

**BLOOD  
ON THE  
CROSS**

# **BLOOD ON THE CROSS**

**Islam in Spain in the Light of Christian  
Persecution through the Ages**

**by Ahmad Thomson**

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## PREFACE

*Blood on the Cross* outlines the history of that extraordinary period during which the Muslims flourished and perished in southern Spain. It was largely due to their presence and illumination in the Iberian peninsula that the Dark Ages in Europe came to an end, and their influence is still with us today in a thousand ways.

In order to fully realise how it was that the Muslims in Spain came to be almost completely eliminated by the notorious Spanish Inquisition, the book begins with an outline of the history of what is today called Christianity, tracing the movement of the original Unitarian followers of Jesus, peace be upon him, from North Africa and the Middle East into Europe and southern Spain, describing the formation and expansion of the Trinitarian church in Italy and the rest of Europe, and outlining the almost total annihilation of the Unitarian Christians at the hands of the Trinitarian church by means of the Mediaeval and Spanish Inquisitions.

Without this analysis of the interaction between the Unitarian and Trinitarian Christians, it is virtually impossible to understand how it was that the inhabitants of the Iberian peninsula in the eighth century AD embraced Islam so readily and rapidly, and how it was that the Jews and the Muslims of Spain in the sixteenth century were either exterminated by the Spanish Inquisition or forced to flee for their lives. What took place in Spain during the intervening centuries is fascinating. Anyone who is aware of what happened in Andalusia between 711 and 1609 will understand why Spain is the way it is today.

It is accepted by all Muslims and some Unitarian Christians that Jesus, peace be upon him, was not crucified and is not the son of God. The creation of Jesus was like the creation of Adam, peace be upon them: "When God wishes something to exist, He says, 'Be!' and it is." To these Unitarians, Jesus is a Messenger of God who confirmed the teachings of Moses and foretold of the coming of Muhammad, may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon them and their families and their companions and all their followers. The Trinitarian Christians - who have somehow mistakenly sought to affirm that Jesus was and is simultaneously a

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human being, the son of God and God Himself, but who nevertheless prayed to and worshipped God and was crucified - have always, as the historical record so clearly demonstrates, waged war both ideologically and physically on whoever affirmed the Unitarian view, whether they were Jews, Christians or Muslims.

**Blood on the Cross** is part of that historical record. This book is, however, intended for anyone who likes to read about other peoples in other places in other times, whatever their own beliefs or perceptions of existence may be, as well as for serious students of the history of Christianity and Islam and Europe who may wish to consult the books listed in the bibliography in order to arrive at an understanding which is far greater than this book can contain. May you enjoy it, and find whatever you seek!

Ahmad Thomson  
Dhu'l-Hijjah 1409

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## CHAPTER I

### THE NAZARENES AND THE CHRISTIANS

Jesus, peace be upon him, started his mission when he was thirty years old. It did not last more than three years. He left behind him the twelve Apostles, seventy disciples and a large following in the rural area of Judaea.

These villages, or the Am Ah Arez as they were called, formed the majority of the population. Drawn by the wisdom and the miracles of Jesus, they gathered round him and followed him. They recognized the light which re-illuminated the teaching which Moses had brought before, and which Jesus had come to clarify and revivify:

Jesus's mission was solely to establish worship of the Creator in the manner in which He had ordained. Jesus and his followers were prepared to fight anyone who tried to prevent them from living as their Lord wished them to. <sup>1</sup>

Many of the priests of the Temple used their position as a means to wealth and reputation. They were not happy with the popularity Jesus had acquired amongst the common people which threatened their status. The Romans who were ruling Judaea, regarded the emergence of this new leader with increasing suspicion, fearing it could result in another revolt of the Jews. They had already had enough trouble from the Essenes, the dwellers of the caves round the Dead Sea. This group of the Jewish community refused to accept the Roman customs and laws where they conflicted with the teachings of Moses. They were dedicated to maintaining the purity of their way of life and to freeing Judaea from foreign occupation. Along with their daily prayers and study of the Scriptures, many of them practised the martial arts. The members of this fighting force were called Zealots. It is probable that Jesus spent much of his childhood amongst the Essenes, not only by the Dead Sea, but also near Alexandria where they had another colony. Many of them subsequently became his followers.

Thus the Roman rulers and the corrupt priests of the Temple discovered a common interest against Jesus and his followers. It was the conspiracy hatched between them which culminated in the disappearance of Jesus and the crucifixion of another man, probably Judas Iscariot, "so that he might suffer the punishment to which he had sold another." <sup>2</sup> The mistaken belief, so ardently adopted by Paul of Tarsus, that it was Jesus who was crucified, was one of the first causes of schism in the early Church:

Those disciples who did not fear God went by night and stole the body of Judas and hid it, spreading a report that Jesus was risen again; whence great confusion arose. The high priest then commanded, under pain of anathema, that no-one should talk of Jesus of Nazareth. And so there arose a great persecution, and many were stoned and many beaten, and many banished from the land, because they could not hold their peace on such a matter. <sup>3</sup>

The persecution of the followers of Jesus, not only by the Romans, but also by the Jews who had rejected Jesus, was another major cause of schism in the early Church. One of the more enthusiastic of the Jewish persecutors was Saul of Tarsus, the 'Hebrew of the Hebrews', who later became famous as Paul. He pursued his task with vigour and efficiency as he himself admitted:

For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jew's religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. (I GAL. 13-14)

The persecution by the Jews and the Romans strengthened some but discouraged others. The weaker followers compromised their beliefs and their actions to avoid it, and,

on account of this, contradictions and disputes amongst the followers of Jesus arose.

It was Paul, once again, who played a large part in this process of compromise which inevitably blurred the purity of the way of life which Jesus had brought. With dramatic suddenness he announced that he had seen Jesus in a vision and had decided to become his follower. However, he waited three years in Arabia and Damascus before returning to Jerusalem to inform the Apostles of this miraculous occurrence. They were now known as Nazarenes. They had been closest to Jesus when he was on earth and were not convinced about the genuineness of Paul's conversion. Their scepticism increased when Paul, who had never sat with Jesus, began to preach a doctrine which differed from, and often contradicted, what they had heard from Jesus himself. Paul later justified his position by saying:

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (I GAL. 11-12)

However, the Nazarenes must have found it impossible to believe that Jesus, having trained his twelve Apostles to spread his teaching while on earth would then, from the Unseen, supersede their authority and change his original teaching without informing them, and by means of a man who had never even met him. Paul's arguments carried little weight with James, the head of the Nazarenes in Jerusalem. It is not clear whether James was the son of Mary by Joseph or the son of Mary's sister. It is known that he was very close to Jesus and according to the New Testament he was one of the more active and outspoken of the Apostles. Jesus gave him and John the name of Boanerges - Sons of Thunder. According to Eusebius he spent so much time praying in intercession for people that his knees grew as horny as those of a camel. Due to his sincerity and honesty he became known as James the Just. He is regarded as being the first bishop of Jerusalem, although this title was not used at that time. He was one of

the most respected people in Jerusalem, and it was to him that many appeals were made to curb Paul's tongue, and to silence his new doctrine of Christ. He was the central figure in the controversy between Paul and the Apostles. <sup>4</sup>

It is possible that Paul may well have been completely rejected by the Nazarenes who still remembered his part in their persecution. It was only due to the influence of Barnabas that Paul was finally accepted into their community. Perhaps Barnabas felt that Paul would adopt their way of life through keeping company with the people who had directly learned so much from Jesus. However, Paul, who realized that he had been accepted into their midst because of Barnabas's support and not because of his own merits, did not stay with them but returned to Tarsus in anger.

Many of the closest followers of Jesus had gone to Antioch to escape persecution by the Jews and the Romans. Barnabas eventually joined them and became the leader of the growing Nazarene community there. They held firmly to the pattern of life which Jesus had embodied. They began to accept people who were not Jews into their number. It was at about this time that the word 'Christian' came into usage. It was used as a term of ridicule and abuse, rather than of description.

A stage was reached where Barnabas decided to take the message of Jesus further afield. He went to Tarsus and brought Paul back with him to Antioch. Thus for the second time Paul came face to face with the people he had once persecuted. He received the same cool reception from the disciples in Antioch as he had experienced from those in Jerusalem. There was a bitter controversy between them concerning not only what Jesus taught, but also to whom it should be taught. Again it was only thanks to Barnabas that Paul was accepted into their number. Finally Barnabas and Paul, accompanied by Mark, the son of Barnabas's sister, set off for Greece on their first missionary journey.

For a Jew whose heart was receptive it was an easy matter to accept Jesus whose teaching only served to illuminate a pattern of life he was already familiar with. For a Gentile, to whom the ways of the Jews were strange and often despised, it was difficult. The Greeks worshipped a myriad of gods.

They did not mind increasing the number of gods, but opposed the affirmation of Divine Unity which negated any other object of worship. It soon became evident that Paul was prepared to compromise the teaching of Jesus in order to make it acceptable to them. Barnabas could not bear with this:

And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus. (ACTS 15.39-40)

Paul travelled west with Peter. Without the sincerity of Barnabas or the counsel of those who followed Jesus to restrain him, he must have met with little opposition to his new doctrines and adopted ways of conduct and behaviour. Paul deviated further away from the teaching Jesus had embodied, and laid more and more emphasis on the figure of Christ whom he claimed had appeared to him in visions. His teaching relied entirely on supernatural communication, and not on any historical testimony of a living Jesus. His defence against those who accused him of changing the guidance Jesus had brought was that what he preached had its origin in a direct revelation to him from Christ, and as such had Divine Authority. It was by virtue of this 'authority' he claimed, that the blessings of the Gospel were not limited to the Jews, but to all who believed. Furthermore he asserted that the requirements of the law of Moses were not only unnecessary but also contrary to what had been directly revealed to him from God. In fact, they were a curse:

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law... (GAL. 3.13)

Thus Paul incurred not only the anger of the followers of Jesus but also that of the Jews since he was contradicting both of their prophets and all the prophets before them. It is clear why he chose to spread his teaching amongst people who hated the Jews and who had not heard about Jesus from anyone else's lips. He justified his actions by asserting that the end justifies the means:



For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory; why yet am I also judged a sinner? (ROMANS 4.7-8)

Paul himself was not altogether clear about his visions:

I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell: God knoweth); how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory. (II COR. 12.1-5)

Thus Paul did not know whether the man he met was 'in the body' or 'out of the body'. He spoke 'unspeakable words' which were not 'lawful to utter'. It would appear that both the source and the subject matter of the revelation were doubtful. Yet Paul asked for a blind faith in himself from his followers, and was angry with those who followed the Apostles who had been with Jesus. Ironically he accused them of changing his gospel:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto to another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from the heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (GAL. 1.6-9)

A little further on in the same epistle he mentions James, Peter and Barnabas by name and says:

I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel. (GAL. 2.14)

These verses clearly indicate the existence of 'another gospel'. There is no record of the Gospel, the revelation which Jesus received from God ever having been reduced to a written form exactly as it was revealed. Paul was probably referring to the eye-witness accounts of the life of Jesus, such as the Gospel of Barnabas, which were so ruthlessly destroyed three centuries later after the Council of Nicaea.

It is possible that Paul sincerely and ardently believed in his actions. However, his misguided zeal was just as harmful in his attempts to redirect the Nazarenes as when he had actively persecuted them: Paul's teaching had major consequences which he probably did not foresee, and which probably developed after his death. His 'gospel of Christ' not only resulted in further changes being made to what Jesus had taught, but also prepared the way to completely changing people's ideas of who Jesus was. Paul's figure of Christ who apparently had the power to annul what Jesus had previously taught, was clearly no ordinary mortal, and inevitably became confused with God by many. Thus this imaginary figure, separate from, yet linked by Paul with Jesus, became an object of worship, and was often mistaken for God. This led many to put Mary in the impossible position of being the 'mother' of God.

This shift of emphasis from Jesus as a prophet to the new image of Christ who was Divine, enabled the intellectuals in Greece and in Rome to assimilate what Paul and those who followed him were preaching into their own philosophy. Their view of existence was a tripartite one and with the Paulicians' talk of 'God the Father' and 'the son of God' it only needed the instatement of the Holy Ghost (in fact the angel Gabriel), to have a Trinity which matched up with theirs. St Augustine was not altogether happy with this, and envied the liberties of the philosophers:

The philosophers speak their words freely. We however do not say whether there are two or three principles, two or three gods. <sup>5</sup>

Plato's philosophy was based on a threefold distinction of The First Cause, the Reason or *Logos*, and the Soul, or Spirit, of the Universe. Gibbon writes:

His poetical imagination sometimes fixed and animated these metaphysical abstractions; the three archical or original principles with each other by a mysterious and ineffable generation; and the *Logos* was particularly considered under the more accessible character of the Son of an eternal Father, and the Creator and Governor of the world. <sup>6</sup>

With the passage of time and the arbitrary identification of 'Christ' with Plato's 'Logos', the two pictures merged into one, and the doctrine of the Trinity was born, became established and was considered to be 'orthodox' Christianity.

The pagans, who had then embraced the Gospel, and who were in some measure versed in the Heathen Philosophy, remarking this resemblance of Terms, persuaded themselves that the Apostles believed in the same things, in respect of these matters, as the Platonic Jews and Pagans. And this seems to be that which drew several philosophers of this sect into the Christian religion, and gave such a great esteem to the primitive Christians for Plato. <sup>7</sup>

Since everyone had different conceptions of what the Platonic terms meant, there was even further schism amongst the Christians. Gibbon writes of the Christians of the second and third centuries:

The respectable name of Plato was used by the

orthodox and abused by the heretics, as the common support of truth and error. <sup>8</sup>

Paul never actually preached the divinity of Jesus nor the doctrine of the Trinity. His manner of expression and the changes he did make, however, when they were fused with the Platonic doctrines, opened the door to both these misconceptions, and prepared the way for their becoming the established doctrines of the Catholic Church. What Paul had done to the teaching of Jesus, others did to his teaching. This process culminated in the Trinitarian doctrines of Athanasius, which were accepted as the official 'orthodox' Christianity during the Council of Nicaea in 325.

The Athanasian Creed, which was composed about a hundred years after the Nicene Creed, has been attributed to the Roman Catholics of the North African Church:

The P. Quesnel started this opinion, which has been favourably received. But the three following truths, however surprising they may seem, are now universally acknowledged: firstly St Athanasius is not the author of the creed, which is now frequently read in our churches. Secondly it does not appear to have existed within a century after his death. Thirdly it was originally composed in the Latin tongue, and, consequently, in the western provinces. Gennadius, Patriarch of Constantinople, was so much amazed by this extraordinary composition, that he frankly pronounced it to be the work of a drunken man. <sup>9</sup>

It is significant that none of the books in the New Testament mention the doctrine of the Trinity. The one verse (I John 4.7) which asserts the unity of the three who bear witness in heaven has long been known to be a forgery, again the work of the Roman Catholics in North Africa. The forgery was made public by Sir Isaac Newton, who found that some of the oldest manuscripts had not been altered:

Of all the manuscripts now extant, above fourscore in number, some of which are more than 1200 years old, the orthodox copies of the Vatican, of the Complutensian editors of Robert Stephens are become invisible; and the two manuscripts of Dublin and Berlin are unworthy to form an exception...In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Bibles were corrected by Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, and by Nicholas, a cardinal and librarian of the Roman church, *secundum Orthodoxam fidem*. Notwithstanding these corrections, the passage is still wanting in twenty-five Latin manuscripts, the oldest and the fairest; two qualities seldom united, except in manuscripts...The three witnesses have been established in our Greek Testaments by the prudence of Erasmus; the honest bigotry of the Complutensian editors; the typographical fraud, or error, of Robert Stephens in the placing of a crotchet and the deliberate falsehood, or strange misapprehension, of Theodore Beza.<sup>10</sup>

The inevitable extension and consequence of the doctrine of the Trinity was the doctrine of incarnation which was the bone of contention of the stormy Councils of Ephesus in 431 and of Chalcedon in 451. For once it had been established that "Jesus was God" by the Council of Nicaea:

...the Catholics trembled on the edge of a precipice, where it was impossible to recede, dangerous to stand, dreadful to fall; and the manifold inconveniences of their creed were aggravated by the sublime character of their theology. They hesitated to pronounce that God Himself, the second person of an equal and consubstantial trinity, was manifested in the flesh; that a being who pervades the universe, had been confined in the womb of

Mary; that His eternal duration had been marked by the days, and months, and years, of human existence; that the Almighty had been scourged and crucified; that His impassable essence had felt pain and anguish; that His omniscience was not exempt from ignorance; and that the source of life and immortality expired on Mount Calvary. These alarming consequences were affirmed with unblushing simplicity by Apollinans, Bishop of Laodicea, and one of the luminaries of the church.<sup>11</sup>

The confusion in holding to the doctrine of incarnation was only heightened by the mistaken belief that it was Jesus who had been crucified. It was not until the Council of Constantinople in 680 that the creed was finally settled, which teaches the Catholics of every age that two wills or energies were harmonized in the person of Christ. Roman Catholicism as such was not established in Great Britain until:

...the end of the seventh century, when the creed of the incarnation, which had been defined at Rome and Constantinople, was uniformly preached in the remote islands of Britain and Ireland; the same ideas were entertained, or rather the same words were repeated, by all the Christians whose liturgy was performed in the Greek or Latin tongue.<sup>12</sup>

It is not surprising that there is no authentic mention of the doctrine of incarnation in the New Testament. The one verse which states that God was manifested in the flesh is, again, a forgery:

This strong expression might be justified by the language of St. Paul (I TIM. 3.16), but we are deceived by our modern Bibles. The word "o"(which) was altered to "theos" (God) at

Constantinople in the beginning of the 6th century: the true reading, which is visible in the Latin and Syriac version, still exists in the reasoning of the Greek, as well as of the Latin fathers; and this fraud, with that of the three witnesses of St. John, is admirably detected by Sir Isaac Newton. <sup>13</sup>

The doctrine of incarnation is implied in the opening verses of John's gospel, but, as the length of time taken to formulate the doctrine indicates, these verses are as ambiguous as the doctrine itself. John's gospel, written about half a century after Paul's death, enshrines the Platonic philosophy. It was not written by John the Apostle and is not an eye-witness account of Jesus's life and teachings. It is very different from the other three surviving synoptic gospels and sometimes contradicts them. However the Roman Catholic Church has claimed it to be the divinely inspired Word of God, and as such free of all errors. Even this gospel contains no mention of the terms 'Trinity' or 'Incarnation', but the spurious authority it gives to the Platonic doctrine has been used to support the doctrine of Trinity and Incarnation, doctrines which Jesus, and even Paul, never preached.

\*                    \*                    \*

What happened to the Nazarenes? They were comprised mainly of the followers of Jesus, many of them his apostles and closest disciples. They attracted many people to their number after he had disappeared. Two communities were formed, one in Jerusalem whose leader was James, and another in Antioch whose leader was Barnabas:

To them what Jesus had taught was the truth and the whole truth. Barnabas and his followers continued to preach and practise the Christianity they had learnt from Jesus himself. <sup>14</sup>

Following the example of Jesus, they continued to adhere

to practices of Moses which Jesus had retained: they affirmed the Divine Unity. They prayed in the synagogue at the appointed times. They fasted as Jesus had fasted. Each year they paid a tenth of their wealth into a common fund and then redistributed it amongst their community. They observed the Sabbath, the Passover, and the holy days. They practised circumcision. They killed the animals they were permitted to eat in the name of their Creator, and in the manner Moses and Jesus had indicated. The whole pattern of their behaviour was in accordance with that of these two prophets. Armed with the strength of the Mosaic law, and by the illumination that Jesus had given them, they worshipped their Lord in the manner He had indicated. "The first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem," writes Gibbon, "were all circumcised Jews; and the congregation over which they presided united the law of Moses with the doctrine of Christ." <sup>15</sup>

The Romans and the Gentiles made little or no distinction between the Nazarenes and the Jews. There was a general persecution of the Jews which culminated in the destruction of the temple of Solomon in 70. Almost the entire Jewish population of Jerusalem was massacred, and many of the Nazarenes shared their fate. Those who escaped settled in Pella, a little town beyond the Jordan.

When Hadrian later became emperor, he founded a new city on Mount Sion. It was called Aelia Capitolina. Severe penalties were fixed for any Jew who even dared to approach it. Gibbon writes:

The Nazarenes had only one way left to escape the common proscription...They elected Marcus for their bishop, a prelate of the race of Gentiles, and most probably a native either of Italy or some of the Latin provinces. At his persuasion, the most considerable part of the congregation renounced the Mosaic law, in the practice of which they had persevered above a century. By this sacrifice of their habits and privileges, they purchased a free admission into the colony of Hadrian, and more firmly cemented their union with the

Catholic Church. <sup>16</sup>

The Nazarenes who refused to make this compromise were condemned as heretics and schismatics. Some remained in Pella, some moved into the villages surrounding Damascus, and many of them settled in Aleppo in northern Syria:

The name of Nazarenes was deemed too honourable for those Christian Jews, and they soon received, from the supposed poverty of their understanding as well as of their condition, the contemptuous epithet of Ebionites (the Poor). <sup>17</sup>

In Rome the pattern of persecution was the same. It was a group of people known as the Galileans, comprised of Nazarenes and Zealots, who were held responsible by Nero, and punished for, the great fire of Rome. The Nazarenes were expected to pay the exacting taxes which were exclusively directed at the Jews in Rome:

As a very numerous though declining party among the Christians still adhered to the law of Moses, their efforts to dissemble their Jewish origin were detected by the decisive test of circumcision. <sup>18</sup>

The persecution of the Nazarenes, and of all those who subsequently followed their example despite such persecution, bring the following verses of John's Gospel to mind:

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.  
(John 16.2-3)

The early persecution of the Nazarenes had a disruptive effect on them, but it also spread them throughout the Roman Empire. Although their numbers were initially diminished,

the teaching of Jesus was made accessible to more people by their being scattered over a wide area. To begin with there had been one or two communities, whereas now the seeds of many communities were sown. In seeking to destroy the Nazarenes the persecutors had ensured their survival:

The communities they formed retained the life-style of Jesus. Those who still embodied Jesus's teaching must have transmitted much of their knowledge directly from person to person. Behaviour was imitated and the doctrine passed on orally. They continued to affirm the Divine Unity. <sup>19</sup>

As the immediacy as Jesus's life began to recede, people began to write down what they remembered or had learnt of his life and teaching. It is likely that each small community, probably centred round a particular disciple or apostle, had its own written record. It is known that there were many such records:

In these early days none were formally accepted or rejected. It was up to the leader of each Christian community to decide what books he would use. Depending on whom they had been taught by, each sect went to a different source. Those who followed Barnabas's example went to one source, those who followed Paul to another. <sup>20</sup>

When the immediate followers of Jesus began to die out, their successors were chosen by all members of the community. These leaders were chosen on the criterion that they were the men who could best guide the community because of the extent of their knowledge and fear of God. They

...could not possess, and would probably have rejected, the power and pomp which now encircles the tiara of the Roman pontiff, or the mitre of a German prelate. <sup>21</sup>

They were the servants of the servants of God. However with the passage of time this position often became the goal of those who wanted power. The presbyters and bishops, as the leaders came to be called, often became involved in politics, especially after the institution of the synods. The hierarchy of the priesthood, an institution entirely foreign to the teaching of Jesus, began to emerge.

