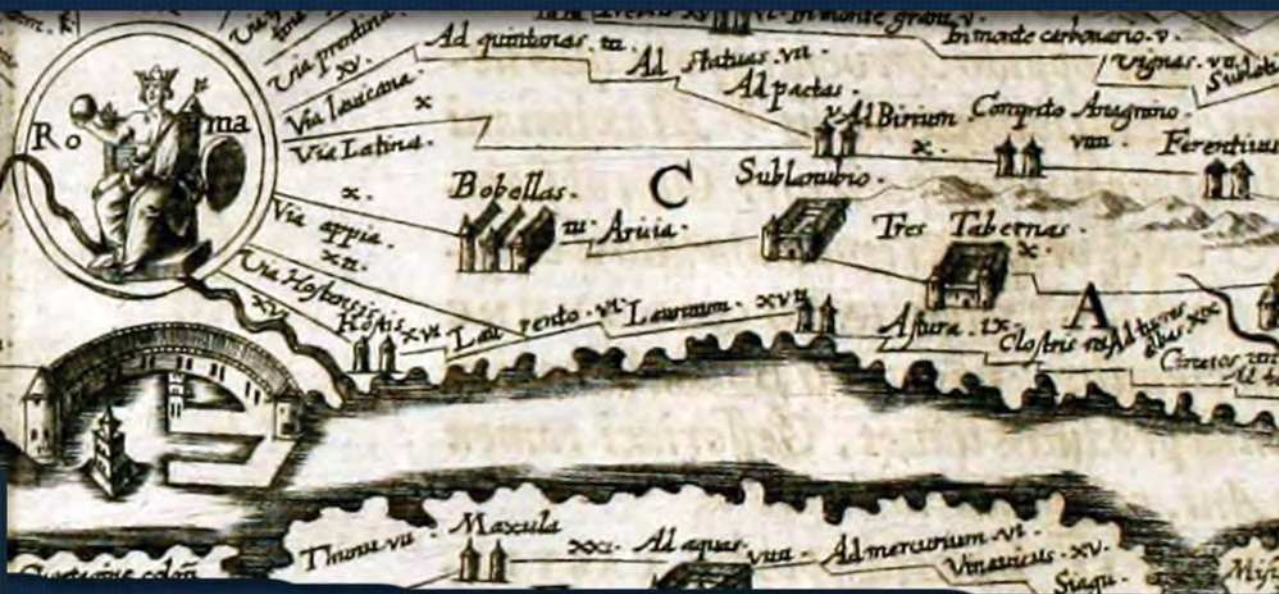


Historia sin fronteras. En torno a las raíces de Europa

Estudios en honor
del profesor Luis A. García Moreno

Francisco Javier Gómez Espelosín
y Jaime Gómez de Caso Zuriaga
(eds. científicos)



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THE JEWS WHO SOLD SPAIN: THE IMAGE OF THE JEW IN THE MEDIEVAL CONCEPTION OF THE MUSLIM CONQUEST OF SPAIN

Liubov CHERNIN

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Resumen: El artículo describe la historia de la representación literaria de la “huella judía” en conquista musulmana de España. Los relatos sobre la colaboración de los judíos en este hecho histórico que surgen mayormente en las crónicas altomedievales son analizados como parte integrante de la imagen general del judío como traidor en las fuentes teológicas y políticas. Las noticias musulmanas sobre guarniciones judías en las ciudades conquistadas ocasionaron la historia pintoresca inventada por Lucas de Tuy sobre los judíos que abrieron la puerta de Toledo para los moros. Poco tiempo después fue adoptada por otros autores y entró en el amplio discurso antijudío de la España bajomedieval.

In the history of the Iberian Peninsula there are certain key dates – watersheds, when a major historical event (or several major events, as in 1492) leaves no doubts about the end of one era and the beginning of another. The first watershed of this kind was the swift conquest of the peninsula by the Muslims in 711, as a result of which the Visigothic state ceased to exist. Though this political entity suffered from a severe crisis during its last decades, such a rapid fall was not foreseen at all. Comprehending the reasons for and consequences of the conquest became an important element in the worldview of the Christian society that formed in the Peninsula after the conquest, in the foundation of new Christian states and in the beginning of the long process of the Reconquista. For obvious reasons the question was not becoming any clearer over the course of time, though the increasingly “belletristic” versions of the events of the early 7th century were starting to appear, and in the centre of all these version was the tragic figure of the last Visigothic king Rodrigo, who “lost Spain” (*el Rey Rodrigo*

que perdió la España). The “loss” of Spain was caused by different factors, but in the mind of the people the most popular factor was the sinful love of Rodrigo for the maid La Cava (Florinda), the grief of the dishonoured La Cava, and the revenge of her father Count Julian, the king’s governor in African Ceuta, who brought Moors from Africa to punish Rodrigo¹. However, this story, elaborated in folklore and chronicles in the tiniest details, was accompanied by additional motives connected with the topic of the Christian defeat. First of all, it is the subject of the story of the sons of the Visigothic king Witiza, who were exasperated because of the loss of their father’s throne, plotted against Rodrigo, and eventually joined to the Muslims. The civil war between the descendants of Witiza and their supporters on one side, and Rodrigo’s party on the other, tore the Visigothic kingdom apart in the last years of its existence². The notorious Count Julian allegedly took part in the landing of the Muslim troops on the European continent alongside the relatives of Witiza – Sisbert and bishop Oppas. The conquest progressed very quickly: the forces landed on the rock of Gibraltar in the spring of 711, during the summer they seized the southern part of the Peninsula, and in October they reached its centre and captured the capital of the kingdom, Toledo. By 716 the Visigothic kingdom ceased to exist.

Among the important themes covered in the sources in connection with these events are reports about the role played in the Muslim conquest by the Jews who lived in the territory of the Visigothic kingdom. This motive appears only in some sources, which reflect the history of the invasion, and it seems that it has never become the subject of independent research. The “Jewish trace” in the Muslim conquest was born in the minds of chroniclers; therefore, it should be investigated in the crossroad of history and literature. In order to understand this role, it is necessary to remember that during the 7th century the state was carrying on a long, complicated, but not very successful campaign of Christianization among the Jewish population as part of its process to consolidate the

¹ On the problem of the historical basis of the legend about the daughter of Count Julian, see GARCÍA MORENO 2013, pp. 88-98. Roger Collins vehemently denies any historical rationale for these stories at all and considers them to be entirely “fictional creatures” – see COLLINS 2004, p. 129. On the literary destiny of the plot see WEINER 2003, pp. 3-22; GOZALBES CRAVIOTO 2011, pp. 3-35. For the fullest collection of the texts dealing with this plot, see MENÉNDEZ PIDAL 1925-1927.

