su amiga” (346). After some time of having her at his disposal, the king moves on to other women and even esteems them more highly than Florinda. When she sees this, “cayosele el corazon de pena, e matara al rrey si facer lo pudiera a su salbo” (346). She decides to get revenge by sending a letter to her father notifying him of the king’s abusive behavior and telling him that she feels her only option is to die a pitiful death: “e tanto sopo decille que quando Iulián vio la carta, non faltó mucho para se caer de sí e morir de la pena que obo” (346). This leads Julian to carefully consider the best way to punish the king.

Julian goes to the king’s palace and advises him that in spite of the fact that all of Spain is in a time of peace, he needs to keep his men ready for war so that they will still be able to defend Spain. To accomplish this, he recommends that Rodrigo send all of his armed men to fight in the king’s lands in Africa and France because they are not as protected as they should be. Julian says he will return to his lands in Africa and continue to protect them because his only reason

for leaving was to come and give this advice to the king. For his part, Rodrigo is pleased with this counsel and says he will follow it immediately. He also rewards Julian for his wisdom.

Once Julian sees that there are no longer any armed men in Spain, and that the king and people only focus on living well, he visits Musa. He lies to Musa claiming the king would not allow Julian in his court. He then offers to help Musa invade Spain without suffering any losses. Musa is suspicious this might be a trap and consults the caliph. He tells Musa to send a small army first to see whether or not what Julian says is true. Musa sends Tarife, 400 foot soldiers, and 200 knights. They confirm that Spain is defenseless, so Musa sends a larger army that is well-equipped for war. Because the Visigothic people are unarmed, they flee from the Muslims leaving behind their goods. Musa continues to send more troops daily, and this allows the Muslims to spread throughout the peninsula.

When Rodrigo realizes he fell for Julian's trick, he sends for his best knight, Sancho, and explains to him the situation. Sancho amasses as many people as he can and goes to meet the Muslim host. He has three times as many men and thinks this will cause the other side to give in to him. However, even though both sides fight hard, the Muslims win because this is what "quiso Dios" (128). They break the columns of soldiers and kill Sancho. The morning after their

victory, Tarife has the soldiers bring all of the spoils to him. He awards horses to the foot soldiers who fought well and makes them knights. After assembling his council, he tells them that the victory is a sign that they have God's favor; however, it is important that they behave themselves wisely in order to avoid harm. He asks them to decide what they want to do next, and they all agree that the best thing is to continue with the conquest.

Back in Toledo, the king asks for a cup of water during dinner, and it turns to blood in his hand. This happens three times before the king leaves the table and throws himself on his bed. He interprets the sign as a omen for Spain, and the news of Sancho's defeat arrives shortly afterwards. Rodrigo's lamenting, crying, and cursing of the day he was born put everyone on guard because of his reputation for having a bad temper and his extreme strength when he is angry. Rodrigo orders all the men in the kingdom to prepare themselves as well as possible to go to battle, and he takes with him 100,000 of the best men in Spain.

On the way to the battlefield, two bishops travelling with Rodrigo are suddenly whisked away by a whirlwind. When the men return to the ground and come to, they say they are being punished for not fulfilling their duties. They die shortly after speaking, and this frightens Rodrigo and his men. The next morning the two armies face off and

fight for one week, but God chooses to make the Muslims win: “quisolo Dios ansi fazer, e vençieron los moros” (133). Eventually the fighting becomes so intense that the soldiers no longer can tell who has the upper hand. At that moment, Julian and Bishop Opas arrive with their soldiers to help the Muslims. The disheartened Christians are forced to retreat while the Muslim side pursues and kills them. After the battle, no one can find Rodrigo’s body or any news of him except for a few pieces of his horse’s armor near a river. Eventually, they find a tomb in Viseo that says it belongs to Rodrigo, the last king of the Goths who disappeared in the battle at Sagvibe.

When news of the defeat spreads, people do not know what to do other than join together and flee to the mountains due to the:

males que a España por el rrey Rodrigo e por la fuerza de la fixa del conde Julian e por otros malos fechos que se facian e non los castigaba, nin los obispos facian el deber con los suyos. E ansi andaban todos metidos en sus vicios a su voluntad e non buscaron al enmienda, maguer que vian señales en el cielo....E non cuidaba el rrey de mas que se folgar, ca dezia que todo estaba en paz.

(351)

In the wake of Rodrigo’s defeat, the major cities in Spain band together and set up their own kings as a means of protection.

Tarife and his men canvas Spain without being contested, and Julian is highly respected by them because of his ability to help them. Julian warns Tarife that they need to behave themselves wisely because, if they do not, it is possible for them to find themselves in a place where one man can kill one hundred of them and still defend himself. When Musa arrives, he takes over Tarife's conquests and looks down on Tarife and Julian. Unlike Tarife, he does not accept Julian's counsel and calls him a traitor. This leads Julian to plot with Tarife to get revenge against Musa. They send letters to the caliph to let him know how Musa is treating them. The caliph supports them because they are the ones through whom the conquest of Spain has been achieved. He sends for Tarife and Musa to appear before him. In the meantime, Julian takes all his goods and Florinda to his lands in Elada. He builds a castle and leaves some men guarding Florinda. The Muslims call Florinda "Caba, e tambien Hecuba que es tanto como mala fembra e desaventurada" (360). When Julian crosses over to Africa, he and his men are killed and left unburied. Upon hearing this, Florinda is inconsolable and curses herself. One night she jumps off a tower. The next morning the guards find her body eaten by animals: "e assi obiern mal fin, que asi los quiso Dios castigar por el mal que ficieron a España" (360).

Discussion

The *Crónica del moro Rasis* is the first version to blame Julian's daughter, who in this text is named Florinda, and it also specifically explains that the Muslims nickname her Caba and Hecuba, meaning bad or unlucky woman, which emphasizes that she is no longer simply an innocent victim of Rodrigo's actions. Florinda behaves herself in a manner that agrees with those descriptions. She is unlucky in attracting the king's unwanted attention and even more unfortunate in being unable to ward off his advances. In agreement with the previous versions of the legend, she is a victim. While no specifics are given regarding the exchanges between the king and her before she is abused, the *Crónica del moro Rasis* says: "Florinda fizo desprecio del e guardabasse de Roderico" (346). Seeing that she is not inclined to accept his offers, the king views force as his only means of getting what he wants, "tanto fatigado se vio de su desseo que la forzo mal de su grado e la tobo por su amiga" (346). Up to this point, Florinda is simply unlucky. The part where she may have earned her "mala mujer" designation is when she becomes vengeful towards the king. The text explains this thirst for revenge appears when the king moves on to other women. No details are given about how long the relationship between Florinda and the king lasts, but the fact that she only thinks

of revenge after he abandons her implies that at some point the relationship may have become consensual. This is a new development in Florinda's characterization and a drastic departure from her innocent victim status.

The previous versions create the idea of a one-time meeting between Rodrigo and Florinda rather than an on-going relationship. The *Crónica del moro Rasis* refers to a relationship that is both extended and eventually seems to have become acceptable to Florinda. She deems his moving on from her as something worthy of punishment instead of being happy to be forgotten. She turns into an instigator when she craftily words her letter: "e para se vengar, escribio a su padre Iulian quanto passara e la fuerza que el rrey le fizo E tanto sopo decille que quando Iulian vio la carta, no faltó mucho para se caer de sí e morir de la pena que obo" (346). Her specific fault is seeking revenge as opposed to seeking justice because she waits until Rodrigo turns to other women before she speaks out. The text states that Rodrigo abuses her, but that is not the action that compels her to write to her father. The catalyst is her abandonment. The fact that she manipulates her father is clear because she "sopo decille" what happened in a manner that would accomplish her goal of revenge. Additionally, Florinda's dramatic suicide and devoured remains identify her as a guilty party. These are

both tabooed actions and, traditionally, lack of burial is seen as a sign of desecration of the body and an obstacle that prevents entrance into the after-life (Taylor 45).

Although Julian's death is equally undesirable, his guilt is not as clearly developed. Julian follows through on his offer to help Musa conquer Spain and does not withdraw his help once the king has been deposed. His character is portrayed more positively than Musa's because Julian keeps his word but Musa disregards both Julian and Tarife's service. This change in Musa's attitude also works to negate his calling Julian a traitor as this incident occurs when Musa is in the process of betraying his men, punishing their hard work, and taking credit for their accomplishments. This makes pinpointing Julian's blame difficult. It is clear from the text that Rodrigo's rape of Florinda is one of several "malos fechos que se facian e non los castigaba" (351). Therefore, the fact that Julian tries to punish Rodrigo for his actions against Florinda is not something that is specifically wrong, yet the fact that Julian is left unburied indicates a level of guilt.

It may be that he is blamed because he lies to Musa when he claims that Rodrigo would not accept him in his court. The falsehood is only mentioned once, so it seems unlikely that it is considered a major flaw. Alternatively, it could be due to Julian's inclusion of the entire Visigothic population in his search for revenge instead of stopping

once Rodrigo is dethroned. However, Julian's actions are not described as treason by anyone other than Musa, and Musa's leadership is undermined by his ill treatment of Tarife and Julian. That Julian continues helping throughout the initial stages of the conquest is presented as something good. His instrumental help during the battle between Rodrigo and Tarife as well as during the conquest make him a positive character, so the lack of burial is difficult to explain.

In contrast to Florinda and Julian, Rodrigo at least has a grave and tombstone even though he is someone whose behavior is less than admirable. Rodrigo cannot control himself and has a bad temper. When he sees the blood omen, the king goes to his chamber and "se arrojo en la cama" crying and cursing the day he was born (349). When his attendants see this, they are afraid because when he gets angry he is "muy fuerte e muy sañudo e le temian mucho" (349). This description is not normal for a king in mourning; it reveals a lack of sobriety in his behavior. His demeanor does not match the earlier claim that he was elected because he was an "ome esforzado e de buen sesso" and instead reinforces the image that he is an unfit ruler (346).

His focus on pleasure, especially in relation to Florinda, distracts him from punishing wrong and from seeing that the bishops

are not carrying out their duties, which would include challenging his lifestyle. Another issue he is guilty of is claiming that his kingdom is at peace when it is not: “e non cuidaba el rrey de mas que se folgar, ca dezia que todo estaba en paz” (351). This claim of peace is an important issue related to Rodrigo’s reign. When he is first elected, the text says the people are happy and there is peace. However, after Rodrigo’s death, the insinuation is that there was never true peace because there cannot be peace without justice, and there cannot be justice if corruption is left unpunished. Al-Rāzī’s Muslim audience quickly would have understood the gravity of this situation. The Koran speaks about the need for rulers to be just and avoid excessive pleasures because “Allah does not love the unjust” and rulers are admonished to “judge between men with justice and do not follow desire, lest it should lead you astray from the path of Allah; as for those who go astray from the path of Allah, they shall surely have a severe punishment because they forgot the day of reckoning” (The Family of Imran 3.57; Suad 38.26). Like the two previous Muslim versions, al-Rāzī’s text continues to present the Visigoth demise as a punishment against a corrupt kingdom.

The Visigothic clergy also contribute to the realm’s destruction. Bishop Opas and his men side with the Muslims instead of helping Rodrigo. The two bishops who march with Rodrigo to meet Tarife are

publicly and divinely judged for their wrongdoing and die before the battle starts. During Witiza's reign, the clergy are encouraged to renege their loyalty to the pope and marry. This dissention against clerical celibacy is not a fictitious element. Under the precepts of the Sixth Council of Constantinople (692), clerics were allowed to marry, yet this policy was adopted during a controversial meeting. The Sixth Council of Constantinople was dominated by representatives from the East with negligible attendance from the West. As a result, Pope Sergius I rejected the council's canons and declared them invalid. Nevertheless, the East accepted them, and some of the churches in the West also adopted them. Collins states that the Visigothic church did not closely follow Rome's lead, particularly on the issue of clerical marriages (*Arab* 12). Canon XIII of the Sixth Council of Constantinople declares:

Since we know it to be handed down as a rule of the Roman Church that those who are deemed worthy to be advanced to the diaconate or presbyterate should promise no longer to cohabit with their wives, we, preserving the ancient rule and apostolic perfection and order, will that the lawful marriages of men who are in holy orders be from this time forward firm, by no means dissolving their union with their wives nor depriving them of their mutual

intercourse at a convenient time. Wherefore, if anyone shall have been found worthy to be ordained subdeacon, or deacon, or presbyter, he is by no means to be prohibited from admittance to such a rank, even if he shall live with a lawful wife.

According to this canon, lawfully married clergy could be ordained up to the presbyter level. However, the problems with the *Crónica del moro Rasis*'s clergy go beyond papal disobedience over the issue of clerical celibacy, which continued to be a contentious practice among the Western church for centuries. The two bishops who travel with Rodrigo to confront Tarife are punished for not carrying out their duties, and one of these duties logically would have consisted in challenging both Rodrigo and the people for living in moral laxness because one of the reasons for judgement is the "malos fechos que se facian e non los castigaba, nin los obispos facian el deber con los suyos" (351).

The religious leaders contribute to the Muslim invasion because they involve themselves in apostasy and neglect to perform their duty of holding people accountable for their wrong-doing. This compounds the corruption in the kingdom because the clergy are supposed to function as a standard of morality against which the laity compare themselves. In this version, the king, nobles, and people are all

involved in moral laxity, and the clergy, who are supposed to challenge them and set an example of orthodoxy, are just as guilty as the other social strata. The blame is general and so is the punishment. Given the medieval focus on the need for leaders to be moral examples, there is an indictment that the pre-invasion norm of a corrupt king and clergy have led the general public into lax living. This may explain why Florinda is given part of the blame in this version even though prior ones only mention her innocence. She may, in a sense, represent the community because female figures are often used to represent people groups. Even though the king's behavior towards her is wrong, she shares in the blame and corruption just as the general public contributes to the immoral society of the time by indulging in wrongdoing.

In this version of the legend, multi-kingdomed Spain appears as a post-invasion phenomenon. Before the invasion, there is only one king, Rodrigo, and the earlier attempts to divide Spain into two parts for Acosta's sons are looked down on. The people fear division will weaken the kingdom and leave it vulnerable to outside attacks. After Rodrigo's defeat, smaller kingdoms are set up as survival tactics when the people living on farms and small villages flee to the stronger, main cities: "obieron muy gran miedo, e hicieron rreyes en las villas prinipales de España que assi lo contaban, e que assi lo hicieron en

Cordoua, Seuilla, Toledo y Elibera” (353). The reference to the smaller kingdoms may be to emphasize that they are only island strongholds within the Muslim conquered territory. These minor city-kingdoms are mere vestiges of the vanquished Visigoths emphasizing that the entire Visigothic kingdom fell to the Muslims, and the “kingdoms” that formed after the invasion will soon be conquered and assimilated to the whole. The repeated references to divine assistance during the different battles between Tarife and the Visigoths emphasize that the land now belongs to the Muslims because they are religious and moral.

An example of the Muslim’s noble character is Tarife’s willingness to accept counsel. After defeating Sancho’s army, Tarife calls for his council and accepts advice from them. He also follows Julian’s recommendations to be cautious in his attacks in order to avoid being ambushed. For his part, Julian listens to Tarife’s commands and goes where he is sent. On the other hand, Rodrigo, with his palace full of advisors, does not seem to benefit from advice because it does not challenge his lifestyle. His counselors seem to be of the same quality as Witiza’s guards: they are the kind who will not dare contradict him and are only good for soothsaying. The legend seems to function as a negative example of the results that accompany surrounding oneself with soothsayers.

Al-Rāzī is the first one to expand the blame for the destruction of the Visigothic kingdom from being the sole responsibility of the corrupt king to include the clergy, nobility and general public as well. This version marks a turning point in Florinda's characterization because she changes from being an innocent victim into an active catalyst of the Muslim invasion. Julian recovers his role as an important facilitator and scout for the Muslim troops, and the invasion continues to be presented as the result of divine judgment against the Visigoths. The emphasis on this victory, when the Muslims were far outnumbered, enhances the prestige of the caliphate in al-Andalus because it represents a territory that was miraculously placed under their leadership.

Chapter 5

Immodesty, Misogyny, and Treasonous Coronations

Background

Pedro Alfonso, the Count of Barcelos, authored the *Crónica de 1344*. He relied heavily on al-Rāzī's history for his information, especially the parts related to Rodrigo's reign (Catalán y Soledad de Andrés lxiv). Given that the translation of al-Rāzī's chronicle occurred under his father's reign (King Dinis), the Count of Barcelos would have had access to the now lost Portuguese translation, and this has led scholars such as Catalán and Soledad de Andrés to consider the *Crónica de 1344* as a more reliable source of information on Rodrigo's reign than the Spanish translation of the *Crónica del moro Rasis* (*Rasis* xvii).

Pedro Alfonso was an illegitimate son of Portuguese King Dinis I and a great-grandson of Castile's King Alfonso X. The Count of Barcelos wrote the first real Portuguese chronicle whose vision includes all of Portugal and Spain instead of simply listing the lineages of local nobility and royalty as had been the custom before him (Catalán y Soledad de Andrés, *Crónica* li). The count wrote during a time of recent accomplishments: the area of al-Andalus that Portugal was responsible for reconquering had already been returned to

Christian hands, and Portugal's borders with Castile and Leon continued to hold where they had been set during Alfonso III of Portugal's reign. The Count of Barcelos followed his great-grandfather's lead by writing his history in his regional language instead of resorting to Latin, and this added prestige to the Portuguese language. Unfortunately, there are no Portuguese copies of the original version from 1344. There is, however, an incomplete version of the Spanish translation that contains a description of Rodrigo's reign. I base my analysis on this Spanish version.