The Romans did not view the emergence of the 'Early Church' very favourably. They attempted to uphold the worship of their gods. In the first three centuries after the disappearance of Jesus they probably did not always distinguish between the Nazarenes and the Paulinian Christians. The term 'Christian' was used to describe both those who followed Jesus and those who believed in Christ. If a man said he believed in God and refused to pay homage to the Roman gods, that was sufficient to establish his guilt. He was liable to imprisonment, confiscation of his goods, and often death. Gibbon remarks on the irregular conduct of their persecutors:

...who contrary to every principle of judicial proceeding, admitted the use of torture in order to obtain, not a confession, but a denial, of the crime which was the object of their inquiry. <sup>22</sup>

The early persecution of the 'Christians' culminated in the edict passed by Diocletian and Galenius in 303. It was the last and final attempt to abolish 'Christianity' in whatever form it had taken. Churches were confiscated, gospels burnt, and all 'Christians' were placed outside the protection of the law. They could be persecuted, but they could not defend themselves. When the edict was first nailed to the door of a church it was torn down by a Christian who was promptly but slowly roasted alive. The persecution was directed mainly at those who were recognizably followers of Jesus. For by this time the Paulinian Christians, not distinguishable by the outward observance of a guidance they refused to follow, were beginning to permeate the whole structure of the Empire:

...in the reign of Diocletian, the palace, the

courts of justice, and even the army, concealed a multitude of Christians, who endeavoured to reconcile the interests of the present with those of a future life. <sup>23</sup>

Paul's religion, which had initially not been favourably received, became popular after the destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem in 70, and after the savage repression of the Barkowkaba rebellion of the Jews in 132. Paul's followers were not persecuted in the same ruthless manner which the followers of Moses and Jesus suffered. As has been seen it was also found to be far more palatable to the people who were not Jewish by birth. In Gibbon's words:

When numerous and and opulent societies were established in the great cities of the empire, in Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome, the reverence which Jerusalem had inspired to all the Christian colonies insensibly diminished...the Nazarenes, who had laid the foundations of the church, soon found themselves overwhelmed by the increasing multitudes that from all the various religions of polytheism enlisted under the banner of Christ; and the Gentiles who, with the approbation of their peculiar apostle, had rejected...the Mosaic ceremonies, at length refused to their more scrupulous brethren the same toleration which at first they had humbly solicited for their own practice. <sup>24</sup>

Thus quite soon after Jesus had left the earth there was a definite and widening divergence between the people who followed him and the people who followed Paul. Differences between the two were not only evident in life-style and belief, but were also delineated geographically. Whilst Paul's version of Christianity spread through Greece and then Europe, the followers of Jesus and their followers spread with their knowledge to the East and to the South, and eventually right

across North Africa. Their teachings also spread to the North and were eventually adopted by the Goths.

As the Pauline church became more established it grew increasingly hostile to the followers of Jesus. It became a matter of doubt and controversy whether a man who sincerely acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, but who still continued to observe the law of Moses, could possibly hope for salvation. The Nazarenes and their successors, rejected by the Jews as apostates, were denounced as heretics by the Paulinian Christians. The Paulinian Christians thus separated themselves from the followers of Moses and Jesus:

They aligned themselves more and more with the rulers of the Roman Empire, and the persecution which, to begin with, had been directed to all who called themselves Christians now began to fall mainly on those who affirmed the Divine Unity.<sup>25</sup>

The Paulinian Christians had compromised the guidance of Jesus to such an extent that they no longer posed a threat to the structure of authority into which they were being assimilated.

It is clear that terms such as 'the early Christians' and 'the early Church' are inadequate. They have traditionally been used to disguise the fact that there was once not one body, but two: a body of people called the Nazarenes who believed in Jesus and followed Jesus, as well as the body of people called the Christians who believed in Christ and followed Paul. The institution which arose out of Paul's teachings can be conveniently referred to as the 'Official' Church, in order to distinguish this body from those who continued to follow the original teachings and example of Jesus.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER I

- (1) *Jesus Prophet of Islam.*
- (2) *The Gospel of Barnabas.*
- (3) *The Gospel of Barnabas.*
- (4) Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of Christianity*, p. 274.
- (5) St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 19.23.
- (6) Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, II, p. 9.
- (7) Le Clerc, *The Apostolic Fathers*, p. 84.
- (8) Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, II, p. 12.
- (9) *Ibid*, IV, p. 418.
- (10) *Ibid*, IV.
- (11) *Ibid*, VI, p. 10.
- (12) *Ibid*, VI, p. 55.
- (13) *Ibid*, VI, p. 10.
- (14) *Jesus Prophet of Islam.*
- (15) Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, II, p. 119.
- (16) *Ibid*, II, p. 120.
- (17) *Ibid*.
- (18) *Ibid*, II, p. 216.
- (19) *Jesus Prophet of Islam.*
- (20) *Ibid*.
- (21) Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, II, p. 159.
- (22) *Ibid*, II, p. 216.
- (23) *Ibid*, II, p. 188.
- (24) *Ibid*, II, p. 119.
- (25) *Jesus, Prophet of Islam.*

## CHAPTER II

## THE DONATISTS AND THE ARIANS

When Constantine became Emperor he realised that it was impossible to eradicate Christianity, in whatever form, from the Roman Empire. Rather than let it divide the Empire he therefore attempted to use Christianity as a means of unifying it. He hoped to make the altars of the Official Church a convenient footstool to the throne of the Empire. As Gibbon makes clear:

The throne of the emperors would be established on a fixed and permanent basis, if all their subjects embracing the Christian doctrine should learn to suffer and obey. <sup>1</sup>

Constantine therefore embarked on a policy of integrating the religion of the Official Church with the old Roman state religion. He did not publicly accept or reject either one of them in favour of the other. He patronized both. His actions seem to indicate that his toleration of the Church was based on political expediency and that he desired to maintain his position as emperor, and not to become a Christian.

Constantine began his policy of integration by repealing all the laws of Galenus and Diocletian. In 313, he and Licinius, his brother-in-law who commanded the eastern half of the Empire, issued the edict of Milan:

The two emperors proclaim to the world that they have granted a free and absolute power to the Christians, and to all others, of following the religion which each individual thinks proper, to which he has addicted his mind, and which he may deem the best adapted to his own use. <sup>2</sup>

Whilst tolerating the official church, Constantine continued to patronise his ancestral religion. He liberally restored and enriched the temples of the Roman gods. He increased

the council of Olympus by the apotheosis of his father Constantius. The coins and medals of the Empire were impressed with the figures and attributes of Jupiter and Apollo, of Mars and Hercules. He was considered by many of his subjects to be the representative if not the manifestation of the Roman sun-god on earth:

...the devotion of Constantine was more peculiarly directed to the genius of the Sun, the Apollo of Greek and Roman mythology; and he was pleased to be represented with the symbols of the god of light and poetry...The sun was universally celebrated as the invincible guide and protector of Constantine. <sup>3</sup>

Constantine united the Sabbath of the official church with the day of worship of the sun-god. Jesus had celebrated the Sabbath on Saturday, but due to Constantine's persuasion it was moved forward a day to Sunday. In 321, he

...artfully balanced the hopes and fears of his subjects, by publishing in the same year two edicts: the first of which enjoined the solemn observance of Sunday, (Constantine styles the Lord's day '*dies solis*', a name which could not offend the ears of his pagan subjects), and the second directed the regular consultation of auspices. <sup>3</sup>

Constantine took full advantage of the fact that the symbol adopted by the official church, the cross, was the same as that of the Roman sun-god. This symbol signified something different to each of his subjects, depending on whether they were pagan or 'Christian', but it was acceptable to both of these parties:

He eventually erected in the midst of Rome his own statue, bearing a cross in its right hand; with an inscription which referred to the victory of his arms, and the deliverance of



Rome, to the virtue of that salutary...The same symbol appeared on the arms of the soldiers of Constantine; the cross glittered on their helmets, was engraved on their shields, was interwoven into their banners...But the principal standard which displayed the triumph of the cross was styled the Labarum...It is described as a long pike intersected by a transversal beam. The silken veil which hung down from the beam, was curiously enwrought with the images of the reigning monarch and his children. The summit of the pike supported a crown of gold, which enclosed the mysterious monogram, at once expressive of the figure of the cross, and the initial letters of the name of Christ. <sup>4</sup>

Thus the style of dress worn by the 'Crusaders' who came nine centuries later, and the symbol which adorns so many Christian altars today, have their origin in the political manoeuvres of a pagan emperor.

Constantine made full use of the Official church in maintaining discipline in his army. The authority of the bishops was used to ratify the obligation of the military oath. Deserters faced the added threat of excommunication. The regular correspondence which connected the bishops of the most distant provinces enabled them to provide Constantine with useful intelligence work.

Constantine encouraged his subjects to become Christians, promising them not poverty, but wealth:

The salvation of the common people was purchased at an easy rate, if it be true, that, in one year, 12,000 men were baptised at Rome, besides a proportionable number of women and children; and that a white garment, with twenty pieces of gold, had been promised by the emperor to every convert...<sup>5</sup>

However, Constantine made sure that the Official Church

remained entirely subservient to the Emperor:

The irresistible power of the Roman emperors was displayed in the important, and dangerous change, of the national religion...It was long since established as a fundamental maxim of the Roman constitution, that every rank of citizens were alike subject to the laws, and that the care of religion was the right as well as the duty of the civil magistrate...The emperors still continued to exercise a supreme jurisdiction over the ecclesiastical order. <sup>6</sup>

However Constantine ensured that its members were kept comfortable:

The whole body of the Catholic clergy, more numerous perhaps than the legions, was exempted by the emperors from all service, private or public, all municipal offices, and all personal taxes and contributions, which pressed on their fellow-citizens with intolerable weight; and the duties of their holy profession were accepted as a full discharge of their obligations to the republic...Eight years after the Edict of Milan, Constantine granted to all his subjects the free and universal permission of bequeathing their fortunes to the Holy Catholic Church...<sup>7</sup>

Constantine gave generous gifts to the leaders of the Official Church and their communities. As they grew in number and popularity he began to discourage the worship of the Roman gods until he finally proclaimed to the world:

...that neither his person nor his image should evermore be seen within the walls of an idolatrous temple; while he distributed through the provinces a variety of medals and pictures, which represented the emperor in an humble

and suppliant posture of Christian devotion.<sup>8</sup>

Constantine's policy of adopting the religion of the Official Church as the new state religion was not achieved without a struggle. He may not have been aware of the distinction between the Nazarene Church and the Official Church when he commenced his policy of integration. However the Nazarene Church's refusal to co-operate with him soon made the difference apparent. He therefore attempted to unify the early church by encouraging the Nazarene Church to merge with the Official Church. This approach did not always meet with success.

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The different positions adopted by the two churches and Constantine's attitude towards them are clearly indicated by the events which took place in North Africa during Constantine's reign. Here the members of the Nazarene church were firm. They refused to accept the validity of the Official Church whose centre was now Rome and not Jerusalem. The people of Carthage had a long history of war with Rome. That Rome should be regarded as the new holy centre was therefore repugnant to them, especially since the change had come about through political expediency.

The Unitarians in North Africa had persistently refused to worship the Roman gods and follow the Roman Emperors. They had also refused to make the compromises which the Official Church had made. The conflict both with the Roman rulers and the Official Church came to a head with the election of a Unitarian priest called Donatus. He was chosen as bishop of Carthage in 313, the same year as the edict of Milan, and he soon had about three hundred bishops under him, including one bishop in Rome.

The leader of the Official Church in Rome tried to have Donatus replaced by one of his own bishops, named Caecilian:

The prestige of Constantine was such that in the conflict which ensued, both parties

appealed to him...the patronage of Constantine brought with it a very important change in the history of Christianity. For the first time it had become possible for schism and unorthodoxy to become an offence punishable by secular law. This secular coat of armour stood at the disposal of whoever could prove himself to be orthodox, and could then be used against those who differed from this new standard of orthodoxy.<sup>9</sup>

Constantine supported the official bishop, Caecilian. He tried to persuade the Donatists to do likewise, but they refused. He issued a decree which condemned Donatus and drew their attention to "the advantage of worshipping the Supreme Deity in the proper manner."<sup>10</sup> Two tribunals met to decide the affair and give both parties a 'fair hearing'. However the members of the tribunals were all from the Official Church, and their decisions were predictably unacceptable to the Donatists. All attempts to unite the two churches having failed, Constantine decided to persuade the Donatists by force. The Roman army was called into action in the name of Christ and the Church.

The Donatists could not believe that the Romans, who had persecuted them for so long, had suddenly become Christians overnight. The pagan army began a fearful massacre of the Donatists. Bishops were murdered in their churches and dead bodies were thrown into the wells. The generous provisions of the Edict of Milan only applied to those who did as the Emperor wished. The extensive literature of the Donatists was so systematically destroyed that very little of it survives today. In this way a pattern for the treatment of 'heretics', which has been followed for centuries, was set.

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The same struggle between the Official Church and the Unitarians also took place in Alexandria, an important centre of Christianity. The leader of the Unitarians was a Libyan priest called Arius. He refused to accept the doctrine of the Trinity

for which he could find no support in the Scriptures. He declared that Jesus' prophethood which raised him in degree above other men was solely due to the will of God, but that he was essentially as human as any other man created by God:

If Jesus was in reality the 'Son of God' he argued, then it followed that the father must have existed before the son. Therefore there must have been a time when the son did not exist. Therefore it followed that the son was a creature composed of an essence or being which had not always existed. Since God is in Essence Eternal and Ever-existent, Jesus could not be of the same essence as God...Since Jesus was created by God, his being was finite and so he could not possess the attribute of Eternity. Only God is Eternal. Since Jesus was a creature he was subject to change like all other rational creatures. Only God is unchanging. Thus he asserted that Jesus was not God.<sup>11</sup>

Arius's views were not welcomed by Alexander and Athanasius - the leaders of the Official Church in Alexandria. They did their best to defame Arius and his followers, who, in accordance with the established practice, were condemned as 'heretics'. The whole city was divided over this issue, and when Constantine heard that fighting had broken out in the streets, he was compelled to act.

Constantine's experience with the Donatists had shown him that the use of force to achieve 'religious unity' was not successful, since the 'conversion' thus achieved was not very reliable. He therefore tried to exert his influence in a more amicable manner and wrote a long letter to both Alexander and Arius, in which he stressed 'religious unity', but without any reference to using Jesus as a guide:

If we cannot all think alike on all topics we can at least be united on great essentials. As far as regards the Divine Providence let there

be one faith and one understanding, one united opinion in reference to God.

The letter concludes:

Restore me then my quiet days and untroubled nights that I may retain my joy, the gladness of peaceful life. Else I must groan and be defused wholly in tears, and no comfort of mind till I die. For while the people of God, my fellow servants, are thus torn asunder in unlawful and pernicious controversy, how can I be tranquil of mind?<sup>12</sup>

Constantine's letter had no effect, and he therefore called a meeting in 325 of all the bishops in order to decide the question once and for all. This gathering, which Constantine presided over, is known today as the Council of Nicaea. It resulted in the official acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity as the true doctrine of 'orthodox Christianity'. The Nicene Creed was composed and written down. It had the following anathema appended as a direct rejection of Arius's teaching:

But as for those who say, 'There was when he was not', and, 'Before being born he was not', and that he came into existence out of nothing, or who assert that the Son of God is of a different hypostasis or substance, or is created, or is subject to alteration or change - these the Catholic Church anathematizes.<sup>13</sup>

The Official Church had finally achieved the Emperor's public recognition and approval. Its religion was the state religion. The consequences of the Council were far-reaching. They were in complete contradiction to the sentiments expressed in the Edict of Milan, which Constantine had proclaimed twelve years earlier. The four gospels, none of them eye-witness accounts, which the Official Church had adopted as their official scriptures, were given official status. All other accounts of the life and teaching of Jesus, many of them eye-witness

accounts written by the first Nazarenes, were banned. They were either destroyed or made Apocrypha, that is hidden from the general public. Up until the Council of Nicaea there were at least three hundred different gospels.

After the Council it became a capital offence to possess an unauthorized Gospel. As a result about one and a half million Unitarians were killed in the years following the Council's decisions. The fact that no early manuscript of any gospel written before 325 exists today, indicates that even the four gospels accepted by the Official Church are not the ones which were originally written. Alterations, deletions, and additions have been made, and the originals destroyed to disguise this fact:

The Gospels, scattered and spasmodic and late, are already celebrating the Christ of faith, and celebrating Him for their own time, and with the assumption that the last days were about to begin. It follows, therefore, that any dramatisation of the life of Jesus which uses the narrative form of the New Testament is already a mire of its own making if it tries to turn Christ back into the hidden Jesus. Every boast about 'authenticity' is a sign of confusion...' <sup>14</sup>

The Council of Nicaea, instead of bridging the gulf between the Christian sects, widened it, and it resulted, writes Gibbon, in "a spirit of discord and inconstancy, which, in the course of a few years, erected eighteen different models of religion." <sup>15</sup>

The Arians, as in the case of the Nazarenes, the Ebionites and the Donatists, were labelled as 'heretics'. Their affirmation of the Divine Unity led to their persecution. Arius himself was poisoned and died in Constantinople in 336.

Ironically, Constantine died affirming the faith of the Unitarians, having been baptised two years before his death in 337 by Eusebius of Nicomedeia, an Arian bishop. His son and successor, Constantius, was also an Arian, and for a while the Arians in the Eastern half of the Roman Empire had breathing

space.

In 360 Constantius called the famous Council of Rimini. It was attended by a much larger gathering than the Council of Nicaea, since it was composed of above four hundred bishops of Italy, Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain and Illyricum. The majority of the bishops were from the Official Church. However, a creed drawn up by the Arian bishops which stated that the 'son' was not equal or consubstantial to the father, was agreed to by the assembly. It was on this occasion that, according to Jerome, the world was surprised to find itself Arian. This creed was ratified in the Council of Seleucia. However, when the Official bishops realized what they had done, they withdrew their support and reaffirmed the creed of the Council of Nicaea and the doctrine of the Trinity.

The Official Church continued to become more established, especially in Rome, and finally found unqualified imperial favour during the rule of Theodosius:

If Constantine had the advantage of erecting the standard of the cross, the emulation of his successor assumed the merit of subduing the Arian 'heresy'. Theodosius was the first of the emperors baptized in the...faith of the Trinity. Although he was born of a Christian family...the practice of the age encouraged him to delay the ceremony of his initiation, till he was admonished of the danger of delay, by the serious illness which threatened his life, towards the end of the first year of his reign.<sup>16</sup>

On being baptised in 380, Theodosius issued a solemn edict, which proclaimed his own faith, and prescribed the religion for his subjects:

It is our pleasure that all the nations, which are governed by our clemency and moderation, should steadfastly adhere to the religion which was taught by St. Peter to the Romans; which faithful tradition had preserved, and which is now professed by the pontiff of Dam-

ascus, and by Peter, bishop of Alexandria, a man of apostolic holiness. According to the discipline of the apostles, and the doctrine of the gospel, let us believe the sole deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; under an equal majesty, and a pious Trinity. We authorize the followers of this doctrine to assume the title of Catholic Christians; and as we judge, that all others are extravagant madmen, we brand them with the infamous name of heretics; and declare, that their conventicles shall no longer usurp the respectable appellation of churches. Besides the condemnation of Divine justice, they must expect to suffer the severe penalties, which our authority, guided by heavenly wisdom, shall think proper to inflict upon them. <sup>17</sup>

Shortly after this edict Theodosius called the famous Council of Constantinople in 381. A hundred and fifty bishops:

proceeded without much difficulty or delay, to complete the theological system which had been established by the Council of Nicaea. The vehement disputes of the fourth century had been chiefly employed on the nature of the Son of God; and the various opinions, which were embraced concerning the Second, were extended and transferred, by a natural analogy, to a Third person of the Trinity... final and unanimous sentence was pronounced to ratify the equal Deity of the Holy Ghost. <sup>18</sup>

It had taken nearly four centuries for a doctrine which Jesus had never preached had come to be accepted in his name, and finally established as 'the truth'.