² This version is given in the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* created in the 9th century – chapter 7 (according to the version *ad Sebastianum*), chapter 2 (according to *Rotense*). On the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, see GIL FERNÁNDEZ - MORALEJO - RUIZ DE LA PEÑA 1985, pp. 38-41 (the quotations are on pp. 120-123); COLLINS 2004, pp. 135-136. On the conflict between Rodrigo and the “*witizianos*”, see COLLINS 2004, pp. 136-140; GARCÍA MORENO 2013, pp. 343-352.

society of the kingdom. This campaign ended, as can be seen from the sources, in 694 by the decree of king Egica concerning the enslavement of all converts who did not become good Christians and devoted subjects of the king and the Church³. This is the last event known from the more or less trustworthy contemporary sources. All subsequent data can be reconstructed only on the basis of later documents.

1. "Jewish trace" as reflected by Muslim sources

The Muslim chronicles that are chronologically close to the conquest itself are considered to be the fullest and most reliable descriptions of the events of 711, though it is clear that most of them were written later, far from Spain, and their content was conditioned by political bias⁴. There we find the first references to the participation of the Jews in the fall of the Visigothic kingdom. There are two reports available in various Arab sources. One of them can be found in the chronicle *Achbar Majmua*, dating back to the beginning of the 9th century. In this report, it is said that in several towns (principally in the South), Muslim armies met numerous Jewish populations who gave them support, and the conquerors often left Jewish garrisons when they moved northwards. This statement is repeated by several Arab historians, who indicate different towns⁵. As a matter of fact, this account appears to be quite probable, if we remember the previous history of the Jews in the territory of the Iberian Peninsula. The more severe and ingenious were the measures taken by the Visigothic kings and councils, the sooner it was clear that their actions had a very slight influence on the self-identity of the Jewish minority. This does not mean, obviously, that the campaign had no results at all: by the end of the 7th century the Jewish community as such legally ceased to exist and the vast majority of the Jews, if not all of them, were converted to Christianity, at least nominally. However, they

³ The fate of the Jews of Visigothic Spain has long been a subject of scholarly research. Some of the recent summaries are: GONZÁLEZ SALINERO, 2000 and numerous articles of this author; BRONISCH 2005; BARCALA MÚÑOZ 2005; GARCÍA MORENO 2005; and articles from the collection: TOLAN - DE LANGE - FOSCHIA - NEMO-PEKELMAN (eds.) 2014. On the attempts made by Egica to deal with the Jews, see CHERNINA 2009, pp. 7-24.

⁴ For a general review of Arab chronicles dealing with the course of the Muslim conquest and their reliability, see COLLINS 1989, pp. 23-26; MANZANO MORENO 1999, esp. p. 431; GARCÍA MORENO 2011; GARCÍA MORENO 2013, pp. 37-53; VIGUERA MOLÍNS 2011.

⁵ LAFUENTE Y ALCÁNTARA, p. 25. For an analysis of this report, see ROTH 1976, *passim*; TAHA 1989, p. 92 and 106 n. 68.

adhered to their new religion no more than superficially and sought to keep the ancestral rites. Such persistence gave rise not only to the displeasure of the authorities, but also to reasonable suspicions of disloyalty in the Jewish population. Therefore, in 694, the converts were accused of conspiring with “overseas coreligionists” in order to overthrow king Egica, and were punished with general enslavement. There is every reason to suppose that this edict was not much more effective than the previous ones, and after a while the converts regained their freedom and returned to crypto-Judaism more or less secretly. Anyway it is absolutely evident that such attitudes among the ruling class did nothing to enforce the fidelity of the Jewish population towards their homeland and king, and the hearty welcome they gave to the conquering Muslims is not very surprising. Fred Astren notes that the tale about the seizure of Cordoba in *Achbar Majmua* and all other reports about Jewish garrisons in the conquered towns of Spain repeat the similar texts in Arabic chronicles about the capture of Caesarea and other towns of the Near East, and this fact raises suspicions that historical facts are shielded here by the literary *topos*. However, in our case, if the *topos* did not fully coincide with reality, there is a great probability that it could do so. The Jews might not have formed garrisons, but it is very likely that they welcomed the Muslim conquerors and took advantage of the establishment of the new power in order to return openly to Judaism⁶.

Another group of reports from Arabic chroniclers is of great interest for us. They concern the seizure of Toledo, the capital of the Visigothic kingdom. Generally, they all agree that by the time Tariq entered the city, most of the inhabitants had already left and had surrendered at their discretion. Only the Jews did not leave, according to some reports. They met the conquerors, and perhaps even obtained some privileges from the Muslims, such as the right to stay in the city. One of the oldest Arab chronicles, the *Chronicle of al-Razi*, composed in the 10th century, though preserved only in later translations, tells us that after the seizure of Toledo the Jews who remained in the city came humbly to Tariq, and he gave them the city as a residence⁷. Other chroniclers, for example Ibn al-Atir, say that

⁶ ASTREN 2009, pp. 99-112. Though scholars indicate that the composer of *Achbar Majmua* tended to follow the legendary sources (this fact is commonplace in classical Spanish historiography: SÁNCHEZ ALBORNOZ 1944, p. 42), the report of Jewish collaboration is frequently considered to be trustworthy precisely because of the consistency of such a reaction in view of previous events. See for example the works of such different authors as: SAAVEDRA 1892, p. 89; BARON 1964, p. 46; ASHTOR 1973, pp. 15-16; O’CALLAGHAN 1975, p. 92; SIMON 1983, pp. 25-26; BRONISCH 2005, S. 201.

⁷ “Et quando los judios vieron que se perdian, et toda la tierra se perdia, vieronse todos para Tarife, et rogaronle que les diesse donde poblasen, et él tovo por bien de les dar á Toledo, et

Tariq found the city abandoned and populated it with Jews. He is echoed by Ibn Adari Marrakeshi, who writes that by the time Tariq arrived, the city was empty, and only a small number of Jews remained there⁸. The Jews do not appear in all the reports about the conquest of Toledo, but almost everywhere we find the idea that the Christian inhabitants had left it by the time it passed to the Muslims.

2. The story about the gate of Toledo and the impact of Lucas of Tuy to the idea of “Jewish trace” in the conquest

The most curious anti-Jewish additions to this story appear in Christian literature from the 13th century. We refer here to a tale first encountered in the *Chronicon Mundi* of bishop Lucas of Tuy, which spread from there to many other texts. Lucas writes:

The city of Toledo, conqueror of many peoples, defeated in the triumphs of the Ishmaelites, succumbed owing to the treason of the Jews since it was very strong and rebellious. For, while the Christians were gathered on Palm Sunday at the church of St. Leocadia outside the royal city, out of reverence for such a solemn feast, in order to hear the word of the Lord, the Jews, who had given a sign of their treachery to the Saracens, shutting the doors on the Christians, opened them to the Saracens. Thus the faithful Toledan populace, found defenceless outside the city, was destroyed by the sword⁹.