The *Crónica de 1344* participates in an unusual trend among the Christian versions of the legend. It blames Florinda, but it does not explain why she is blamed other than for being a beautiful woman. The text unwaveringly presents the relationship between Rodrigo and Florinda as unwelcomed by her; nevertheless, she is inexplicably identified as culpable.

Crónica de 1344

According to the *Crónica de 1344*, upon the death of King Acosta, the nobles become divided into factions, each supporting one of Acosta's underage sons. Eventually the two sides reach a compromise to elect Rodrigo as regent until the boys come of age. At

his coronation, Rodrigo swears on the Gospels that he will turn the kingdom over to the control of his nephews and serve them when they come of age. However, shortly after he solidifies his power, he has the princes' guardians murdered and raises the princes in his palace where he dotes on them even more than a father would: "e tomo los fijos del rrey e troxolos consigo e fizolos criar en su palacio tan viçiosamente e tan honrradamente como a ellos convenia. E tanto les fazia de amor e de algo que su padre non gelo fiziera ni la mitad" (93). When the princes come of age, Rodrigo does not give them the kingdom, and no one dares to confront him over the issue for fear that they will be assassinated.

Every time Rodrigo hears of a nobleman's daughter or son, he sends for them, raises them in his castle, and gives them many honors. When he hears of the discretion of Julian's daughter, he invites her to his palace. The king offers to raise her as a companion to the queen, treat her well, and give her away in marriage. Julian receives the news with gratitude and counts it as an honor. He is the count of Ceuta and is in charge of the ports on both sides of the sea. Julian is a highly respected and wealthy man, and his daughter also earns a good reputation when the queen and people in Toledo see that she is diligent in doing her duties. They consider her the most beautiful woman in the world.

One day, the king's desire is ignited after he notices her working and happens to see her legs. Rodrigo pressures her, and although she tries to avoid him and reason with him, he eventually has his way with her. Having to give in to the king deeply disturbs her to the point of causing her to lose her beauty, and, on the suggestion of her trusted friend, Alquifa, she writes to her father to let him know what happened. In her letter, she asks him to send for her because the king dishonored her and she no longer wants to live in his palace. She even threatens to commit suicide if her father will not go and get her.

Julian receives the letter, is upset, and secretly sets out on a boat for Toledo. When he meets with the king, Rodrigo goes out of his way to honor him due to his guilty conscience, “tuvose por muy culpado de lo que hizo a su fija” (107). He asks why Julian has made the journey to Toledo during the difficult winter months. Julian says that it is to update him on the battles with Musa. He tells the king how Musa had attacked his land and reminds the king that even though Julian had been inclined to offer Musa half of the territories under his control in order to stop the fighting, Rodrigo had ordered him to defend himself. Julian, his people, and his family successfully fight the Muslims and are fortunate to route Musa and surround him in his castle. After that, Musa signs a peace treaty with him. However, when Julian returns to Ceuta, he finds his wife is very ill. He tells the king

that she begged Julian to bring their daughter so that she can see her and recover.

When the men who accompany Julian hear this story, they realize that the first is true but the part about his wife is not true and that Julian must be planning to take his daughter home. A few days later, the king gives Julian his daughter but warns him that she is not to stay and live with him forever but must return to Toledo as soon as her mother recovers. Julian ominously promises that when she returns, she will be accompanied by a retinue like none other ever seen in Spain.

When Julian returns to Ceuta, he calls a council together of his vassals, friends, and family. Before he can speak with them, his wife enters and demands that their daughter be avenged. She threatens to leave Julian and return to her castles and lands and not only divorce him but also attack and destroy Ceuta if he will not take revenge. Julian tells her that the purpose for calling the council together is precisely to figure out what to do because he is as distraught as she is and wants to die. Don Ximón, one of Julian's most trusted counselors, advises remaining loyal to Rodrigo. He says that Julian has never before done anything that can be interpreted as wrong, and that if he fights the king, he will be interfering with God's justice. Enrique recommends that Julian stop being a vassal of Rodrigo, from whom he

has received no land. He also reminds Julian that he is capable of transporting knights into Spain without anyone knowing it. Julian agrees to do as his wife's cousin suggests and sends a letter to Musa offering to help him enter Spain.

Musa confers with the caliph who warns him to beware of treason and not to risk any Moors on the sea. Musa then receives orders to send Tarife across with 100 knights and 400 footmen. Tarife lands at Algezira, which belongs to Julian, and renames it Tarife. He and his soldiers kill all of the men in the village. After that, Tarife has all of the goods, women, and children brought to him for distribution before returning to Musa. After seeing Tarife's success, many people want to join Julian, and the caliph eventually agrees to allow the conquest of Spain. Upon receiving the news, Tarife goes to Julian with 12,000 men. Julian secretly transports them to Spain in small groups which he pretends are merchants. Tarife and his men tell Julian that they will do as he says and that they depend on him because none of them knows the land. Julian advises them to settle in the mountain and villas in the area because the fact that Rodrigo has not attacked means that he does not yet know of their presence and if they stay in one area, he is more likely to overlook them.

Rodrigo's scouts tell him about the Muslim force, so he sends his nephew, Sancho, and a large army to fight them. Sancho and his

men outnumber the Muslims and surround them on all sides. However, God decides that it is Sancho's time, so he dies in battle. The Muslims defeat the Christian army and Tarife divides the loot and gives horses to all the infantry. When Rodrigo hears of Sancho's death, he interprets this as a sign that something will also happen to him. After assembling his forces, he and Tarife fight for one week, but the Muslims win. No one knows what happens to Rodrigo, but a grave in Viseo later appears which says it belongs to Rodrigo.

Refundición de 1400

Besides the original *Crónica de 1344*, there is an updated and edited version from 1400. It contains a few changes in the way the legend develops. For example, Rodrigo's reign is described as lasting 15 years, but the 1344 edition never specifies the length of his reign. Another difference is the advice Enrique gives Julian. Enrique notes that when the king dishonored Julian, that indicates the agreement between them is broken. It releases Julian from being obligated to him. Enrique notes that Julian pays homage to Rodrigo, but he never received land from him, so this makes their relationship less binding than if the land under Julian's control had been given to him.

Perhaps the most important revision is related to the reason why Tarife defeats Rodrigo. The 1400 text specifies Rodrigo has Acosta's

sons lead the two wings of the army. Tarife and Julian find out about this and approach the brothers. They persuade them they should not help Rodrigo because he disinherited them. Instead, they promise to give Acosta's their father's kingdom if they will go into battle and then fall back. The brothers agree to desert Rodrigo mid-battle, "e desta guisa vençieron los moros aquella batalla, por consejo e ayuda destos dos traydores" (133). It is interesting to see that Acosta's sons are identified as traitors but Julian is not. This is connected to the relationship that exists between Count Julian and the king because Julian does not receive land as part of his subordination to the crown.

Among the Germanic tribes, including the Visigoths, warriors fought in bands and were loyal to their leaders. They pledged allegiance to their chieftain, but they did so as free men and could mutually agree to end their relationship (Stephenson 5). In exchange for loyalty, the Visigothic leader was expected to provide weapons and horses for his men (Stephenson 5; Beneyto 63). This expectation that the lord would provide for his soldiers, and even compensate them for losses, continued into the later medieval centuries and is documented in customs codes ("Feudalism" 60). Eventually, as the Visigoths settled more permanently into Hispania, the kings would sometimes reward their soldiers with gifts of land. These were bestowed only on a temporary basis so that the recipient had to remain loyal in order to

avoid losing the land. The expectation of obedience and loyalty of vassals towards the king was so strong that they were required to obey even if the king asked them to participate in illegal actions; disobedience was considered a crime and resulted in the loss of the king's favor and friendship (Beneyto 61).

However, some counts grew to control vast tracts of land and have enough men who were loyal to them that they were fairly independent of the king. Their relationship with the monarch was different. They were loyal to the king and in return were counted among his personal friends, as part of the upper nobility, and as decision makers (Beneyto 63). In these situations, the practice of raising noble children in the king's palace was very important in order to create strong ties with the nobility and to establish them as intimate acquaintances who had direct access to the king. This practice continued in the individual Spanish kingdoms and would have been familiar to the medieval audience (Beneyto 100). When Enrique reminds Julian that he did not receive land from Rodrigo, he is emphasizing the tenuous relationship between Julian and the king. As a powerful count, the only thing Julian jeopardizes by his defection is his friendship with the king and high standing in court. After the king's mistreatment of his daughter, Julian no longer has a reason to desire Rodrigo's close friendship.

Julian's decision to change to the Muslim side is not technically treason, and this can explain why he is not identified as a traitor. Throughout the Middle Ages, especially along border communities, there was interaction and even intermarriage between the Christian and Muslim kingdoms. It was not uncommon to change loyalties based on what was most beneficial to the person. For example, the Cid, the epic hero of medieval Spain, is also known to have allied himself with Muslims to fight against Christians and even against other Muslims depending on his needs at the moment. The *Primera crónica general* documents that in 1060, García VI of Navarre gathered an army made of "los suyos et de agenos, gascones et morros" in order to fight against his brother Fernando I of Castile (Alfonso X 484). The king joined forces with Muslims and Basques, people groups who have a history of allying themselves against the Spanish kingdoms, and used their help to fight against his own brother. This is no different than Julian's tactic of allying himself with the Muslims to fight Rodrigo. During the confrontation with Fernando I of Castile, García VI of Navarre illegally appropriated some of his nobles' lands. When he refused to return it to them, some of his men deserted: "negandol el natural derecho . . . passaron al rey don Fernando de Castiella" (Alfonso X, *Primera crónica* 484-85). A similar situation occurs in the fourteenth century when Alfonso XI annuls his marriage with Costanza

Manuel, daughter of Juan Manuel, “por lo cual el infante don Juan manuel se desnaturó del rey: y le corrió la tierra: y le hizo grandes daños” (Valera, *Crónica* 177). Just like Juan Manuel and Sancho VI’s men, Julian defects due to unjust treatment. Changing fealty was common, and that is what the chronicle describes Julian doing. With the help of his advisors, he realizes that his alliance with Rodrigo is no longer beneficial to him, so he changes loyalty in order to place himself in a position that will better allow him to accomplish his goals.

In contrast, Acosta’s two sons depend on the king and have no land apart from what was granted to them by him. Their relationship is different than Julian’s, and it requires a different level of loyalty. The manner in which they abandon Rodrigo in mid-battle is extremely important to their characterization because that has always been a severely censured action among armies. The *Crónica de 1344* does an accurate job of distinguishing between the actions of Julian and Acosta’s sons. Due to his high status and independence from the crown, Julian could change loyalties. In contrast, Acosta’s sons were dependent on Rodrigo, and they abandon him at the height of war. Theirs is an action that is not socially permissible. Even more egregious is the fact that they benefit from changing sides because they regain control of their father’s land. In contrast, there is no mention that Julian ever receives land or a share of the spoils for his

involvement in the invasion. He changes sides because he has already lost the king's friendship--no friend would abuse another friend's child--and because he seeks justice. Acosta's sons change sides for material gain.

Portuguese 1400

There are also differences between the Spanish 1400 revision and Cintra's 1400 Portuguese version. Importantly, the pivotal point of defection in the battle between Rodrigo and the Muslims is accomplished thanks to three traitors instead of the two that the Spanish version mentions: "e desta guisa venceron os mouros aquella batalha, per consselho e ajuda destes tres treedores" (322). All three versions, the 1344 version and both 1400 versions, mention only two sons of Acosta. It seems that, unlike the Spanish version, the Portuguese edition identifies Julian as one of the traitors. It may be that there were stricter customs regarding feudal loyalty in Portugal by 1400.

Discussion

The name given to Julian's daughter is Allataba in the Portuguese version and Lataba/la Taba and Allataba/Alataba in the Spanish ones. This reflects her given name; it is the name she calls

herself and its usage begins before the rape. However, Fogelquist, who bases his research on Cintra's 1400 Portuguese edition, says the Count of Barcelos is the first to give Julian's daughter the nickname of "Cava":

The spelling of the name with a c [instead of the t of misread "Taba"] is consistent with the moral attributes of the daughter of Count Julián as she is depicted in the *Crónica de 1344*; there is a clearly discernible relationship between what Cervantes centuries later identified as the Arabic meaning of her name, *mala mujer*, and the nature of her actions. (*Reconfiguration* 15)

When Fogelquist talks about misreading, he appears to be referring to the translation process by which Gil Pérez transcribed what was read out loud to him. Phonetically, both /t/ and /k/ are plosive sounds and could, in theory, be confused by a listener or even substituted by a non-native speaker. Fogelquist gets his connotative interpretation of "mala mujer" from sixteenth century authors Miguel de Cervantes and Sebastián de Covarrubias' in order to arrive at the conclusion that the definition of "la Cava" as "bad woman" is equivalent to "prostitute".

There is no explicit association between la Cava and prostitution until Covarrubias' *Tesoro de la lengua castellana* (1611). Cervantes' example of "la Cava Rumia" in chapter 41 of *Don Quijote* defines "la

Cava” as “mala mujer” and “rumia” as “Christian” (426). It does not mention anything about prostitution. This is Covarrubias’ addition by creating a connotative association from the definition of the geographical “cava,” which is a water junction. He lists two entries for “cava”: “Cava vale lugar hondo, donde se suelen congregan las aguas que concurren de los collados vezinos: dizen ser Arabigo, pero su rayz es Hebrea” (464). The second entry for “cava” refers to the character in the legend:

Cava fue la hija del Conde don Iulian, por cuya causa se perdio España . . . su verdadero nombre dizen auer sido Florinda pero los Moros llamaronla Caua, que vale cerca dellos tanto como muger mala de su cuerpo que se da a todos, puede venir de la rayz dicha del verbo in niphah congregare porque assi como la Caua o hora recibe en si diversidad de aguas asi la tal recibe variedad de simientes. (464)

When Fogelquist says Florinda’s behavior fits her description as a “mala mujer,” he is interpreting her actions as prostitution. He believes the *Crónica de 1344* shows three behaviors by which Julian’s daughter earns that nickname. He says she prostitutes herself, lies, and dresses immodestly.

Fogelquist declares that Florinda earns her bad reputation in this version by conducting a sexual transaction with the king when she gives in to his seduction. This is based off the 1400 Portugese wording that “e, quando ella vyo que a el rey assy demandava, pesoulhe muyto e defendeuselhe per boas pallavras o melhor que pode. E elle aficouha tanto que sua defesa nõ lhe presto e ouvesse de vencer, por que era molher, e fazer o mandado del rei dõ Rodrigo, que a fortemete aficava e lhe tanto prometia” (305). Fogelquist interprets this to mean that:

The La Cava of the *Crónica de 1344* is not portrayed as an innocent girl, because she is shown to have mastered the prescribed discourse, the ‘palabras buenas’ medieval women were instructed to use to ward off temptations of the flesh. She succumbs willingly to Rodrigo’s persuasive words: perhaps to his professions of love, or perhaps to his promises. The reader is not told explicitly what the king promises La Cava, but the presumed meaning of her name, *mala mujer*, suggests that what takes place is the exchange of sexual favor for material advantage. Rodrigo purchases her favor and she consents to the transaction; she prostitutes herself. (*Reconfiguration 24*)

However, Florinda does not “succumb willingly” to the king’s seduction. The wording shows she obeys the king’s “mandado” not that she gives in to his request. The king consistently insists on his desire even though Florinda dislikes his advances: “pesoulhe muyto”. Florinda gives in to the king’s command because all of her verbal defenses, the only defenses she has, are useless. She has no choice but to obey Rodrigo because she is away from her family and in the king’s care. The 1400 Portuguese *Crónica* explains that “des o primeiro dia que a el rei començou de demander, sempre lhe ella quis cada dia peor, ca ella era de boo siso e bem viia chaamente que lhe ñ podia el rei fazer cousa que sua deshorrã ñ fosse. Pero, sem grado, per parecer, fez quanto elle quis” (306). Florinda does not fall for the king’s offers: she sees that nothing good will come from an alliance with him, and she starts hating him “des o priemeiro dia,” from the first day the king approaches her. The *Crónica* describes Florinda subordinating her will to the king’s desire after exhausting her discursive options; it does not show her executing a sexual transaction.

Fogelquist also claims that Florinda lies when she misrepresents her relationship to her father:

What seems to motivate La Cava’s actions in the *Crónica de 1344*, when all is said and done, is what might be

termed a strategy of containment implemented to limit damage to her reputation, a cleanup operation after a nasty oil spill in pristine coastal waters; better to be judged the victim of rape than a consenting partner in an adulterous relationship. When La Cava writes her father appealing to his sense of honor, she points an accusing finger at Rodrigo, denying her complicity in the maldad: “Ca el rrey, muy sin mi grado yugo conmigo” (102). She is a consummate liar. (*Reconfiguration* 26)

For Florinda to declare in her letter that the relationship happened against her will, “sin mi grado,” fully agrees with what the *Crónica* describes even if it does not agree with Fogelquist’s interpretation of the events. She participates in the relationship but not willingly. This letter does not prove Florinda is a liar.