In the reign of Constantine, the Official Church, or the Roman Catholic Church as it was now known, had been clearly subservient to the Emperor. In the reign of Theodosius it

began to exert its influence over the Emperor:

The decrees of the Council of Constantinople had ascertained the 'true' standard of the faith; and the ecclesiastics, who governed the conscience of Theodosius, suggested the most effectual methods of persecution. In the space of fifteen years, he promulgated at least fifteen severe edicts against the 'heretics'; more especially against those who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity... <sup>19</sup>

These edicts form the foundation, and are the origin of all the laws which the Roman Catholic Church subsequently promulgated in its attempts to eliminate all beliefs, especially affirmation of the Divine Unity, other than its own.

The edicts expressed in the language of declamation and invective were far-reaching and strictly enforced. Any law which the 'heretics' might attempt to use as a defence was automatically considered invalid. Edicts were directed against the leaders, the places of worship, and the persons of the 'heretics'.

Their leaders were refused the privileges and payments which were so liberally granted to the leaders of the Official Church. Instead they faced the heavy penalties of exile and confiscation of property for preaching and practising their faith. They also had to pay the impossible fine of ten pounds of gold. By eliminating the leaders it was hoped that their followers would be compelled by ignorance and hunger to return within the pale of the Catholic Church.

The rigorous prohibition of the use of their places of worship was extended to every possible circumstance in which the 'heretics' might assemble to worship their Lord. Their gatherings, whether public or secret, by day or by night, in cities or in the country, were equally proscribed. The buildings and the land which they had used for worship were confiscated.

All the followers of the 'heretical' leaders were left to the mercy of the general public. The anathema of the Official Church was complemented by the condemnation of the

supreme magistrate. Thus a man could commit any outrage against a 'heretic' with impunity from the law. They were thus ostracized from society and excluded from all but menial work. Since they were not permitted to make a will or receive any benefit from a dead person's will, they soon lost what little property they had.

All citizens of the Empire were encouraged to participate in the elimination of the 'heretics', who were put to death if they persisted in their faith. A special group of people were organized to facilitate the execution of the edicts and to deal with accusations and complaints against the 'heretics':

Every Roman might exercise the right of public accusation, but the office of the 'Inquisitor of the Faith', a name so deservedly abhorred, was first instituted under the reign of Theodosius.<sup>20</sup>

Thus the origins of all the 'Inquisitions' which were instigated by the Roman Catholic Church and which culminated in the notorious Spanish Inquisition are derived not from the teachings of Jesus, but from the dictates of a 'holy' Roman Emperor.

Some of the first people to die on account of the edicts of Theodosius lived in Spain. Belief in the Divine Unity had spread to Spain through the Goths from the North of Europe and through travellers from the North of Africa. The Unitarian bishop of Avila was called Priscillian. In accordance with the edicts of Theodosius, he and six others were tortured, condemned and executed in 385 by the sentence of the Praetorian Prefect. Two bishops were also sent into exile to the Isles of Scilly. As is always the case in the persecution of 'heretics', Priscillian and his followers were accused of the most foul and degrading acts of self-gratification:

But an accurate, or rather a candid inquiry, will discover, that if the Priscillianists violated the laws of nature, it was not by the licentiousness, but by the austerity of their lives. They absolutely condemned the use of the

marriage-bed; and the peace of families was often disturbed by indiscreet separations. They enjoined, or recommended, a total abstinence from all animal food; and their continual prayers, fasts and vigils, inculcated a rule of strict and perfect devotion.<sup>21</sup>

The manner in which the trial of Priscillian took place was clumsy and the duplicity between the leaders of the Official Church and the officials of the Roman Empire was patently obvious. The Praetor had received an appeal and pronounced sentence in a matter of faith, while the bishops had exercised the function of accusers in a criminal prosecution. With the passage of time this duplicity was made more respectable:

Since the death of Priscillian, the rude attempts of persecution have been refined and methodised in the Holy Office, which assigns their distinct parts to the ecclesiastical and secular powers. The devoted victim is regularly delivered by the priest to the magistrate, and by the magistrate to the executioner; and the inexorable sentence of the Church which declares the spiritual guilt of the offender, is expressed in the mild language of pity and intercession.<sup>22</sup>

It was during the reign of Theodosius that the Roman Catholic Church finally established its authority over the office of emperor. In using the religion of the Official Church to unify his empire, Constantine had assured that its leaders remained subservient to him, and he had retained control over them. Once the hierarchy of the priesthood was established in the land, however, it began to exert more influence over the common people. The army, which the Emperors in the past had used to assert their authority, was now largely composed of 'Christians'. Their allegiance was now divided between the priests and the Emperor. In order to retain their popular support, the Emperors after Constantine found it increasingly necessary to seek the support of the priesthood.

As the priesthood grew aware of the power they wielded over the people, they were only prepared to support the Emperor if he did as they wished.

In the reign of Theodosius, it was Ambrose, the Trinitarian archbishop of Milan, who won the support of the common people. He exerted his influence over Theodosius to a degree which Constantine would never have countenanced or envisaged. The advisers of Theodosius were all followers of Ambrose, and even the Emperor's most secret counsels were immediately communicated to the archbishop. Since he too was a 'Christian', however, and under the illusion that he could only attain to God by the means and with the help of the priesthood, Theodosius felt compelled to accept this state of affairs.

The degree of Ambrose's influence over Theodosius is clear from their respective actions in the following incidents. In the first a Unitarian church and a Jewish synagogue were burnt down in Callinicum, a small town in Persia, by some Trinitarian monks. They were told by the Roman magistrate to either rebuild these places of worship or else provide the money to do so. Theodosius ratified this decision. Ambrose told Theodosius that the magistrate's decision should be annulled since the monks had only destroyed "a mere synagogue, the haunt of infidels, the home of the impious, the hiding place of madmen, which was under the damnation of God Himself." <sup>23</sup>

As this private warning did not produce an immediate effect, the archbishop publicly addressed the Emperor from his pulpit, and refused to continue the service until he had obtained from Theodosius a solemn promise which secured the impunity of the bishop and the monks of Callinicum.

In the second incident, some of the inhabitants of Thessalonica murdered a Roman general. Acting under the orders of Theodosius, the inhabitants of the city were invited to the public games. Once they had gathered in the amphitheatre they were butchered by the Roman army. When Ambrose heard of this, he ordered the Emperor to do penance. Theodosius refrained from going to communion for several months and then mourned his action. Finally he made his way to the church:

He was stopped in the porch by the archbishop, who in the tone and language of an ambassador of heaven, declared to his sovereign that private contrition was not sufficient to atone for a public fault, or to appease the justice of the offended deity. <sup>24</sup>

Ambrose, who in the innovation established by the Official Church, had assumed the power to absolve wrong-actions, demanded a rigorous penance from the Emperor. The usual penance fixed by the Roman Catholic Church for homicide was excommunication for twenty years. If this had been applied to Theodosius, who was responsible for the deaths of several hundred people, it would have been impossible to fulfil the penance before he died. Ambrose made a concession and shortened the period of excommunication to eight months, and:

it was sufficient that the Emperor of the Romans, stripped of the ensigns of royalty, should appear in a mournful and suppliant posture; and that, in the midst of the church of Milan, he should humbly solicit, with sighs and tears, the pardon of his sins. <sup>25</sup>

Such was the utility and efficacy of the innovation of 'confession'. It was a practice which Jesus never followed, and a means of persuasion which the Official Church made full use of to exert its influence in the land.

By the end of the reign of Theodosius, the Roman Catholic Church had all the resources of the Roman Empire at its command to establish its doctrines and to eliminate any other beliefs. It had grown so powerful that many people mistakenly equated the magnitude of its influence with the degree of its authenticity. Its origins had become lost in the past. It was a long time since Jesus had lived on earth. The history of the split between the Nazarenes and the followers of Paul had been conveniently covered over. Few people doubted the fallacious claims of power, wielded under divine authority,

made by the Roman Catholic Church. Anyone who did, or who attempted to live as Jesus had lived and affirmed the Divine Unity as he had affirmed it, was removed by an institution which was hand in glove with the rulers of the Roman Empire.

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With the passage of time the Emperor became even more subservient to the Roman Catholic Church. The coronation of the Emperor became a religious ceremony. He was admitted into the lower orders of the priesthood and was made to anathematize all 'heresy' raising itself against the Holy Catholic Church. In handing him the ring, the Pope told him it was a symbol of his duty to destroy heresy. In girding him with the sword, he was reminded that with this he was to strike down the enemies of the Official Church.

With the eventual collapse of the Roman Empire in the West, the Pope's influence became so great that it was he who decided who should be the next Emperor of the Catholic Empire:

The Vatican and Lateran were an arsenal and manufacture which, according to the occasion, have produced or concealed a various collection of false or genuine, of corrupt or suspicious acts, as they tended to promote the interest of the Roman Church. Before the end of the 8th century, some apostolical scribe, perhaps the notorious Isidore, composed the decretals and the donation of Constantine, the two magic pillars of the spiritual and temporal monarchy of the popes. This memorable donation was introduced to the world by an epistle of Hadrian I, who exhorts Charlemagne to imitate the liberality and revive the name of the great Constantine. <sup>26</sup>

By means of this forgery:

The sovereignty of Rome no longer depended on the choice of a fickle people; and the successors of St. Peter and Constantine were invested with the purple and the prerogatives of the Caesars. So deep was the ignorance and credulity of the times, that the most absurd of fables was received, with equal reverence in Greece and in France, and is still enrolled among the decrees of the canon law. <sup>27</sup>

Thus the office of the Pope completely superseded that of the Roman Emperor. Once this transfer had been effected, the Pope was free to choose an official Christian figurehead who would retain the title of a Roman Emperor, but remain the servant of the Church. The Pope's choice of Charlemagne coincided with the ambition of Charlemagne himself, and when he was summoned to Rome he came eagerly:

On the festival of Christmas, the last year of the eighth century, Charlemagne appeared in the Church of St. Peter; and, to gratify the vanity of Rome, he had exchanged the simple dress of his country for the habit of a patrician. After the celebration of the holy mysteries, Leo suddenly placed a precious crown on his head, and the dome resounded with the acclamations of the people. 'Long life and victory to Charles, the most pious Augustus, crowned by God the great and pacific emperor of the Romans!' The head and body of Charlemagne were consecrated by the royal unction: after the example of the Caesars he was saluted or adored by the pontiff; his coronation oath represents a promise to maintain the faith and privileges of the church; and the first fruits were paid in his rich offerings to the shrine of the apostle. <sup>28</sup>

This trend of the increasing influence of the Church is evident from the contents of the Bull '*Unam Sanctum*' which was



issued by Pope Boniface VIII on the 18th November 1302. It was the result of his confrontation with Philip IV of France. If it is compared with the edict of Theodosius, the reversal of roles performed by Emperor and Church in the two documents is very marked. The Bull declared that there was one Holy Catholic Church outside which there was neither salvation nor remission of sins. It asserted that the temporal sword and the spiritual sword were alike committed to the service of the Church. The spiritual sword was in the hands of the clergy, whilst the temporal sword was delegated to the secular authority on the understanding that it was to be wielded on behalf of the Church and under its direction. Since what was spiritual was greater than what was temporal, the temporal power was to be subject to the spiritual power, which was itself subject only to the judgment of God. Since it claimed the authority of the spiritual power had been divinely granted to St Peter and his successors, to oppose it was to oppose the law of God Himself.

The forgery of the decretals, through which it is alleged that the spiritual monarchy of the world belongs to the popes of the Official Church, was not discovered until the sixteenth century. By this time the Church was so well established that even the discovery that its claims to authority were entirely fallacious could not shake the obedience of the minds it influenced. Similarly it retained the land allegedly donated by Constantine, 'the fatal gift of Constantine' as Dante calls it, on which the Vatican was built and continued its business.

The popes themselves have indulged a smile at the credulity of the vulgar, but a false and obsolete title still sanctifies their reign; and, by the same fortune which has attended the decretals and the Sybylline oracles; the edifice has subsisted after the foundations have been undermined. <sup>29</sup>

This then is the story of how the Roman Catholic 'Official' Church originated and how its beliefs and policies first arose. Neither it, nor its doctrines were instituted or preached by the prophet Jesus. Yet in the name of God and Jesus the Church reached a point where it not only considered itself able to

define who a follower of Jesus was, but also felt itself obliged to eliminate all those who did not fall within this definition, especially those who affirmed Divine Unity.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER II

- (1) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, II, p. 454.
- (2) Ibid, II, p. 450.
- (3) Ibid, II, p. 448.
- (4) Ibid, II, p. 447.
- (5) Ibid, II, p. 458.
- (6) Ibid, II, p. 473.
- (7) Ibid, II, p. 475.
- (8) Ibid, II, p. 481.
- (9) Ibid, II, p. 469.
- (10) *Jesus Prophet of Islam*.
- (11) Ibid.
- (12) Ibid.
- (13) Ibid.
- (14) Ibid.
- (15) D. Potter, *Sunday Times Weekly Review*, 10th April 1977, p.1.
- (15) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, III, p. 23.
- (16) Ibid, III, p. 399.
- (17) Ibid, III, p. 400.
- (18) Ibid, III, p. 408.
- (19) Ibid, III, p. 412.
- (20) Ibid, III, p. 413.
- (21) Ibid, III, p. 415.
- (22) Ibid, III, p. 415.
- (23) T. Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, p. 440.
- (24) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, III, p. 440.
- (25) Ibid, III, p. 440.
- (26) Ibid, VI, p. 206.
- (27) Ibid, VI, p. 207.
- (28) Ibid, VI, p. 216.
- (29) Ibid, VI, p. 208.

## CHAPTER III

## THE VISIGOTHS

Despite the attempts of the Roman Catholic Church to crush Unitarianism in North Africa and the East, the chain of transmission of the original teaching from Jesus through his followers and their followers remained unbroken. It was by virtue of this transmission that belief in the Divine Unity was embraced by the Goths. Through them it spread right across southern Europe, at the same time as the Official Church was becoming firmly established in Rome. The Goths have been much maligned because of this. The majority of historians have done their best to hide the fact that once the Goths became Arians their culture flourished. Instead they have been depicted as savage and unruly barbarians from their beginning to their end.

In spite of the diverse theories of their origin it appears now to be an accepted fact that the Goths originally came from the North of Europe. In about 180 BC they moved southwards from the area around the Baltic Sea to the mouth of the Vistula, looking for fertile land and a warmer climate. By 240 BC, the Goths had settled in the south of Russia on both banks of the River Volga. From being shepherds they now became farmers. They formed into two distinct tribes. The Goths on the eastern bank became known as the Ostro-goths. Those on the western bank were called Visigoths. In the centuries which followed their numbers greatly increased. The Visigoths spread to the west and to the south. In the middle of the third century AD they made three great naval excursions to the south. In the third expedition they ravaged Nicaea and Nicomedia, destroyed the temple of Diana at Ephesus and sacked Athens. This coincided with the furious plague which, from 250 to 265 BC raged throughout every province, every city and almost every family of the Roman Empire.

In 269 AD the Visigoths moved en masse towards Italy. They were met and defeated by Claudius, who was surprised to find that the army had travelled with their entire families and possessions. It appears that they had intended to settle in Italy. There were further clashes between the Visigoths and

the Romans during the rule of Aurelianus, the successor of Claudius. However, both sides were considerably weakened by the recent fighting and the plague. A treaty beneficial to both of them was agreed on, intermarriage between the Goths and the Romans was encouraged and peace was established. The most important condition of peace was understood rather than expressed in the treaty. Aurelianus withdrew the Roman forces from Dacia, and tacitly relinquished that great province to the Goths and the Vandals, who were another of the great tribes of southern Europe at that time.

For fifty years there was peace. Then in 322 AD there was again fighting between the Romans and the Goths. Constantine outmanoeuvred them and another treaty was signed. This treaty was ratified ten years later in 332 by Constantine, that is, five years before his death, and at a time when he had begun to support Arius and his followers. A specified area of land was acknowledged as theirs, and they received an annual subsidy on the understanding that they would keep their peace with the Emperor.

\*                      \*                      \*

It is not clear whether the Goths came into contact with Unitarianism before appearance of the man called Ulfilas. Their encounters with Greece and the borders of Italy must have provided them with some opportunity of doing so. Certainly it was during the lifetime of Ulfilas that Unitarianism became firmly established amongst the Visigoths and Ostrogoths, both in their affirmation of the Divine Unity, and in the way they lived. It is because of this fact that the Official Christian historians have so derided and denounced not only the Goths but also the other tribes of Europe who followed their example:

The Ostrogoths, the Burgundians, the Suevi, and the Vandals, who had listened to the eloquence of the Latin clergy, preferred the more intelligible lessons of their domestic teachers, and Arianism was adopted as the national faith of the warlike converts, who were seated

on the ruins of the Western Empire. This irreconcilable difference of religion was a perpetual source of jealousy and hatred; and the reproach of 'barbarian' was embittered by the more odious epithet of 'heretic'.<sup>1</sup>

Ulfilas, a leader of the Visigoths, came to Constantinople shortly after the death of Constantine, who was baptised in the last years of his life by Eusebius of Nicomedia, and died in the Arian faith. Constantius, his son and successor, was also an Arian. Although Rome in the West had become the centre of the Ostrogoths, Constantinople in the East was at this stage inhabited largely by Arians.

Whilst Ulfilas was in Constantinople he met Eusebius of Nicomedia who was the supporter of Arius, baptiser of Constantine, and adviser of Constantius. Eusebius was one of the greatest leaders of the Arians. He taught Ulfilas all he knew. Ulfilas was only thirty years old when Eusebius made him a bishop in 341. Ulfilas returned to his people and it is not without reason that the Emperor Constantius called him 'the Moses of our day'.

For the next forty years Ulfilas spread light amongst the Goths. He brought a new way of life to them. He was the means by which they experienced a new spiritual awakening.

The majority of the Visigoths and Ostrogoths embraced the faith of Arius. This new way of life eventually spread to many of the other Teutonic tribes of Southern Europe, especially during the rule of Hermanric, King of the Ostrogoths, who by 370 had unified the different tribes of Europe by conquering them all.

Up until this time, the tribes of Europe had relied entirely on an oral tradition. Ulfilas invented an alphabet for the Gothic language and then translated the Septuagint, namely the Old Testament, and also one of the early gospels from the original Greek. From the outset he was violently opposed by the Official Church whenever he came into contact with its adherents. The fundamental reason was because he was a Unitarian. Furthermore these translations of the Scriptures which he made available to all his followers were not in keeping with the policy of the Roman Church. It discouraged

translation of the gospels into any language, and its own official gospels were only made accessible to the official priesthood. Since the gospel translated by Ulfilas was not one of the four approved gospels, he was hated all the more. A gulf, as wide as the one between the Nazarenes and the Christians, existed between the followers of Ulfilas and the members of the Official Church.

In the following three centuries, the Church did its best to eliminate Arianism in the south of Europe in the same manner as it had dealt with the Donatists and the Arians in North Africa. As the history of the Arian Goths demonstrates, they did not reciprocate this behaviour.

Notwithstanding these provocations, the Catholics of Gaul, Spain and Italy, enjoyed, under the reign of the Arians, the free and peaceful exercise of their religion. <sup>2</sup>

In about 375, the first wave of marauding Huns who came from the East broke on the Goths. Ulfilas asked the Emperor Valens, who was also an Arian, if the Visigoths could enter the Roman Empire. The Emperor granted them permission to do so under certain conditions and promised them every help in settling down in their new home. One of the conditions imposed by the Emperor was that only Goths who were Arians were to be allowed to settle within the boundaries of the Eastern Empire. They were also told to surrender their arms. Ulfilas crossed the Danube at the head of about two hundred thousand Visigoths.

The officers who were sent to receive the Goths were corrupt and dishonest. They began to pick out the young women and boys to gratify their lust. They robbed the refugees of almost all that they possessed. Instead of seeing to their basic needs the officers took advantage of them. They sold at a great price to the refugees first of all beef and mutton, and then, as supplies grew scarce, the flesh of dogs, diseased meat and filthy offal. When their money and possessions were exhausted, some Goths were driven to sell their wives and children. This picture of sensuality, greed and brutality is drawn not from Gothic sources, but from Roman historians. <sup>3</sup>

This tyranny continued through the winter of 376 and 377, and still the Visigoths refused to break their promise to be peaceful citizens of the Empire. However, the time came when the patience of the Visigoths was exhausted. They attacked the small unit of the Roman army which was guarding them and easily overpowered them. They not only regained their women and children and possessions, but also all that the Romans possessed.

After this initial success they began to roam the countryside in search of food without any let or hindrance. They helped themselves to whatever they could lay their hands on. Their movement soon took on the shape of a triumphal march, and they began to proceed towards Constantinople. When Valens heard of this he assembled his army and marched towards the approaching Visigoths. They met near Adrianople. Here a battle was fought in 378. The Visigoths won a decisive victory and about two-thirds of the Roman army was destroyed. Valens was wounded and died on the field of battle. He was succeeded by Theodosius, whose edicts were eventually the means by which the Arian Goths were eliminated. Thus, ironically, by killing an Arian emperor, the Visigoths helped to create the situation which ultimately led to their total destruction.

Theodosius did not openly attack such a large body of people who had already decimated the Roman army in the East. He signed a treaty with them and it was agreed that they should settle in Thrace. This they did, as if they were holding the land of their birth. Theodosius also promised an annual subsidy to them, provided they remained peaceful. Having concluded his treaty with the Goths, Theodosius marched to Constantinople where he summoned Damophilus, the Arian leader, and:

...offered that Arian prelate the hard alternative of subscribing to the Nicene creed, or of instantly resigning, to the orthodox believers, the use and possession of the episcopal palace, the Cathedral of St. Sophia, and all the churches of Constantinople. <sup>4</sup>

Damophilus refused to do either and was immediately exiled.