In order to adequately understand and appreciate this most interesting fragment, it is necessary to keep in mind the aims of Lucas' work and the circumstances of its appearance. Lucas was close to the court of Queen Berenguela, mother of king Fernando III of Castile. In 1236 she ordered the bishop of Tuy to compose a general history of the events from the creation of the world up to the conquest of Cordoba by the glorious son of Berenguela. The “custom-made” nature of the chronicle mostly determined its content. Firstly, according to the wishes of the chronicle's patron, it should have been based on the historical work of Isidore of Seville¹⁰ – the first Spanish ideologist of

dioselo et encerrólos hy et pusso hy homes que tuviesen las fortaleças de la villa en derredor, et dexóles y señor de su mano” (GAYANGOS 1852, p. 72).

⁸ FAGNAN 1904, t. II, p. 18.

⁹ LUC. TUD., *Chron.* 3, 62.

¹⁰ LUC. TUD., *Chron. Praef.*

a strong and powerful state, the author of a famous “Praise of Spain”, and the inventor of the ideological triad *Lex, gens et patria Gothorum*. These statist emotions are also dear to Lucas himself, and the conception of a unified state ruled by the most Christian king is very important to him¹¹. Moreover, Lucas is characterised by a more than creative attitude to the material. He treats it very freely, and frequently invents facts and even sources that he claims to rely on¹². For every particular historical section, Lucas chooses a basic source, and builds his narration around it by adding data from other chronicles and even from oral sources as and when required. His description of the era of the Muslim conquest is based mainly on the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* (9th century), and he adds to it certain information from the *Historia Silense* (11th century) and *Chronica naierensis* (12th century), as well as from some other sources¹³. These texts describe the events at great length, including the capture of Toledo, but none of them contain any episode with the Jews. It is possible, of course, that Lucas possessed some additional written texts containing this story that are unknown to us or have not survived up to our time, but this assumption seems unlikely¹⁴, because all the authors who include it in their works obviously take the story from Lucas’s text. On the other hand, Lucas could have simply invented this plot or have taken it from the oral tradition. This last possibility is quite likely, because we know that the bishop of Tuy used oral legends and heroic poems from the *chansons de geste* in his *Chronicon*¹⁵, The folklore motifs connected with the participation of the Jews in the events of 711 are unknown to us, but this is not a definitive proof that they could not exist at all. The conception of Jewish treachery as a factor in the Muslim conquest could be created in the mind of Mozarabs by the reports (or even memories) about Jewish presence in the captured cities.

In any case, it is evident that Lucas included a report about Jewish treachery not because of its literary merits or, at least, not mainly because of them. Its

¹¹ HENRIET 2001, p. 258ff.; JÉREZ CABRERO 2006, p. 14.

¹² LINEHAN 2001, p. 202; JÉREZ CABRERO 2006, p. 12.

¹³ FALQUE 2003, pp. v, xlvi; JÉREZ CABRERO 2006, pp. 159, 173, 310, 312.

¹⁴ FALQUE 2003, p. C. However, some historians of the 19th century also found Arabic sources to corroborate this story. One of the Arabic chronicles supposedly says: “Y estuvo Tharek sobre Toledo, y como habitaban en ello judíos, se abrió la ciudad”. Some 19th century authors repeated this phrase. See, for example, MARTÍN GAMERO 1862, p. 513 with reference to older studies, where we can even find an Arabic “original” for the quotation. However, later on this motive was deservedly forgotten, because, by all appearances, it was a fraud of the 18th century. Cf. GOZALBES CRAVIOTO 2011, p. 11.

¹⁵ FALQUE 2003, p. CIII; JÉREZ CABRERO 2006, p. 159.

origin must have been determined both by the personal anti-Jewish sentiment of the author and by the joint requirements of politics and ideology, which led to the Lucas' choice of material for the *Chronicon*. Lucas worked by order of the state, and he therefore created only those fictional motifs that were advantageous to the ruling regime or, at least, fit in with its worldview. So it is quite obvious that this fragment, whether completely imaginary or based on folklore, conformed to the ideas of the elite about the Jews as a whole, and about the reasons for the "loss of Spain".

We have no grounds to consider that Fernando III or his mother were somehow especially hostile towards the Jews. However, there were two factors that could not help but influence the story about the conquest of Toledo. First of all, Fernando was a king-conqueror. Most of his life was spent in military campaigns, usually very successful, and the topic of treachery at war would have been very pressing for him. The possibility of explaining such a painful defeat as the fall of the Spanish capital in the struggle with the Moors by the intrigues of betrayers seemed logical and allowed him to be proud both of the piety of his ancestors, who went to solemn prayer despite the obvious danger, and of their military courage. Were it not for this treachery, Toledo would not have surrendered so easily. On the other hand, the beginning of the 13th century was a time of large-scale intensification of anti-Jewish propaganda, the beginning of the missionary activity of the Dominicans and Franciscans, and an increase in the number of polemical texts¹⁶. Therefore the choice of Jews to fulfil the role of the terrible internal enemy seems very logical; moreover, most sources confirmed the presence of the Jews in the city at the moment of conquest. In order to make his report seem more truthful, Lucas adds some chronological and geographical details. He connects the siege with Palm Sunday, though the most probable date of the conquest is October of 711. The choice of the church, where Christians go to pray, is determined both by the real importance and popularity of the sanctuary and by its locality. The way to the church of *Santa Leocadia fuera de muros* (outside the walls) lay through the gate that in the 13th century was called the "Jewish" gate, because it was adjacent to the medieval Jewish quarter of the city. The church itself no longer existed by the 13th century, but its ruins were still known¹⁷. Some sort of sanctuary had always existed at this spot, which is considered to be the burial place of this very popular Toledan saint.

¹⁶ SIMON 1983, p. 27; COHEN 1986, p. 593; CHAZAN 1989, p. 23ff.

¹⁷ On this church see BARROSO CABRERA – MORÍN DE PABLOS 2007, p. 109; GURT I ESPARRAGUERA – DIARTE BLASCO 2012.

Lucas of Tuy elegantly interweaves the motive of Jewish treachery into the fabric of historical narrative. He refers to it once more when he talks about the death of infante Fernando, the son of the king Alfonso VIII of Castile. Allegedly, when the prince was told about the Jewish betrayal in Toledo in 711, he became angry and began to persecute Jews, and they poisoned him for this¹⁸. But the sources, which are closer to the death of the infante in 1211, do not say a word about the Jews and assert that he died of illness. But for Lucas this story, in a slightly modified form, serves political aims – to emphasise once more the malignance and untrustworthiness of the Jews, with help from the widespread motif of poisoning the ruler. Such stories enforce the idea, that the Jews are the source of all sorts of misfortunes that befell Spain during its history¹⁹.

3. The unity of evil: Jews and Witiza in the interpretation of the Muslim conquest

In the context of the Muslim conquest, anti-Jewish attitudes are inseparably linked with the traditionally negative depiction of the Visigothic king Witiza in Spanish Christian historiography. Lucas of Tuy played the main role in the formation of another motif, popular in subsequent historiography, that Witiza, the son and heir of Egica, in one way or another “pardoned” the Jews and gave them back their freedom and even part of their previous wealth and influence. Lucas treats this king in an extremely negative way, and after enumerating his vices he writes: “Witiza added iniquity to iniquity and called the Jews back to Spain. He broke the privileges of the Church and gave the Jews the privilege of immunity”²⁰.