Fogelquist reads into the narrative that the king notices Florinda more than her companions because she is less modestly dressed than the others:

In spite of her virtue, it is she who tempts the king, albeit without the intention of doing so, by exposing in a public place parts of her body forbidden to public view, and most particularly to the sight of men: ‘Acaesçio qu’ella andando vn dia trebejando sin anfaz ninguno e cantando con las

otras donzellas muchas, paso por ay el rrei, e acaesçio
asy que le vio vn poco del pie a vueltas con la pierna, que
lo avia, tan blanco e tan bien hecho que non podria ser
major' (98). She allows both her face and her foot to be
seen: her face is not veiled (*sin anfaz*) and her dress is
too short to hide the sight of her foot. (*Reconfiguration 22*)

Contrary to what Fogelquist believes, the *Crónica* does not say Florinda is in a public place, nor does it say she is seen by “men” other than the king. The Spanish 1400 version says this scene takes place in an orchard, and she is in the company of other women “*andando ella en vna huerta con otras muchas donzellas, sin ninguna tocadura*” (98). A palace orchard would have restricted access, so it is unlikely men would have seen her. In fact, the *Crónica sarracina* specifies that Florinda and her companions are in a palace garden which is hidden--the only place from which it can be seen is the king's window (Corral 447-48).

When Fogelquist says Florinda is immodest because “her face is not veiled (*sin anfaz*),” he is making an assumption that having an unveiled face was socially incorrect at that time. The Spanish 1400 version says Florinda was “*en vna huerta con otras muchas donzellas, sin ninguna tocadura,*” (98) so Florinda was not necessarily the only unveiled woman in her group. During the Visigothic and medieval

periods, unmarried women in the Iberian Peninsula were known as “mancebas de cabello” and wore their hair loose to emphasize their marital status (Bernis Madrazo 12; León Salmerón 77). The note that Florinda did not have a veil could be to highlight her unmarried status. Medieval veils covered a woman’s hair and sometimes her neck and shoulders (Bernis Madrazo 17-18; González Palencia 156). They did not cover either Muslim or Christian women’s faces during this time period, so the conclusion that Florinda’s unveiled face reveals immodesty is anachronistic.

The second part of Fogelquist’s accusation, that Florinda’s “dress is too short to hide the sight of her foot,” is equally problematic. Everyday medieval women’s dress in Spain, both Christian and Muslim, covered them from head to toe so that only women’s faces and hands were visible (León Salmerón 83). While Fogelquist claims that the king’s view of Florinda’s foot and leg worked to tempt the king, the text does not say she was showing off these features. The 1344 version says the king happened to see Florinda when she and her companions were working: “vn dia trebejando . . . acaesçio asy que le vio vn poco del pie a vueltas con la pierna” (98), although both 1400 versions soften this to say she was walking, not working, with other women. Dresses were loosely draped below the bust and waist during the Count of Barcelos’ lifetime, and they were not held away from the

body with hoops, wires, or layers of petticoats. Even if a woman's hemline is longer than the woman is tall, as was the fashion in late medieval Spain, practicality demands that in order to walk, the hem has to be raised higher than the foot in order to avoid stepping on the hem, especially if the ground is uneven. Additionally, during the Visigothic period women wore short tunics and mantles when they worked in fields (León Salmerón 54). So in an agricultural setting, it would not have been unusual for a woman's legs to be exposed. Again, the context is that the king sees Florinda's foot while she is moving around in a garden, and in that setting, this would not mean Florinda was being immodest.

Fogelquist goes on to conclude that the king noticed Florinda because she was dressed in a manner that was less appropriate than her companions' apparel. However, there is no textual support for this theory. The fact that the king notices her is not because she is dressed differently than the others but because she is the most beautiful, "la mas hermosa donzella" as the 1344 *Crónica* states (98). I disagree with Fogelquist that this version of the legend supports the association of la Cava with prostitution.

Florinda's name Lataba/la Taba/Allataba/Alataba is used as a given name and not as a derogatory term; it appears in the text chapters before the incident with Rodrigo. Minor spelling variations

based on similar sounds occur in everyone's names. For example, within the 1344 version, Yercoles and Ercoles appear on the same page as two variations of Hercules, and neither spelling reflects a negative nickname (105). Between the Spanish 1344 and 1400 versions, Jullano and Juliano are two spellings for Julian (111). The spelling variations create nearly identical sounding names, and changes of this nature are very common in medieval texts. They do not reflect a strategic, derogatory use of the nickname "Cava".

In contrast to Fogelquist's explanation of why the *Crónica de 1344* should be credited as being the first version to dub Julian's daughter as "la Cava," Menéndez Pelayo says that term does not actually refer to a prostitute. He believes "la Cava" is just a variable spelling of Florinda's name (95). She is not described as a bad woman in the *Cronica de 1344*, and this can be demonstrated by examining both the way others respond to her and how she behaves towards others.

The first mention of Julian's daughter is indicated when the king hears of her discretion: "huna hija muy fermosa e muy buena donzella e que avia muy gran sabor de seer muy buena muger. E tanto qu' eso supo el rrei Rrodrigo, mando dezir al conde don Julian que le mandase traer su fija a Toledo" (1344 97). The reason the king sends for her is because he believes she will be a good companion to the

queen due to her beauty and, described in more detail, because of her good manners. Once she is in Toledo, Florinda earns a reputation due to her diligence, “començo a deprovar tan bien en su hazienda e de ser tan buena e de ser comunal en todo, que todos dezian bien della. E la rreina se pagava della mucho, e dezia muchas vezes que, si lluengamente bivieses, que non podria estar que alta muger non fuese” (1344 98). It is her diligence that earns her a good reputation in Toledo. Only after this description of her character is her great beauty mentioned. The fact that Florinda receives so much attention based on her hard working nature demonstrates how special she is, and it makes her and her parents’ distress over what happens even greater given her ability to carry herself in such a laudable manner.

Examining Florinda’s behavior towards others further emphasizes her good character. When Rodrigo tries to persuade Florinda, the text states that she “començo de se defender por buenas palabras” (1344 98). This indicates that she does not just give in the first time the king pressures her. She tries to reason with him and show him his error. In fact, the Spanish 1400 revision says Florinda “defendiosele con buenas rrazones lo mejor que pudo” (98). Her only recourse to defend herself is her use of reasoning--her logic. This picture of her is far from showing a passive acquiescence to the king’s reprobate desires. Florinda’s character is further developed as she

accepts her friend's good counsel and writes a letter to notify her father. This contrasts with Rodrigo, who insists on entering Hercules' house despite his advisors' warnings against it. Florinda knows how to accept advice and carry herself in a respectable manner. She is a victim of Rodrigo's corruption just as everyone else under his care becomes his victim. Rodrigo's nephews lose their preeminence in the kingdom and the Visigothic people are defeated by the Muslims as a result of the repercussions of Rodrigo's relationship with Florinda.

An important point to notice is that although Florinda threatens suicide if her father does not send for her, she is not being coercive. Despite the violence inherent in rape, ancient and medieval women often were blamed as accomplices in the act. This fear of being accused is why Florinda does not immediately write to notify her father: "veo que todos los sesudos juzgan las mas de la mugeres por malas. E por esta rrazon yo non oso enbiar dezir a mi padre, por miedo que he que me lo non crea que en verdad por mi grado yo non lo fize, e rreçelo que me desanpare" (1344 100). It was (and still is) common for female rape victims to resort to suicide in order to try to restore their reputation. They imitated the example of the Roman matron Lucretia who was so overwhelmed by the outrage of her rape that she committed suicide after she made her husband promise to avenge her. In Livy's *History of Rome*, Lucretia is so adamant about

her innocence that she prefers to commit suicide rather than risk being considered unchaste. Florinda's threat of suicide is meant to emphasize her belief in her innocence and create a parallel between her and Lucretia. This idea is more fully developed in the "Romance de como la Caua escriuio al Conde don Julian su padre" (1573). In this poem, Florinda explicitly identifies herself with Lucretia:

Deueys de vengar señor
esta gran villanía
y ser Bruto el gran romano
pues Tarquino se hazia:
si no yo sere Lucrecia
la que dio fin a su vida. (Timoneda xvii)

Lucretia was a standard of feminine virtue because of her fidelity to her husband. Her suicide represented a call for justice to eliminate dishonorable Tarquine from power. Florinda's willingness to commit suicide is meant to stress her status as a victim and draw attention to the extremes of the king's immorality.

Lucretia is the specific example Augustine draws on in *City of God*, written shortly after the Visigoths sacked Rome, in order to advocate that raped women should not be condemned for the violence they suffer. He declares that women should not be expected to commit suicide in order to demonstrate their innocence because this is the

equivalent of requiring women to be punished more harshly than men. When Florinda threatens suicide, she is declaring the depth of conviction she has in her innocence; she is not manipulating her father. Even the explicit request for vengeance via the death of Rodrigo would not create grounds for accusing Florinda of wrongdoing because the Visigothic law code, *Liber Iudicorum*, does not consider it murder for a victim's relative to kill a rapist. The thirteenth century law code *Las siete partidas* actually requires that rape be punished with the death of the perpetrator. Asking to be avenged, even going so far as requesting Rodrigo's death, does not have a negative effect on Florinda's image. It is an action that was accepted in the Middle Ages.

All of the women in this version of the legend are described in very positive terms. Alquifa gives Florinda excellent advice about how to deal with her situation and let her father know what happened. Both she and Florinda know how to read, write, and argue rhetorically. This means they at least received instruction in the classical trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric if not all seven of the liberal arts. Muslim noble women living in al-Andalus were literate, and by the tenth century so were all but the poorest people in al-Andalus (Townson 42). The tradition of educated Muslim women dates back to Mohammed's wives who were frequently consulted on matters ranging

from routine to religious and legal advice both during and after Mohammed's lifetime. In al-Andalus, women could work as teachers and professionals as well as earn renown as poetesses (Imamuddin 36). In fact, there are records that Umm al-Naha was a lawyer and two princesses—Princess Walladah, daughter of Muhammad III al-Mustakfi and Princess Umm al-Kiram, daughter of al-Mutasim of Almeria—were among the famous eleventh and twelfth century poetesses of al-Andalus.

The high aristocracy of the medieval Christian kingdoms were also classically trained. Pedro IV of Aragon's wife, Leonor, delivered a speech to the council for her husband in September 21st 1365 while he was at war. In order for her to do that, she must have had training in reading and oratory because Pedro IV often wrote his speeches and the speech was presented in an appealing manner. Isabel I of Castile was also classically trained. She, like her husband Fernando II of Aragon, addressed councils and persuaded them to fund the Catholic Monarchs' endeavors. Educated women even appear in medieval Spanish literature. Tarsiana in the *Libro de Apolonio* (1250) is fully trained in the seven liberal arts as revealed by her knowledge of the advanced quadrivium skills of math and music. Laureola in *Cárcel de amor* (1492) knows how to read and write because she writes letters with her own hand to answer Leriano's pleas.

Visigothic noble women were also literate, so the reference to educated women is not a fourteenth century, anachronistic detail. José Orlandis proposes that the education of nobles may have been based on the *Institutionum disciplinae*, sometimes attributed to Isidore of Seville, which recommends teaching literacy at an early age and then continuing with instruction in the seven liberal arts (77). Braulio (590-651), who, like Isidore of Seville, was one of the leaders of Visigothic education and religion, wrote a letter to his newly widowed sister Básiila in 633. He also wrote letters of consolation to Apicela and Eutrocia; mourning mothers Hoyon, Hermenefredo, and Hugnan; and recently widowed Wistremiro. All of this points to a Visigothic aristocracy that included literate women. The legend's description of educated noble women reinforces the value of education that existed in the Visigothic period and continued to be esteemed by the legend's readers.

Like Florinda, her mother is portrayed as a very competent woman. Julian mentions that he had his in-laws' help in his battles against Musa, and his wife mentions castles that belong to her as her own inheritance in Cospi. Apparently her connections are strong enough that she really could have destroyed Ceuta if Julian had not worked to right the wrong done to Florinda. Moreover, she claims to be able to lead the revenge against Rodrigo if Julian will not direct it.

Julian acknowledges that part of his strength is due to her: “ca son assaz temudo e honrrado per ella” (Catalán, 1400 109). These women think through their situations and use the tools at their disposal in order to accomplish their goals.

Julian and Tarife also are presented in good light. Both are portrayed as successful warriors. Neither one is vilified or made out to be a horrible person even though they are the ones who are in charge of the invading Muslim troops. They are both depicted as normal human beings who experience stress and success. In fact, Julian’s defection is explained, and to an extent justified, in this version. He had been serving Rodrigo well prior to the abuse of his daughter. More interesting is that Julian is ordered to defend Ceuta without receiving any additional aid from Rodrigo. Using only the help of his family and friends, he protects Ceuta and manages to route Musa. This is nothing short of remarkable given the fact that Musa is said to be undefeated throughout the rest of the region. Julian is described in an exemplary manner.

On the other hand, Rodrigo’s behavior is not commendable. Although there is a note that he did a many good things, no specific details are given whereas his less admirable achievements are recorded. He murders his nephews’ caretakers in order to gain control of their upbringing, and he breaks his vow to transfer the kingdom to

them when they come of age. Rodrigo's corruption is further indicated by the fact that, by the time his nephews are of age, no one is willing to challenge Rodrigo because he will have them killed. This means that his court can only have soothsayers and not real counselors like those who helped Julian and Florinda. Any naysayers to Rodrigo would be at risk of losing their lives. This situation can only breed corruption because it describes an unethical king who surrounds himself with like-minded people. His lack of character is again seen in Rodrigo's treatment of Florinda. He forces her to give in by resorting to his position as ruler. Rodrigo also tries to cover his tracks: he goes out of his way to treat Julian well when he arrives in Toledo. This can be read two ways. It shows that wealth is Rodrigo's way of solving his problems and easing his conscience, and as a result, he thinks he can buy off Julian. It reveals that he thinks everyone around him is as corrupt as he is because he believes that this show of favor will blind Julian to the situation. Rodrigo perfectly illustrates a corrupt ruler.

Rodrigo's behavior is exactly the opposite of what is expected of a regent. Medieval kings wore crowns as signs of their divine election and submission. They were expected to represent justice and moral living in order to be good examples to their people and ensure divine favor for their kingdom. Unchecked corruption among the leadership or injustices that leaders allowed to exist among their subjects were both

believed to incur heavenly wrath. Rodrigo's lack of integrity leads to the punishment of the Muslim invasion. This blessings-curses mentality for good and bad behavior is rooted in Biblical imagery. As Peter Brown points out, after the fall of the Roman Empire, its former territories adopted the view that they each were responsible for ensuring the continuance of the Christian religion. Each territory came to view their individual kingdoms as micro-Christendoms and themselves as symbolic Chosen People. Their histories were written in a manner that mimicked the Bible and emphasized patterns of fall and redemption. The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda embodies this view of history by describing the Visigothic fall from favor through the corruption of its leaders. However, implied in this ideology is the restoration of the lost territory once the corruption is eradicated. The identification of the destruction of Spain as a result of immorality actually works to provide hope that the conquered territory can be restored, as had already happened in the kingdom of Portugal. The effects of divine punishment were believed to last only as long as the catalyst for the chastisement existed. Once the wrong was corrected, the situation was supposed to cycle back to that of blessings for obedience.

In the *Crónica de 1344*, this is seen fairly quickly. Rodrigo is removed from power, but Pelayo is said to begin ruling in Asturias only

two years after Rodrigo's disappearance. He is described as a good king and as ruler of all of the remaining Christians: "Pelayo el Montesino fue muy buen rrei e leal e todos los christianos que heran en las montañas acojeronse todos a el" (200). Immediately, under good leadership, what was lost to the Muslims begins to be regained. Initially, all of the survivors fall under Pelayo's rule. However, the *Crónica de 1344* says this single regent situation was lost as Pelayo's heirs left inheritances to all of their sons instead of just the firstborn. This resulted in the creation of several Spanish kings and kingdoms.

In the introduction to the *Primera crónica general*, Alfonso X, Pedro Alfonso's great-grandfather, notes that this division worked against the restoration process:

por que fuesse sabudo . . . como fueron los cristianos
despues cobrando la tierra; et del danno que uino en ella
por partir los regnos, por que se non pudo cobrar tan
ayna (4)

The division of the Christian kingdoms was considered harmful and detrimental to a return to Spain's original state as a unit. Alfonso Henrique's great-uncle, Sancho IV of Castile, also speaks against the division of kingdoms by saying Jesus was against it: "El regno que es partido e menguado conuiene que sea desollado por rayz, segund que deixo Jesu Cristo en el euangelio" (88). Pedro Alfonso refers to all of

the Iberian Peninsula as *España*, and this reflects the ideology of a unit with Portugal functioning as one of the Spanish kingdoms. Modern scholars do not always accept the connection between Portugal and the other Spanish kingdoms. For example, David Birmingham's *A Concise History of Portugal* does not acknowledge any early, shared history or alliances with medieval Spain. Instead, he highlights Henry of Burgundy's French roots and Portugal's close alliance with England. No mention is made of the fact that Henry of Burgundy's rule was legitimized via the dowry of his wife, Teresa of León, who was an illegitimate daughter of Castile-Leon's King Alfonso VI. In Birmingham's history, Spain is only presented as an enemy of Portugal and an invader.