Theodosius then arranged the election of Gregory of Nazianzus as the new Trinitarian bishop of Constantinople. He had to have an armed guard to protect him from the angry Arians in his triumphal procession through the streets of Constantinople:

He beheld the innumerable multitude of either sex, and of every age, who crowded the streets, the windows and the roofs of the houses; he heard the tumultuous voice of rage, grief, astonishment and despair...About six weeks afterward, Theodosius declared his resolution of expelling from all the churches of his dominions, the bishops and their clergy, who should obstinately refuse to believe, or at least to profess, the doctrine of the Council of Nicaea. His lieutenant Sapor was armed with the ample powers of a general law, a special commission, and a military force. <sup>5</sup>

Only the official version of what subsequently took place exists today. Suffice it to say that the Arian influence in Constantinople was destroyed. The Cathedral of St Sophia was handed over to the Official Christians and the Arian places of worship were closed or converted into Official Churches.

Once the Official Church was established in Constantinople, Theodosius began the business of establishing it wherever there were Arians. The rigour of his decrees, beginning with his edict of 380, and their effects in the Western half of the Empire have already been discussed. Their consequences in the Eastern half of the Roman Empire were just as far-reaching.

It was inevitable that there should be a confrontation between Ulfilas and his followers on one hand, and the combined forces of the Official Church and the Roman Emperor on the other. Many of the bishops who had professed to be followers of Arius declared themselves to be followers of Athanasius now that Theodosius was emperor. Their beliefs

were founded more on politics than conviction. If the Emperor was an Arian their synods would declare that Unitarianism was orthodox Christianity. If the Emperor opted for Trinitarianism, then the very same bishops would declare that the faith of the Emperor was orthodox Christianity:

Religion was the pretence; but...ambition was the genuine motive of episcopal warfare. <sup>6</sup>

Ulfilas was not a party to these politics. He had been made a bishop when the faith of Arius was accepted as orthodox Christianity and when Athanasius had been denounced as a dangerous heretic. With the change on the imperial throne, Ulfilas refused to change his way of life, even though the followers of Athanasius were now in imperial favour. Despite the fact that many of the bishops who had supported Arius during the rule of Constantius and Valens had now renounced him, Ulfilas maintained the courage of his convictions. The beliefs and actions of Ulfilas and his followers were governed not by fear of the Emperor, but by fear of God.

Ulfilas challenged the doctrines of the Official Church with the boldness and conviction of Arius. The technical term which the Church had borrowed from Plato to establish the idea of consubstantiality within their doctrine of the Trinity, '*homousien*', was condemned by Ulfilas as 'detestable and abominable'. He pointed out that it was nowhere mentioned in any of the gospels and declared that:

...it should be spurned and trampled on as an invention of the devil and the teaching of daemons. <sup>7</sup>

Ulfilas and his followers never hesitated to affirm their faith in, and to worship, the One and only true God. He is, they said, Eternal, Incorruptible, Alone, Unbegotten, without beginning and without end. He cannot be associated with any form. He is Single and Unchangeable.

Jesus, they said, could not be equated with God. Jesus was not eternal. Jesus was a creature like any other man. He had been exalted among men by the design and will of God,

and not by virtue of his essence.

They denied the 'divinity' of the Holy Spirit. Ulfilas described it as an illuminating and satisfying power neither God nor Lord but helper of Jesus, subject to him as Jesus is subject and obedient in all things to God.

When the Cathedral of St Sophia and the churches of the Arians in Constantinople were taken over by the Official Church, Ulfilas declared that this was an act not of a Christian but of the Anti-Christ. The members of the Official Church, he said, were:

...not worshippers of God, but without God,  
not leaders but misleaders. <sup>8</sup>

He firmly believed that only those who followed the original teaching and example of Jesus could call themselves Christians. All other conventicles were not churches of God, but synagogues of Satan.

Ulfilas was undeterred by the harsh edict of Theodosius in 380. He challenged the authenticity of the Official Church and the authority of Theodosius to pass such laws. He said that if they had any confidence in their faith and actions, they should be willing to meet him in a public disputation. Theodosius supported this idea, and in 381 he summoned Ulfilas and his followers to Constantinople. However on their arrival, Theodosius was persuaded by the Church to issue a decree cancelling the proposed council. The decree provided that neither privately at home nor publicly, nor in any place whatsoever should any disputation concerning the faith be held.

Shortly after this Ulfilas mysteriously died while he was in Constantinople. The resemblance between the death of Ulfilas and that of Arius, who had died forty-five years earlier, is very marked. The death of Arius had been acclaimed as a miracle by the Church, but on closer examination had turned out to be a case of poisoning.

The following confession of faith was recorded at Ulfilas's deathbed:

I, Ulfilas, Bishop and Confessor, have ever

thus believed and in this the only true faith do I make this testament to my Lord. I believe that there is only one God the Father, Alone, Unbegotten and Invisible. <sup>9</sup>

In 1840 a manuscript written by Auxentius, Bishop of Milan and disciple of Ulfilas, was found. He describes Ulfilas as:

A man who I am not competent to praise according to his merit, yet altogether keep silent I dare not. One to whom I, most of all men, am a debtor even as he bestows more labour upon me. For from my earliest years he received me from my parents to be his disciple, taught me the sacred writings, manifested to see the truth, and through the tender mercy of God and the grace of Christ, brought me up both physically and spiritually as his son in the faith.

Ulfilas, he continues, was:

...of most upright conversation...a teacher of poetry and a preacher of truth. <sup>10</sup>

Once Ulfilas was out of the way, Theodosius began the systematic conversion of the Visigoths. He commenced by calling the famous Council of Constantinople, which has already been referred to, in 381. It was this council which gave the Holy Ghost official status as the third member of the Official Christians' conception of the Trinity, and ratified this doctrine as being orthodox Christianity. Gibbon describes the bishops of Theodosius who came to this decision which has so affected the world in the centuries which followed, in following words:

The sober evidence of history will not allow much weight to the personal authority of the fathers of Constantinople. In an age, when the

ecclesiastics had scandalously degenerated from the model of apostolical purity, the most worthless and corrupt were always the most eager to frequent, and disturb, the episcopal assemblies. The conflict and fermentation of so many opposite interests and tempers inflamed the passions of the bishops: and their ruling passions were, the love of gold, and the love of dispute. Many of the same prelates, who now applauded the orthodox piety of Theodosius, had repeatedly changed with prudent flexibility, their creeds and opinions; and in the various revolutions of the church and state, the religion of their sovereign was the ruler of their obsequious faith...The clamorous majority...could be compared only to wasps or magpies, to a flight of cranes, or to a flock of geese. <sup>11</sup>

Gibbon adds that this picture comes not from any 'obstinate heretic', but from the Trinitarian bishop, Gregory of Nazianzus.

The official religion was now clearly established in Constantinople, and in the following years the decrees of Theodosius were relentlessly put into practice in the surrounding countryside. In 382, only four years after the defeat and death of Valens, the general capitulation of the Visigoths in Thrace to the religion of Theodosius was well under way. Those who accepted Trinitarianism were allowed to stay. They were given an annual subsidy to keep them happy. Those Visigoths who resisted the decrees were pushed further and further northwards in the following years. In 395, the same year as the death of Theodosius, they were finally expelled from Thrace.

During this time a systematic destruction of all the books written in the Gothic language was carried out. Virtually none remain today. After six centuries had passed the manuscript of a Gothic bible was found in the monastery of Werden near Cologne. It was written in the alphabet invented by Ulfilas. By the end of the sixteenth century the manuscript had found

it way either by purchase or robbery to Prague. In 1648 it was removed from there into the hands of Isaac Vosseus. It was in his hands when it was published in 1655 by Francis Jeuneus. It was then discovered that of the original three hundred and eighteen pages in the manuscript, only one hundred and eighteen pages remained. One can only guess what happened to the missing two hundred pages. The remains of the manuscript are at present housed in the University of Upsala. The manuscript is inscribed in silver and gold letters upon a parchment of rich purple. The beauty of the craftsmanship and the importance of the text, which is written in a language which has otherwise perished, provide a solitary reminder of a people who once flourished and now are gone. It is regarded as one of the most important treasures of the world. In 1817 Cardinal Mai discovered some more pages of a gospel written in Gothic, but their contents have not been revealed.

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The effects of Theodosius's persecution of the Visigoths not only rebounded on the Emperor but also helped to spread the faith of Arius further west. After the death of Theodosius in 395, his successor Arcadius stopped the subsidy which was being paid to the Visigoths who remained in Thrace. This caused the Visigoths to unite, and with the emergence of their new leader Alaric (370 - 410), they revolted and formed an independent kingdom. It spread from Thrace to Argos and from Athens to Sirmium.

Alaric moved west and down into Italy. In 401 he defeated the Roman Catholic army and conquered Rome. St Augustine says that Rome did not suffer so severely in the days that followed its capture as it did under the eventual return of the Roman Catholic army. Far from following the conduct of the Official Christians, the Visigoths spared so many senators that it was only a matter of surprise that they slew some. Alaric gave orders that no building was to be burnt down, and the the right of asylum was granted to all the Catholic churches. St Augustine says that contrary to the usual customs of war this order was honourably observed. In all the scenes of terror and confusion, and despite all the

opportunities of cruelty and rapine, lives were spared, women's honour was respected, and Catholic nuns were conducted by the Visigothic soldiers to a place of safety.<sup>12</sup>

After Alaric's death in 410, his kingdom did not survive more than eighty years. Without a strong leader to unite them, the Visigoths gave way before the renewed attacks of the Roman Catholic army. However it was this very counter-attack by the Official Catholic Church which once again helped to establish the faith of Arius in another land: the Visigoths spread further west into Gaul and eventually into Spain.

After the death of Wallia, Theodoric, son of Alaric, ruled western Gaul for thirty-two years between 419 and 451. He gave his two daughters in marriage to the kings of the Suevi and the Vandals, the two tribes who occupied Spain during his reign. Towards the end of Theodoric's reign in Gaul, Attila the Hun commenced his famous invasion of Europe. It was said of Attila that the grass never grew on the spot where his horse had trod. The Huns led by him swept through Persia between 430 and 440. They reached the borders of the Eastern Roman Empire in 441. Their presence there and the threat of invasion caused the Romans to make generous treaties with Attila. The treaty of 446 included the payment of heavy taxes to the Huns in the form of food and wealth. These taxes were promptly paid by the Romans to appease the threatening hordes of Huns. When the embassy of Maximin came before Attila in 448, they could only reply in the negative when he arrogantly asked:

what fortress, what city, in the wide extent of the Roman Empire, can hope to exist, secure and impregnable, if it is our pleasure that it should be erased from the earth?<sup>13</sup>

The treaties made by the Romans, however, secured the safety of Constantinople and Rome. When Attila decided to move, he marched from Hungary to Western Gaul in 451. His forces, already swelled by some of the Ostrogoths, were joined by those of the Franks. Faced by a common enemy, Theodoric, son of Alaric, combined with the forces of Italy

who were led by Aëtius, and they marched on Attila who was besieging Orléans. Attila turned to meet them, and the two armies clashed in the famous battle of Châlons. Both sides lost many men. It is said that between 162,000 and 300,000 men were killed. Theodoric, son of Alaric, was killed in the battle and his son Torismund became king of the western Visigoths.

The survivors of the battle withdrew. Aëtius returned to Italy. Attila regrouped his forces. In 452 he invaded Italy. He reduced Aquileia to dust and captured Milan. The Italian refugees fled to the empty area of little islands and waterways on the north-eastern coast of Italy. They began to build what is now Venice. Attila was persuaded not to attack Rome. He was given Hororia, a Roman princess, as a wife. He died on the night of his wedding, due to excessive drinking in 453:

An artery had suddenly burst; and as Attila lay in a supine posture, he was suffocated by a torrent of blood, which instead of finding a passage through the nostrils, regurgitated into the lungs and stomach.<sup>14</sup>

The timely death of Attila left Italy in even greater confusion, and allowed the Arian Visigoths in western Gaul to continue their expansion unmolested. Torismund was succeeded by another king called Theodoric, and he ruled in Toulouse from 453 to 466. He kept to the teachings which Ulfilas had first spread among the Visigoths. His first church service was before daybreak. He ate with temperance. During his reign the first incursion of the Visigoths into Spain was made.

\* \* \*

The state of Spain prior to the arrival of the Visigoths closely resembled the situation which existed prior to the arrival of the Muslims two centuries later. In the fourth century Spain was burdened with a corrupt and decaying feudal system. The Official Church had some influence there, having been established to some degree by virtue of the edicts of Theodosius. However, many of the Roman officials who gov-



erned the country would have nothing to do with this institution, preferring their own idols. Possession of the land was in the hands of the Roman aristocracy. These lords possessed large estates, lived for pleasure and tyrannised the multitude of impoverished citizens who were their serfs and slaves:

"Once upon a time," writes Seneca, "it was proposed in the Senate that slaves should wear a distinctive dress. The motion however could not be carried for fear that our slaves might take to counting us." <sup>15</sup>

The administrative work in this society was performed by the middle class, known as the burgesses. The Roman taxes fell mainly on them. The point was reached where they no longer considered their function profitable. Many of them fled into the forests, and with other serfs and slaves they formed marauding robber bands. These bands grew so large that in the reign of Diocletian, the Caesar had to undertake a large military operation against them. By the reign of Constantine the north of Spain was rotten with debauchery and lawlessness.

When the Vandals and the Suevi swept down into Spain at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth centuries, they met with no organised resistance. Both tribes had come into contact with the teachings of Ulfilas, but the Vandals were far more closely related to the Visigoths, and had embraced Unitarianism as a result. The Suevi were far more warlike, and it appears from their subsequent behaviour in Spain that they preferred their idols.

The Vandals did not remain in Spain for very long, but passed through it and over to North Africa where they united with the remaining Donatists and Arians who had survived the persecution of Theodosius. Through them Unitarianism was established in North Africa once more.

The Suevi remained in Spain. The numerous robber bands joined them and increased their strength. They plundered at will, and many people were forced to seek refuge in the Visigothic kingdom in the south of France. A contemporary writer described the conditions in Spain:

The poor are pillaged, the widows mourn, the orphans are trampled underfoot so much so that many of them flee to the enemy seeking I suppose Roman humanity amongst the 'barbarians', when they could no longer bear the barbarous inhumanity among the Romans. So in spite of the difference of worship and habits they pass over to the Goths.<sup>16</sup>

This condition of chaos in Spain lasted until the Visigoths arrived. They crossed the Pyrenees and defeated the army of the Suevi in a bloody battle on the banks of the Orvigo in 456. Theodoric, king of the Visigoths in Gaul, then marched to Braga, the capital of the Suevis. There was hardly any fighting and the chastity of the women was respected, and inevitably there was a good deal of plundering.

The army of the Visigoths went as far as Merida before returning to Toulouse, where the peaceful rule of the Visigoths continued for another fifty years until the sudden invasion of the Trinitarian Clovis, King of the Franks, in 507.

Towards the end of Theodoric's reign the Visigoths again moved south into Spain. Between 462 and 472 many of them settled there. In the years that followed the Visigoths spread further into the heart of Spain, bringing their way of life with them. Dozy writes that they:

...believed all that their priests taught them; they were naturally religious. In danger, they looked for help from God alone. Before a battle their kings prayed in sack-cloth, an act at which a Roman general would have scoffed; and if they were victorious they recognized the hand of the Eternal in their triumph. Further, they honoured their clergy, and not merely their own Arian clergy but the Catholic priesthood as well. <sup>17</sup>

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER III

- (1) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, IV, p. 409.
- (2) *Ibid*, IV, p. 409.
- (3) E. Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, I, p. 256.
- (4) *Ibid*, III, p. 406.
- (5) *Ibid*.
- (6) *Ibid*, VI, p. 19.
- (7) C.A.A. Scott, *Ulfilas, Apostle of the Goths*, p. 113.
- (8) *Ibid*, p. 115.
- (9) *Ibid*, p. 121.
- (10) *Ibid*, p. 35.
- (11) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, III, p. 408.
- (12) *Ulfilas, Apostle of the Goths*, p. 167.
- (13) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, IV, p. 266.
- (14) *Ibid*, IV, p. 301.
- (15) R. Dozy, *Spanish Islam*, p. 23.
- (16) *Ulfilas, Apostle of the Goths*.
- (17) *Spanish Islam*, p. 223.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE VANDALS

It is necessary at this point to examine the continued persecution of the Donatists in North Africa and to discover in more detail how the Arian Vandals of Northern Europe came down through Spain, united with the Donatists and ruled North Africa virtually up until the spread of Islam to North Africa.

The persecution of the Donatists, which was commenced by Constantine, was continued by Theodosius and Honorius. The fifth title of the sixteenth book of the Theodosian Code exhibits a series of the imperial laws against the Donatists from the year 400 to the year 428. Of these the fifty-fourth law, promulgated by Honorius in 414, is the most severe and effectual.<sup>1</sup>

The persecution was both thorough and rigorous. Many of the Donatists preferred to die affirming the Divine Unity than to live in constriction and enforced silence. The principal targets of the persecutors were the leaders of the Donatists. Three hundred bishops and many thousands of lesser clergy were removed from their communities, stripped of their possessions and banished to the islands. If they attempted to return to Africa the penalty was death. Their numerous congregations, both in the cities and in the country, were deprived of their rights as citizens and were forbidden to worship God in their accustomed manner. A regular scale of fines, from ten to two hundred pounds of silver, was imposed on all who dared to attend a gathering of Unitarian worshippers. After a person had been fined five times his future punishment was referred to the discretion of the imperial court.

By these measures, which were warmly approved of by St Augustine, great numbers of Donatists were forced to profess, at least outwardly, the religion of the Official Church. Many, however, chose to fight to the last, and the country was filled with tumult and bloodshed.

Whilst this persecution was at its height in North Africa, the Vandals, who were Arians, and the Suevi, swept down into northern Spain. The Suevi remained in the north. The

Vandals, under the leadership of Gaiseric, continued to move south. They defeated the Roman army in a decisive battle in mid-Spain:

Salvian ascribes the victory of the Vandals to their superior piety. They fasted, they prayed, they carried a Bible in the front of the host, with the design, perhaps, of reproaching the perfidy and sacrilege of their enemies.<sup>2</sup>

In 428 Gaiseric conquered Seville and Cartagena, and the eyes of the Vandals gazed over the Straits of Gibraltar to Africa which, despite the unrest, was at that time very prosperous. The long and narrow tract of the African coast was filled with Roman developments. It was very fertile and well-cultivated. Although the large population retained a liberal proportion of the crops for themselves, the annual exportation, particularly of wheat, was so regular and fruitful that Africa deserved the name of the common granary of Rome and of mankind.

Gaiseric considered settling there, and on receiving offers of help from the Roman general Boniface who governed North Africa and who had recently accepted the faith of the Donatists, he resolved to do so. He was just about to make the crossing when he was informed that Hermanric, King of the Suevi, had attacked and ravaged the territories he was about to abandon. Gaiseric turned about, drove the Suevi back as far as Merida and into the River Anas, and calmly returned to the sea-shore, to embark his victorious troops. Gaiseric crossed over to Africa with all the Vandals and commenced the conquest of North Africa. He was welcomed by the Donatists:

Gaiseric, a Christian, but an enemy of the orthodox communion, showed himself to the Donatists as a powerful deliverer, from whom they might reasonably expect the repeal of the odious and oppressive edicts of the Roman emperors.<sup>3</sup>

Thus a century after the persecution of Arius and Donatus was first initiated by Constantine, their followers met and recognised each other, after their respective teachings, the same teaching, had circulated right across Europe on the one hand and North Africa on the other. The Donatists merged with the Arian Vandals and, writes Gibbon, they enjoyed an obscure peace of one hundred years at the end of which we may again trace them by the light of the imperial persecutions.<sup>4</sup>

The progress of the Vandals across North Africa was swift. Most official histories describe their conquest as bloody and tyrannical but, writes Gibbon, this destructive rage has perhaps been exaggerated by popular animosity, religious zeal and extravagant declamation. War, in its fairest form, involves hardship and pain. Plundering was inevitable, and where the Vandals found resistance, they seldom gave quarter. However, it is unlikely, as the official historians claim, that the Vandals destroyed the cities they intended to settle, and uprooted the olives and other fruit-trees which they depended on as a source of food. It is hardly credible that it was a usual stratagem to slaughter great numbers of their prisoners before the walls of a besieged city for the sole purpose of infecting the air and producing a pestilence, of which they themselves would have been the first victims.

The Vandals reached Hippo, which is two hundred miles west of Carthage, a few months after St Augustine had died there. His extensive writings were not destroyed by them despite the fact that he had always supported the persecution of the Arians and the Donatists, and was himself a Trinitarian. It is significant that St Augustine had no knowledge of Greek or Hebrew which, many people say, barred him from any true study of the gospels:

According to the judgment of the most impartial critics, the superficial learning of Augustine was confined to the Latin language; and his style, though sometimes animated by the eloquence of passion, is usually clouded by false and affected rhetoric. But he possessed a strong, capricious and argumenta-

tive mind; he boldly sounded the dark abyss of grace, predestination, free-will, and original sin; and the rigid system of Christianity, which he framed, or restored, has been entertained with public applause, and secret reluctance, by the Latin church. <sup>5</sup>

Gaiseric reached Carthage in 439. From there he ruled both North Africa and the Mediterranean. He even attacked Rome in 455. It is said that he promised to harm no-one and to respect people whatever their religion. However, his soldiers sacked and looted Rome for fourteen days before returning to Carthage. They left with many prisoners and all the treasures of Rome, including the spoils which had originally been taken from the Temple of Solomon in the sack of Jerusalem by the Romans. However it appears that the allegations of needless damage done to the city are unwarranted or at least exaggerated. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is of the opinion that there does not seem to be any justification for the charge of wilful and objectless destruction of public buildings, which is implied in the word 'vandalism'.