The *Mozarabic Chronicle of 754*, our main source for the events of the beginning of the 8th century, was composed rather chronologically closely to the facts that it depicts. However, it says only that Witiza attempted to put an end to the disagreements between his father and the nobility. “Not only he brought back to favour those whom his father had condemned to exile, but he did them service when they were restored. Indeed Witiza brought back to their former joy those whom his father had oppressed with a heavy yoke and he freely gave land back to those who had been deprived of it by his father. Finally he called everyone together and publicly and formally burned the pledges that his father

¹⁸ LUC. TUDENS., *Chron.* 4, 88. See ROTH 1994, pp. 73-74; JÉREZ CABRERO 2006, p. 197.

¹⁹ On the anti-Jewish motifs in Lucas’s writings, see PICK 2004, pp. 173-174; JÉREZ CABRERO 2006, p. 196.

²⁰ LUC. TUDENS., *Chron.* 3, 61.

had exacted by trickery”²¹. This phrase does not give us any basis to determine if people of Jewish descent belonged to those whom the father persecuted and the son favoured – it is clear merely that the chronicler is more likely disposed to this monarch and considers him to be a decent man. Although the negative attitude to Witiza was not commonplace in early Spanish historiography, Lucas of Tuy was not the first person to despise this king. As early as the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* we see the direct opposite image of Witiza. It is said that “he was reprobate and was disgraceful in his habits”, and his vices were “the cause of Spain’s ruin”²². *Historia Silense* also depicts Witiza in the same hostile way and compares him to the wolf among the sheep²³.

The tradition that places the cause of all troubles in the blasphemer and libertine Witiza, and in his descendants and adherents, including the count Julian, was preserved in the majority of later chronicles, which rely primarily on Lucas’s text²⁴. Here and in other chronicles the Jews are depicted as an absolute evil, and therefore they become a logical attribute of another absolute evil – the king Witiza. The supposed grace of the king towards the Jews was itself the main reason for the disasters that befell Spain: “God incensed by such evil deeds and such malignancy caused the ruin of men and the enslavement of people of Spain”²⁵. By ascribing pro-Jewish policies to Witiza, Lucas unites him with factors that he thought were the main source of the calamities. He “embeds” the Jews into the story of Witiza, who had already long had a bad reputation in the eyes of Spanish historians, and thus he strengthens the accusation against Witiza by these new arguments, and at the same time adds one more reason for the defeat of the Goths, which he believed was no less persuasive than the depravity of the king.

²¹ *Qui non solum eos, quos pater damnauerat, ad gratiam recipit temtos exilio, uerum etiam clientulus manet in restaurando. Nam quos ille graui oppresserat iugo, pristino iste reducebat in gaudio et quos ille a proprio abdicaberat solo, iste pio reformans reparabat ex dono* (CRON. MOZAR., 44) – LÓPEZ PEREIRA 1980, p. 62; English translation: WOLF 1990, p. 129.

²² *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, 5 (the versions of *Chronica ad Sebastianum* and *Chronica Rotensis* almost coincide); GIL FERNÁNDEZ – MORALEJO – RUIZ DE LA PEÑA 1985, pp. 118-119); WOLF, 1990, p. 164.

²³ *Cum tandem diuinam providentia, Vitizam Gotorum regem inter christicolos quasi lupum inter oves diu latere prospiciens, ne tota soboles prisco voluptabro rursus macularetur more temporum Noe, ut diluuium terram, paucis christianorum reservatis, barbaras gentes Yspaniam occupare permisit* – CHRON. SIL., 6. See SANTOS COCO 1921, p. 6.

²⁴ RODER. TOLET., *De rebus Hisp.* 3, 17: *Et ut iniquitatem iniquitati adicerit, uiolatis priuilegiis ecclesiarum reuocauit Iudeos et maioris inmunitatis quam ecclesias priuilegiis honorauit* (FERNÁNDEZ VALVERDE 1987, pp. 98-99); PCG, 552 (MENÉNDEZ PIDAL 1955, p. 302).

²⁵ LUC. TUD., *Chron.* 3, 61.

4. The heirs of Lucas – development of the story

The chronicle of Lucas of Tuy became a rich source for later historians. Another important historical text of the 13th century – *De rebus Hispaniae* of the bishop of Toledo Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada – owes much to the *Chronicon*. Lucas's younger contemporary, who also had no warm sentiments towards the Jews, copied the history of the Muslim conquest and the report about Witiza's connection with the Jews from the *Chronicon Mundi*²⁶. Nevertheless, Rodrigo omitted the story of the capture of Toledo. Perhaps an important motive for him in this case was an unwillingness to discredit the courage of the men of Toledo, who bravely defended their city, or a disinclination to quarrel with the Jews, who had a certain influence in the city when Rodrigo was bishop there²⁷. But the idea of a union between the Jews and Muslims was itself not strange for this author either – he repeats the tales about Jewish garrisons in the conquered towns²⁸, and generally considers contemporary Jews as potential allies of the Muslims.

Afterwards, the motif of the Jewish betrayal of Toledo passed into the books of many authors, both medieval and modern, who recounted the text of Lucas or his literary heirs with more or less creativity. The most popular source for further borrowings was, of course, the *Estoria de España*, also known as the *Primera Crónica General*, composed in the *scriptorium* of king Alfonso X. The author of this chronicle related Lucas's story as close to the original text as possible²⁹, however the plot gradually accumulated further details, which were intended to make it seem more realistic. For example, in the middle of the 14th century, Juan Gil de Zamora knew the precise number of people who lived in the city when the chronicle was written, including 70,000 Jewish taxpayers³⁰.

²⁶ *Et ut iniquitatem iniquitati adicerit, uiolatis priuilegiis ecclesiarum reuocauit Iudeos et mioris in-munitatis quam ecclesias priuilegiis honorauit* (RODER. TOLET., *De rebus Hisp.* 3, 17).

²⁷ PICK 2004, p. 176; ASTREN 2009, p. 105.

²⁸ RODER. TOLET., *De rebus Hisp.* 3, 23, p. 110; 3, 24.

²⁹ "Et dize don Lucas de Thuy en loor desta cibdad, que seyendo ella buena, poderosa, fuert et complida de mucha buena caualleria que siempre ouo en ella, que a otra fue metuda en poder de los ismaelitas et uençida sin otra batalla que y ouiesse por la traycion de los judios; ca dizen que en dia de Ramos que saliron los cristianos, por onrra de la fiesta que era grand, fuera de la uilla, et fueron a la iglesia de sancta Locadia por oyr y la predigacion et la palabra de Dios; e los judíos que auien puesta su sennal de traycion con los moros, cerraron las puertas de la villa a los cristianos et abriron las a los moros; e desi por que el pueblo de los cristianos estaua desarmado et sin sospecha de mal, salieron a ellos los moros et mataron los y a todos" (PCG, 561 – MENÉNDEZ PIDAL, 1955, p. 316).