The *Crónica de 1344* describes a Visigothic kingdom that is unified under one king before the Muslim invasion and still retains the idea of one Spain despite its division into several smaller Christian kingdoms. Rodrigo's corruption stands out more than that of any other character for causing Spain's loss. However, he is joined by Acosta's sons who commit the crime of defection in mid-battle. While the two Spanish versions maintain Julian's neutral status, the Portuguese version places him in the same traitorous category as Acosta's sons.

The next chapter will examine Pedro de Corral's *Crónica sarracina*, which was written before Castile-Leon finished expelling the

Moors from their territory. It is Spain's first historical novel, and the legend's embedded rhetoric of unity based on the understood historiographical view of fall and redemption is more fully developed.

Chapter 6

The Anticipation of Unity in the Face of Impending Judgment

Background

Pedro de Corral's historical novel the *Crónica sarracina* dates to the first half of the fifteenth century, though the exact date of composition is unclear. His authorship of the *Crónica sarracina* is confirmed by a diatribe aimed at him in the prologue of Fernán Pérez de Guzmán's *Crónica del Rey don Juan* (c. 1435-1454):

Muchas veces acaece que las Crónicas é Historias que hablan de los poderosos Reyes . . . son avidas por sospechosas é inciertas, é les es dada poca fe é autoridad . . . como en estos nuestro tiempos hizo un liviano y preuncioso hombre, llamado Pedro de Corral, en una que llamó Corónica Serracina, que mas propiamente se puede llamar trufa ó mentira paladina. (267-70)

Very little is known about Corral aside from his authorship of the *Crónica sarracina*.

The novel's two titles, *Crónica del Rey don Rodrigo* and *Crónica sarracina* identify the two foci of the work: King Rodrigo and the Saracens. The exact meaning of "Saracen" has varied over time. According to Philip Mayerson, before the Muslim conquests, "Saracen" referred specifically to nomadic Arabs (283). This etymology is

described in greater detail by Sebastián de Covarrubias: “Sarracenos, se dizen los moros, porque pretenden decender de Sarra, mugger del Patriarca Abrahan . . . los Sarracenos, se dizen en Arabigo Essarak, que quiere dezir, robadores, o salteadores; estos son Nomadas, que no tienen abitacion cierta” (1289). Mayerson also explains, that after the Muslim expansion began, conquered people used this term to refer to all Arabs, nomadic or not, and associated the term with Muslims in general (285). Alma C. Allen further elaborates that in Spanish epics, both “Moor” and “Saracen” refer to Africans who are usually Muslim and sometimes black. In English and French literature the color designated by these words may have been stronger, but in Spain, the many intermarriages and military alliances left religion as the main distinguishing feature between people groups.

Menéndez Pidal calls Corral’s work the first historical novel in Spanish (lxxxix). However, it has also been variously identified as a chronicle, epic, and chivalric novel due to the large variety of topics it develops (Cramer 1). The work has over 1,000 chapters, so it is no surprise that it can be classified in a variety of ways.

Corral’s novel employs several rhetorical devices that work to make the writing appear reliable and fit its description as a “crónica.” Its title makes it sound like history, and it employs pseudo-historians which the text describes as eyewitnesses to the action or who are said

to confirm their information with eyewitnesses. The narrative declares it is based on ancient manuscripts that were lost and later made accessible via a second narrator. There was even a time when the work was attributed to Eleastras, one of the characters who functions as the king's chronicler, instead of Corral (Fogelquist "Introducción" 9). The novel also has a strong moralizing tone, which is typical of the didacticism associated with medieval history. These writing strategies are in line with the rhetoric employed by authors ranging from Juan Manuel to Cervantes in order to frame their lessons in a pleasant manner.

Menéndez Pelayo believes Corral's work "no es más que una amplificación monstruosa y dilatadísima del libro de Rasis," but several of the elements that are attributed to Corral's fantasy, such as Hercules' house and Florinda's friend Alquifa, are originally from al-Rāzī's history. In fact, the introduction to the María Brey Mariño manuscript of the *Crónica del moro Rasis* mentions two parts to al-Rāzī's chronicle. The first part deals with everything before the Muslim invasion through Acosta's reign while the second details Rodrigo's reign through Pelayo's father:

La qual coronica fabla muy conplidamente los grandes fechos que conteçieron en aquellos tienpos ante de la destruyçion d'España . . . fasta el tienpo del buen rrey

Acosta que fuera rrey en Castilla . . . fasta que alçaron en Castilla por governador a don Rrodrigo que despues fuera rrey de Castilla . . . e despues se contaran como fue destruyda toda España fasta el teinpo de la muerte deste rrey don Rrodrigo. En la cual coronica se contara por estenso mui complidamente todos los fechos grandes que conteçieron . . . deste rrey don Rrodrigo fasta el tienpo del buen rrey Abarca e del duque don Favila, que fuera padre del rrey don Pelayo que conquerio a España y la torno a ganar. (4)

This description of the two parts to al-Rāzī's chronicle correspond to the information that appears in the *Crónica del moro Rasis* and *Crónica sarracina*, whose manuscripts tended to be bound together. Most of the extant copies of the *Crónica del moro Rasis* end with the selection process for Acosta's successor, as the above introduction declares. The *Crónica sarracina* starts with the selection process to replace King Acosta, describes Rodrigo's entire reign and death, and chronicles the Muslim and Christian rulers through Pelayo's coronation and initial confrontations with the Muslims. Whoever wrote the introduction to the María Brey Mariño manuscript was well informed on the contents of the two works but does not distinguish between al-Rāzī's chronicle and Corral's novel. It describes both parts as if they

were al-Rāzī's history. This may be due to the lack of authorial identification within the manuscripts and the initial acceptance of the *Crónica sarracina* as a work of history.

Crónica sarracina

This novel starts with a description of the chaos that ensues as the kingdom's nobles divide into factions after King Acosta's death: "E estando así la tierra sin rey en tal división que no se podían acordar los unos con los otros començaron aver entre sí vandos e muchas peleas, e maltratávanse de muy mala manera" (94). Spain is almost split in two because the guardians of Acosta's sons promote the idea of dividing Spain into two regions so that each son will have an inheritance. However, some of the wiser men fear that this kind of division will weaken Spain and leave it vulnerable to outside rule by Rome or Byzantium. As a solution, the leaders decide on Rodrigo, one of Acosta's cousins, because he is "un onbre bueno e muy sesudo, y esforçado e ardid, e que aquel daría a cada uno su dever" (94). However, Rodrigo has to swear that, as the regent of "los Reinos de España," (95) he will turn the kingdom over to Sancho and Elier when they are old enough to reign.

Shortly after Rodrigo's regency begins, he requests that the council allow him to attack Cordova, where the guardians of Acosta's sons live, because the entire city has refused to acknowledge his leadership. The council agrees that, if left unchecked, this dissention could become a threat to Spain's unity. The siege of Cordova is successful, but it also causes the death of 12,000 knights and 15,000 infantry. As a favor to the deceased knights' widows, Rodrigo promises to raise their children in his palace.

After Rodrigo returns to Toledo, he sends emissaries to the king of Africa in order to request his daughter's hand in marriage. Rodrigo chooses her because she is said to be the most beautiful woman in the world: "avía nombre Eliata, la qual era la más hermosa donzella de todo el mundo, ca por eso avía embiado don Rodrigo por ella" (170). At this point, Rodrigo sees that he has gained the favor of the people, so he decides to declare himself king: "E veyendo don Rodrigo que todos los mayores de España eran a su mandamiento e avían dél muchos dineros e que no sería contrariado llamóse rey por la tierra, e fue recebido por señor que no ovo ý ende quien dixiese de no, e desta manera cobró el reino don Rodrigo" (171).

Rodrigo decides he wants to be known as the most generous and powerful king, so he sends word to all of the grandees in Spain to send him their children in order for him to raise them in the palace.

When Rodrigo hears of Julian's daughter, he sends for her because she is said to be extremely beautiful as well as intelligent: "muy hermosa e muy buena donzella a maravilla, ca era de buen seso e de quantas buenas costumbres que pudiesen ser halladas en muger" (175). Count Julian, living in Ceuta, is very honored by the king's request and sends his daughter to court. When she arrives in Toledo, she behaves herself wisely and earns a good reputation.

One of Rodrigo's duties as king is to follow the tradition of the Visigothic kings and add a lock to Hercules' house to honor him as the founder of Spain and prevent entry into his enchanted house. No one has ever entered Hercules' house, so Rodrigo decides he will demonstrate his valor by entering it and discovering its mysteries. Inside, he and his men find an inscription warning that the person who unlocks Hercules' house will be the cause of Spain's destruction, and they also find a cloth with images of the Arab army that will conquer Spain. Rodrigo tries to ease the tension of this ominous discovery by saying it was his destiny to unlock Hercules' house and no one can go against God's will. Count Julian is among the men who accompany Rodrigo into Hercules' house. He reasons that if Spain is at risk of being invaded, his lands will be the first to suffer because he controls the borderlands both in Africa and on the Spanish coast. He asks Rodrigo for extra troops to help him defend himself. Rodrigo and the

council send him 20,000 knights and 100,000 soldiers and agree to pay the troops' salary for two years.

Unfortunately, most of the reinforcements are shipwrecked by a storm on their way to Ceuta. Rodrigo connects their deaths with what he saw in Hercules' house. He realizes that during his reign, more than 40,000 knights and 150,000 foot soldiers have died "e que estos fechos no eran sino destrucción de España, e de los godos para siempre" (237). He decides to send Julian more reinforcements, but he strategically sends the unwanted survivors of the Cordovan rebellion because he feels they are expendable. In Africa, Julian and the reinforcements are able to defeat Musa and Tarife's armies despite being greatly outnumbered by them.

One day Rodrigo falls in love with Florinda when he sees her and her friends playing and having a beauty contest in a palace garden. After this, the king plots how he can get Florinda within his power. He eventually issues an invitation to the queen to eat with him in his chambers because he claims he is feeling unwell. Once the queen and other ladies are entertained playing games, the king calls Florinda aside to remove scabies mites from his hands. While she is kneeling before him, and as he sees her beautiful white hands, the king tells her he loves her and would like her to do as he wishes. Florinda pretends to misunderstand him and confirms that she has

committed her life to his service “e esto porque espero ser honrada por vos, e que me faredes siempre gracias e mercedes” (451). The king then speaks more directly by saying that he loves her in the manner he loves his wife and lets her know that he wants her to be his mistress.

Florinda tries to downplay the interview by saying she interprets his request as a test of her character. However, the king promises that he is sincere and will ensure that their relationship is not revealed. Florinda replies that is impossible “que no es cosa al mundo fecha que no sea sabida, e mucho más aína el mal” (454). She argues that giving in to the king’s request would make her a traitor and that, once the relationship is discovered, she will be the one blamed for seducing or even poisoning the king as part of a search for power. The king dismisses her worries, but Florinda says that she would rather die than commit that crime: “Señor, no me mandades en toda guisa fazer tal cosa que ciertamente vos digo verdad que más querría ser muerta que tal cosa consentir. Señor, si vós entendiésedes que avía mal seso vós aviades de castigar antes que vós me mandar que cayese en tal yerro” (454). The king lets the matter drop for that day, but he continues to pressure her daily. Eventually, he simply sends for her during the siesta and has his way with her. After this, the king sends

for her as often as he wants. As a result of the king's abuse, Florinda's beauty begins to fade.

Florinda eventually confides in Alquifa, the daughter of another count of Spain. Alquifa tells Florinda that she needs to send word to her father because, if the king impregnates her, it will be too late to say that she did not consent to the relationship. Florinda confesses that she is afraid her father will not believe she is innocent "e todavía los ombres por nuestra gran desventura nos juzgan por la mayor parte ser malas, he miedo que él no lo creyese que así avía pasado, e echaría a mí toda la culpa" (457). However, she takes Alquifa's advice and writes to her parents informing them that "el Rey sin mi grado me tomó para sí, e cumplió su voluntad" (458).

Immediately after he reads the letter, Julian travels to Toledo. The king receives him with a hug and asks whether something has happened. Julian explains that, although he was successful against Musa, when he returned home, he found his wife, Countess Frandina, almost at the point of death. His wife says the only remedy for her illness is to see Florinda, so Julian has come to take his daughter home. Julian proposes that Rodrigo disarm Spain as a way to fill the king's coffers and reduce the fighting between nobles, but in reality he suggests this in order to make his revenge against the king easier. Rodrigo values Julian's advice more than anyone else's, and "no dezía

al Conde de 'no', e que le preciava más que su consejo" (465), so he goes along with Julian's proposal of having all the knights destroy their weapons and return to farming their lands. Julian also receives a signed letter from Rodrigo giving him permission to kill his reinforcements if they fail to submit to the king's edict. The king willingly gives Julian the letter because he is not fond of those knights. He also allows Florinda to go with her father. However, he tells Julian how much he will miss her and commands that the very hour her mother recovers Florinda must be sent back to him.

Once Julian is back in Ceuta, he tells the reinforcements that the king decided upon disarming Spain and cancelling the payments to the knights. He also claims that Rodrigo asked him to kill them because they are related to the knights of the Cordovan rebellion. Julian proceeds to show them the letter from the king so that they will believe he is telling the truth. The knights are shocked, but they cannot overlook the proof of the letter. They thank Julian for sparing their lives and promise to fight for him until death.

With the approval of his council, Julian sends a letter to Musa letting him know that he and his men will help the Muslims conquer Spain because he is no longer Rodrigo's vassal. Musa is gladdened by this and forwards the letter to the caliph. He promises to send knights to accompany Musa if he can first confirm that Julian is sincere and

provide him with specific details of the help Julian can offer. Julian says he has 30,000 knights, 100,000 foot soldiers, and is in charge of the ports on both sides of the sea, so Musa will not need to worry about provisions. He guarantees that they will conquer Spain because he has already seen it predicted in Hercules' house. The caliph requires that Musa first send Tarife and some men to see how they fare before sending the entire army. Once the Muslims see how successful Tarife and his men are, they become eager to attack the rest of the Spain.

Musa is amazed when Prince Sancho and his army arrive to confront him because the prince's men are only armed with leather weapons. This is due to Rodrigo's earlier edict of disarmament. In contrast, Musa's men carry metal weapons. The fighting is intense, and just when the Christians gain the upper hand, night arrives. The narrator says that night came two hours earlier than it should have because God had already predetermined to let the Goths die:

E sin duda creed que si la noche tan aína no viniera que los moros para siempre fueran desbaratados E otra cosa non fue sino la grand sobervia que creció en el linaje de los godos . . . e a Dios no le plaze de la sobervia, e la abaxa. Consintió que todos fuesen muertos e destruidos, y echados de la grande honra que siempre ovieron

Empero sabed que la pena no la quiso dar sino en este
mundo, por quanto las carnes fueron martiriada e
destruidos. (495)

That night Prince Sancho dreams about his death and sees Rodrigo's upcoming defeat and later penance. Sancho is killed the next day in battle and his chronicler, Alanzuri, sends Eleastras the record of the Sancho's vision and battle before Alanzuri dies of battle wounds.

Despite seeing many omens foretelling his death, Rodrigo goes out to fight the Muslim army. Bishop Opas, Julian's brother-in-law, travels with Rodrigo's army and sends Julian updates about everything that goes on in Rodrigo's camp. Opas even tries discouraging Rodrigo by conjuring demons that represent Rodrigo's character flaws.

According to Eleastras, the Visigothic defeat occurs in "el mes de la luna" (620). Nevertheless, Rodrigo does not die in the battle. He is somehow pushed out of it, and although he tries to return to the battle three times, a hermit finally convinces him to accept that God does not want him to die. He must stay alive in order to do penance. The chronicler Eleastras dies in the battle for Leon, but his history is later found and completed by Carestes, a vassal of Alfonso the Catholic. Carestes finishes the story of Rodrigo by describing the temptations he endures during his penance, including being eaten alive by a two-headed snake.

When Florinda hears of the Visigothic defeat, she is overwhelmed by the belief that she has been the cause of it all. She regrets she wrote her father the letter and wishes she would have committed suicide instead. Florinda and her father exchange a series of letters in which she repeatedly asks that he content himself with Rodrigo's demise. She requests that he not continue with the destruction of Spain and its innocent people. However, Julian tells her that he will persist until he has had his fill of revenge. Florinda eventually dies from an infection caused by an embedded fish bone in her nail bed and Julian is killed when a tower falls on him.

Discussion

Like the *Crónica de 1344*, the *Crónica sarracina* continues to present Florinda as an innocent victim. Florinda's response to the king indicates that she is not interested in having a sexual relationship with him: "Señor, no me mandedes en toda guisa fazer tal cosa que ciertamente vos digo verdad que más querría ser muerta que tal cosa consentir" (454). In fact, when Rodrigo first becomes attracted to Florinda, she is in an enclosed palace garden with her friends "como la huerta era muy guardada e cercada de grandes tapias, e allí do ellas andavan no las podía ver sino de la cámara del Rey, no se

guardavan, mas fazían lo que en plazer les venía así como si fuesen en sus cámaras” (448). The specific description of the orchard as a protected and enclosed garden refers to the common medieval theme of *hortus conclusus* and represents Florinda’s chastity. Like the garden’s fertility, Florinda’s sexuality is safe from unwanted visitors until Rodrigo uses his high position to gain access to it. According to Fogelquist, Florinda’s request that the king not order her to comply with his desire reveals her acknowledgment that his orders override her will (“Introducción” 51). Florinda does not consent to having a relationship with the king. She only submits her will to his command after seeing that she cannot dissuade him. Florinda’s daily resistance to his advances appear to have been enough to let the king know that she would not willingly give in to him. Her death from the infection caused by an embedded fish bone seems to continue the trend to present Florinda as a helpless victim. She is unable to prevent the king’s violence towards her, she fails to convince her father to stop helping the Muslims, and she cannot stop the infection that spreads from her finger throughout her body. She allegorically represents the Visigothic kingdom that is destroyed due to the unchecked infection of corruption among the leadership. Examples of other women who represent the suffering and destruction caused by immoral leadership include Bathseba and Andromache. The miscarriage and widowhood

Bathseba suffers parallels the lives destroyed during King David's attempt to hide his immoral involvement in adultery and murder. The *Iliad's* widowed and enslaved Andromache reflects the enslavement and death of the Trojan population in the aftermath of Paris' illicit attachment to Helen. Like these women, Florinda, represents the Visigothic soldiers and villagers who suffer the effects of Rodrigo's wrong decisions.