Gaiseric's rule was long and fierce, and he did not grant the Roman Catholics the usual freedom to practise their religion which was typical of the vast majority of Arian monarchs. However he did nothing more than what the Catholic Church had done when it was established in the land. There had been continuous persecution of the Donatists during the century prior to the arrival of the Vandals, and under such circumstances it is understandable that retaliation was almost inevitable. The most enlightened leaders of the Donatists, who would have been more prone to forgive and do as they would be done by, were long dead. Those who remained were understandably motivated by a desire for revenge.

During the early conquest of Africa by the Vandals, the Arian Visigoths in Europe remained aloof from Gaiseric's activities. When the Visigoths moved down into Spain in the second half of the fifth century, however, the Vandals in North Africa made an alliance with them. Some Visigoths eventually crossed the straits and settled in the areas of North Africa nearest Spain. However on the whole these two tribes

did not mix, although peace was kept between them.

In 477 Hunneric, the son of Gaiseric, became king. He continued to oppose the Catholic Church with violence, though it is not clear how violent he was, for only the 'official' histories written by his enemies survive today, and they are clearly exaggerated. They hold the view that to kill a Unitarian who is actively following a prophet of God is a necessary virtue, whilst any act of retaliation or self-defence by a Unitarian is regarded as an atrocious act of barbarism.

It would appear that Hunneric attempted to make peace with the Roman Emperor by saying that if the Unitarians throughout the Empire were given the same toleration and freedom of conscience as the Trinitarians then he in turn would allow the Roman Catholics in North Africa to practise their religion freely. When this attempt at reconciliation failed, he imposed all the laws by which the Official Church had persecuted the Donatists on the Official Christians themselves. Those who had formulated and enforced the laws of persecution were now subjected to them:

In the original law which is still extant, Hunneric expressly declares, and the declaration appears to be correct, that he had faithfully transcribed the regulations and penalties of the imperial edicts, against the heretical congregations, the clergy, and the people, who dissented from the established religion. If the rights of conscience had been understood, the Catholics must have condemned their past conduct, or acquiesced in their actual sufferings. But they still persisted to refuse the indulgence which they claimed. While they trembled under the lash of persecution, they praised the laudable severity of Hunneric himself, who burnt or banished great numbers of Manichaeans; and the disciples of Arius, and of Athanasius, should enjoy a reciprocal and similar toleration in the territories of the Romans, and in those of the Vandals. <sup>6</sup>

Huneric used exactly the same tactics which the Roman Church had so often employed against the Arians and the Donatists. The practice of a conference, which the Catholics had so frequently used to insult and punish the Unitarians, was used against themselves. At the command of Huneric, four hundred and sixty-six orthodox bishops assembled at Carthage. When they were admitted into the hall of audience they were dismayed to find that an Arian bishop was to preside over the council. There was a general uproar. Once the tumult had quietened down, the orthodox bishops were given the choice of accepting Unitarianism or facing the penalties which the Catholic Church had originally fixed for those who differed from the established religion. As a result one martyr and one confessor were selected among the Catholic bishops; twenty-eight escaped by flight, and eighty-eight by conformity; forty-six were sent to Corsica to cut timber for the royal navy; and three hundred and two were banished to the different parts of Africa after being deprived of all their possessions.

The laws of persecution were imposed on all who rejected Unitarianism. The Vandals adopted the practice of enforcing their form of baptism on the Trinitarians. Anyone who refused to undergo this baptism, which scandalously violated the freedom of the will, was punished in accordance with the laws of the Catholic Church, and the tortures which the Official Christians had used on the Donatists were now inflicted on themselves. Through the veil of fiction and declamation which pervades the official histories, it is evident that the Catholics, more especially under the reign of Huneric, endured the most cruel and ignominious treatment. Those who refused to worship in the Unitarian churches were threatened with exile or death, and Gibbon dramatically describes at least one example of the mass expulsion of a large number of Roman Catholics from the land which the Vandals had settled:

A venerable train of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, with a faithful crowd of four thousand and ninety-six persons, whose guilt is not precisely ascertained, were torn from their

native homes by the command of the Huneric...These unhappy exiles, when they reached the Moorish huts, might excite the compassion of a people, whose native humanity was neither improved by reason, nor corrupted by fanaticism: but if they escaped the dangers, they were condemned to share the distress of a savage life.<sup>7</sup>

Such actions, although an imitation of the methods of the Catholic Church, were outside the teachings of Arius and Donatus. No-one benefited from them, and they only led to fierce retaliation by the Trinitarians when the reconquest of Carthage by the Roman general Belisarius in 533 established the Official Church in Africa once more.

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It is significant that many of the more famous forgeries perpetrated by the Official Church were made during this extended period of persecution by the Vandals. The majority of the Vandals did not speak Latin, the language of the Roman Church, and therefore alterations to the text of the Latin bibles could be made with relative impunity. However those who were aware that further changes were being made to an already distorted message must have felt that their persecution of the Trinitarians was justified under the circumstances, and that the measures taken by them were made in an attempt to protect and maintain the purity of what remained of Jesus's teaching.

Despite this, the Christianity of today owes much of its plausibility to the forgeries executed by the Official Christians of this period. These include the compilation of the Athanasian Creed and the invention of I John 5.7:

...the orthodox theologians were tempted, by the assurance of impunity, to compose fictions, which must be stigmatized with the epithets of fraud and forgery. They ascribed their own polemical works to the most venerable

names of Christian antiquity; the characters of Athanasius and Augustine were awkwardly personated by Virgilius and his disciples; and the famous creed which so clearly expounds the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, is deduced, with strong probability, from this African School. Even the Scriptures themselves were profaned by their rash and sacrilegious hands. The memorable text, which asserts the unity of the THREE who bear witness in heaven, is condemned by the universal silence of the orthodox fathers, ancient versions, and authentic manuscripts. It was first alleged by the Catholic bishops whom Hunneric summoned to the conference of Carthage. (Or, more properly, by the four bishops who composed and published the profession of faith in the name of their brethren. They style this text, '*luce clarius*'. It is quoted soon afterward by the African polemic, Virgilius and Fulgentius.) An allegorical interpretation in the form, perhaps, of a marginal note, invaded the text of the Latin Bibles, which were renewed and corrected in a dark period of ten centuries. After the invention of printing, the editors of the Greek Testament yielded to their own prejudices, or to those of the times; and the pious fraud, which was embraced with equal zeal at Rome and at Geneva, has been infinitely multiplied in every country and every language of modern Europe. <sup>8</sup>

Gibbon concludes by saying:

The example of fraud must excite suspicion: and the specious miracles by which the African Catholics have defended the truth and justice of their cause, may be ascribed, with more reason, to their own industry, than to the

visible protection of Heaven. <sup>9</sup>

Hunneric was succeeded by Hilderic who became king in 523. He renewed the customary toleration of the Arians towards the Catholics. He issued an edict which restored two hundred official bishops to their churches, and allowed free profession of the Athanasian Creed. But the Catholics accepted with cold and transient gratitude a favour so inadequate to their pretensions, and Hilderic's tolerance was also criticised by the Vandals themselves. Some of their leaders insinuated that he had renounced their faith, and the soldiers more loudly complained that he had degenerated from the courage of his ancestors.

Hilderic's tolerance was his undoing. The Catholics, who were not content to live in peace because they wanted power, plotted his downfall. The army, supported by the Roman Catholics, revolted and a general named Gelimer seized power. He was eventually defeated by Belisarius in 533.

Belisarius had sailed from Constantinople under the orders of the Emperor Justinian. He disembarked his army at Tunis, and they then marched towards Carthage. It is said that he exhorted his army not to pillage and plunder, but to act humanely towards anyone who did not resist them. After a few days' march they met and defeated the Vandals outside Carthage. His victory was announced to the city on the eve of St Cyprian, when the churches were already adorned and illuminated for the festival of the martyr, whom three centuries of superstition had almost raised to a local deity. The Arians, conscious that their reign had expired, released their church to the Catholics who performed their rites, and loudly proclaimed the creed of Athanasius and Justinian.

It was inevitable, especially after the acts of retaliation committed by the Vandals, that persecution of the Arians should be recommenced by the Official Church, and once Belisarius had returned to Constantinople with Gelimer as his prisoner, this task was taken up in earnest. Indeed the reign of Justinian has been noted for its extensive persecution of those who refused to subscribe to the official religion:

The reign of Justinian was a uniform yet vari-

ous scene of persecution; and he appears to have surpassed his indolent predecessors, both in the contrivance of his laws and the rigour of their execution. The insufficient term of three months was assigned for the conversion or exile of all 'heretics'.<sup>10</sup>

Those who remained were killed. A bishop of the Official Church was given the title of 'Inquisitor of the Faith', the title first used by Theodosius and later adopted by the Mediaeval and Spanish inquisitions. It was his job to see that the elimination of 'heretics' was carried out efficiently and in a co-ordinated manner. Not only the Unitarians but also the Jews, the Samaritans and all the variegated minor Christian sects, especially in the eastern half of the Roman Empire, suffered under this fresh wave of persecution and thousands were slaughtered:

...in the creed of Justinian, the guilt of murder could not be applied to the slaughter of 'unbelievers'; and he piously laboured to establish with fire and sword the unity of the Christian faith.<sup>11</sup>

This extensive persecution again reduced the number of Unitarians in North Africa. The general population was further decimated by the plague which started by the Nile in 542. It spread to the East through Syria, Persia and the Indies, and to the West right across North Africa and into Europe. Despite all this, affirmation and worship of the Divine Unity was continued in North Africa by the followers of Arius:

When Islam came to them they embraced it, so well-prepared were they for what was after all an extension and re-affirmation of the guidance they had been following.<sup>12</sup>

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

- (1) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, IV, p. 224.
- (2) *Ibid*, IV, p. 220.
- (3) *Ibid*, IV, p. 224.
- (4) *Ibid*, IV, p. 225.
- (5) *Ibid*, IV, p. 228.
- (6) *Ibid*, IV, p. 412.
- (7) *Ibid*, IV, p. 414.
- (8) *Ibid*, IV, p. 417.
- (9) *Ibid*, IV, p. 419.
- (10) *Ibid*, VI, p. 45.
- (11) *Ibid*, VI, p. 48.
- (12) *Jesus Prophet of Islam*.

## CHAPTER V

### THE OSTROGOTHS

When the Visigoths spread West after the death of Alaric in 410, the Ostrogoths followed in their footsteps and eventually descended into Italy. Their leader was a man called Theodoric (454-526), son of Theodoric.

As a child Theodoric was possessed of unusual beauty with striking long yellow hair. When he was seven years old he was sent as a hostage to Constantinople. Here the handsome noble-spirited boy soon endeared himself to the Emperor Leo. He stayed in the imperial palace for ten years. When he was seventeen the Emperor returned him to his father with rich presents and good will. Scarcely had he returned home than the Roman governor of Bulgaria revolted against the Emperor. Theodoric immediately collected an army of 10,000 and attacked Belgrade. He defeated the rebellious governor before the Roman Emperor had time to send the Imperial Army to crush the revolt.

In 474, when Theodoric was twenty years old, King Theodoric died, and he became the new king of the Ostrogoths. In 484 he was elected as Roman Consul. By this time the Ostrogoths had multiplied to such an extent that the land around the Volga was not sufficient to supply their needs. It was becoming increasingly necessary to move elsewhere.

Meanwhile in Italy there was chaos. No enlightened leader had replaced Alaric. The invasion of Attila the Hun in 452, followed by his death in Milan in 453, had brought greater unrest to Italy. The leaderless army he left behind was left to its own devices. The subsequent plunder of Rome by Gaiseric the Vandal in 455 caused turmoil in the south of Italy. Restlessness was everywhere. The country was torn in civil strife, and plagued by the exploitation and greed of the nobles and the intrigues of the Roman Church. Having suffered a temporary set-back during the reign of Alaric, this institution was now busily continuing to gain control in the land. The transfer of power and wealth into the hands of the Pope became increasingly marked. The decrees of religious tolerance which Alaric had made were withdrawn by the leader of Rome

under the pressure of Pope Hilarius in 467.

The outward splendour of the papal court grew brighter as that of Caesar's waned. The revenue from the Official Church's domains increased and it became, writes Scott:

...a satire on the general poverty of the city. <sup>1</sup>

As the life of the citizens grew harder and poorer, the shrines of the Church's martyrs and saints grew with ever fresh splendour. Italy was full of unrest and discontent.

Out of the disorder a new leader named Odoacer emerged. He was a Gothic mercenary. He sent an embassy to Zeno, the Emperor of Constantinople, saying that Zeno should be the sole Emperor of the Roman Empire, and that he, Odoacer, would rule Italy. From this point the Western Empire had ceased to exist as such. Odoacer ruled from 476, and in Rome at least there was a degree of order:

Like the rest of the 'barbarians' he had been instructed in the 'Arian heresy'; but he revered the monastic and episcopal characters; and the silence of the Catholics attests the toleration which they enjoyed...Italy was protected by the arms of its conqueror; and its frontiers were respected by the 'barbarians' of Gaul and Germany. <sup>2</sup>

However, beyond Rome the country was not at peace. The Emperor Zeno in Constantinople regarded the crumbling Roman Empire with disquiet. To the north the Ostrogoths were becoming restless. To the west Italy was in turmoil. Whether as an act of wisdom or self-defence, he made Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, a patrician and entrusted him with the mission of restoring order to Italy.

Thus it was with full imperial approval that Theodoric began the long and difficult march to Italy in the autumn of 488. The journey was hard. They faced a march of 700 miles through the snows of winter. Theodoric marched at the head of 40,000 soldiers. Their wives and children and possessions followed them, drawn in wagons. They entered Italy in 489.



By 493 his conquest of Italy was complete. Odoacer was defeated and the Ostrogoths were distributed and settled all over Italy:

A firm though gentle discipline imposed the habits of modesty, obedience and temperance; and the Goths were instructed to spare the people, to revere the laws, to understand the duties of civil society, and to disclaim the barbarous licence of judicial combat and private revenge.<sup>3</sup>

To begin with, the other tribes in Europe viewed his conquest with disquiet. When it became clear, however, that he intended to establish peace and worship in the land, their alarm was changed to respect. They accepted his powerful mediation, which was uniformly employed for the best purposes of reconciling their quarrels and settling their differences. His domestic alliances, a wife, two daughters, a sister, and a niece, united the family of Theodoric with the kings of the Franks, the Burgundians, the Visigoths, the Vandals and the Thuringians; and contributed to maintain the harmony and balance of central Europe.

Theodoric's rule, which lasted until 526, was a time of great and generally diffused happiness for the people of Italy. The Pontine Marshes were drained, harbours were built and the burden of taxation was lightened. Italy's agriculture was so much improved that it ceased to import corn and began to export it. Such was the extraordinary plenty which an industrious people produced from a grateful soil that the merchants of the world were drawn to Italy. Their beneficial traffic was encouraged and protected by the liberal spirit of Theodoric, and travel throughout the provinces of Italy by land and water was restored and extended. The city gates were never shut either by day or by night; and the common saying, that a purse of gold might safely be left in the fields, indicates the peace which pervaded Italy at this time.

Theodoric was a firm believer in the Arian faith, and his rule was moulded by the practical application of the knowledge and the way of life which Ulfilas had first brought to the

Goths. His rule has been noted for his toleration of the Official Church and he showed the greatest consideration towards the Roman Catholics. He believed that:

We cannot impose a religion by command because no-one can be compelled to believe against his will.<sup>4</sup>

Gibbon writes that:

...he justly conceived himself to be the guardian of the public worship; and his external reverence for a superstition which he despised, may have nourished in his mind the salutary indifference of a statesman of philosopher. The Catholics of his dominions acknowledged, perhaps with reluctance, the peace of the church; their clergy, according to the decrees of rank or merit, were honourably entertained in the palace of Theodoric.<sup>5</sup>

Such was his reputation for justice, that Theodoric was even asked to arbitrate between rival candidates for the papacy, Symmachus and Laurence. His decision was accepted by both parties.

He also equally tolerated the practices of the Jews and defended them from malice and persecution. It is recorded that on one occasion he even enforced a general levy to compensate for the losses which some Jews had suffered in a riot. He was heavily criticized by the Official Church for doing this.

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There was therefore during the reign of Theodoric a unified and peaceful Europe which was predominantly Arian in faith. And it was during his reign that Hilderic, who became the leader of the Vandals in 523, restored the customary Arian toleration of the Official Church in North Africa.

The Arian Empire, however, was not safe from the

designs of the Official Church. As in the case of Hilderic, it actively worked towards the downfall of Theodoric in the breathing space afforded by his toleration of this institution. The Arians were attacked from the East and from the West and from within.

In 523 the Emperor Justinian issued his decree from Constantinople in which he exposed to persecution all who refused to accept the official religion throughout the Roman Empire. Theodoric sent Pope John to Constantinople to request Justinian to annul his savage edicts. He claimed for his distressed brothers in the East the same indulgence which he had so long granted to the Catholics of his domains in the West. As in the case of Hunneric, who had also attempted to persuade the Emperor to exercise religious toleration throughout the empire, the mission failed. Theodoric suspected that Pope John was guilty of double-dealing. He arrested him, and put him in prison where he died.

When news reached Theodoric of Justinian's continued persecution of the Arians in the East, Theodoric could not check his feelings of anger, resentment and the desire for revenge:

...a mandate was prepared in Italy, to prohibit, after a stated day, the exercise of the Catholic worship. By the bigotry of his subjects and enemies, the most tolerant of princes was driven to the brink of persecution. <sup>6</sup>

The mandate, however, was neither published nor implemented, but the ill-feeling remained.

Theodoric was not only troubled by the persecution of Justinian in the East, but also by dissension from within. Boethius, the philosopher-king of Rome and champion of the Roman Catholics, began to stir up trouble in the Senate. He talked freely of the 'liberation of Rome' and caused unrest. Theodoric eventually imprisoned him, and finally killed him and his sympathizer, Symmachus, in 524.

This action put remorse into his heart, and unrest amongst the Official Christians grew. The Roman Catholics, angered by the death of Pope John, Boethius and Symmachus,

renewed their efforts to be rid of the Arian ruler. The last two years of his reign were clouded by his own gloom and growing unrest in his kingdom.

Theodoric's policy of peaceful co-existence foundered because of the unrelenting opposition of the Catholic Church. His rule was never appreciated by the Catholics. Hodgkin writes that had Theodoric been a pagan, he would have been extolled, but because, in the eyes of the Official Church he was a 'heretic', his best efforts were accepted with sullen distrust. From them he earned nothing but misapprehension, dislike and hatred. At the close of a glorious life, the King of Italy discovered that he had excited the hatred of a people whose happiness he had so assiduously laboured to promote. Theodoric died, full of remorse, in 426. Gibbon, however, had only praise for Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths. He describes him as:

...a hero, alike excellent in the arts of war and of government, who restored an age of peace and prosperity, and whose name still excites and deserves the attention of mankind. <sup>7</sup>

After the death of Theodoric, there followed thirty years of chaos during which the Church finally re-asserted itself in Italy. In order to understand more clearly how this happened, it is necessary briefly to examine the life of Clovis, King of the Franks.

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The rule of Clovis coincided with that of Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths. Supported by the Official Church, he attacked the Arian empire from the west at the same time as Justinian's attacks came from the east.

The Franks had always remained aloof from Christianity in whatever form. It was they who had combined with Attila the Hun in his battle against the Arian Visigoths at Châlons in 452. During the reign of Clovis, however, which lasted from 481 to 511, the Franks were converted to trinitarian Catholicism.

Following the wishes and persuasion of his wife, Clotilda, Clovis became a Roman Catholic in 496 when he was thirty years old and was baptised in the cathedral of Rheims. A phial, the Sainte Ampoule, of 'holy' oil, which was always used for the coronation of the kings of France, was brought down from the ceiling of the cathedral by a white dove:

The new Constantine was immediately baptized, with three thousand of his warlike subjects: and their example was imitated by the remainder of the gentle barbarians who, in obedience, to the victorious prelate, adorned the cross which they had burnt, and burnt the idols which they had formerly adored. <sup>8</sup>

The Catholic Church was overjoyed with the conversion of such a powerful king, for:

On the memorable day, when Clovis ascended from the baptismal font, he alone, in the Christian world, deserved the name and prerogatives of a Catholic king...the 'barbarians' of Italy, Africa, Spain and Gaul were involved in the Arian 'heresy'. The eldest, or rather the only son, of the church, was acknowledged by the clergy as their lawful sovereign, or glorious deliverer; and the arms of Clovis were strenuously supported by the zeal and favour of the Catholic faction. <sup>9</sup>

Strengthened by the allegiance of this powerful king, the Official Church made large inroads into the Visigothic kingdom of southern France. The Visigoths there had enjoyed peace and prosperity for so long that they had neglected the arts of self-defence. They were unprepared for the sudden invasion which Clovis initiated in 507. He marched south with his army and overtook the fleeing Visigothic army forty miles outside Poitiers. He challenged the king of the Visigoths, another Alaric, to single combat, and killed him. The Gothic army was then routed and massacred.

Clovis then continued his victorious march south into Aquitaine, and in the following years the Arian Visigoths were driven further and further south. These successful inroads into the Arian Empire were yet another source of concern to Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, during his reign in Italy. He had worked hard to unite Europe, and this source of disruption was indubitably one of the major reasons for the gloom in which he ended his reign.

The reconquest of France by the Catholic Church was completed with the final conquest of Burgundy by the Franks in 532, led by the sons of Clovis.

Once the Church had re-established itself in France, it began to extend its activities to the east and the south, towards Italy and towards Spain. The Franks, under the auspices of the Church invaded Italy in 538, and destroyed Milan in 539. Their movement coincided with that of Belisarius, the famous general of the Emperor Justinian.