³⁰ *Hec civitas regia per iudeos fuit amissa tempore Roderici regis. Nam dum christiani in die ramis palmarum ad ecclesiam sancte Leocadie extra urbem regiam ob reverenciam tante sollempnitatis*

This detail seems to be a hint at the special favour of the Castilian kings who permitted the Jews to live in the capital and closed their eyes to the crimes of their ancestors. From the end of the 14th century and *The Chronicle of the King don Pedro* of Pedro López de Ayala, the story of the seizure of Toledo acquires an additional colourful motif – after arranging with the Jews and waiting for them to open the gate, Muslims hid in the gardens (*huertas*) outside the city and from there attacked the defenceless Christians³¹. In the middle of the 15th century, the archpriest of Talavera Alfonso Martínez indicated the precise gate in question as the Gate of Cambrón, which led towards Vega Baja, where the church of St. Leocadia was situated. In the High Middle Ages the Jewish quarter was located next to this gate³².

An episode depicting the Jewish treachery as the most important moment of the capture of Toledo, and thus one of the key events of the Muslim conquest, also found its place in the literature of the genre that sought to amuse rather than to teach. The most verbose and artistic description can be found in the book *Crónica del rey don Rodrigo con la destrucción de España*, written in 1433 by Pedro de Corral and usually called one of the first Spanish tales of

ad audiendum verbum Domini convenissent, iudei qui prodicionis signum dederant sartuconis, christianis claudentes portas, sarracenis aperuerunt, et ideo fidelis tholetanus populus inermis inventus extra urbem, gladio est deletus. In hac urbe Lxx.^a milia judeorum tributa solvencium, absque parvulis et mulieribus et pauperibus, nostri temporibus sunt inventa; christianorum et sarracenorum est innumera multitudo. Quoted from: FITA 1984, pp. 138-139. On Juan Gil de Zamora and his conception of history, see COSTAS RODRÍGUEZ 1994, pp. 11-30.

³¹ “E despues desto los moros ganando e conquistando a España, llegaron a la çibdat de Toledo, e commo quier que algunos dias se detouo la çibdat de Toledo y se defendio, enpero dizen que vn dia, con maldat de judíos que allí biuián, dixeron a los moros commo los christianos de la çibdat de Toledo sallian, el dia de Ramos, todos fuera de la çibdat a oyr las horas de aquel dia y a tomar los rramos bendichos a vna iglesia que es en la vega, que dizen Santa Leocadia la de fuera, e que poniendo anssy sus çeladas, que los podrían tomar e ganar la çibdat. E los moros fizieronlo assy, e vn dia de Ramos, commo lo auian acostunbrado, los christianos salieron a oyr sus oras aquella dicha iglesia de Santa Locadia, que es fuera de la çibdat. E los moros tenían puesta su çelada en vnas huertas ý çerca, e fueron a ellos e tomaron los mas catiuos e mataron muchos...” - ORDUNA 1994, pp. 58-59 (cáp. 18).

³² “E en esto Tarif fuese después a Toledo e ouo su fabla e trato con los judios de Toledo por tomar la çibdad a trayçion. E vn dia de Ramos, estando Tarif con ssus moros escondido por las huertas fuera de la çibdad, e los christianos estando en Santa Leocadia fuera de la çibdad en su fiesta, los judios cerraron las puertas de la çibdad, en espeçial la del Canbron, que es en derecho de Santa Leocadia, e salieron los moros que estauan escondidos por las huertas de la vega, e mataron todos los christianos e christianas, que vno non queda a vida” - LARKIN 1983, p. 31. On this chronicle see BOMBÍN 1976, pp. 8-83. On the location of the Jewish quarter in Toledo in the 13th century see LEÓN TELLO 1991, pp. 126-128.

chivalry³³. The report of Jewish treachery in the version of Pedro de Corral is several times longer than in earlier sources. It contains such details as several stages of negotiations between the Jews and Tariq; ten elders, who become at the same time advisers to Tariq and the hostages and guarantee the loyalty of the Jews to the conqueror; and a description of the location of the Jewish quarter of Toledo, the church of St. Leocadia and the city gate that separates them. It stands to reason that the author “actualizes” the story and uses the terminology of the 15th century – for example, the ten elders are called *los mejores y mayores de toda el Aljama de Toledo*.

The “literary” history of the plot is continued by the romance *Toma de Toledo por Tarif*, first published by the 16th-century author Lorenzo de Sepúlveda³⁴. The romance relates the story of Lucas de Tuy very closely to the original, it drops hints about the pretended Christianity of the converts and calls them by the term most familiar to its late medieval audience – *gente marrana*.

It should be noted that the legend about the Jewish treachery could exist simultaneously with other reports about the capture of Toledo, where the siege is ended by the signing of the agreement of capitulation, and not by the assault³⁵. These reports are, in a way, confirmed by several Arabic chronicles, which affirm that most of the inhabitants left the city before the conquerors arrived, and the Muslims easily established a capitulation treaty with those who were still there – that is, first of all, with the Jews³⁶. So we see that in the mind of the chroniclers and historians different pictures of the events coexisted, and the historical reliability of the report about Jewish perfidy could take a backseat – it would be better to talk about the perennial Jewish perfidy, rather than about the conquest as it really happened. Therefore, the tale about Jewish treachery also occupied an appropriate place in the anti-Jewish polemical literature. It is included, in most of its details, in the *Fortalitium Fidei* of Alonso de Espina written in 1458 – in the small fragment where the story of the Jewish treachery

³³ On Pedro de Corral and his writing see FOGELQUIST s. d, pp. 4-9; ÁLVAREZ-HESSE 1990, pp. 15-54; GRIEVE 2009, p. 80.

³⁴ Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, “Toma de Toledo por Tarif”, in DURÁN 1854, p. 413 (cf. the edition: RODRÍGUEZ MOÑINO 1967). See also MENÉNDEZ PIDAL 1953, t. 2, p. 111.

³⁵ The best example here is the above-mentioned chronicle of Alfonso Martínez, where the report about the surrender is placed directly after the story of the seizure of Toledo with the help of Jewish traitors: “E luego Tarif fue apoderado de la çibdad, con çiertas condiçiones que ouieron los cristianos que dentro estauan; espeçial mente los moçaraues, e con seys iglesias que quedasen...” - LARKIN 1983, p. 31. Information about the capitulation treaty can be found in the 17th-century text, which however relied upon the earlier sources: *Chronicon Petri Juliani archipresbyteri S. Justae (Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1628)*, p. 90.

³⁶ ASTREN 2009, p. 104.

in Toledo is given as an example of “the first cruelty of the Jews”, the word “treason” (*proditio*) is repeated six times³⁷. Alonso de Espina refers to the sources that were also used by Juan Gil de Zamora, Lucas of Tuy, and the *Estoria general*, and he follows the texts of his predecessors accurately enough³⁸.