Despite the fact that Rodrigo's narration of his relationship with Florinda portrays her as innocent, Eleastras, the king's chronicler, tries to turn Florinda into the guilty party by saying she desired the encounter with the king and by describing Rodrigo as the most honorable man in the world: "e por el plazer que tu fija hovo, tú [Julian] consentiste ser destruido e desonrado el mejor ombre del mundo" (462). This evaluation of Rodrigo's character contrasts with the aggressive manner with which he declares his intentions towards Florinda. He makes sure the queen is distracted and then calls Florinda aside to remove scabies mites from his hands: "e como las vio que jugavan, llamó a la Caba, e dioxole que le sacase aradores de las manos. E la Caba fue luego . . . e fincó las rodillas en el suelo E él . . . le fallava las manos blandas, e blancas, e tales quales él nunca viera a muger" (450). Florinda submissively removes the highly contagious scabies mites, which can spread by skin-to-skin contact,

from his infected hands. She kneels before him in a posture that emphasizes her subservience. Florinda's beautiful white hands contrast with the king's infected ones to the same extent that her innocence and obedience are the opposite of his abusive intentions, yet the only criticism Eleastras directs towards the king is the fact that he accepts Julian's advice to disarm Spain (526). Eleastras chooses to interpret events in the manner that best suits his ideology because Rodrigo himself tells Eleastras to record his relationship with Florinda:

e todo esto fazía el Rey por poner en el libro quál fuera la causa verdadera porque el Conde don Julián viniera contra él, e el comienzo de España ser destruida por qué vino, ca a esa sazón Eleastras ni onmbre del mundo no sabía parte ni mandado quel Rey oviese yazido con la Caba. (528)

The king knows Florinda is a victim, but Eleastras cannot accept that point of view. He shifts the blame away from the last Visigothic king and goes out of his way to portray Rodrigo as pious.

When Rodrigo is chosen as regent, he is described as an ideal, just ruler. Eleastras declares that he is wise, will give each person their portion, and will not abandon the country (94). Eleastras' comments show that he considers these qualities to be accurate reflections of Rodrigo's character despite the fact that Rodrigo does

not comply with any of them. He is not wise when he accepts Julian's advice nor when he decides to enter into a relationship with Florinda. It should be noted that Rodrigo's only requirement for his consorts is that she be extremely beautiful. He chooses Eliata to be his wife because she is reputed to be the most beautiful woman in the world. He invites Florinda to his palace because she has a good reputation and is also extremely beautiful. This election of women based on their physical appearance is not based on the pseudoscience of physiognomy because the *Crónica sarracina* does not support that ideology. While Florinda's internal and external beauty are in harmony, Queen Eliata's beauty is not. Eliata's shallow character does not match her extreme beauty. She is vain, and her focus on appearances actually causes King Abalagía's death. As a result, Rodrigo's choices must be seen as being motivated by lust instead of being interpreted as a pursuit of noble character.

Rodrigo follows a pattern of behavior that places his goals and desires above the welfare of the kingdom and his subjects. Exemplary leaders are supposed to put the good of others above their own, but Rodrigo places his desire for wealth over the security of his borders when he orders soldiers to destroy their weapons and take up farming. By discontinuing his payments to them he actually dishonors men who had previously fought to support him and he withholds their money.

Rodrigo also abandons Spain. He lives the last portion of his life in isolation and private penance, which does not really set an example for his former subjects to follow even if he does set a general example for the novel's readers to avoid sin instead of paying the consequence. Rodrigo does not even participate in Pelayo's fights to reestablish Christian rule.

However, the overall portrayal of Rodrigo as a man who prays whenever he receives negative news and throughout his temptations and as someone who acknowledges his errors all work with the narrators' comments to turn the king into a sympathetic character despite all of his baneful actions. His death by being eaten alive by a two-headed serpent, which serves as an earthly purgatory, also works in his favor to show his true repentance. Despite the devastation he causes, Rodrigo is allowed to die with the assurance of celestial acceptance: "el Spiritu Sancto de Dios le dixo: 'Esfuerça e non aya miedo . . . e quando fuere tiempo yo te guiaré por que vayas fazer tu penitencia por que tu alma aya salvación'" (397). Rodrigo's successful penance diminishes the negative characterization that he would otherwise have received for being the catalyst of the Visigothic destruction. His overall image is positive because the work presents him as an example to learn from given the fact that Rodrigo's soul is ushered into heaven at his death.

Unlike some of the earlier versions of the legend, Corral's work does not make Julian a neutral figure. Instead, he starts off honorably but later becomes corrupted. In the beginning, he is a model soldier and is loyal to Rodrigo. He knows how to lead his troops to victory despite terrible odds. However, the turning point occurs when he returns to Ceuta after removing Florinda from Rodrigo's guardianship. He lies about both the king and Florinda's behavior, making his daughter appear complicit in a supposed plot to murder him. The first one to denigrate Florinda's character is her father, which is exactly what Florinda says she fears will happen when she initially delays in making her situation known. Julian also misrepresents the king when he claims Rodrigo ordered him to kill his reinforcements simply because they are related to the Cordovan knights. In reality, Rodrigo's letter only gives Julian permission to kill those men if they refuse to disarm and return to their land. These lies mark the beginning of Julian's transformation into an untrustworthy villain.

The series of letters exchanged between Florinda and her father reveal a character that has deteriorated. Even though Florinda points out that continuing to aid in the conquest of Spain will cause the innocent to suffer, Julian chooses to help destroy them. When the Muslims decide to plot his death, despite his dealing honestly with them, there is no sympathy left for his character. His demise receives

only two sentences: “e estando así cayóse una torre del dicho Castillo, e mató al dicho Conde, e al dicho su fijo, e a los suyos. E así fizieron mala fin como traidores” (348). This passing mention of his death contrasts with the many chapters in which he is a central character. While Julian may start out as someone readers feel some sympathy towards, in the end he becomes a figure who has been swallowed up by his rage.

The main religious figure, Bishop Opas, betrays Rodrigo and works as a spy who informs Julian of the Christian army’s movements. In fact, he is even more adamant about getting revenge than Julian is because he warns Julian “no se vos olvide la desonra que vos fizo; antes buscad manera como le fagades perder el reino. E yo vos prometo que yo vos ayude en ello en quanto el alma me durare en el cuerpo a todo mi poder” (460). The *Crónica sarracina* identifies Bishop Opas as Julian’s brother-in-law and Florinda’s uncle. This relationship is expounded upon in the *Primera crónica general*, which more specifically describes Opas as King Witiza’s brother and Count Julian as the king’s relative and confidant (306-07). This makes Countess Frandina the former king’s sister and Opas’ sister. Opas’ vindictiveness is a reprisal for injuries committed against his relatives. Rodrigo’s disinheritance of the previous king’s sons is an affront to

Opas' nephews, and the abuse of Florinda, Opas' niece, is the second attack on his family's prestige and honor.

In addition to being a leader who places revenge above the well-being of the general population, Bishop Opas represents a clergy that is accused of being ineffective in their roles. He engages in black magic, which is not permitted by the Catholic Church. His summons devils to dishearten Rodrigo, and this places Bishop Opas on the same level as a witch or warlock. According to the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* (c. 910), improper leadership among the clergy is tantamount to a decree of divine judgment:

Istud namque Spanie causa pereundi fuit, sicut dicit Scriptura: "Quia abundavit iniquitas, refrigescit karitas" et alia Scriptura dicit. "Si peccat populus, orat sacerdos, si peccat sacerdos, plaga in populo" . . . et quia reges et sacerdotes Domino deliquerunt, ita cuncta agmina Spanie perierunt. (104)

The role of religious leaders was considered an essential part of society, and decadence among the moral leadership was equated with devastation. Bishop Opas' unorthodoxy works as an omen of impending doom.

Like the Visigothic kingdom in the *Crónica sarracina*, the fifteenth century kingdom of Castile was plagued with weak

leadership. Eleastras faults Rodrigo for accepting bad advice when he listens to Julian's counsel to disarm the country without consulting the assembly. This conduct of listening to unreliable confidants is very similar to the divisive situation that existed in Castile during the start of the fifteenth century. Widowed Queen Catalina refused to listen to the sound advice of her brother-in-law, Fernando I of Aragon, during their regency of Castile (1406-1416). She reversed some of the centralizing policies of the late Enrique III of Castile. The person most strongly blamed for giving Queen Catalina wrong advice was her personal confidant Leonor López de Córdoba.

The continued tensions between Queen Catalina and Fernando eventually lead to the division of Castile into two sections in 1408. Each part of Castile came under the control of a regent, and the same set of laws was not always used in both sections of Castile. For example, in 1408 Queen Catalina imposed severe regulations against Castilian *Mudejars* (Muslims from al-Andalus who lived in the Spanish kingdoms). In contrast, Fernando did not agree with or enforce the policies in the area of Castile under his control. Eventually Catalina's side was no longer able to enforce the laws either due to the lack of consistency in the kingdom.

Like his mother Queen Catalina, Juan II of Castile (r. 1406-1454) was a weak king once he came of age and assumed the

kingship. He relied on the counsel of an advisor he had since early childhood, the Condestable Álvaro de Luna. The Condestable managed all of the king's business, including the selection of his queen (Valera, *Crónica* 191). This over dependence on Luna caused many problems in Castile, resulting in feuding among the nobles and clerics. For example, the *cortes* convened between 1419 and 1425 repeatedly requested that Juan II address issues of corruption, but the king merely replied with a command that the laws of the land be followed. His commands did not stop the clergy from illegally renting out royal lands or going against the pope's orders and awarding religious posts in Castile to non-Castilians. This lack of ethical behavior among the Castilian clergy is echoed by Bishop Opas' disregard for orthodoxy. The repetition of appeals by the *cortes* regarding the same frustrations year after year reveal Juan II's ineffective leadership.

Fifteenth century Castile was weak, divided by factions, and rife with the corruption that accompanies the non-enforcement of laws. Corral's depiction of Bishop Opas' unorthodoxy, Julian's vengeful nature, and Rodrigo's weak leadership mirrored problems that were harming Castile's infrastructure. Corral's novel functions as a warning to readers of possible judgment if Castile's situation is not reversed.

The impact medieval leaders were thought to have on their kingdoms, whether to make them prosper or bring about their ruin, was an important concept in the Middle Ages. It was emphasized in chronicles, religious and secular literature, and especially in *exemplae*. Corral's contemporary, the historian Diego de Valera (1412-88), echoes this thinking when he states leaders are credited with their territory's successes and held to a higher standard of responsibility for its failures: "que bien quanto la gloria y honor delos fechos loable es al principe o caudillo deuida: aun que parte sea delos subditos: assi de contrario es ael atriuydo el mayor deshonor o mengua el reparo y remedio [de los males] a todos atanne y conpete: mayormente alos grandes" (*Crónica abreviada*, 199). Sancho IV of Castile (1258-95), in his *Castigos e documentos* (c. 1293), warns that a king's wrong doing is worse than any normal person's because people imitate the king:

Mas envergonnado es el mal fecho o el mal pecado diez atanto en el rey que en otro omne, por dos cosas. La primera, porque tiene mayor logar que los otros e por eso non se encubre tan bien el mal en el comme se encubiere en otro. La segunda, todos meten mientes en el por lo que diz e en lo que faze, ca a enxemplo del se mantiene todos los otros, e el es espejo de que todos se catan

segunt es vn enxemplo que se dize: ‘Quando la cabeça duele, todos los mienbros se sienten.’ (51)

Leaders were considered responsible for the well-being of their subjects, and in Corral’s version of the legend, they are the social level that is held responsible for the destruction of the Visigothic kingdom.

Throughout the *Crónica sarracina*, the idea of a divided Spain is looked down on. It is described as something that will weaken Spain and allow it to be subjugated to outside rule. The possibility of dividing the kingdom among Acosta’s heirs sparks fears that disunity among the different factions will tear the country apart: “e estando así la tierra sin rey en tal division que no se podían acordar los unos con los otros començaron aver entre sí vandos e muchas peleas” (Corral 94). The need to accept Rodrigo’s centralized rule is described positively and as the normal state of Spain. As Inés de la Flor Cramer posits, one of the reasons why Rodrigo’s positive image is preserved throughout the text is because he represents the last leader of a unified Spain (4, 61). She further explains that “el texto destaca específicamente la desunión entre diferentes facciones de caballeros para implicar que las luchas intestinas fueron responsables del gradual deterioro del reino” (Cramer 29). This weakening of the kingdom caused by internal

conflicts (“luchas intestinas”) was a reality Castilians had recently experienced.

Almost two centuries earlier, Alfonso X had already critiqued the division of the Spanish kingdoms as harmful because it delayed the Reconquista: “et esto fizimos por que fuesse sabudo el comienço de los espannoles, et de quales yentes fuera Espanna maltrecha et como fueron los cristianos despues cobrando la tierra; et del danno que uino en ella por partir los regnos, por que se non pudo cobrar tan ayna” (*Primera crónica*, 4). The Reconquista was the medium through which the Spanish kingdoms were expected to regain their lost territories and reunite under one regent. Fifteenth century Castile had seen delay of the Reconquista efforts which resulted from Luna’s overpowering influence on Juan II as well as divisive effects of the split leadership of Queen Catalina and Fernando I of Aragon.

The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda consistently presents the Visigothic kingdom as a single unit under the control of one leader. That unity is said to have been lost because of corruption among the Visigothic leadership. However, this view does not lead to the conclusion that the Christians accept the Muslims as victors or rightful owners of the conquered land. Instead, due to Christian ideology, this identification of immorality as the cause for Spain’s destruction also includes the hope of its future restoration.

The medieval Catholic Church used Covenant Theology to identify itself as spiritual Israel and heir of the promises made in the Bible to that Chosen People. This view was supported by Church Fathers such as Justin Martyr and Augustine of Hippo. As a result of this logic, the Catholic Church, and by extension the historians of Christian kingdoms, adopted a view of history that paralleled Biblical Israel's cycles of punishment and restoration described in Deuteronomy 28-30. This passage assures that after doing wrong and enduring bondage as a result of their immorality, if people return to their religious mores, their situation will be restored to its previous state:

When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come on you and you take them to heart . . . and when you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey him with all your heart . . . then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you He will bring you to the land that belonged to your ancestors, and you will take possession of it. (*New International Version*, Deut. 30: 1-5)

This reasoning turns the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda not only into a warning against the harmful results corruption can have on a

kingdom but also into a call to morality in order to recover what was lost and restore it to its former unity.

The expected reunification of the Spanish kingdoms had already been documented in the *Chronica prophetica* during Alfonso III of Asturias's reign (866-910):

Christ is our hope that. . . the kingdom of the Goths will be restored by our present prince. Also, this our prince, the glorious lord Alfonso, is foretold by the revelations and demonstrations of many Christians to be on the verge of ruling over all of Spain in the near future. (par. 5-6)

During the fifteenth century, this important ideal of unification could be seen in Fernando I of Aragon's strategic positioning of Trastámaras on the thrones of all of the Spanish kingdoms in the hopes of consolidating the crowns within one family. His eldest son, Alfonso V of Aragon, married Enrique III of Castile's daughter. His second son, Juan, married the Blanca I of Navarre. His eldest daughter, María, married Juan II of Castile; and his younger daughter, Leonor, married Eduardo I of Portugal. These were the only Spanish kingdoms that existed at that time as Leon was part of Castile and Catalonia was part of Aragon. Eventually, in 1469, Fernando I's grandson, Fernando II of Aragon, would marry Juan II of Castile's granddaughter, Isabel of Castile, and these Catholic Kings would finally reunite the Spanish

kingdoms. Only Portugal remained outside of their official control although two of the Catholic Kings' daughters married kings of Portugal and there were strong family ties between the two kingdoms.

While it is unlikely Corral lived to see the reign of the Catholic Kings, Corral's contemporaries document the event as the completion of the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda's cycle of destruction and restoration. Diego de Valera documents it for Fernando II of Aragon in the introduction to *Doctrinal de principes* (1469-1488):

es profetisado de muchos siglos aca que no solamente
seres señor destos regnos de castilla y aragon que por
todo derecho vos pertenecen mas aberes la monarchia de
todas las españas y rreformares la silla ynperial de la
inclita sangre de los godos donde venis que de tantos
tiempos aca esta espargida y deyramada. (5)

António de Nebrija also refers to the momentous reunification of the Spanish kingdoms as the conclusion of the Visigothic judgement cycle when he states in his prologue to the *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (1492), "los miembros y pedaços de España que estauan por muchas partes derramados: se reduxeron y aiuntaron en un cuerpo y unidad de reino después de repurgada la cristiana religión: por la cual somos amigos de Dios o reconciliados con él." The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda has an important rhetorical

function of creating the expectation of unity among the Spanish kingdoms.