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Belisarius had conquered Carthage, the capital of the Donatists and the Arian Vandals, in 533, the same time that the conquest of Visigothic Gaul was completed by the sons of Clovis. Having re-established the Official Church in Carthage, and having quelled all resistance from the Vandals, Belisarius left some of his army in Carthage and returned to Constantinople. There he handed over Gelimer, the leader of the Vandals to the Emperor Justinian.

Although Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, had been dead for seven years, the Ostrogoths were still powerful in Italy and there was every chance that they would try and retake Carthage. Having committed himself to conquering North Africa, Justinian was bound to also conquer Sicily and Italy. This decision was supported by the insistence of the Catholic Church and his own hatred of anyone who denied the Trinity. The army of Belisarius was re-equipped and enlarged, and it set sail for Sicily in 536.

As in the case of Alaric, King of the Visigoths, in Italy, so in the case of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, no new leader of any worth emerged after his death. When Belisarius

landed in Sicily he met with little organized resistance, and he soon continued his journey to Naples. He took the city of Naples in 537, and many people were killed. However, it appears that Belisarius was not only an outstanding general, but also a humane one. He did, as in his conquest of Carthage, attempt to moderate the calamities which he foresaw as being the inevitable companions of a victorious army, saying:

The gold and silver, are the just rewards of your valour. But spare the inhabitants, they are Christians, they are suppliants, they are now your fellow-subjects. Restore the children to their parents, the wives to their husbands; and shew them, by your generosity, of what friends they have obstinately deprived themselves.<sup>10</sup>

Having wiped out any resistance in Naples he marched on Rome. Theodatus, the new king of the Ostrogoths, capitulated without a fight. He acknowledged Justinian as Emperor and abdicated. Vitiges, a general of the Gothic army, retreated with his men to Ravenna where he prepared for war. Belisarius walked into Rome without a struggle.

In the spring of 537, Vitiges laid siege to Rome, but without success. Belisarius resisted the siege and was sent reinforcements by Justinian. After a year and nine months, the siege was abandoned by the Goths in March 538, and they retreated to Ravenna. They had lost a third of their army, and as they withdrew Belisarius attacked, inflicting even greater losses.

In 539, the same year that the Franks destroyed Milan, Belisarius captured Ravenna and took Vitiges prisoner. He was asked by Justinian to return to Constantinople with the booty, which he did, taking Vitiges with him.

Thus by the end of 539, only thirteen years after the end of Theodoric's famous reign, the Official Christian armies had virtually reconquered Italy. Under the orders of the Emperor Justinian all the Arian churches were handed over to the Catholics, and under his edicts all those who refused to

accept trinitarianism were killed or exiled.

This did not take place without a struggle. In the absence of Belisarius, Rome was retaken by the Goths. He was recalled, and retook the capital in 547. He left, and the Goths again took Rome in 549. Narses was sent from Constantinople to reconquer Italy, which he did, retaking Rome in 563. From this time on, the Official Church gained in strength, and all traces of the Arian Goths in Italy were systematically removed. The last group of Arians to survive, in the very north of Italy, were the Lombards. They were 'converted' to the official religion in about 600.

The survivors of the Ostrogoths were pushed westwards and, following the path of the Visigoths, they sought refuge in Spain. After the conquests of Clovis and his sons in France, and of Belisarius and his successors in Italy, Spain was the last remaining stronghold of the Arian Goths.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER V

- (1) C.A.A. Scott, *Ulfilas, Apostle of the Goths*, p. 135.
- (2) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, IV, p. 378.
- (3) *Ibid*, V, p. 15.
- (4) *Ulfilas, Apostle of the Goths*, p. 169.
- (5) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, V, p. 26.
- (6) *Ibid*, V, p. 31.
- (7) *Ibid*, IV, p. 380.
- (8) *Ibid*, IV, p. 438.
- (9) *Ibid*, IV, p. 439.
- (10) *Ibid*, V, p. 162.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE GOTHS IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

The Arians flourished in the Iberian peninsula during the fifth and sixth centuries AD, and their rule was marked by its toleration of the Official Church. This toleration of other Christians by those who affirmed the Divine Unity was a way of behaviour which characterized the Unitarians whenever they were established in the land. Conversely the intolerance of the Official Church always characterized its behaviour towards anyone who differed from its version of religion, especially the Unitarians. As with Alaric and Theodoric in Italy, so with the Arians in Iberia the Catholic Church was not content to be tolerated and left alone. As its history shows, its aims were directed towards achieving power on earth.

The toleration extended by the Goths to the Catholics allowed them to organise and subvert the Arians from within while the successful Catholic armies of France began to make inroads into the north of Iberia from without. The situation was almost an exact blueprint of that which was to occur towards the end of the Muslims' stay in Andalus six hundred years later. Indeed the story of the Arian Goths in Iberia, from beginning to end, is virtually the same story as that of the Muslims in Andalus. The following account of the demise of the Arian Goths is a short one, because records scarcely exist. However, the account of the Muslims' demise in Andalusia is more fully documented. It will outline the nature of this recurrent pattern more clearly, and demonstrate the mechanics of the Trinitarian persecution of Unitarians in Iberia in greater detail.

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In Iberia as in Italy the Official Church did not rest until the Arians had either been eliminated or absorbed into the structure of the Roman Catholic Church. The advances of the Catholics from the north diminished the territories which the Arians inhabited and ruled, whilst from within Catholics gradually insinuated their ways into the life-style of the rulers. As soon as the rulers began to wander from the guidance they had been fol-

lowing, the unity of the Arian community was breached, and divided against itself. This sealed the end of the Arian Goths' peaceful rule in Iberia.

The last Arian king to rule Spain was Leovigild. His son, Hermenegild, accepted Roman Catholicism and, with his eyes on the crown, rebelled against his father. The Suevi in the north of Spain had also recently accepted Roman Catholicism. Hermenegild united them with the invading army of the Franks, and between 577 and 584 they did battle with Leovigild. Hermenegild was eventually heavily defeated and compelled to surrender. His father allowed him to continue practising the Roman Catholic religion. Hermenegild abused this toleration and continued to plot against his father. Leovigild therefore had his son executed.

Leovigild's other son and successor was called Recared. Not wishing to share Hermenegild's fate, he waited until his father had died. Once he had been made king, he began his policy of making Roman Catholicism the official religion of Iberia and there was a wave of persecution of the Arians between 586 and 589. He publicly recognised the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church as being the 'orthodox' religion in 587 and Roman Catholicism was officially approved of as the state religion in the third Council of Toledo in 589.

As in the case of the Emperor Constantine, Recared's acceptance of the Catholic Church appears to have been based more on political expediency than any firm conviction as to the truth of its doctrines. "To recover sovereignty over a kingdom undivided," writes Castro, "was well worth renouncing the dogma of the non-divinity of Christ." <sup>1</sup>

Recared's opening words in the Council of Toledo made it apparent that he considered himself the saviour of Iberia and of the Catholic Church. His manner is strongly reminiscent of the first decree of Theodosius:

I do not believe that it is unknown to you that my object in calling you before the presence of Our Serenity is the re-establishment of the form of ecclesiastic discipline...God (whom it has pleased to remove the obstacle of 'heresy' by means of us) has admonished us that we should

restore the ecclesiastic custom. May you be filled with joy and gladness to know that through the providence of God the Canonical Custom has returned to the paternal precinct to our glory. <sup>2</sup>

Recared spoke as if he were doing a great favour to God and the Catholic Church. However it appears from his speech that his motives, if anything, were selfish, and it is clear that he had chosen this course of action:

...so that in the future our glory may shine, honoured by the testimony of the Catholic Church.<sup>3</sup>

Recared clearly regarded the religion of the Official Church as a means to further his ambitions. Throughout his speech the Catholic faith was only mentioned as a custom, ecclesiastical law, and liturgy, but not as a way of life:

Whoever reads the minutes of the famous Council without any preconceptions will get the impression that political interest, reasons of state, take precedence over religious sentiments and worries about the future life. <sup>4</sup>

All that was necessary as far as Recared was concerned was to change a few words:

Instead of saying, as had been the practice among the Visigoths, 'Gloria Patri per Filium in Spiritu Sancto', now the priests were required to say 'Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritu Sancto'. A dative instead of an accusative and all was in order. <sup>5</sup>

Thus instead of saying 'Glory be to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit', the people of Spain were persuaded to say, 'Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit'.

The subsequent pattern of events after the Third Council of Toledo was a repetition of the story of the Official Church's

climb to power during the reigns of Constantine and Theodosius. Like Constantine, Recared wished to use the religion of the Official Church to unite his kingdom and to contain the powerful and seditious activities of a divided nobility. To begin with, he appointed the bishops himself, and disliked any interference from the Church in these matters. There were a number of instances when he overruled the recommendations of the Church, and made whosoever he wanted a bishop. Like Theodosius, however, he ended up by being a servant of the Church:

...the bishops did not confine themselves to moulding the hearts and minds of kings; they themselves undertook legislation and administration. They declared in their public records that they had been appointed, by the Lord Jesus Christ, guardians of the nation. Surrounded by his nobles, the king prostrated himself humbly before them when they were assembled in council at Toledo, and implored them with signs and tears to intercede to God on his behalf, and to give wise laws to the State. <sup>6</sup>

As in the rule of Theodosius, many of these 'wise laws' took the form of religious persecution. In the years that followed the Goths who held firmly to Unitarianism were eliminated. Like Arius and his followers, they were rooted out with a ruthless ferocity. The Goths were only allowed to exist on the condition that they accepted Roman Catholicism as their religion.

With the passage of time the Official Church and the rulers of the land became more and more identified with each other. They were corrupted by power and wealth, and once more the land was caught in a decaying and decadent feudal system.

The clergy when they attained to power disavowed the principles which they had set forth when they were destitute...Henceforth, possessed of vast domains densely populated with serfs, of splendid palaces crowded with slaves, the bishops recognised that they had been pre-

mature, that the time for emancipating the serfs was not yet, and might not arrive for centuries to come. <sup>7</sup>

The state of the country degenerated into a decay similar to the one it had experienced before the Arian Goths arrived. This was the state of the country just before the Muslims came. In both cases the advanced decay of the society was accompanied by an almost total lack of the affirmation and worship of the Divine Unity by its members.

When the Muslims first arrived on the shores of Africa nearest Iberia they came upon a few Arian Gothic settlements. They were inhabited by the descendants of the last of the Spanish Arian Goths who had either fled or been banished by the Catholics to the shores of Africa.

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Today there is no trace of the Arian Goths in either Thrace, Italy, France, Spain or Africa. They have left their mark on the art and architecture of Europe, but in spite of this they are almost universally described by the historians as 'barbarians', and the European histories are full of the tales of their alleged brutality. The fact that they affirmed and worshipped the Divine Unity is either ignored, or covered over by the use of vindictive euphemisms such as 'heretic' and 'schismatic'.

Yet undoubtedly the Goths were at one time one of the most civilized peoples to have lived in Europe. Charles Kingsley writes of the re-generative effect they had on Europe, and of the sane influence of their way of life which involved:

comparative purity of morals, sacred respect for women, for family life, for law, equal justice, individual freedom, and above all for honesty in word, and deed. <sup>8</sup>

As long as they held to their Unitarian faith they were successful. When they left it, they perished. Their story stands out in the history of Europe. Nowhere, with the exception of the Muslims of Andalus, was there an achievement so great or a

downfall so complete. They have left their mark from the Bosphorus to the Pillars of Hercules, and viewed chronologically they form the link between the Roman Empire and Modern Europe, but they have completely disappeared. The historians have done them no justice. All their books have been destroyed, and the majority of those who have written about them have been their enemies.

In spite of the fact that their record has been destroyed so effectively, the meagre fragments that have been discovered recently indicate the greatness, the vitality, the tenacity, the heroism and the initiative of the Arian Goths. It is impossible to write about them, however, without feeling a failure to do them full justice. Their story has been covered up so effectively that reading about them one learns more about the contempt and bigotry of their enemies than of the Goths themselves. It is clear, though, that the Arian Goths flourished as long as they held to the teaching of Jesus transmitted to them by Ulfilas. They were eventually destroyed because their leaders became corrupted and left that guidance and because, by doing so, they became vulnerable to the organized and systematic persecution which was always levelled against them by the Official Church.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER VI

- (1) Castro, *The Structure of Spanish History*, p. 65.
- (2) *Ibid*, p. 64.
- (3) *Ibid*, p. 62.
- (4) *Ibid*, p. 64.
- (5) *Ibid*.
- (6) R. Dozy, *Spanish Islam*, p. 222.
- (7) *Ibid*, p. 225.
- (8) C. Kingsley, *Hypathia*, preface, p. 14.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE JEWS IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

Once the Official Catholic Church had established its power over the king in Spain, it became very rich. Having silenced the Arian Goths, the Official Church and the State, in reality the same body, undertook the persecution of the Jews in Iberia with unparalleled ferocity:

Michelet justly observed, 'Whenever during the Middle Ages men began to ask how is it that the ideal Paradise of the world under the sway of the Church was realised here below as a Hell, the Church, conscious of the objection hastened to stifle it by declaring that, "It is the wrath of God. it is due to the crime of the Jews. The murderers of our Lord are still unpunished." And a persecution of Jews was set on foot.'<sup>1</sup>

In 616, King Sisebut, a Catholic Goth, decreed that all Jews must be converted to Roman Catholicism before the end of the year. On expiry of this date all unconverted Jew were to be banished after receiving a hundred lashes. The Jews were forbidden to celebrate the Passover, or circumcision or marriage according to the Jewish rites. Any Jew who failed to give his child a 'Christian' baptism should receive a hundred lashes, forfeit his land to the King and have his head shaven for a sign.

As a result of this decree more than 90,000 Jews were baptized. They, however, constituted a minority of the Jewish population. Those who were baptized continued to practise circumcision and to perform all the Mosaic laws. For seventy years their persecution was carried out half-heartedly, and then followed a period of concentrated attacks on Jews:

...the fortunes of the obstinate 'infidels' were confiscated, their bodies were tortured; and it seems doubtful whether they were permitted to abandon their native country. The excessive zeal of the Catholic king was moderated, even by

the clergy of Spain who solemnly pronounced an inconsistent sentence: that the sacraments should not be forcibly imposed, but that the Jews who had been baptized should be constrained, for the honour of the Church to persevere in the external practice of a religion which they disbelieved and detested. Their frequent relapses provoked one of the successors of Sisebut to banish the whole nation from his dominions; and a council of Toledo published a decree, that every Gothic king should swear to maintain his salutary edict.<sup>2</sup>

In 681, the Council again decreed that they should either be baptized or expelled, and the majority of Jews were forcibly baptized, since it was made virtually impossible for them to leave the country. A decree of 693, made it impossible for the Jews to function as merchants. In 694, it was decreed that all unconverted Jews were to be sold into slavery, except children under seven who were to be brought up as Christians.

This last decree was too much for the Jews, and in the same year, seventeen years before the conquest of Spain by the Muslims, they revolted. The plan was that all exiled Jews who had found refuge on the other side of the Straits of Gibraltar were to attack Spain. As soon as they landed, the Jews already in Spain were to revolt simultaneously in all the places where they were strongest. The king's spies found out about the revolt and it was mercilessly put down by the simple expedient of killing the majority of able-bodied Jews in Spain. Those who survived the general massacre, were condemned to slavery. Old ones were generally allowed to retain their religion, but the young were henceforth brought up in the Christian faith. Marriages between Jews were forbidden, and a Jewish slave was only allowed to marry a Christian slave.

In this manner the Jewish community in Spain was greatly diminished, disrupted, divided and deprived of its property. This relentless persecution of the Jews added to the general unrest which permeated Spain on the eve of the Muslims' arrival. The country was smothered in a decaying and corrupt feudal system. The slaves and the serfs were overburdened. The

middle class citizens had to bear the brunt of the taxes, since the nobles and the clergy were exempt from such liabilities. Instead these privileged classes were engaged in the quest for pleasure and power. They had no forces with which to oppose an invasion except those of the serfs and the Jewish slaves. Understandably there was little love lost between the rulers and the ruled, and it is not surprising that both the Jews and the serfs, and many of the impoverished citizens, actively helped the Muslims overcome their tyrannical rulers:

The Gothic kings and bishops at length discovered that injuries produce hatred, and that hatred will find the opportunity of revenge. A nation, the secret or professed enemies of Christianity, still multiplied in servitude and distress; and the intrigues of the Jews promoted the rapid success of the Arabian conquerors.<sup>3</sup>

The oppressed majority of this corrupt and decaying society regarded the Muslims not so much as conquerors but as saviours. The Muslims ended their slavery and gave them freedom to practise their religion. The country was ripe and ready for the new injection of life which came with the Muslims when they landed in Andalusia during the summer of 711, only 92 years after the Prophet Muhammad journeyed to *Madina al-Munawarra*, 'the Illuminated City', and began to establish the way of Islam in it. The meaning of the Arabic word, '*Andalus*', is 'to become green at the end of summer'. This was certainly the reality of that summer in which the Muslims first came to Spain.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER VII

- (1) R. Dozy, *Spanish Islam*, p. 231.
- (2) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, IV, p. 426.
- (3) *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER VIII

## THE EARLY PAULICIANS

Before examining the life of the Muslims in Spain, it would be illuminating to examine the fresh wave of Christian Unitarians which reached its peak in the Eastern Roman Empire at the very time that the last of the Arian Goths were being eliminated from Spain in the West. The people involved in this movement were originally called the Paulicians.

The Paulicians were originally the followers of Paul of Samosata, who was a Nazarene. He was taught by Diodorus, the leader of the Nazarene Church in Antioch after the Apostle had died. He was one of the purest transmitters of the original teaching of Jesus. Paul of Samosata's followers included Lucian who taught Arius, and Eusebius of Nicomedia who had taught Ulfilas. He also greatly influenced Nestorius, whose Unitarian followers spread as far east as India and China, and as far south as Abyssinia. He was thus an essential link in the chain of transmission, which had started with Jesus and spread from Antioch through Barnabas and his followers. Through them the affirmation and worship of the Divine Unity spread right across Europe and North Africa in two separate movements which, as we have seen, culminated in their reunion when the Arian Vandals of Europe came down through Spain and settled in North Africa.

As well as these movements to the West, the original teaching of Jesus was also taken to the East. The group of the followers of Paul of Samosata, who were first known as the Paulinians and later became known as the Paulicians, initially settled in the provinces of Asia Minor to the west of the Euphrates. For the next ten centuries they were systematically persecuted wherever their movement spread, and their books were almost completely destroyed. To begin with, much of their teaching was transmitted orally, and there was always the danger that this wisdom would be wiped out with the men who possessed it. During the eighth century, however, the teaching flourished throughout Thrace, and even the Emperor of Constantinople was a Unitarian. During his reign the leaders of the Paulicians were summoned to the Imperial Court and those parts of the oral tradition which could be reduced to written form were recorded on paper.

The book that resulted was called *The Key of Truth*.

Nearly all copies of this book were subsequently destroyed during the following centuries. However Frederic Conybeare came across an early manuscript of *The Key* while travelling in Armenia during the mid-nineteenth century. He had a copy made of it and translated it. Thanks to his work a considerable amount of information which had been buried for centuries was made available to the public.

*The Key of Truth* presents a picture of a Unitarian Church based on completely different lines to the Roman Catholic Church, both in doctrine and worship. Before the publication of this book there had only been a limited and officially censored version of the activities of the Paulicians. Now we know their rites and disciplines, and their general organization, as well as having a far more complete knowledge of their tenets. *The Key of Truth* thus gives a far more accurate and just description of the earliest form of Christianity than that provided by the Official Church:

A lost church rises before our eyes, not a dead anatomy but a living organism...We can, as it were, enter the humble congregation, be present at the simple rites, and find ourselves at home among the worshippers. <sup>1</sup>

Their communities significantly lacked any form of organized priesthood:

The Paulician teachers were distinguished only by their scriptural names, by the modest title of fellow-pilgrims, by the austerity of their lives, their zeal or knowledge, and by the credit of some extraordinary gifts of the holy spirit. But they were incapable of desiring, or at least of obtaining, the wealth and honours of the Catholic prelacy. Such anti-christian pride they bitterly censured; and even the work of elders or presbyters was condemned as an institution of the Jewish synagogue. <sup>2</sup>

Their leaders were chosen on account of their knowledge of the teachings of Jesus, but there was no hierarchy of higher and lower clergy, for they believed:

God giveth not the spirit by measure.<sup>3</sup>

Their leaders were all married and had children. They lived in the way that the closest followers of Jesus had lived. They described themselves as belonging to the holy, universal and apostolic church founded by Jesus. They preserved all the apostolic traditions which Jesus revealed to his closest followers, including the practice of worshipping and then eating together. Their 'communion service' was no more than this. They had no doctrine of transubstantiation, which claims that the bread and the wine which the Official Christians share is changed into the 'body and blood' of Christ.

The Paulicians had no visible object of worship. They affirmed the Divine Unity. They were not dualists as their enemies have insinuated, for it was the common practice of the Official Christians to associate them with the Manicheans, yet another sect of the early Christians who compromised the teaching of Jesus with the dualistic philosophy of the Magian fire-worshippers who followed Zoroaster.

The Paulicians had their own gospel, which was not one of the official gospels. They made a clear distinction between the Old Testament and their own gospel:

Since they adored the latter as the oracles of God, and abhorred the former as the fabulous and absurd invention of men and daemons.<sup>4</sup>

Another of their books was *The Shepherd of Hermas*, which was written between 88 and 97 AD at Patmos near Ephesus, long before the official New Testament canon was fixed. It was accepted as a revealed book by the Nazarenes, and was forbidden by the Official Church. It was virtually lost to the world until a third century papyrus manuscript of the text was discovered in 1922:

It was found that the Greek used by Hermas

was a simple vernacular. The language could be understood by the common people and it is clear that the book was written for everyone and not for an intellectual elite. His style was frank and informal and he possessed an originality of speech which made the book easy to read.