The improper role played by the Jews in the early medieval history of Spain was remembered at various stages of the anti-Jewish campaign, for example, in 1449 when there was a riot in Toledo against the Constable don Alvaro de Luna, who imposed very severe taxes on the city. Jewish converts acted as the immediate executors of his orders, and the rioters accused them not only of the actual crime against the people of Toledo, but also of the sins committed by their ancestors in the glorious capital. New details are added to the old motif in this document, that is the precise number of “old Christians” put to the sword by the Moors as a result of the Jewish treason³⁹. In the 16th century, bishop Juan Martínez Silíceo of Toledo referred to this story in order to substantiate the statutes about purity of blood, which he fervently supported⁴⁰.

5. The Jewish version

From Christian sources the legend about the fall of Toledo penetrated the Jewish chronicles of the 16th century. Samuel Usque proposes his own variant in his book *Consolation of the tribulations of Israel*, written in the middle of that century in Portuguese. He corrects the account of the calamities that had befallen the Jews during their history in order to include the story of the Muslim conquest of Toledo. Usque, like other Jewish historiographers of that time, tried to make sense of the troubles and misfortunes that had befallen his people and to see in them the concealed will of God. In his version there is treachery, but it is completely unclear who is guilty in it – and the Jews become victims of the cruelty of the conquerors, although this is not the end of their troubles. “Realizing how bad their account of the city’s capture would appear to the king, the

³⁷ ALPHONSO DE ESPINA 1494, 3.7.17, fol. 143.

³⁸ Alonso de Espina treated the *Chronicon* of Lucas de Tuy as a source for the history of Spain with great respect, and among other things he took from it the idea that the fall of the Visigothic kingdom was caused by the sins of the kings, especially Witiza. See MEYUHAS GINIO 1995, pp. 305-306.

³⁹ BENITO RUANO 1961, pp. 193-194. On the proclamation of Pedro Sarmiento, where this episode is mentioned see ROUND 1966, especially p. 424; KAPLAN 1998; MEYUHAS GINIO 1995, pp. 307-308.

⁴⁰ LEÓN TELLO 1979, p. 20; SICROFF 2010, pp. 156-157.

nobles sought an adequate reason or excuse for such a loss, and decided to lay the blame on the afflicted Israelites, on whom all misfortunes are unloaded". As a result the Jews of Toledo suffered from the sword of the Muslim conquerors, and their coreligionists who remained under the authority of the Christian king were also repressed with impunity⁴¹. Joseph ha-Cohen, author of the Hebrew chronicle *Vale of Tears*, borrows this story from Usque, with some slight changes⁴².

Other Jewish authors who were interested in the history of Spain preferred to completely disregard the story about the alleged Jewish treachery and adhered to different motifs, also traditional in Spanish historiography, which did not lay responsibility on the Jews. In the *Seder Eliahu Zuta* of Eliahu Capsali (16th century), the blame for the destruction of Spain lies completely on the traitor Count Julian⁴³, and Itzhak Abarbanel at the end of the 15th century mentioned the story of the sinful liaison of Rodrigo and La Cava in the context of his discussion about king David and the wife of Uriah. Such emphasis on this motif was probably intended to draw attention away from the possible part of the Jews in the conquest, and to indicate that they were not themselves the traitors, but rather the traitor was the high official of the king himself⁴⁴. But it should be also noted that the motif of treachery itself was preserved – the people whose worldview was formed in the late medieval and early modern Spanish context could not imagine the loss of Spain without it. They always remembered the betrayal of Count Julian, and the betrayal of the brother of Witiza, bishop Oppas, who according to many chronicles openly went over to the side of Muslims and assisted them⁴⁵.

6. Conclusion: Jewish treachery becoming a historical fact

The long-held belief that the Jews were traitors during the conquest of Spain was also confirmed by the established association of Jews with infidelity in general. The theological accusations of *infidelitas* and *perfidia* were easily transformed into accusations of real lies and political treason. Not in vain did Alonso de Espina reproach the Jews in another context that by betraying the king they

⁴¹ Usque, *Consolação*, 3.3.

⁴² For an analysis of this fragment, see: LEÓN TELLO 1989, pp. 227-228.

⁴³ See MORENO KOCH 2005, pp. 28-32; BEN-SHALOM 2006, p. 325.

⁴⁴ BEN-SHALOM 2006, pp. 325-328.

⁴⁵ GIL FERNÁNDEZ – MORALEJO – RUIZ DE LA PEÑA 1985, pp. 123-124; *Crón. mozár.*, 54 (LÓPEZ PEREIRA 1980, pp. 70-71).

violated both the loyalty oath and their own obligations⁴⁶. In the mentality of people who lived in the High and Late Middle Ages, Jewish treachery fits perfectly in the context of a conspiracy, which gave king Egica a pretext to enslave them in 694. Almost twenty years before the appearance of the Muslims on Iberian soil, the Jews allegedly colluded with their coreligionists to overthrow Visigothic king. At that time, the wisdom and perspicacity of Egica prevented them from doing it, but now they completed their conspiracy and finally destroyed the unity of *rex, gens et patria Gothorum* that had been the goal of the Visigothic rulers in the 6th and 7th centuries.

It is not only in the context of the events of 711 that the Jews are presented as the culprits in the military failure. The *Annals of St. Bertin* affirm that they played the same unseemly role during the capture of Bordeaux by the Danes in 848 and the capture of Barcelona by the Muslims in 852⁴⁷. A similar report can be found in one manuscript concerning the seizure of Tarragona in 850, and though it is generally considered to be unreliable, the fact that the motif appears here is of great importance, and it can also be seen in some Arabic sources⁴⁸. Jews and betrayal, Jews and fraud went hand in hand for the people of the Middle Ages – and among the authors we have mentioned this motif is permanently present, for example, in the writings of Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada and Pedro de Corral.

Medieval chroniclers easily and naturally borrowed the story of the capture of Toledo from each other not only because of the traditionalism of the medieval mentality, with its tendency to rely on the authorities, but also because of the treatment of history as a collection of didactic examples – *exempla*. The story of treachery which led to the fall of the Visigothic capital had an extremely important function in this context. It is absolutely evident that the fall of the capital of Visigothic kingdom was considered to be one of the key moments of the Muslim conquest and that it attracted the attention of historians. Precisely because of the special status of Toledo, the idea that the city was lost due to an unsuccessful strategy or an unfortunate military operation seemed to medieval authors to be highly incredible and even unpleasant and insulting. The motif of treason was not only present in all the narratives that dealt with the *pérdida de España*, but it played the key role in all of them: all Spain was lost because of the betrayal of Count Julian and bishop Oppas. For the late Middle Ages, the figure of the Jew seemed to be the ideal image of a traitor. It was no

⁴⁶ MEYUHAS GINIO 1995, p. 311.

⁴⁷ WAITZ 1876, pp. 443, 447.