In addition to promoting the historiographical view of judgement and restoration, Corral includes many other Biblical allusions, which appear to reflect a belief that his audience is well-versed in Biblical imagery and will understand its implications in the story. For example, Eleastras claims Florinda should be blamed because she could have alerted her father as soon as the king started pressuring her and should have cried out so that the queen heard her: “Enpero tato sabed que si ella quisiera dar bozes que bien fuera oída de la Reina, mas callóse con lo quel Rey quiso fazer” (463, 455). This detail about crying out is not included in either the Visigothic law code, the *Liber Iudicorum* (also known as the *Fuero juzgo*) or Alfonso X’s medieval laws, *Las siete partidas*. Corral is specifically referring to the Deuteronomic code. Deuteronomy 22:23-27 distinguishes between a consenting woman who does not cry out and an innocent rape victim who does scream even if no one hears her. Significantly, the well-known parallel between Florinda and Lucretia supports Florinda’s innocence despite not crying out because Livy’s Lucretia did not scream for help either. Another Biblical allusion occurs when Julian advises Rodrigo to order his knights to go back to working their fields and destroy their weapons. This parallels Isaiah 2:4, “They will beat

their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore" (*New International Version*). Not only does Julian's advice sound lucrative in that it will discontinue the payments made to soldiers and keep that money in the king's treasury but this action also has Biblical connotations of ushering in a time of peace and justice. Still another example is when Rodrigo is pushed out of the battle with the Muslims before he is killed. This is similar to John 8:59 when the people in Galilee try to stone Jesus, but he walks between the crowd and continues on his way. Florinda's death from an infection that starts in her nail bed and eventually kills her recalls the Biblical injunction not to tolerate even a little of what is wrong because it will grow out of proportion: "a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough" (*New International Version*, 1 Cor. 5.6) and "if your hand cause you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell" (Mark 9.43). This is what physically happens to her. She allows something that is bad to fester. Symbolically, it reflects what happens to the Visigothic kingdom as corruption among the leadership spreads its effects throughout the kingdom and destroys it. Rodrigo, during his penance, goes the opposite route and tolerates physical maiming by being eaten alive in order to purge his wrong.

A more mysterious reference is Corral's declaration that the Muslims defeat the Visigoths in April, the "moon month." The crescent moon symbol did not begin to be used regularly by Muslims until their conquest of Constantinople in 1453 (Arnold 155; Ridgeway 241).

According to Thomas Arnold:

It has sometimes been supposed that the crescent is the symbol of Islam as the cross is the symbol of Christianity. But the crescent is only sporadically found on Muhammadan buildings before the rise of the Ottoman Turks, and does not appear to have ever been regarded in the early centuries of the Muhammadan era as in any way distinctive of the faith of Islam. (155)

The Ottoman dynasty dating is too late to explain the importance of the lunar association in this work. Even though the hypothesized writing of Corral's work ranges from Menéndez Pelayo's 1403, Fogelquist's 1430, to Cramer's 1433, these are all prior to the fall of Constantinople, so they do not explain the lunar reference.

Additionally, Arnold theorizes that the upward pointing image that first appears in the Turkish and Ottoman flags is actually representative of a horseshoe which only later became associated with a moon in order to dissociate the image from evil eye horse amulets.

Fortunately, an anonymous book known as *El libro de conocimiento*, written by a Spanish Franciscan friar in the fourteenth century, describes and actually draws the flags of his time. His book helps shed light on the lunar reference. The flags of Damascus and Egypt; the region of Tremec n; the region of Sara; Xorman; the city of Buda; and the Berber cities of Africa, Luchon, and Tunis already have crescent moons by the fourteenth century. In fact, the three Berber flags are consistent in being white and displaying a moon. The author of the *Libro de conocimiento* describes the city of Africa's flag as "vn pendon blanco con vna luna cardena" (42). Most of the Muslim soldiers who initially crossed into Spain were Berbers, and Corral identifies Rodrigo's wife, Eliata, as the daughter of the king of Africa. Of further interest is the Franciscan author's reference to "saraynos." This group is from the empire of Sara and is associated with Arabia and the Moors. It also has ties with the herding empire of Catayo. These Saraynos of nomadic descent sound similar to the description of herding Saracens and Muslims identified by Mayerson and Covarrubias. Both they and the Berbers appear to represent Muslims. Even if the moon is not a symbol that represents Islam in general, it is clear from these pendants that the crescent is an image that could represent fourteenth century Berber and Arab armies.

The variations of Corral's version of the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda closely parallel the values and struggles of fifteenth century Castile. Corral elaborates the details of Rodrigo's reign by supplementing them with problems Castile faced. These mirrored issues made it appear that, if the situation in Castile did not improve, it might face judgment just as the Visigothic kingdom had. The description of shared blame among the Visigothic leadership agrees with the influence people in power were thought to hold and the greater responsibility attributed to them when the kingdom suffered. However, Rodrigo's successful penance foreshadows the future restoration of Visigothic unity. This expectation of unity is echoed in the writing of Corral's contemporaries who lived to see the reign of the Catholic Kings and viewed it as the restoration of the Visigothic kingdom.

Corral's connection between his version of the legend and the events of his time is a strategy that Miguel de Luna also employs in his late sixteenth century *Verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo*. He turns Toledo, the Visigothic kingdom, into the anachronistic capital of Castile and presents the Muslims as Prince Sancho's potential allies against Rodrigo. The Muslims help Julian in his attempt to remove the degenerate king from his abusive position of authority. This positive

presentation of the invited Muslim influence in Spain appears shortly before the expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain.

Chapter 7

Castilian Visigoths, Invited Arabs, and the New Look of Unity

Background

Miguel de Luna published the first part of his *La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo* in 1592. Instead of defining Spain politically, the legend's rhetoric of unity is turned into a tool to help present the Arab influence in Spain as something that is positive and ought to be incorporated into the Spanish culture. The legend seems to be part of Luna's efforts to foster Morisco (Muslims who had converted to Christianity but still had Arabic cultural influences) integration with the rest of the Spanish population. It also presents the Moorish presence as one that was invited in order to restore justice to the Visigothic kingdom. The legend's didacticism regarding punishment for immorality and the influence rulers have on the general public continues to be emphasized. Considered together with Luna's participation in the fraud of the Lead Books of Sacromonte, this version of the legend seems to be used to advocate what a socially unified Spain should look like, which differs from the previous focus on political unity.

Luna presents his fictional text as the translation of Abulcaim Tarif Abentarique's *Historia de la conquista de España*. This Muslim

soldier is described as an eyewitness and participant in the Muslim invasion of Spain. For many years, *La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo* was accepted as history because of Luna's position as official translator for Felipe II. Nevertheless, the Escorial manuscript containing Abentarique's complete history in Arabic has never been found.

Luna's work was very popular both in Spain and throughout Europe. It was reprinted seven times in Spain in the seventeenth century, and underwent three English, five French, and seven Italian translations between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Bernabé Pons, "Estudio" XXXV). Bernabé Pons declares Luna's work was one of the best-known versions of the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda in Europe ("Estudio" XXXVIII). That this version was accepted as truth is reflected in the English translator Matthew Tauman's arguments in favor of its veracity:

now to shew the Authentickness of the Arabick original, and the Spanish version, many of the most Eminent Spanish Authors, as Pedrasa, Rodrigo Caro, Bleda, and others, Quote and Command Abulcacim Tariff, as an Author the most worthy of Credit they knew: And as for Michael de Luna, his Translator, as he was a Citizen of Grenada . . . chosen by Philip the Second . . . he would

not have chosen it to have given it to the Publick, if he
had not judg'd it . . . worthy. (M.T. A3)

Luna's position as official translator of Arabic for Felipe II led readers to assume he was telling the truth about basing his history on a recently discovered manuscript written by an eyewitness who fought with Captain Tarife in the Muslim army. The text's margins are amply annotated with comments made by Luna. These notations are meant to heighten the perception of truth that the text is a translation. In reality, they are more decorative than functional. The majority of the notes are only Arabic translations of non-essential words in the text. For example, a marginal note reveals that "ioyas y dadiuas llama el Arabigo haduia" (41) or "encubrir llama el Arabigo, hufian" (45). These random word translations are not necessary to understand the text nor do they enhance the readers' understanding of the plot. Their main purpose seems to be to impress readers with Luna's linguistic ability.

Added to the presumption of truth that Luna's position as a royal translator accorded him, his book also includes a letter to readers from the king's lawyer, Ioan de Faria, proclaiming the reliability of the history due to the fact that Abentarique is an eyewitness who lists specific names, dates, and places. Additionally, Faria praises Luna for bringing to light the new information that had previously been "ignorado de nuestros Chronistas, que tan al rebes, y como por

suennos han tratado esta historia” (16). The letter enhances the acceptance of Luna’s work by pointing out that Luna had made royal translations of the gospels of Saint John and Saint Cecilius that had been found in an old bell tower.

This description of Luna’s translations refers to his participation in the fraud of the Lead Books of Sacromonte and the Torre Turpiana in Granada, though the authenticity of the Lead Books was not seriously questioned until after Luna’s death. This collection of Lead Books started with an initial discovery in 1588 of a small box in the Torre Turpiana when the minaret was demolished during the construction of a new cathedral. The box contained a trilingual parchment written in Arabic, Spanish, and Latin claiming to have been written by Cecilius. It included his translation of John’s revelation and described the accompanying relics as a bone from Stephen and a handkerchief used by Mary at the crucifixion. In 1595 the rest of the Lead Books were discovered in Sacromonte. These included additional writings by Cecilius and some of his fellow missionaries to Spain. The Lead Books talk about the Virgin Mary’s love for Arabic speaking people and the efforts of Saint James and Saint Cecilius to convert them in Spain. These artifacts claimed Arabs had lived in Spain back in the first century, which means their presence predates that of the Visigoths and negates the theory of Visigothic a priori

ownership of the land. It also challenges the negative stereotyping of Moriscos by claiming the Virgin Mary favored Arab converts. Given the widespread support for the cult of Mary in Spain, this association of Mary with Arabs could have turned the prejudices against the Moriscos into anti-Mary expressions. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were periods of intense religious upheaval during the Protestant Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and one of the dividing points was Mary. Protestants did not distinguish her from any other human while Catholics insisted on her ability to perform miracles and intercede for them. Spanish theologians like Francisco Suárez (1548-1617); an eminent Jesuit theologian respected by Felipe II, Pope Gregory XIII, Pope Paul V, and Pope Innocent XI; actively published treatises and sermons defending Mary's special status as the Mother of God. Associating Mary with Arabs had the potential to appeal to the religious fervor and support associated with her in Spain. While the Lead Books failed to garner widespread support for Moriscos, the attempted alliance with Mary was a calculated and potentially powerful move. It was an attempt to divorce Arabic lineage and culture from its Muslim associations and integrate Moriscos into Christian Spain.

The Lead Books continue to be shrouded in mystery even today. After Luna's death, the collection of Lead Books was sent to the

Vatican for examination where they were declared fraudulent. Due to their heretical nature, the Vatican forbade further examination of the Lead Books. In 2000, the collection was finally returned to Sacromonte, but the injunction still prevents scholars from gaining access to the books.

The religious and political context of Luna's *Verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo* (1592) and the Lead Books fraud is an old Christian-Morisco tension that will soon lead to the Morisco expulsion in 1604 under Felipe III. Under Carlos V and Felipe II there had already been legislation aimed at restricting and forcibly integrating the Grenadine population. Granada had been the last stronghold of Muslim al-Andalus, and it is where the Muslim population had centered before its conquest and forced conversions under the Catholic Kings. In 1526, Carlos V had forbidden the use of the Arabic language and of Morisco clothing, yet the law's enactment was delayed forty years thanks to a large payment made by the Moriscos. In 1567, Felipe II's *Pragmática* outlawed the use of Moorish names and clothing, and everyone was required to learn Castilian within three years. Use of the Arabic language was also forbidden. Felipe II additionally ordered that children of Moriscos be raised by Catholic priests in order to facilitate their integration into Christian society and ensure they had orthodox beliefs. These reforms were answered by the Morisco Rebellion of the

Alpujarras (1568-1571), but Felipe II was able to quell the rebellion. He then ordered the *morisco* population from Granada be dispersed among various Spanish cities in order to break apart family clans and prevent further uprisings.

Interestingly, one of Luna's co-conspirators in the Lead Books fraud, Julián del Castillo, also produced a history of Spain, *Historia de los reyes godos que vinieron dela Scitia de Europa, contra el Imperio Romano*. Castillo's book undermines the prestige of Gothic ancestry by emphasizing the non-Spanish origin of the Goths. Luna follows suit with this thinking when he says Rodrigo is from Scythia, not Spain. When considered in the context of Luna's Lead Book activity, it appears *La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo* is one of several texts that worked to question the logic that the Christians, descendants of the Goths, were the rightful heirs to Spain by virtue of their longer history in the Peninsula. Instead, it points out, in a very delicate and subtle manner, that the Goths were invaders who came from the outside just as the Arabs did. This challenges the rejection of all things Arab as foreign and Muslim. Instead, Luna is suggesting that the Arabs made a positive impact on Spain.

La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo

In this version, Rodrigo, originally from Scythia, becomes regent after his brother King Acosta dies. Acosta left an heir, but Prince Sancho is too young to rule. In the beginning, Rodrigo's kingdom is at peace, but this leads him to have time to engage in unethical practices. He becomes obsessed with finding a way to own the throne instead of holding it as regent. Sancho's mother, Anagilda, understands Rodrigo's goal and moves from Toledo to Cordova in order to keep Sancho safe. Rodrigo comes up with a plan to poison Sancho, and he invites him to Toledo to participate in a solemn celebration. Anagilda tries to excuse herself and Sancho but eventually has to agree to attend. She and Sancho go to the festivities, but as soon as they are over, they head back to Cordova, much to Rodrigo's disappointment. When Rodrigo consults his confidant, Ataulpho points out that the people will not revolt if the heir is imprisoned on what appear to be real charges. Once Sancho is in prison, it will be easy to kill him. Rodrigo likes this plan and sends Ataulpho to carry it out. Ataulpho and his men secretly enter Cordova and arrest Sancho while he is sleeping. Anagilda quickly learns of the abduction of her son and arranges for 25 knights and 30 foot soldiers to accompany her to rescue Sancho. She personally

fights for his freedom and eventually everyone except Ataulpho is killed. Anagilda orders Ataulpho's nose and ears cut off and then sends him with a letter to Rodrigo.

In her letter, she notifies Rodrigo that she sees through him. She criticizes him for fighting against helpless victims instead of his enemies. Anagilda crosses the Straight and passes through Julian's lands in Africa in order to contact the Muslims and request their assistance. Rodrigo quickly sends for Julian to update him on Anagilda's movements and gives him jewels so that he can take them to Governor Musa. Anagilda and Sancho become ill and stop to rest in Tanger, giving Julian time to reach Musa first. Once he delivers the jewels Rodrigo sent for Musa, he learns that Musa cannot make a treaty with Rodrigo without the caliph's permission.

While Julian waits for the reply, he sends word to Rodrigo to let him know that Anagilda and Sancho have died of grief in Tanger. Instead of feeling remorse, Rodrigo feels relief and insists Julian stay and continue seeking a treaty with the Muslims so that he can have their help if any of his countrymen, the only threat Rodrigo thinks of, try to usurp his authority. He also issues a command prohibiting everyone from owning weapons and orders the soldiers to take up farming. In Castile and Andalusia, Rodrigo executes everyone he suspects had been sympathetic to Sancho. After taking these

preventative steps, Rodrigo is lulled into a false sense of security:

“con este remedio le parecio . . . poder viuir y reynar con tranquilidad y sosiego, en todo lo qual manifiestamente se engaño el pobre Rey, porque hecho esto andaua descuydado y excercitando algunos vicios, mayormente los carnales” (43). Rodrigo begins to subvert justice. He kills the husband of any woman he is interested in and, as a result of his corruption, there is disorder in his kingdom.

Zahara Abdnalyca, only daughter of the Moorish king of Africa, goes sailing on her birthday but ends up shipwrecked in Spain. She and Rodrigo fall in love with each other, “entro por medio el amor y aficion . . . fue causa que cada dia creciesse mas por ambas partes” (44). Rodrigo offers to marry her if she will convert to Christianity, which she does. All of her servants who want to convert stay with her in Spain, but those who remain Muslim are safely sent back to Africa. They inform her father of her conversion and marriage, and he consequently dies of shock. Even though Rodrigo marries, he does not abandon his lascivious lifestyle and he eventually notices Julian’s daughter, Florinda. He tries to court her, but she persistently rejects him, “se le defendia, teniendo entendida que de la pretension del Rey no podia sacar ninguna honrra para si, ni tampoco para sus padres ni parientes” (46). The king orders the queen and her ladies in waiting to dress their best and wait at his table and then takes advantage of the

situation to rape Florinda. She writes a cryptic letter informing her father that the king's scepter broke her valuable emerald ring, and she requests that Julian find a resolution to the situation.