Hermas begins by telling of four visions he experiences, the last of which he calls a revelation since on this occasion an angel visited him dressed as a shepherd. The angel informed Hermas that he had been sent by the 'most reverend angel', (that is, the angel Gabriel) to live with Hermas for the rest of the days of his life. The angel then ordered Hermas to write down all 'the Commands and Parables'. Since these were dictated to him by the angel, who only related what he was told to say by the 'most reverend angel', it was accepted as a revealed book by the early Christians.<sup>5</sup>

The first command is a clear affirmation of the Divine Unity:

First of all believe that God is One and that He created all things and organized them, and out of what did not exist made all things to be, and He contains all things but Alone is Himself uncontained. Trust Him therefore and fear Him, and, fearing Him, be self-controlled. Keep this command and you will cast away from yourself all wickedness, put on every virtue of uprightness, and you will live to God if you keep this commandment.<sup>6</sup>

It is very probable that the Paulicians also used the *Didache*, which was a Nazarene manual of behaviour and church procedure. It was written in the language spoken by the poor people, and was clearly addressed not only to learned men, but to everyone. It was written between 60 and 160 AD, and relied on the writings of Barnabas:

Part of the Didache has been borrowed from the earlier part of the Epistle of Barnabas.<sup>7</sup>

Harnack, the famous Christologist, and Bishop John Wordsworth, are both of the view that the author of the Didache did not regard St Paul and St Luke as authoritative. As with all other Unitarian writings the Didache has been virtually destroyed. Only fragments remain. Their context indicates that the lost pages contained material which revealed the abuses of the Official Church.

In the light of such censorship Conybeare's discovery and translation of the manuscript of *The Key of Truth* is vitally illuminating. It is especially revealing in its description of Jesus and his nature.

The Paulicians affirmed that Jesus was a man and a prophet, but not God. They therefore respected the Virgin Mary and believed in the immaculate conception, but did not think of her as being 'the mother of God'. They did not say that Jesus was born on the twenty-fifth of December, since this belief originated in Rome towards the end of the fourth century when the celebration of his birth was grafted on to one of the old pagan festivals. They said that Jesus was born a human being and remained one. They therefore had no doctrine of incarnation, the doctrine by which the Official Church tried to explain that God could also be a man at the same time. Instead the Paulicians said that Jesus, because of his moral excellence, was favoured and chosen by God. When he was baptized by John at the age of thirty he was given knowledge from God by means of the Holy Spirit, that is, the angel Gabriel. He was thus endowed with the authority and lordship over men which enabled him to serve them.

Competent authorities have acknowledged that this Christology does not contradict the synoptic gospels. This view agrees with chapter forty-eight of Justin Martyr's *Dialogue*, where the author, in spite of his rejection of the doctrine recorded in *The Key of Truth*, agrees that the 'basis' of its teaching is the same as his. He admits that the concept of the 'divinity of Christ' rests on a prophetic rather than a historical basis, but fails to add that the source of this 'prophetic basis' was not a prophet, but Paul of Tarsus. He further agrees that it is more reasonable to envisage that Jesus was born a human being and was then anointed by

way of election. "For we all," he says, "expect the Messiah to be born a man of men."<sup>8</sup>

It was because of this belief that the Paulicians were sometimes known as 'Adoptionists'. This school, which can be traced back to Byzantium in about 185, was led by a man called Theodatus. He affirmed the immaculate conception, but denied the 'divinity' of Jesus. He said that Jesus was a man imbued with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit from his baptism. He had thus attained such perfection of holiness that he was 'adopted' by God as his 'son'. Theodatus, whose views were accepted by Paul of Samosata, was excommunicated in about 195.

Following the example of Jesus, the Paulicians did not practise infant baptism, which had never been taught by him, and which they regarded as an innovation, an innovation which in fact was not finally accepted into the Roman Catholic Church until the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century. The members of their communities were baptized when they had reached a mature age. There was no compulsion in their rites of baptism. They said that true baptism should be preceded by repentance and true faith if it was to have any meaning.

The Paulicians did not subscribe to the doctrine of the Trinity in the least, and even the word 'trinity' was entirely foreign in their teachings. They rejected the doctrine as being unscriptural, and as having been borrowed from the Platonic system of philosophy. The Logos is nowhere mentioned in *The Key of Truth*. Paul of Samosata dismissed the use of such terminology as an innovation which would not enlighten but only mystify.

The certainty of the Paulicians as to the nature of Jesus and the nature of God could only be the fruit of pure teaching. It is possible that their gospel, which was not one of the four officially accepted gospels, may well have been the gospel of Barnabas. This gospel, one of the three hundred which were almost utterly destroyed by the Official Church after the Council of Nicaea, clearly distinguished between Jesus and God.

The Paulicians affirmed that it was not Jesus who was crucified, but another man in his place. They therefore regarded the story of the resurrection as a fiction, and rejected the doctrines of atonement and redemption which Paul of Tarsus had instigated. The Paulicians had no doctrine of original sin. They naturally rejected the symbol of the Official Church and the Roman sun-

god, the cross, as having no spiritual significance. They regarded all images of Jesus or Mary, whether painted or carved, as idolatrous and alien to the teaching of Jesus. It was forbidden even to make a sign of the cross.

Instead they held to the teaching of Jesus. There was no pomp or show in their liturgy and worship and, like the Ebionites in Syria, they were ridiculed for their simplicity and for their poverty, which was based on the living example of Jesus.

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Persecution followed the teaching of the Paulicians wherever it took root. The vow which the leaders of the Paulicians made when they were elected included the undertaking that they were prepared:

to take on themselves scourgings, imprisonments, tortures, reproaches, crosses, blows, tribulations and all the temptations of the world.<sup>9</sup>

The Paulicians suffered under the early persecution of the Christians by the Romans, and were one of the groups who were condemned by the Council of Nicaea in 325. Persecution after this date increased. In 417, the Official Church held a council at Shahapivan, and it was decided, in the twentieth canon, that all Paulicians were to be branded on the forehead with the image of a fox. Anyone who left the Church and joined a community of Paulicians was to be hamstrung.

This general persecution drove the Paulicians northwards into Armenia where they flourished and became known as the Armenian Church. Conybeare says that according to manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, the Adoptionists, or Paulicians, who went from Antioch to Armenia, are described as people who were clothed in sack-cloth, barefooted and ascetic in their lives. They preached against the worship of the cross. Among the names mentioned, one Theodore is prominent.

By the middle of the fifth century the Paulicians' way of life was widespread in south-east Armenia:

...it not only attracted bishops, priests, deacons and monks but native satraps, princes, feudal lords, headmen of villages with their entire families...<sup>10</sup>

With the passage of time it became the national life-style of Armenia, and even spread into south Russia.

During the fifth century, however, the Romans began to extend their empire into Armenia. Wherever the imperial army went, there too was the Official Church. The Paulicians were tortured and killed and driven out of that part of Armenia which came under the rule of Constantinople. However, many Paulicians survived by fleeing further east, or to the south. During the rapid spread of Islam in the last half of the seventh century, many of them recognized that this was a revelation confirming the one which they were following, and they embraced Islam. There was no compulsion in the matter, and many Paulicians, whilst making an alliance with the Muslims, preferred to keep their separate identity. Thus Conybeare remarks that several centuries later the Latin Crusaders found the Paulicians always fighting on the side of the Muslims, but remaining a distinct group of people. Pope Clement addressing Charles V is recorded as saying that the religion of Paul of Samosata was:

...nothing different from pure Mohammatanism.<sup>11</sup>

As in the case of the other Christian Unitarians, the history of the Paulicians in the official histories can only be traced by the brief mentions made of their continued persecution. The next event that can be traced is the stoning to death of Sylvanus, a leader of the Paulicians who was captured together with several of his companions by a man called Simeon:

By a refinement of cruelty, Simeon placed the unfortunate Sylvanus before a line of his disciples, who were commanded, as the price of their pardon, and the proof of their repentance, to massacre their spiritual father. They turned aside from the impious office; the stones

dropped from their filial hands, and of the whole number only one executioner could be found, a new David, as he is styled by the Catholics.<sup>12</sup>

Simeon later joined the Paulicians and was himself martyred.

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Despite continued persecution the Paulicians maintained their way of life, and their lot was improved when another emperor called Constantine, who was a Unitarian and an Adoptionist, became the ruler of Constantinople in the middle of the eighth century. Early on in his reign he made an expedition into Armenia, and found in the cities of Melitene and Theodosiopolis a great number of Paulicians. He persuaded many of them to return with him. They accordingly left the banks of the Euphrates and came to Constantinople and Thrace. Thus it was that the Unitarian Paulicians moved into the lands where the Unitarian Goths had flourished four centuries before. It was by this emigration that their way of life was eventually introduced and diffused into Europe. During the rule of Constantine, their way-of-life spread rapidly throughout Thrace. It was at his insistence that *The Key of Truth* was written. Thus at the time when the last of the Unitarian Goths had been destroyed in Spain, and when the Muslims had just arrived in Andalus, there was a fresh flowering of Unitarian Christianity in the East. In the years that followed, these Unitarian Paulicians were either to spread north and west with their teaching, or to embrace the way of Islam which came up so rapidly from the south.

The rule of Constantine the Adoptionist, called Catallinus by John of Damascus, was a tumultuous one. He actively opposed the innovations of the Official Church, and consequently there was conflict between the two. He rejected infant baptism, and it is said that he fouled the font of St Sophia when Germanus the Patriarch was baptizing him as a child. He is especially noted and remembered for his campaign against the worship of saints and their relics, and the worship of images, by the Official Christians. In order to appreciate the significance of this campaign,

especially in relation to the story of the Paulicians, it is necessary to briefly explain how these practices first arose.

The earliest followers of Jesus would have nothing to do with image worship:

The primitive Christians were possessed with an unconquerable repugnance to the use and abuse of images, and this aversion may be ascribed to their descent from the Jews, and their enmity to the Greeks. The Mosaic law had severely proscribed all representations of the Deity; and that precept was firmly established, in the principles and practice of the chosen people.<sup>13</sup>

All the early Christian fathers, including Clement and Tertullian, condemned image worship as being contrary to the second commandment of the Old Testament which clearly forbids making a representation of any living thing. It reads:

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth below, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I am the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20.4-6)

When Jesus came, he taught the same doctrine as Moses, and for the first two centuries after his death none of his followers indulged in what is today referred to as 'sacred art'. The introduction of images into the Official Church, when it did come, was literally an underground movement. It began in the catacombs. As early as the third century emblems such as a shepherd, a lamb, a fish, a dove, a cock, or a ship were scratched or painted on the rock surrounding the tomb. With the passage

of time this 'art' became more ambitious and scenes such as Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac were depicted in the catacombs. All the subject matter was taken from the Old Testament. No attempt was made to represent the likeness of Jesus until the reign of Constantine and especially after the Council of Nicaea in 325, the practice of 'religious art' received official approval. It not only became more ambitious in its subject matter, but also crept up from the catacombs and into the churches themselves, to take equal place with the veneration of the remains of Christians who had died:

The first introduction of a symbolic worship was in the veneration of the cross, and of relics. But a memorial, more interesting than the skull or the sandals of a departed worthy, is a faithful copy of his person and features, delineated by the arts of painting or sculpture...At first the experiment was made with caution and scruple; and the venerable pictures were discreetly allowed to instruct the ignorant, to awaken the cold, and to gratify the prejudices of the heathen proselytes. By a slow though inevitable progression, the honours of the original were transferred to the copy: the devout Christian prayed before the image of a saint: and the pagan rites of genuflection, luminaries, and incense, again stole into the Catholic Church. <sup>14</sup>

However, these practices were not accepted overnight, and were bitterly opposed by the Nazarene school of Christians including the Arians and Donatists. In 326 AD, Eusebius of Nicomedia heatedly replied to a request from Constantina, the sister of Constantine, to send her a likeness of Christ, with these uncompromising words:

What and what kind of likeness of Christ is there? Such images are forbidden by the second commandment. <sup>15</sup>

However, not only the painting of pictures, but also reverence towards them, were firmly established, at least in the Offi-

cial Churches by the end of the fourth century. Basil, who died in 379, is recorded as saying about them:

I reverence and kiss them with homage...as they are not forbidden but are painted on all our Churches. <sup>16</sup>

In the following two centuries the practice became widespread in the Catholic Church:

The use, and even the worship of images, was firmly established before the end of the sixth century...the Parthenon and Vatican were adorned with the emblems of a new superstition; but this semblance of idolatry was more coldly entertained by the 'rude barbarians' and the Arian clergy of the West. <sup>17</sup>

The main 'religious artists' at this time were the monks who made a considerable amount of money from the works of their hands and the ignorance of the people. Perhaps their most ingenious invention was the 'Edessa', a handkerchief which had purportedly been offered to Jesus to wipe his brow during his journey to the place of his alleged crucifixion. It was said that when he was supposed to have removed the handkerchief from his brow, the delineations of his face were left imprinted on it. This handkerchief was fabricated five centuries after Jesus had left the earth in the town of Edessa, from whence it received its name. It was revered as the source of many miracles and military victories. It was so successful that many similar 'originals' were made and sold all over the Roman Empire:

Before the end of the sixth century, these images 'made without hand' (in Greek it is a single word), were propagated in the camps and cities of the eastern Empire; they were the objects of worship, and the instruments of miracles; and in the hour of danger or tumult their venerable presence could revive the hope, rekindle the courage, or repress the fury, of the Roman



legions.<sup>18</sup>

Naturally these practices found favour with those who had abandoned the original teaching of Jesus. Those who held it avoided them:

As the worship of images had never been established by any general or positive law, its progress in the eastern empire had been retarded, or accelerated, by the differences of men and manners...The splendid devotion was fondly cherished by the levity of the capital, and the inventive genius of the Byzantine clergy, while the rude and remote districts of Asia were strangers to this innovation of sacred luxury. Many large congregations of Gnostics and Arians maintained, after their conversion the simple worship which had preceded their separation; and the Armenians, the most warlike subjects of Rome, were not reconciled, in the twelfth century, to the sight of images.<sup>19</sup>

During the sixth and seventh centuries the worship of the Virgin Mary and the saints, their visions and miracles, their relics and images, were preached by the monks and worshipped by the people. It was not until the Paulicians, who had begun to move into Thrace in the seventh century and who were established there in the eighth that any serious attempt was made to check this innovation.

Leo the Iconoclast began the destruction of images in Constantinople in 726 AD. He met with vigorous opposition, not only in Constantinople but also from Rome, and some of the letters written to him by Pope Gregory II are still extant. The Pope had nothing but good words for image-worship. In one of his letters he said these images were:

...the genuine forms of Christ, his mother, and his saints, who had approved, by a crowd of miracles, the innocence and merit of this relative worship. He must indeed have trusted to

the ignorance of Leo since he could assert the perpetual use of images, from the apostolic age, and their venerable presence in the six synods of the Catholic Church.<sup>20</sup>

Leo was unimpressed by the Pope's arguments and continued to smash idols. He prepared to extend his activities to Italy itself. Gregory II wrote him a stern warning:

Are you ignorant that the popes are the bond of union, the mediators of peace between the east and west? The eyes of the nations are fixed on our humility; and they revere, as a god upon earth, the apostle of St. Peter, whose image you threaten to destroy...Abandon your rash and fatal enterprise; reflect, tremble, and repent. If you persist, we are innocent of the blood that will be split in the contest; may it fall upon your own head.<sup>21</sup>

Leo ignored the Pope's warning, and the whole of Italy prepared for his threatened invasion. The Italians swore to live and die in the defence of the Pope and the holy images. Leo's army landed in Italy and attacked Ravenna where it was heavily defeated. The waters of the Po were so deeply infected with blood that for six years no-one would eat the fish of the river. An annual feast was instituted to celebrate the victory over Leo's army, and the worship of images in Italy continued unabated. Pope Gregory II pronounced a general excommunication against all who by word or deed should attack the tradition of the Official Church fathers and the images of the saints. There was thus a quite definite split made between the Roman and Byzantine churches, which continues until today.

When Leo's son, Constantine the Adoptionist, became emperor he continued his father's work in and around Constantinople. It was he who was responsible for having *'The Key of Truth'* put into writing, and the Paulicians' way of life flourished during his reign. In 574, he called the Synod of Constantinople. It was attended by 338 bishops of Europe and Anatolia. None of the Roman Catholic bishops from Rome attended,

since Gregory II's general excommunication still placed the Greek church beyond the Roman Catholics' definition of 'Christianity'. The Pope declared that the Greek church had gone astray, and that its gatherings should be boycotted unless or until it returned to the norm of the Roman Catholic Church.

The synod attempted, in some degree, to re-establish the original teaching of Jesus:

This Byzantine synod assumed the rank and powers of the Seventh General Council; yet even this title was a recognition of the six preceding assemblies which had laboriously built the structure of the Catholic faith. After a serious deliberation of six months, the 338 bishops pronounced and subscribed a unanimous decree, that all visible symbols of Christ except in the eucharist, were either blasphemous or heretical; that image-worship was a corruption of Christianity and a renewal of paganism; that all such monuments of idolatry should be broken or erased; and that those who should refuse to deliver the objects of their private superstition, were guilty of disobedience to the authority of the church and of the emperor.<sup>22</sup>

The results of this edict were tumultuous. The Catholic Church and the monks, whose profession and even dress were banned, strongly resisted this assault on their dignity and their income, and the remainder of Constantine the Adoptionist's reign was a stormy one. The strenuous attempts of the Church to reinstate image-worship in Constantinople eventually proved successful during the rule of the Empress Irene. She decreed in 780 that image-worship was permissible within the Christian Church, and so once more the 'official religion' was asserted in the East. "The fond alliance of the monks and females," writes Gibbon, "obtained a final victory over the reason and authority of man."<sup>23</sup>

This decree was followed by the second Council of Nicaea, which was held in 787. Since this council was held under the auspices of the Catholic Church, Pope Hadrian sent some dele-

gates from Rome. Three hundred and fifty bishops attended. They re-established the Official Church's doctrine concerning image-worship:

They unanimously pronounced, that the worship of images is agreeable to scripture and reason, to the fathers and councils of the church: but they hesitate whether that worship be relative or direct; whether the godhead, and the figure of Christ, be entitled to the same mode of adoration. Of this second Nicene Council, the acts are still extant; a curious monument of superstition and ignorance, of falsehood and folly...For the honour of orthodoxy, at least the orthodoxy of the Roman church, it is somewhat unfortunate, that the two princes who convened the two councils of Nice, are both stained with the blood of their sons.<sup>24</sup>

For the next sixty years the Catholic Church struggled to make the Council's decision a reality throughout the Eastern Empire. Success finally came during the reign of the Empress Theodora who firmly established image-worship in Constantinople by about 842. It was during her reign that another sizeable confrontation between the Church and the Paulicians took place, for the Paulicians would have nothing to do with image-worship:

The objects which had been transformed by the magic of superstition, appeared to the eyes of the Paulicians in their genuine and naked colours. An image made without hands, was the common workmanship of a mortal artist, to whose skill alone the wood and canvas must be indebted for their merit or value. The miraculous relics were a heap of bones and ashes, destitute of life or virtue, or of any relation, perhaps, with the person to whom they were ascribed. The true and vivifying cross was a piece of sound or rotten timber; the body and

blood of Christ, a loaf of bread and a cup of wine, the gifts of nature and the symbols of grace.<sup>25</sup>

The confrontation between the Paulicians and the Official Church was a bloody one, and Gibbon was amazed at:

...the sanguinary devotion of Theodora, who restored the images to the oriental church. Her inquisitors explored the cities and mountains of the Lesser Asia, and the flatterers of the empress have affirmed, that, in a short reign, one hundred thousand Paulicians were extirpated by the sword, the gibbet, or the flames.<sup>26</sup>

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER VIII

- (1) F.C. Conybeare, *The Key of Truth*, preface, p. 12.
- (2) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, VII, p. 59.
- (3) *The Key of Truth*, p. 111.
- (4) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, VII, p. 57.
- (5) *Jesus Prophet of Islam*.
- (6) Ibid.
- (7) J.A. Robinson, *Barnabas, Hermas and the Didache*, preface, p. 3.
- (8) *The Key of Truth*, p. 91.
- (9) Ibid, p. 2.
- (10) Ibid, p. 108.
- (11) Wallace, *Anti-trinitarian Biographies*, II, p. 117.
- (12) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, VII, p. 60.
- (13) Ibid, VI, p. 172.
- (14) Ibid, VI, p. 173.
- (15) T. Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, VI, p. 431.
- (16) Ibid.
- (17) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, VI, p. 174.
- (18) Ibid, VI, p. 176.
- (19) Ibid, VI, p. 179.
- (20) Ibid, VI, p. 184.
- (21) Ibid, VI, p. 189.
- (22) Ibid, VI, p. 179.
- (23) Ibid, VI, p. 208.
- (24) Ibid, VI, p. 210.
- (25) Ibid, VII, p. 57.
- (26) Ibid, VII, p. 61.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE LATER PAULICIANS

The widespread persecution instituted by Theodora in the ninth century drove the Paulicians of Armenia and Thrace to unite and fight back, and it is not surprising that the persecution by the Official Church strengthened their alliance with the Muslims. Many Paulicians embraced Islam as a result of this renewed contact with them. Others, however, continued to maintain their separate identity as Christian Unitarians.

The Paulicians were helped by the revolt of a soldier called Carbeas who commanded the guards of the general of the east. His father was impaled by the Catholic inquisitors. Together with five thousand of his men, he renounced his allegiance to the Roman Emperor and the official religion, and they joined forces with the Muslims. In the mountains beyond Sewas and Trebizond, he founded and fortified the city of Tephrike, and all the Paulician fugitives who had taken to the hills gathered round him.