⁴⁸ SÁNCHEZ REAL 1951, p. 340; ROTH 1994, p. 74.

accident that this motif appears at the beginning of the 13th century, an age of active anti-Jewish polemics, and gained maximal currency in the 15th century.

In the example of the capture of Toledo in 711, we see how historical events and ideological notions intermingled in the minds of the people who lived in the High Middle Ages. History unquestioningly submitted to ideology, and served, as we see here, anti-Jewish sentiments that were typical for that epoch. The story invented by Lucas of Tuy fit in perfectly with the traditional image of the Jew – a liar, an evil-doer, and a traitor, whose “infidelity” concerns not only religious matters, but also strictly political loyalty to his homeland and sovereign.

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TABLA DE CONTENIDOS

Presentación.....	vii
Directorio de participantes.....	ix
Semblanza del profesor Luis A. García Moreno.....	xiii
Luis A. García Moreno: publicaciones 1970-2021.....	xix
Entrevista a Luis A. García Moreno (25/01/2016).....	xlvi
Borja ANTELA-BERNÁRDEZ – Jordi VIDAL PALOMINO	
Ríos, manantiales y fuentes fantásticas en la literatura geográfica griega sobre la India antigua.....	81
Manuel ALBALADEJO VÍVERO	
<i>Abstract:</i> In this paper I have tried to collect all the rivers, springs and sources of fantastic nature that the ancient Greek authors located in India. The objective is to analyze these passages to extract a series of common guidelines to all of them, among which the image of India as a wonderland stands out, a country blessed by all kinds of wealth and natural resources, but which, in a contradictory way, at times the country also hid many dangers.	
César en <i>Brigantium</i> (61 a. C.). Crítica de las fuentes e intertextualidad.....	93
Víctor ALONSO TRONCOSO	
<i>Abstract:</i> This paper continues two earlier publications of the author on the same subject. It studies the naval expedition of Julius Caesar to the north of Callaecia, leading to the subjugation of Brigantium. It analyses the passage of Cassius Dio describing the episode and faces three questions: its degree of credibility (basically right), the sources on which it depends in the last resort (Caesar's letters to the senate) and its intertextual dimension (according to the hermeneutics of Bakhtin and Kristeva).	

Borja ANTELA-BERNÁRDEZ

Abstract: In the literature of antiquity, we can find clear examples of writings in which the fantastic acquires the validity of historical fact. In this paper we will focus on a series of episodes from Plutarch's Life of Sertorius in order to show how certain concepts prior to the actual narration of the facts, considered historical, influence the way of conceiving the facts to be narrated, and the very meaning of the story being told, clearly affecting the biographical genre, but also on the way of conceiving ancient historiography, and consequently, even on our current perception of past events, which were probably clearly fantastic and exempla motifs for the ancients, but have been validated as possible and real by our contemporary colleagues.

Oleg AUROV

Abstract: The article is devoted to the question of existence of royal insignia in the Visigothic Kingdoms since the appearance of the Kingdom of Toulouse till the middle of the 6th century. The author comes to conclusion, that the absence of information about these insignia in Latin and Greek texts of the period can be explained by the character of the Visigothic kings' power. Barbaric generals of the Late Roman army (including the Visigothic ones) who usurped power over the certain West Roman provinces used the support of military units consisting of their compatriots and of the Roman provincial aristocracy who needed defense in the situation of the Roman administration collapse. In this situation the Visigothic kings did not need any direct communication with the Roman population and did not want to emphasize the legitimacy of their power using the Roman political symbols. The fall of the Western Roman Empire did not change the situation immediately. But the Visigothic defeat in the battle of Vouillé (507) created step by step the basis of the new political reality. Looking for the social base of their weakened power the kings had to accept the new political conception and to operate like legitimate governors in the sense of Late Antique political culture. The culmination of this process chronologically corresponds to the reign of king Liuvigild (568 – 586), who appeared seating on the throne dressed in purple clothes with a gold crown on the head.

Viviana EDITH BOCH

Abstract: The difficult times that occurred in the years around the plunder of the Eternal City had an immediate impact on all regions

of the vast Empire. The intellectual elites transmitted, through epistolary exchange, their experiences, anguish and ideas. The influence of the metadiscourse on Antiquity was of capital importance to spread the stamp and relevance of prominent personalities in the political and ideological evolution of a period marked by uncertainty. It functioned as an agent for the construction of images and mobilization of transformations in all areas of culture. It is the interest of the present study to delve into the motivations and circumstances that accompanied the religious conversion of an influential pagan senator of the Empire: the proconsul *Rufius Antonius Agrypinus Volusianus*.

Los *conventus* de la Bética y los límites del método histórico..... 167

Antonio F. CABALLOS RUFINO

Abstract: As a result of the need for a continuous re-evaluation of historiographical models, on this occasion we consider the need to review the argumentative and methodological starting points that lead to a conception, which has been consolidated to the point of becoming a paradigm, of the *conventus* of Hispania Ulterior Baetica as intermediate circumscriptions in the political-administrative management of the territory during the High Roman Empire, which we understand, however, to be lacking this character in this specific province.

The Jews Who Sold Spain: The Image of the Jew in the Medieval
Conception of the Muslim Conquest of Spain..... 185

Liubov CHERNIN

Abstract: The article deals with the history of the literary reflection of "Jewish trace" in the Muslim conquest of Spain. The stories about any participation of the Jews in this event, which appear mostly in the late medieval chronicles, are analysed as the part and parcel of the general image of a Jew as a traitor in both theological and political spheres. Muslim reports about Jewish garrisons in the conquered towns gave birth to the colourful story about the Jews who opened the gate of Toledo to the Muslims, invented by Lucas of Tuy. It was soon picked up by other authors and entered to the large-scaled anti-Jewish discourse of Late Medieval Spain.

Aceptación y rechazo de Roma: el rey, la *lex Aquilia* y la patria potestad
en los Fueros de Aragón..... 205

Guillermo FATÁS

Abstract. The medieval laws of Aragon (Fueros) have become famous for their rejection of Roman law, but this, which is real in some points, should not be understood as a general feature. This essay deals with the supposed native formula of a royal oath; and two specific cases with

opposite meanings: the adoption of the “lex Aquilia” and the denial of the “patria potestas” interpreted in the manner of Rome.

Los escipiones en la Primera Guerra Púnica. La desesperada búsqueda del éxito militar de un grupo familiar patricio..... 213

Jaime GÓMEZ DE CASO ZURIAGA

Abstract: The Scipio’s family group, belonging to the *gens* Cornelia, was looking for prominence, prestige and glory during the First Punic War. However, it’s most prominent members, Gnaeus and Lucius, were far from obtaining a great success, and their triumphs were made to look enlarged by the family’s own political influence, already huge in that epoch.