Upon receiving his daughter's letter, Julian heads to Spain, but he takes time to warn his wife to pretend to be ill. At Rodrigo's court, he updates the king on the negotiations with the Muslims. He also asks to be allowed to take his daughter home because his wife desperately wants to see her. Rodrigo concedes, but his is displeased by the request: "desta demanda recibio el Rey mucho disgusto, mas no pudo dexar de conceder su peticion" (47).

Julian takes Florinda home and calls together a council of his friends. He is frustrated that the king abused Florinda because it makes revenge difficult. His friends and relatives are equally angered by the king's actions and recommend he seek the Muslims' help to conquer Spain. Julian takes his wife, daughter, and riches over to Africa. There they are warmly greeted by Musa who writes a letter to the caliph Almanzor commending Julian to him. Julian travels to the caliph's court and details his strategy for invading Spain. Julian describes the territories under his control and his plans for feeding the troops. The caliph's council decides he is an "hombre de buen entendimiento y que sabia muy bien los ardides de guerra," (50) so the king tells Musa to help him. After Julian and General Tarife's

initial, successful raid, Rodrigo laments having turned Julian into an enemy. He understands that Julian will give the Muslims a strong advantage because he knows the land. The king realizes his weaknesses against the warrior. Due to Julian's influence Rodrigo had ordered Spain's castles be razed. He also commanded the disarming of his people. Added to these misguided decisions is the knowledge that his treasury cannot fund a war. His trusted advisor, Archbishop Toriso, advises him to open the tower in Toledo in the hopes it contains treasure. Unfortunately, in the tower they only find omens of destruction.

After completing the initial raid, Tarife goes to the caliph in order to describe the success and persuade him to allow the conquest of Spain. The caliph accedes, and Tarife and Julian return to Spain. When Rodrigo learns of their return, he sends Captain Ataulph against them. Rodrigo's soldiers are initially successful against Tarife's army; nevertheless, a woman visits Tarife and tells him of a prophecy that identifies him physically and foretells of his success. In return for her encouragement, Tarife promises not to harm the woman or her people. When he writes to Musa about his success against Ataulph, he requests Musa send the other two-thirds of the soldiers that stayed behind in Africa. When Rodrigo hears of Tarife's success,

he immediately begins contemplating strategies to capture Julian in the expectation that, without Julian, the invaders will have to give up.

The next general to confront Tarife's army is under the command of Archbishop Opas. Tarife requests eight days of rest before beginning the battle, and Opas agrees to it without understanding that will allow Tarife enough time to receive reinforcements from Africa. There are high death tolls on both sides, so Rodrigo decides to go out to battle in person in order to encourage his men. The battle between Rodrigo and Tarife's armies starts three days from the Muslim new year, which is marked by the crescent moon of Muharram. After several days of battle, Rodrigo understands his army cannot win, so he decides to abandon his men. He flees, and no one is able to find his body after the battle. In order to encourage his men to find Rodrigo, Tarife offers a prize for whoever can bring him back dead or alive. Shortly afterwards, some of his men find a shepherd dressed in Rodrigo's clothes and take him to Tarife. Julian recognizes that the man is not the king, so they interrogate him and discover that Rodrigo changed clothes with the shepherd and headed towards Castile.

As Tarife, who is joined by Musa, works to conquer Rodrigo's kingdom, the people learn that if they peacefully surrender their cities, they will be left unharmed. Many cities choose this policy, including

Ubeda; Baeza; Toledo, “the capital of Castile;” and Zaragoza (93-96). Once the armies reach the Pyrenees, they stop because they understand it is the border between Spain and another country and the caliph only gave them permission to conquer Spain. At this point, Julian is sent back to his lands in Algeiras because “auia seruido muy bien en aquella guerra al Rey Miramamolin su señor” (96) and because his lands had been destroyed by the many warriors passing through it on their way to Spain. After a time, Musa is also sent back to his lands, and Tarife commends him to the caliph as worthy of remuneration since “te a seruido en esta jornada muy auentajadamente” (105). Tarife is recalled to the caliph in order to give a full account of the conquest in person. This does not happen before he begins to see Pelayo head a resistance movement against him and declare himself king over the few people who fled to the mountains of Asturias. Pelayo declares that “aunque tienes ocupado nuestro Reyno de España con mal titulo y fuerça de armas, tenemos confiança en Dios que con su ayuda lo bolueremos a restaurar” (104). While this is not the result Tarife most wanted, he is glad to know from Pelayo’s claim to succession that Rodrigo is dead.

Florinda and her mother are reunited with Julian in Tanger, but Florinda is depressed because she feels as though the war is her fault and because she has no expectation of ever being able to marry.

Through demonic influence, “engañada del demonio,” she decides the best option is to commit suicide by jumping from a tower in Villa Vicioca (111). Before leaping, she requests her parents rename the place Malaca because “oy se acaba en ella la mas mala muger que vuio en el mundo” (111). The toponym refers to her: “mala” meaning “bad” and “ca,” which means “why” (112). As a result, the Muslims nickname her la Caba meaning bad woman. Julian goes crazy after his daughter’s death and eventually stabs himself. His wife develops cancer and also dies. Because Julian has no heir, his lands default to the caliph. Even though Julian served the caliph well, the narrator still considers him a traitor to his people and a negative example.

Discussion

Similar to the medieval Muslim versions of the legend, Luna presents Almanzor as an orderly and just ruler who is respected and obeyed by his men. That Almanzor actually lived in eleventh century al-Andalus and not the eighth century Middle East does not seem to have presented a problem for the author. His identification of Toledo as Castile’s capital when Castile did not even exist as a Spanish region during the Visigothic period is equally anachronistic. It is

interesting to note that the Lead Books follow suit in terms of dating by placing Cecilius' martyrdom in 56 A.D. while still holding him to be the author of a commentary on John's revelations, even though the traditional dating for John's gospel and Revelation ranges from 60-90 A.D. Almanzor's positive image contrasts with Rodrigo's in the usual manner, but there is a new twist. The legitimate rulers of Spain, Queen Anagilda and Prince Sancho, appeal to the Muslims for protection and help against Rodrigo. While this plea is not answered due to the untimely deaths of the Spanish rulers, the Muslims do in fact help dethrone Rodrigo. They help Julian rid the decayed Visigothic kingdom of its despotic ruler. Even though the usual view of the Reconquest as a restoration of power to its Gothic owners still appears in Luna's work, this ideology is not expressed with positive language. Pelayo warns Tarife, "te hazemos saber aunque tienes ocupado nuestro Reyno de España con mal titulo y fuerça de armas, tenemos confiança en Dios que con su ayuda lo bolueremos a restaurar" (104), yet, contrary to Pelayo's claim, Tarife and the Muslims are not described as occupying Spain with a great deal of violence. Instead, several cities are specifically listed as peacefully surrendering to the Arabs, including the capital Toledo. The one who illegitimately occupies Spain with violence is Rodrigo. For example, Rodrigo tries to kill Sancho on two different occasions in order to steal the throne from

him. His immoral lifestyle is also blamed as the cause for general violence among the Visigothic population. His reign is the one associated with usurpation and not the Arab conquest.

Unlike Corral's version, which counter-balances Rodrigo's corruption with descriptions of his penitence, Luna does not try to salvage the king's image. Nothing in the text describes Rodrigo as a good king. *La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo* blames Rodrigo's moral laxness for preventing justice and causing betrayals:

no se administraua justicia en sus Reynos como era
razon. Y como los Reyes y Principes son espejo de sus
republicas Del mal exemplo de vida y costumbres
deste Rey nacieron tantos vicios, maldades y trayciones
entre sus subditos, que no se trataua verdad ni podian
viuir, sino con grande trabajo: y ansi no me marauillo del
castigo y plaga que Dios embio sobre ellos. (43-44)

This view seems to excuse Julian's behavior as the natural response to Rodrigo's injustices. It transfers the blame from Julian onto the king by saying that as a result of the king's immoral example and disregard for justice, everyone behaved unethically. If anyone's behavior in the text is considered less than admirable, the author declares it is Rodrigo's fault.

The effect Rodrigo's degeneracy has on the innocent is described in stronger terms in this version than the previous ones. Florinda, ever the innocent victim, now suffers additional horrors due to the king's actions. In the letter to her father, Florinda says "cayo sobre ella el estoque real, y desgraciadamente la hizo dos pedaços, partiendo por medio la verde piedra" (47). The wording of the letter is reminiscent of the language that often accompanies murders or killings in chivalric novels. These works often include accounts of knights who fall upon their adversaries and destroy them, at times even cleaving them in two from the head down. In *La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo*, the king's royal scepter falls on Florinda's emerald ring and splits it in two, killing Florinda's future chances for marriage. That the instrument of destruction is the royal scepter identifies Florinda as helpless under the force of the king's authority. Rodrigo uses his position of power over Florinda to fulfill his desire. She emphasizes her non-complicity by declaring the scepter fell on her ring and broke it, an action that implies violence on a passive object.

The emerald ring's green color is traditionally associated with fecundity, and emeralds are known as the stone of successful love. Florinda deeply resents the king's disqualifying her from marriage "y sobre todo ello le crecian mas sus pesadumbres en verse deshonorada,

y sin esperanza de tener estado, segun ella desseava" (111). Due to Rodrigo's actions, Florinda's life goal of marrying cannot be fulfilled, and she feels the additional weight of responsibility for the death of many innocent countrymen. Florinda reaches such a point of desperation and defeat that she believes she is guilty of wrongdoing and should die an ignoble death. So deep is her conviction that she decides to commit suicide. The Catholic Church considered murder of the self as a mortal sin and a revocation of the person's salvation. When Florinda decides to commit suicide, it is because she believes being the cause of so many deaths is worthy of the damnation of her soul. However, the narrator maintains Florinda's innocence by describing her desire as "engañada del demonio" and saying she "imagined" herself to be responsible (111). These sentiments reveal her strong sense of morality and create a contrasting foil to Rodrigo's lax regard for others. Unlike Julian, Tarife, and Musa's faithful service to the caliph, which results in honors, Florinda's submission to the king leads to her death. The rest of the Visigoths suffer similar consequences.

All the cities that try to remain loyal and resist the Arabs are destroyed. Only those who side with the Arabs receive clemency and continue to live. For the Visigoths, following Rodrigo results in death, but submission to the Arabs results in a restoration of justice and

peace. As Pelayo declares, Rodrigo's, "grandes peccados . . . fueron causa de su destruycion y desuentura mia" (104). The effects of Rodrigo's immorality affected more than just the king. It hurt everyone around him and continued its destruction after Rodrigo's death.

Because Rodrigo is the one held responsible for setting a bad example and prompting the Muslim invasion, Julian's condemnation appears to be a mere act of lip service. The author's vituperation against Julian does not stand up to analysis. The narrator denounces Julian's treason by explaining,

este Conde siruio muy bien al Miramamolin Almançor con lealtad, no por esso dexo de ser en hecho de verdad traydor de su Rey y señor, y a toda su patria, y asi la misma razon y verdad manda a los hombres de virtud y sabiduria que se guarden destos tales, porque de suyo son infames, y siempre se ha visto muy a la clara, que los semejantes traydores hazen mala fin entre todas las naciones del mundo, como este mal Conde hizo. (113)

The author starts with a commendation of Julian's loyal service and only criticizes him for being faithful to the wrong leader. Julian's behavior is not censured anywhere else in the text. Rodrigo considers Julian an astute warrior and so do the Muslims. Julian lends his military acumen and allegiance to the side that is more just. His

actions are not really those of a traitor given that Rodrigo had already betrayed him by using his authority to hurt Florinda. The author's critique of Julian's character, like Pelayo's reference to the Arabs as unjust and violent rulers, is not supported in the text and is only a nod to the traditional view of the legend's characterization.

The *Verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo*'s description of Bishop Opas' is also very different than in previous versions. He no longer plots with Julian to try and dethrone Rodrigo. Instead, he is one of Rodrigo's generals who fights against Tarife unsuccessfully. The treason of Bishop Opas is a motif that dates at least to the *Crónica del moro Rasis*, so it is noteworthy that Luna presents him as innocent concerning any betrayals related to Rodrigo. This seems to exempt religious leaders from the blame previously associated with them for not carrying out their function of confronting the king when he started to live destructively. The less critical stance against the religious leaders may be the result of an attempt by Luna to remove attention from the religious sphere in order to focus it on the social issue of tensions between Moriscos and Old Christians. Luna's connection to the Lead Books, which are religious relics, and his powerful patronage by Archbishop Pedro de Castro would also have led him to be cautious in his representation of religious leaders. Besides that, continuing the trend of criticizing unorthodoxy among the clergy would not have

helped Luna's efforts to divorce Moriscos from the perception that they contributed to religious corruption.

Neither Tarife nor Musa are set up as culpable figures. Tarife is recalled to give an eyewitness account of the conquest to the caliph, and Musa is commended and allowed to return to his governorship in Africa. Unlike the previous Muslim versions, Musa does not suffer the character flaw of being jealous of Tarife and dealing treacherously with him. The caliph is also spared the tarnish of being unjust in his treatment towards Musa and Tarife. None of these Arabic figures suffer any weaknesses and instead only good things are said about them. They behave themselves honorably and show respect for their subjects and superiors. Their presence in Spain works as a foil to the effects of Rodrigo's leadership.

While Almanzor's example leads to expansion and prosperity, Rodrigo's legacy to his subordinates is undesirable. He leads his people into immorality and this attracts divine punishment. The depiction of these events concurs with all of the previous versions of the legend by saying the Visigothic kingdom was destroyed by God as a result of its immorality. Taken in the immediate political-religious context of the sixteenth century, this reasoning leads to the idea that the Arabs really are not to blame for the destruction of the Visigothic

realm. God destroyed it because it deserved to be annihilated due to Rodrigo's negative influence.

The author presents the Arab arrival as the preservation of Spain. It is not Gothic Pelayo and his small group of followers who save Spain. It is Tarife and the Arabs who save the majority of the people by allowing surrenders, permitting the observance of the Christian religion, and restoring justice and peace to Spain. The fact that Toledo, the capital, is mentioned as a city that surrenders symbolically represents the main population. In contrast, Gixxa, the one city Pelayo captures, ends up being destroyed by Pelayo because it is too difficult to defend. It really is the Arabs who preserve and restore Spain in Luna's work. Through this he shows that it is possible for Catholics and Arabized people to coexist and prosper in Spain. The Arab presence in Spain strengthens the moral character of the Visigothic population by deposing its immoral leader and preserving the lives of those who surrender. Bernabé Pons points out that Rodrigo's marriage to the newly converted Eliata questions the thinking that the Visigoths represent a pure bloodline and challenges the prejudices against Moriscos by showing the last Visigothic king in a mixed relationship ("Pasado" 63). This contrasts with the corrosive influence the old Christians claimed the Moriscos had on the general

population and Catholicism by describing the Arabic influence as one that tends towards morality.

Luna's presentation of events is completely different than the previous versions of the legend, and it shows the way the legend can be molded to identify what Spain and its people look like even if that identity contradicts the previously accepted norms. What does not change is the unity the legend tries to create. The previous versions presented the vision of a politically unified Iberian Peninsula. By Luna's lifetime, that was already a reality, so the new goal was to create acceptance and peace between two of the socio-religious groups who lived in peninsular Spain.

In 1580, Felipe II finally reunited the Portugal with Spain; however his kingdom encompassed more than just the Iberian Peninsula. Felipe II, as co-regent with his wife, Mary I of England, was also king of England and Ireland. He ruled the Americas, the Netherlands, and his namesake, the Philippines, as well as most of the Italian Peninsula. This Spanish empire was very different in scope from the long-desired unity of the Spanish peninsular kingdoms.

The Hispania of the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda, encompassing all of the Iberian Peninsula and belonging to the Christian Goths, no longer was enough to identify how Spain and its people looked. During the late sixteenth century, Spain stretched

across two oceans, encompassed people who spoke non-Spanish languages, and included a variety of religious beliefs beyond the Catholic-Jewish-Muslim triad that had been present in medieval Spain. As Spanish power expanded and new people and territories were added, there was a need to reidentify Spain. Luna's version of the legend provides a different perspective on the issue of Spanish identity than what had previously been accepted.

La verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo describes the destruction of Visigothic Spain as a consequence of Rodrigo's corrupt leadership and its negative effects on the populace. This agrees with the previous version of the legend. However, because Luna does not describe the fall of the Visigothic kingdom to the Arabs as a struggle between Christianity and Islam, there is no longer a need for the Reconquista in order to reinstate the Christian Visigothic kingdom. In his version, justice is restored through the good leadership of the Arabs. As the narrator states, the people follow their leaders' examples. Just like Rodrigo's defective character led his people to destruction, the narrator assures the opposite is also possible: "los populares toman dechado de viuir con rectitud, verguença, y criança, quando, sus mayores son virtuosos, y de buena vida y costumbres" (43). These good examples exist in Tarife and the Arab leaders, resulting in a return to morality after the Muslim conquest. The

Verdadera historia del Rey don Rodrigo repeatedly describes the manner in which Tarife behaves towards the cities that surrender to him: “Tarife se holgo mucho . . . y vsando clemencia, no consentio que ninguno de los suyos entrasse en la ciudad a hazer algun daño” (94). Before Tarife leaves Spain to report to the caliph, he takes measures to ensure the good governance of the land by selecting his replacement and having that selection confirmed by the caliph. Tarife checks every move with the caliph before he acts and is careful not to exceed his delegated authority. This is seen in his refusal to cross the Pyrenees into France because his orders only allow him to conquer Spain. In exchange for his loyalty, the people under Tarife’s care believe him when he promises them clemency or rewards for their service because the caliph confirms Tarife’s offers. This relationship of trust between the caliph and Tarife never exists between Rodrigo and his subjects. Rodrigo kills the husband of any woman he desires and abuses Florinda through the use of his royal authority. The Arabs arrive and restore good leadership, so there is no need to reverse the effects of their presence in Spain. They do not represent immorality through a deviant religion. They are the restorers of peace and justice, and under their governance, things function as they should. The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda is a rhetorical tool that promotes unity and is an index of how Spain and its people look or should look. Like

all legends, it can be molded and adjusted to meet the needs of each time period, but its value as a proponent of morality and unity persistently appears throughout each century.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda does more than just reveal the catalysts for the Muslim invasion. By depicting the Visigothic kingdom as divinely punished because of its leaders' unethical behavior, the legend promotes the ideology that the lost unity and prosperity of the Visigoths will be restored once the Christians return to morality. This is due to the heavy Christian influence during the Middle Ages. It led historians to interpret events as cycles of punishments and rewards. Rodrigo's defeat was the beginning of the cycle of punishment, and the Reconquista became an effort to reverse the destructive effects of moral corruption and move back towards the reward of prosperity.

The Visigothic kingdom functions as a symbol of unity and affluence throughout the Middle Ages due in part to the idealized view of the Visigoths that the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda promotes. It describes Rodrigo as king of all of Spain, emphasizing the political unity of the Visigoths. He owns very ornate armor and raises all of his nobles' children in his court at Toledo. This works to demonstrate the opulence of the Visigothic kingdom. The legend's description of Rodrigo's 100,000-man army that confronts the Muslim invasion

implies that the Visigothic kingdom is able to feed a large population, and this also works to create a positive image of the Christian Visigoths. All these benefits were lost during the Muslim invasion, which the legend says was occasioned by corruption among the Visigothic leadership.

Out of all of the characters in the legend, Rodrigo receives most of the blame for the fall of the Visigothic kingdom. He is described as an unethical leader who is unable to restrain his pride and lust. In the *Crónica sarracina*, Rodrigo is said to have four main character flaws that cause the invasion: covetousness (wanting what was not his), pride, avarice (being greedy over what already belonged to him), and lust. Catholic tradition regards all four as cardinal sins. These errors are a threat to the soul, which Christian doctrine identifies as the undying portion of each individual. Cardinal sins require divine intervention in order to be reversed. This is what happens to the Visigothic kingdom. Rodrigo's flaws threaten the stability of the kingdom and, as a result, he and his kingdom experience divine punishment:

otra cosa non fue sino la grand sobervia que creció en el linaje de los godos . . . e a Dios no le plaze de la sobervia, e la abaxa. Consintió que todos fuesen muertos e destruidos, y echados de la grande honra que siempre

ovieron Empero sabed que la pena no la quiso dar
sino en este mundo, por quanto las carnes fueron
martirizadas e destruidas. (Corral 495)

The Muslim conquest is portrayed as a chastisement meant to purge, or “martyr,” the corruption in the kingdom. Rodrigo’s rape of Florinda is the immediate catalyst for the Islamic invasion and lust is identified as his greatest flaw. In this respect, Florinda plays a representative role as the embodiment of the Visigothic population that suffers the effects of corrupt leadership. She is coerced into submitting to Rodrigo’s desires much like the general population is forced to accept his appropriated kingship. She suffers when he oversteps the limitations of his role of guardian and claims her as a consort, and the Visigothic kingdom is condemned to judgment when Rodrigo expands his role of regent to that of monarch. Florinda, who was supposed to be honored by the king and given away in marriage, ends up dishonored and disqualified for marriage. The effects of Rodrigo’s leadership cause the opposite of the expected results. Instead of respecting Hercules’ house and adding a lock to it, Rodrigo exchanges his responsibility for that of entering the enchanted house and discovering that the Arabs will invade Spain during his reign. As king, Rodrigo causes the destruction of his people instead of their preservation.

The medieval versions of the legend describe Florinda as a victim and create parallels between her and Lucretia, but they also blame her. The narrator of the *Crónica sarracina* accuses her of not notifying her father as soon as the king started pressuring her and suggests she gave her consent when she did not scream during the rape. The *Crónica del moro Rasis* says the initial encounter between Florinda and the king was a rape but implies that eventually she consents to the relationship because she feels jealous when Rodrigo abandons her for other women. It also blames her for manipulating her father through her letter. These indictments have led to associations among Florinda, Eve, and Helen for causing the destruction of an entire people group due to their seductive beauty. Nevertheless, the majority of the versions of the legend, medieval and modern, do not explain why they condemn Florinda. It seems the authors tend to take it for granted that their audience is already very familiar with the many versions of the legend and can intuit why she is blamed.

Although the Muslim versions of the legend portray Julian as a neutral figure, many of the Christian versions blame him for focusing too much on getting revenge and for dividing the kingdom into factions. Julian starts out loyal to Rodrigo, but after the abuse of his daughter, he changes his allegiance to the Muslims. The *Crónica de 1344* depicts him persuading Witiza's sons to abandon Rodrigo in mid-

battle. In the *Crónica sarracina* he tricks his reinforcements into supporting him by claiming Rodrigo ordered him to kill them. From one perspective, Julian's insistence on avenging Florinda is perfectly legal and actually necessary in order to prevent the spread of immorality, the *Crónica sarracina's* description of Julian's actions makes him guilty of wrath, another cardinal sin. However, from the perspective of Julian's function as a representative member of the Visigothic nobility, his behavior needs to be corrected.

The bishops in the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda, whether it is the bishop of Jaen, the bishop of Liberia, or Bishop Opas, all represent ineffective clergy members who are not carrying out their duty to be moral examples for their people. They, along with the nobles and the king, are accused of being responsible for causing divine judgment against the Visigoths: "los males que a España por el rrey Rodrigo e por la fuerza de la fixa del conde Julian e por otros malos fechos que se facian e non los castigaba, nin los obispos facian el deber con los suyos. E ansi andaban todos metidos en sus vicios a su voluntad e non buscaron la enmienda" (al-Rāzī 351). According to Sancho IV of Castile (r. 1284-95), medieval kings were considered the moral mirror of the people, "espejo de que todos se catan," and any unethical behavior the king engaged in was considered worse than the equivalent wrong done by an ordinary person, "Mas envergonnado es

el mal fecho o el mal pecado diez atanto en el rey que en otro omne” (51). He also warns kings to consider the results of Rodrigo’s corruption and its destructive effect on his subjects: “Para mientes quanto mal vino en Espanna por lo que fizo el rey don Rodrigo con la Caba, fija del conde don Jullan” (60). Given the strong association between religion and politics in medieval Spain, the clergy was held accountable for the king and kingdom’s spiritual well-being. According to the *Crónica de Alfonso III* (c. 990), unorthodox examples among the clergy were considered very serious: “et alia Scriptura dicit ‘Si peccat populus, orat sacerdos, si peccat sacerdos, plaga in populo’ . . . et quia reges et sacerdotes Domino deliquerunt, ita cuncta agmina Spanie perierunt” (104). The legend describes the defeat of the Visigoths as a result of divine judgment for unethical behavior among the leadership, which included the king, nobles, and clergy.

The Visigoth’s crowning achievement of uniting the Iberian Peninsula under one monarch was reversed due to corruption. After the invasion, Spain became divided into a large Muslim region and a small Christian enclave in the mountainous north. The Christian resistance movements located in Asturias slowly spread southward, but they did not remain consolidated under the Asturian crown. Instead, the recovered territory eventually split into the kingdoms of Castile and Leon, Portugal, Navarre, and Aragon, though the borders

of each kingdom varied with the frequent wars. As the different Peninsular kingdoms stabilized, they also divided up the responsibility for reconquering the Muslim controlled territory. While different kingdoms would sometimes join together in their Reconquista efforts, they also created alliances with the Muslim kingdoms against each other. During the Battle of Graus (1063), Castile joined forces with the Muslims in Saragossa against the Aragonese Reconquista because Castile claimed rights to Saragossa. Duplicity of claims to the Algarbe region caused fighting between the kingdoms of Castile and Portugal until the reign of King Denis of Portugal (1279-1325).

The existence of multiple Peninsular kingdoms, which often were at odds with each other, disrupted the Reconquista efforts and was criticized for weakening Spain. In the *Estoria de España* (c. 1260-84), the division of kingdoms is portrayed as harmful: “passaron los dAffrica et ganaron todo lo mas dEspanna . . . et del danno que uino en ella por partir los regnos, por que se non pudo cobrar tan ayna” (Alfonso X 4). Sancho IV also condemns the division of Spain into multiple kingdoms: “Non cae al rey de menguar su regno ni pararle entre sus fijos para despues de sus dias; nin le cae bien de enajenar nin malapara los bienes del su regno. El regno que es partido e menguado conuiene que sea desollado por rayz, segund que deixo Jesu Cristo en el euangelio” (88). The existence of the various

Spanish kingdoms was mainly the result of kings who divided their kingdoms among their sons. For example, Sancho III Garcés of Navarre (992-1035) divided Castile and Leon among two of his sons and left Pamplona and Aragon to a third son. Fernando I of Leon (1015-65), divided Galicia, Castile and Leon among his three sons. The distribution of land among several sons tended to lead to wars between the kingdoms, which distracted from the Reconquista efforts, cost the lives of Christian soldiers, and created political instability.

The rhetoric embedded in the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda transforms the seven-century Reconquista efforts into a fight to restore unity among the Spanish kingdoms. Identifying moral corruption as the catalyst for the Visigothic defeat creates the hope that the effects of the divine judgment, in particular the existence of various Spanish kingdoms, can be reversed once the Christians return to their religious mores. This reintegration of kingdoms into one unit with one monarch was supposed to symbolize a return to divine favor and usher in the prosperity of the Visigothic kingdom.

This view of the temporary nature of the Muslim invasion appears in many medieval literary and historical documents. The *Crónica sarracina* describes the Muslim invasion as an allegorical punishment of the flesh in order to save the soul. Given the Christian association of the flesh with what is temporal and the soul with what is

eternal, this interpretation of the Visigothic defeat suggests its temporal nature. The soul, the permanent nature of the Visigothic kingdom, is not actually destroyed during the Muslim invasion. It is only temporarily altered as reflected by the short-term partitioning of the Spanish kingdoms. Diego de Valera's *Crónica abreviada* (c. 1474) echoes the non-permanent nature of the Muslim dominance in Spain when he writes: "bien sabes que nuestro Señor hiere y castiga a sus hijos peccadores por alguno tiempo: pero no les desampara ni olvida para siempre" (75). The *Chronica prophetica* (883) supports this view of the fleeting nature of the Muslim occupation and the political disunity in Spain:

Because you forsook your Lord God, I will forsake you . . . for 170 years . . . Christ is our hope that, when in the very near future, the 170 years have passed, the audacity of the enemy will be reduced to nothing and peace will be given to the holy church of Christ. . . . the kingdom of the Goths will be restored by our present prince. Also, this our prince, the glorious lord Alfonso, is . . . on the verge of ruling over all of Spain in the near future. Thus under the protection of divine clemency, the borders of the enemy shrink daily while the boundaries of the church of God grow. And to the extent to which the dignity of the name of

Christ is fulfilled, the derisive calamity of the enemy
wastes away. (par. 5-6)

The description of the invasion as a punishment for moral corruption actually works to create hope of a future reversal of the situation. This temporary nature of moral punishments is based in Deuteronomy:

It is because this people abandoned the covenant of the
LORD Therefore the LORD's anger burned against
this land, so that he brought on it all the curses . . . and
in great wrath the LORD uprooted them from their land . .
. when you and your children return to the LORD your
God and obey him. . . then the LORD your God will
restore your fortunes and have compassion on you
He will bring you to the land that belonged to your
ancestors, and you will take possession of it. (*New
International Version*, Deut. 29:25-30:5)

Christians viewed divine punishments as temporary manifestations that could be reversed once morality and religious orthodoxy were restored. It is essential to understand the legend of Rodrigo and Florinda with this mindset because its value is not limited to its moral didacticism against behaviors that should be avoided. The legend functions as a strong proponent of the restoration of unity among the kingdoms.

The legend also lends provides insight into the way medieval chroniclers in al-Andalus and the Spanish kingdoms legitimized their claims to Spain. Looking first at the Muslim legitimization, the Muslims describe their successful invasion as divine approval for their good leadership. Tarife and Musa are both skilled warriors who obey the orders they receive from the caliph. They consult the caliph before allying themselves with Julian and obey the caliph's command to send an initial probe into Spain before risking the lives of the entire Muslim army. The Muslims help depose Rodrigo's illegitimate kingship. *Early Islamic Spain*, based on the teachings of Ibn al-Qūṭīyya (895-977), identifies Witiza as the last Visigothic king and describes Rodrigo an usuper of the throne. The Muslims restore justice by returning to Witiza's sons the personal lands that belonged to their father. They behave themselves morally by accepting good advice from Julian and preserving the lives of the cities that surrender to them. In contrast, Rodrigo is a king who abuses his own subjects and puts men to death in order to take advantage of their wives. The Muslim expansion into al-Andalus is described in positive terms because it spreads Islam. The visions of Mohammed that Musa and Tarife see prior to the invasion reveal divine approval for their actions. According to the their chronicles, these feats mean the Muslims restored justice and morality to Spain. They base their claims to the land on the divine intervention

that helped them defeat the Visigoths and gain so many riches through the expansion into Spain. They view their successful invasion as a divine punishment against the unethical Visigoths. This same view is echoed in Christian chronicles. For example, the *Crónica de 1344* states: “Los moros ganaron porque la gracia de Dios había partido de los cristianos” (P. Alfonso 127). The Muslims see themselves as rightful owners of al-Andalus because they are morally superior to the Visigoths and better equipped to be in charge.

The Christians base their claims to all of Spain on their Visigothic heritage. The Spanish kings trace their line of succession through Pelayo, the legendary initiator of the Reconquista and Rodrigo’s successor. He becomes the monarch of the first Spanish kingdom in Asturias. The *Crónica de Alfonso III* records this view of the the Spanish kingdoms as heirs to the Visigothic realm and documents its expected restoration: “Spes nostra Christus est . . . quem conspicis, sit Spanie salus et Gothorum gentis exercitus reparatus” (112). The *Estoria de España* even identifies the Goths as the first Spaniards:

Et esto fiziemos por que fuesse sabudo el comienço de los espannoles, et de quales yentes fuera Espanna maltrecha et como por el desacuerdo que ovieron los godos con so sennor el rey Rodrigo et por la traysion

que urdio el conde do Yllan et ell arçobispo Oppa,
passaron los dAffrica et ganaron todo lo mas dEspanna.

(Alfonso X 4)

The *Historia de los reyes godos* (1582) describes the Visigoths as Felipe II's (r. 1581-98) ancestors: "los Reyes Godos de España . . . hasta vuestra Magestad cabeça y successor dellos por linea rexta y mas poderoso Monarcha de los Christianos," which reveals that the Gothic heritage was valued even into the early modern era (Castillo 3). It was because of the Gothic ancestry that the Spanish kingdoms could argue that al-Andalus belonged to them and had only temporarily fallen into Muslim hands while they corrected their moral failures. Without the Visigothic lineage, the cyclical curse-blessings ideology cannot be used to legitimize *a priori* claims to the entire Iberian Peninsula. Blessings and curses cycles are unique to each people group or kingdom. They are not transferrable. This is why the Church Fathers such as Justin Martyr and Augustine spent time reinterpreting the promises made in the Bible to symbolically apply to the Catholic Church. They claimed the covenants were made to spiritual Israel and not to the Israelite ethnic group. There are no Biblical or Christian examples of a blessings-curses cycle starting with one group and then continuing with a completely different group. The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda claims the Muslim invasion was a

punishment for the moral failures of the Visigothic leadership, and the resulting loss of prosperity and unity could be recovered once they began to behave themselves ethically. The Spanish kingdoms cannot be made up of a different people group than the Visigoths and still claim that the end of their punishment cycle would specifically result in the unification of the Iberian Peninsula as it had existed under the idealized Visigoths. They have to be part of the Visigoths in order to try to be able to complete the blessings-curses cycle of the Visigoths. The Spanish kingdoms cannot restore something that never belonged to them. They can acquire new lands, but they cannot restore them if they do not belong to the same people group that had them before. They cannot say that the Reconquista is a fight to restore the Visigothic kingdom if they are not the heirs of the Visigoths.

The legend of Rodrigo and Florinda was an important part of medieval Spanish tradition. It is documented in almost all of the major histories and chronicles of medieval Spain and is a common theme in Spanish literature. The legend was also well-known through oral tradition as revealed by the many *romances* that have survived until the present. It describes a golden era of military strength, political unity, and economic prosperity under the Visigoths. This unity is destroyed through the Muslim invasion due to immoral practices among the Visigothic leadership. The most egregious example of this

unethical behavior is symbolized in Rodrigo's rape of Florinda. The harm he causes her, instead of the protection and honor he was expected to bestow, parallels the destruction the Visigoths experience under his unscrupulous kingship. The Christian worldview of blessings for orthodox behavior and curses for moral corruption create the expectation that the idealized unity and prosperity of the Visigoths can be restored. This creates a motivation for the Reconquista with the goal of reuniting the Spanish kingdoms under one monarch and returning to the opulence of the Visigothic realm.

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