De las columnas a los Pirineos: Apiano y la geografía de la Península Ibérica..... 237

Francisco Javier GÓMEZ ESPELOSÍN

Abstract: Appian’s apparently archaic image of the Iberian Peninsula reveals his manifest disinterest in such matters. His whole account of the Roman conquest of the peninsular territory ignores the corresponding geographical supports that may have appeared specifically in his sources of information in order to concentrate his attention on other more relevant aspects from his perspective, such as the stratagems used or the more or less courageous and prudent attitude of the protagonists. The isolated and scattered geographical references in his account are only the result of the filtering process from his sources and do not in themselves allow for an approximate reconstruction of the scene of events.

Iberia en el *Periplo del Mar Exterior* de Marciano de Heraclea..... 261

José María GÓMEZ FRAILE

Abstract: In this paper I propose to contrast the information on the Iberian Peninsula from the Marcian of Heraclea’s *Periplus of the Outer Sea* with the Ptolemy’s *Guide to Geography*. The analysis covers the coastal sequences, the general geographic inventory and I propose a method to relate the numerical information from the Marcian’s *Periplus* with the Ptolemy’s geographic coordinates.

Algunas precisiones sobre las formas de gobierno en Atenas..... 291

Florencio HUBEÑAK

Abstract: The topic of “forms of government” or “forms of power” is a classic in the literature of the history of political thought and even of political science.

As a historian convinced of the need to “go back to the sources” and review the interpretations, it seems convenient to me to carefully analyze what was the historical reality of the emergence and

development of these forms in Athens, considered the basis of political thought in this sense.

The conclusions we arrived at –and that arise from the development of the work– clearly show the difference between the Athenian political reality and its interested deformation through the times.

“¡Soy demasiado vieja para volver a casarme!” Mujeres y vejez en el Antiguo Oriente..... 321

Josué J. JUSTEL

Abstract: This contribution aims at providing some data about the factor of (advanced) age in Ancient Near Eastern women. The article deals with a selection of legal and literary cuneiform texts, as well as a brief list of biblical ones, and attempts to explain why in the Ancient Near East not all women (whose husbands had passed) were considered “widows”.

Isidoro de Sevilla en Rusia: estudios y traducciones..... 337

Elena MAREY

Abstract: In this article I tried to present an overview of Isidorian studies in Russia. Professional interest in the history of Spain, especially in the history of the High Middle Ages, appeared not so long ago: strictly speaking, the studies of Visigothic history begin in the 60s and are associated with the name of Alexander Korsunsky. The figure of Isidore of Seville, his thoughts and his works are always in the center of attention. Today his texts are studied by historians and philosophers, specialists in ancient and medieval culture; the main issue of various works is the Isidorian way of citing and using his very different sources. Any works of Isidore were translated into Russian, and the new translations also appear, although there are many difficulties with the “word game” in the Latin text.

El asesinato como instrumento político entre los visigodos..... 355

Salvador I. MARIEZCURRENA PONCE

Abstract: The next pages are a study about political assassination throughout Gothic history, identifying the different existing variants from it presents from the 5th to the 8th centuries and which serve as a guide to the process of institutional construction and political relations that will take place in the different stages of the Visigothic evolution: the Toulouse kingdom, the Ostrogoth intermediate, the Leovigildian re-founding and the Toledo kingdom.

Powerslave: rehenes y control político en el reinado de Alejandro..... 379

Marc MENDOZA

Abstract: Alexander employed different policies in his dealings with the elites from his new territories. Recurrently, groups of locals joined the

expedition. Behind an apparent uniformity, it is possible to distinguish different policies in terms of application and goals both towards those involved and their homelands. Therefore, this practice covered from the forced taking of political hostages until the relatively voluntary incorporation of some contingents into the Macedonian ranks. This way it will address their short- and long-term goals, the effects both aimed and produced, their incorporation in the discourses of both conquerors and conquered, and their importance for their integration into the growing empire.

Los gladiadores en la *Onirocrítica* de Artemidoro y una propuesta de restitución..... 403

María Engracia MUÑOZ-SANTOS

Abstract: Artemidorus is an essential source for the knowledge of gladiature in the Eastern Roman Empire of the 2nd century AD. Although his *Onirocritica* is an obviously fanciful work, the social context in which it was written gives us a lot of information about how the inhabitants of Greece saw the *munera* at that time. However, his work has several gaps precisely where a gladiator typology should appear. In this work, we reread Chapter 32 of Book II to launch a hypothesis for the restitution of these gaps..

San Isidoro y Ximénez de Rada como fuentes para los cronistas suecos del Renacimiento y del Barroco..... 411

Ingmar SÖHRMAN

Abstract: We do not know whether there remained any idea of a common Gothic origin and the Gothic exodus to Spain in the memory of the Swedes and the Scandinavians during the first part of the Middle Ages even if there are some indications that this story was not altogether forgotten during the Viking Era, but it turns out clearly that the Gothic part of the history and its legends and ideological prejudices were rediscovered when the work of Ximénez de Rada became known as it was considered more serious and complete than the work of his predecessors. His chronicles and those of his pupil, Alphonse X, come rather quickly to Sweden where they caused a new interest in the Gothic past as the work of Ximénez de la Rada could be used as an established source and through his chronicle many also got to know the works of Isidore of Seville whose books were considered interesting, and many Scandinavian intellectuals of the time studied and used them in their own works. The inspiration to dedicate one's work to the Gothic past led to that the last two Catholic Archbishops of Sweden, and virtually brothers, wrote their respective works on this topic and especially these two turned into the main source for Gothic studies not only in Sweden but also in Spain. In the C17 once more a great interest in the Gothic past rose as the small Swedish Baltic empire took form.

This interest was based on the works of John Magnus and Ximénez de Rada and led to the ultimate romantic interest in the topic at the beginning of the C19.

De nuevo sobre el segundo tratado entre Roma y Cartago.....	429
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YU.B. TSIRKIN

Abstract: The second treaty between Rome and Carthage, as it used to be the first one, is first of all a deal of spheres of influence, but it did in a clearer way: Carthage tried to prevent an eventual Roman interference in his area of interest and Rome prioritized recognition by Carthage of his character of leading power and hegemony on the Latium and south of Etruria. In some way, this treaty reflects the Roman regeneration after the catastrophe of the Gallic invasion.

ÍNDICES

Index locorum.....	445
Index nominum.....	453

Este volumen de homenaje al profesor y académico Luis Agustín García Moreno reúne diferentes contribuciones de una serie de colegas, discípulos y amigos que abarcan un amplio espectro de temas dentro de un extenso arco cronológico, que va desde la historia antigua al mundo altomedieval y moderno. Algunas de ellas hacen referencia al estudio de la historia y geografía antiguas, relacionadas con diferentes temas y espacios, desde la India a la Península Ibérica; otras se ajustan, dentro de un molde muy amplio, a cuestiones de tipo historiográfico, que afectan a la manera de enfocar la historia de determinados temas, y otras más tienen que ver con la historia de la Antigüedad tardía y del mundo visigodo. Una historia sin fronteras sobre diversos temas en torno a las raíces de Europa, muy acorde a los intereses e investigaciones llevadas a cabo a lo largo de la vida académica del homenajeado.



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