Between 845 and 880, the combined forces of the Muslims and the Paulicians fought back against their would-be persecutors, and they won many victories. Even the dissolute Michael, the son of Theodora, was compelled to march against the Paulicians. He was defeated under the walls of Samosata, where the teacher of the first Paulicians had once lived, and the Roman Emperor fled before the 'heretics' whom his mother had condemned to the flames. The Muslims fought side by side with Carbeas, but the victory was ascribed to him.

Carbeas was succeeded by a man called Chrysocheir, an even greater and more daring leader. He boldly penetrated into the heart of Asia Minor with the Muslims and the Official Christian army suffered many defeats at his hands:

...the troops of the frontier and the palace were repeatedly overthrown, the edicts of persecution were answered by the pillage of Nicaea and Nicomedia, of Ancyra and Ephesus...It is not unpleasing to observe the tri-

umph of rebellion over the same despotism which has disdained the prayers of an injured people. <sup>1</sup>

When the Emperor came to power he tried to persuade Chrysocheir to settle down peacefully by means of bribery. When this failed he renewed the campaign against the Paulicians. He met with some victories on the plains, but could not subdue Tephrike and the Paulicians in the mountains surrounding it. He returned to Constantinople and prayed for success. It was his daily prayer that he might live to pierce Chrysocheir's head with three arrows. His prayer was granted. After a successful inroad, Chrysocheir was surprised and slain in the retreat. His severed head was brought before the Emperor, who delightedly called for his bow and discharged three arrows into it, amidst general applause from his courtiers.

With the death of Chrysocheir, the glory of the Paulicians in Thrace faded and withered. The Emperor Basil mounted a second expedition to conquer Tephrike, and this time he was successful. The Paulicians who lived there either died fighting, took refuge in the surrounding country or surrendered:

The city was ruined, but the spirit of independence survived in the mountains: the Paulicians defended, above a century, their religion and liberty. <sup>2</sup>

Although some remained in Thrace, a large number of Paulicians were driven northwards by the persecution of the Church, and they moved into Bulgaria. Following the same pattern of events as when the Paulicians first moved into Armenia, and into Thrace, their way of life was soon accepted by the majority of its population with enthusiasm.

The Paulicians of Bulgaria became known as the Bogomiles, for it was the policy of the Official Church to change the name of the Paulicians whenever they reappeared in another country in order to cover the unity of their movement. Inevitably the Paulicians of Bulgaria initially met with some persecution, but generally they were welcomed, and

their movement spread rapidly. It followed the same direction as the Arian Goths had taken four centuries earlier:

The Bulgarians...spread their branches over the face of Europe. United in common hatred of idolatry and Rome, they were connected by a form of episcopal and presbyterian government; their various sects were discriminated by some fainter and darker shades of theology; but they generally agreed on two principles, the contempt of the Old Testament, and the denial of the body of Christ, either on the cross or in the eucharist. A confession of simple faith and blameless manners is extorted from their enemies, and so high was their standard of perfection, that the increasing congregations were divided into two classes of disciples, of those who practised, and of those who aspired.<sup>3</sup>

Their example was so markedly different to that of the Catholic Christians, that many people embraced their way of life:

The favour and success of the Paulicians in the eleventh and twelfth centuries must be imputed to the strong though secret discontent which armed the most pious Christians against the Church of Rome. Her avarice was oppressive, her despotism odious: less degenerate perhaps than the Greeks in the worship of saints and images, her innovations were more rapid and scandalous: she had rigorously defined and imposed the doctrine of transubstantiation: the lives of the Latin clergy were more corrupt, and the eastern bishops might pass for the successors of the apostles if they were compared with the lordly prelates, who wielded by turns the crozier, the sceptre, and the sword.<sup>4</sup>

With the rapid expansion of the Paulicians came persecution from the Official Church, and they were harried wherever they settled. Their leader in Bulgaria was burnt alive in 1110. Some of them who had migrated to Serbia were persecuted during the period around 1118. Those who had settled in Bosnia and Herzegovina ably defended themselves, and when the Turkish Muslims eventually settled in these countries in 1463 and 1482, most of their Unitarian descendants embraced Islam. However, the main movement which was launched from Bulgaria, and which was largely the result of the persecution which took place there, was towards central Europe.

A group of Paulicians migrated to south Germany where they became known as the Catharii, which means 'the Pure'. Their movement spread further westwards and many of them settled in the south of France, around Toulouse especially, the same area which the Arian Goths had once ruled. They also spread down into the north of Italy. As well as the journeys made overland, many of the Paulicians from Bulgaria travelled by sea. They landed in Venice, in Sicily and in the south of France.

The Roman Catholic Church viewed their rapid growth with dismay. The Paulician Catharii were condemned by the Church as early as 1022, in the Council of Orléans. By the middle of the twelfth century, Catharian groups and churches were established throughout Europe despite persecution. At this stage the Roman Catholic Church was so corrupt that it could not act efficiently and effectively. It was reduced to verbal opposition, and the Catharii were repeatedly condemned, as the Councils of Lombard in 1165, and of Verona in 1184, bear witness.

It was not until the next century that the Catholic Church was able to organize any efficient means of persecution. However, it made up for its delay by initiating a drive of such dimensions against the Unitarians as had not been witnessed for centuries.

It was in the country of the Albigeois, in the southern provinces of France, that the Paulicians were most deeply implanted; and

the same vicissitudes of martyrdom and revenge which had been displayed in the neighbourhood of the Euphrates, were repeated in the thirteenth century on the banks of the Rhône. The laws of the eastern emperors were revived by Frederic II. The insurgents of Tephrike were represented by the barons and cities of the Languedoc. Pope Innocent III surpassed the sanguinary notoriety of Theodora. It was in cruelty alone that her soldiers could not equal the heroes of the Crusades, and the cruelty of her priests was far excelled by the founders of the Inquisition; an office more adopted to confirm, than to refute, the belief of an evil principle...The visible assemblies of the Paulicians, or Albigeois, were extirpated by fire and sword; and the bleeding remnant escaped by flight, concealment, or Catholic conformity. But the invincible spirit which they had kindled still lived and breathed in the western world. <sup>5</sup>

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Before examining the Mediaeval Inquisition and its destruction of the Paulician Catharii in greater detail, it is important to remember that whatever the different names used to describe the Paulicians during different periods and in different places, theirs was a single and unified living movement. Like a plant, the seed of their teaching was continually sown, grown, flowered, fruited, withered, and almost dead, only to take root and spring up elsewhere.

The movement of the Paulicians was extensive. Wherever there are accounts of 'the destruction of the heretics', if they do not describe the persecution of the Arians or Donatists, then they are quite probably describing the persecution of a group of the Paulicians, or of a group of people who were influenced by them.

The Nestorian Church, for example, was greatly influenced by the teaching which was transmitted through Paul of

Samosata and the Paulicians. It spread as far east as China and eventually spread back the way it had come. Under the reign of the Muslim Khalifs, who tolerated anyone who wished to practise Christianity in peace, the Nestorian Church was diffused from China to Jerusalem and Cyprus. Their numbers, with those of the Jacobites who were another Christian sect, were computed to surpass the members of the Greek and Latin official churches. Unitarian Christians flourished under the protection of the Muslims.

The Nestorian Church was also well-established further afield. In Malabar, in India, they united with the followers of St Thomas who is reputed to be buried near Madras. They were hardly bothered by anyone until the sea routes to the East were opened up in the sixteenth century:

When the Portuguese first opened the navigation of India, the Christians of St. Thomas had been seated for ages on the coast of Malabar. Their religion would have rendered them the firmest and most cordial allies of the Portuguese, but the inquisitors soon discerned in the Christians of St. Thomas, the unpardonable guilt of a 'heresy'...Instead of owning themselves the subjects of the Roman pontiff, the spiritual and temporal monarch of the globe, they adhered, like their ancestors, to the communion of the Nestorian patriarch...they united their adoration of the two persons of Christ; the title of Mother of God was offensive to the ear, and they measured with scrupulous avarice the honours of the Virgin Mary, whom the superstition of the Latins had almost exalted to the rank of a goddess. When her image was first presented to the disciples of St. Thomas, they indignantly exclaimed, 'We are Christians, not idolaters!'...Their separation from the western world had left them in ignorance of the improvements or corruptions of a thousand years. <sup>6</sup>

The leaders of the Nestorian Church in Malabar were killed by drowning, and the remainder were 'converted' to Roman Catholicism by the Jesuits, whose leader was Alexes de Menezes. After sixty years the Portuguese official clergy were driven out, and the Nestorian pattern of worship was re-established.

A similar story is revealed about the Nestorian Church in Abyssinia. The Jesuits arrived there in 1557 and in 1626 their leader, Alphonso Mendez, 'converted' the Abyssinian emperor and his subjects to the official religion of Rome:

A new baptism, a new ordination, was inflicted on the natives; and they trembled with horror when the most holy of the dead were torn from their graves, when the most illustrious of the living were excommunicated by a foreign priest. In the defence of their religion and their liberty, the Abyssinians rose in arms, with desperate but unsuccessful zeal. Five rebellions were extinguished in the blood of the insurgents...neither merit, nor rank, nor sex, could save from an ignominious death the enemies of Rome.<sup>7</sup>

The Jesuits, however, were finally driven from Abyssinia, and its inhabitants returned to Unitarian worship.

It is also quite possible that some of the first Christians in Great Britain were Paulicians, although it is more likely that they were Arians. In the reign of Theodosius, for example, two Arian bishops, who were followers of Priscillian, were banished to the isles of Scilly. Worship of the Divine Unity in Great Britain may well have spread through them, or by means of other earlier Unitarian exiles.

Certainly the first form of Christianity in Great Britain was Unitarian, and England was one of the last countries to be taken over by the Roman Catholic Church. As we have seen, Roman Catholicism was not well established in this country until the late seventh century.

Toland's description of the Unitarian Christians of Ireland in his book, 'Nazarenus', bears a marked resemblance to the

Paulicians whose ways are described in *The Key of Truth*. Toland says that the first Christians in Ireland believed in One God, and not in the doctrine of the Trinity. There were no images in their places of worship. They had no doctrine of transubstantiation. They had no doctrine of confession, and believed that no-one had the power to absolve wrong actions except God. Their gospel was written in their native tongue, and was not one of the four gospels officially approved by the Official Church. Their saints were not the same as those of the Church, and they were not canonised. Their marriage ceremonies were not necessarily in the church. There was no doctrine of celibacy. All their leaders married and had families. They practised temperance at all times, and usually ate only once a day. They regarded their church not as a political empire or as an organisation, but as a congregation of faithful men and women who were present throughout the world. They called themselves the Children of the Church.

When the first Roman Catholic missionaries arrived in Ireland, they denounced the Irish Unitarians as 'pagans' and 'heretics', and set about changing their way of life. The chief leader of the Catholic missionaries was called Patrick (390-460). His success is demonstrated by the fact that today he is ironically regarded as the apostle and patron saint of Ireland. He was responsible for burning more than three hundred of the Celtic gospels. No Irish Unitarian gospel exists today. As with the Gothic alphabet, the Gaelic alphabet is no longer alive today.

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These three brief examples of the Unitarian Churches in Malabar, Abyssinia and Ireland, indicate the probable extent of the influence of the Paulicians. However their main activity was in and around Europe, and it was there that they were persecuted more severely:

Theirs the tears, theirs the blood shed during more than ten centuries of fierce persecution in the East. And if we reckon of their number as well as we may the early puritans of

Europe, then the tale of wicked deeds wrought by the persecuting Churches reached dimensions which appal the mind. As it was all done nominally out of reverence for, but in reality in mockery of, the Prince of Peace, it is hard to say of the Inquisition that they knew not what they did.<sup>8</sup>

To appreciate the extent of this fresh outbreak of persecution by the Roman Church against the Paulician Unitarians of France and Italy, it is necessary to examine the structure of the Mediaeval version of the Inquisition, and to see how effectively it was rebuilt along the lines of the Inquisitions of Theodosius, Justinian and Theodora. This study is also vital if the reader is to appreciate the origins of the Spanish Inquisition, which stemmed from the Mediaeval Inquisition, and which was responsible for the extermination of the Jews and the Muslims of Spain.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER IX

- (1) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, VII, p. 62.
- (2) *Ibid*, VII, p. 63.
- (3) *Ibid*, VII, p. 68.
- (4) *Ibid*, VII, p. 67.
- (5) *Ibid*, VII, p. 69.
- (6) *Ibid*, VI, p. 64.
- (7) *Ibid*, VI, p. 84.
- (8) E.C. Conybeare, *The Key of Truth*, p. 11.



## CHAPTER X

## THE END OF THE PAULICIANS

Up until the arrival of the Paulician Catharii in central Europe, the persecution of the 'heretics' had not been organised on a large scale since the elimination of the Arian Goths several centuries before. The Official Church had grown so powerful that few people dared to openly differ from its tenets. With the power, however, came corruption, and with the corruption came enervation. In the midst of this decay the teaching of the Paulicians thrived.

Perhaps the most corrupt element in the Official Church at this time was that of the monks. Their movement had been started, but by St Antony in Egypt, three hundred years after Jesus's ministry. His practices spread rapidly through the Official Christian world, and the monks divided into two classes, those who lived a solitary life and those who formed monastic communities and lived under a common and regular discipline. Initially the movement was an attempt to rediscover the original way of life of Jesus. However, many of them subscribed to the doctrines of the Official Church, and like this institution, once they accumulated wealth they were corrupted:

As long as they maintained their original fervour, they approved themselves...the faithful and benevolent stewards of the charity which was entrusted to their care. But their discipline was corrupted by prosperity; they gradually assumed the pride of wealth, and at last indulged the luxury of expense. Their public luxury might be excused by the magnificence of religious worship, and the decent motive of erecting durable habitations for an immortal society. But every age of the church has accused the licentiousness of the degenerate monks; who no longer remembered the object of their institution, embraced the vain and sensual pleasures of the world, which they

had renounced and scandalously abused the riches which had been acquired by the austere virtues of their founders.<sup>1</sup>

To begin with the monks were predominantly in the eastern half of the Roman Empire. They made a lucrative living out of fabricating and selling images and relics and, as we have seen, they were largely responsible for the popularity of image-worship within the Official Church. They soon spread to Europe, bringing their practices with them. The majority of their new followers became equally powerful and equally corrupt. Gibbon writes:

I have somewhere heard or read the frank confession of a Benedictine abbot: 'My vow of poverty has given me a hundred thousand crowns a year; my vow of obedience has raised me to the rank of a sovereign prince.' I forget the consequence of his vow of chastity.<sup>2</sup>

It was in the face of such corruption that the movement of the Paulician Cathariis achieved such popularity. Theirs was by no means the only Unitarian movement to spring out of the decay of the Catholic Church in France. Another prominent group of people who rejected the trinitarian dogma were the Waldenses.

They were named after Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons who lived in the twelfth century. He had a New Testament translated into Romance, and a collection of extracts from the writings of the early Christian Fathers, known as 'sentences'. He studied these and learnt them by heart. He arrived at the conviction that nowhere was anyone living as Jesus had lived. He gave his land to his wife, sold his property, put his daughters in an abbey and gave what money was left to the poor. He went preaching everywhere, and soon had a large following of men and women:

They entered houses announcing the gospel to the inmates; they preached in the churches,

they discoursed in the public places, and everywhere they found eager listeners, for...the negligence and indulgence of the clergy had rendered the function of preaching almost a forgotten duty.<sup>3</sup>

They wore robes and sandals, emulating Jesus, and became known as the 'Poor Men of Lyons'. They soon met with opposition from the Official Church, for they refused to worship Jesus as God. They refused obedience to the authority of the Pope and his prelates since according to the apostles, they said, God is to be obeyed rather than man. They said that the concept of purgatory, and the costly masses and alms which the clergy commissioned from people with the promise of avoiding it, and the lucrative sacrament of confession, and the priesthood itself, were all inventions of man and not taught by Jesus. They said that women could preach. They held that prayer and remembrance of God in bed, or in a room, or in a stable was as efficacious and as acceptable to God as in a church.

In about 1190, the Poor Men of Lyons' joined with the Paulician Catharii. Their numbers were now so large that the Catholic Church was in danger of being superseded and replaced by them. They rejected the whole structure of the priesthood of the Official Church as an innovation, for they knew that every human being has direct access to God. They had their own gospels, written in Romance. These were accessible to all who wished to read them, which was very popular with the people who, under the rule of the Catholic Church, had very little access even to the official gospels. They were accessible only to the priests and not to the common people, for it was feared that if anyone could read all the Bible, then many more people would realize how far removed the practices of the Roman Catholic Church were from those of Jesus:

Thus for instance Fra. Fulgentio was reprimanded by the Pope in a letter saying, 'Preaching of the Scriptures is a suspicious thing. He who keeps close to the Scripture will ruin the Catholic faith.' In his next letter

he was more explicit, warning against too much insistence on the scriptures 'which is a book if anyone keeps close to, he will quite destroy the Catholic Church.'<sup>4</sup>

The only way the Official Church could maintain its status quo was by suppression, repression and oppression.

The fundamental faith of the Catharii, on the other hand, was not conducive to persecution, because acceptance into their number depended upon baptism voluntarily sought for, often with tears and supplication, by a faithful and penitent adult. There could be no dragooning of the unwilling into such a church. On the contrary, the whole purpose of the scrutiny to which a candidate for baptism was subjected, was to ensure that his heart and intelligence were won. This was in order to guard against that merely outward show of conformity, which is all that a persecutor can hope to impose.

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At the beginning of the thirteenth century, therefore, the Roman Catholic Church was in an almost impossible situation. On one hand the institution was threatened with severe corruption from within its own structure. On the other hand it was faced with redundancy on account of the popularity of the teaching of the Paulicians. Furthermore its attention was divided and diverted by its involvement in the folly of the Crusades. Much of its activity at this time was directed towards attempting to halt the rapid advance of Islam and to recapture Jerusalem:

The leaders of the Vatican must have seen the marked similarity between Islam and Unitarianism as preached by Arius. Both believed in One God. Both accepted Jesus as a prophet who nevertheless was still a man. Both believed in the Virgin Mary and in the immaculate conception of Jesus, and both accepted the Holy Spirit but rejected the divinity which had been attributed to him. So the hatred for

the Arians was transferred to the Muslims. Looking at the Crusades with this perspective they cease to be an isolated phenomenon of Church history, but become an extension of the massacre of the Arians by the Pauline church. <sup>5</sup>

There is no scope in the present work to cover the phenomenon of the Crusades either in depth or detail. They began and ended in confusion, and many people died in the process. The first Crusade which began in 1096 was formed, writes Gibbon, mostly of thieves and criminals. This was the consequence of the Council of Clermont in 1095 in which the Pope proclaimed that anyone who joined the Crusade would be given full dispensation of all his sins and would be relieved of any criminal penance he might owe.

The practice of granting dispensations had been instituted in the fifth century by the Catholic Church. In return for a sum of money the Pope would grant a licence either to excuse or to permit an action which was otherwise canonically illegal. Similarly anyone who had made use of the rite of confession and had been given a very heavy penance to absolve his sins, could pay the Church money instead. These practices made the Church very rich and many of the people very poor.

As a result of the decree of the Council of Clermont, anyone who had committed some wrong action, from theft to murder, flocked under the banner of the cross. The rabble of 60,000 men and women pillaged their way across Europe. On reaching Hungary they came face to face with Paulicians whose forefathers had originally been driven north from Thrace by the persecution of the Empress Theodora and her successors. There was a major battle, and two-thirds of the Crusaders were killed. The survivors took refuge in the mountains of Thrace. The Emperor of Constantinople came to their rescue and safely conducted them to the city. When they reached Constantinople, its treasures proved a great temptation for them. They would have plundered the city had the Emperor not swiftly conducted them over the Bosphorus.

Reinforcements of better-trained soldiers were sent to join the remnants of the first Crusaders. When, led by Godfrey,

they arrived at Constantinople, they proceeded to fight the Emperor and laid siege to the city. The Emperor, however, managed to bribe and persuade them to hold to their original plan which was to fight the Muslims and to take Jerusalem, and they too were conducted across the Bosphorus. Godfrey eventually reached and conquered Jerusalem in 1099.

The Second Crusade was undertaken forty-eight years after the fall of Jerusalem in 1170 in order to support the survivors of the First Crusade. The gates of the cities both in Europe and Asia were closely barred against the Crusaders, and food was only let down to them from the walls in baskets. This food was of the poorest quality, stale, and often unfit for human consumption. The Crusaders were plagued by famine and pestilence. Many of them died before they reached Palestine. The survivors were killed in battle. Jerusalem was reconquered by the Muslims in 1187.

The Third Crusade, led by, among others, King Richard of England, failed to recapture Jerusalem. Richard returned to England in 1192 with the remnants of an army which had been decimated by shipwreck and battle.

The Fourth Crusade chose an easier object of conquest and, despite the fact that Constantinople was in the hands of the Official Christians, succeeded where the first two crusades had failed. In 1203, they burst into the ancient capital of the East, pillaging and plundering. The churches were ransacked, and the booty from them not only subsequently popularized the practice of image-worship in the west, but also greatly increased the wealth of the Roman Catholic Church:

The most enlightened of the strangers, above the gross and sensual pursuits of their countrymen, more piously exercised the right of conquest in the search and seizure of the relics of the saints. Immense was the supply of heads and bones, crosses and images, that were scattered by this revolution over the churches of Europe; and such was the increase of pilgrimage and oblation, that no branch, perhaps, of more lucrative plunder was imported from the east. Of the writings

of antiquity, many that still existed in the twelfth century are now lost...without computing the extent of our loss, we may drop a tear over the libraries that have perished in the triple fire of Constantinople. <sup>6</sup>

Despite the wealth which accrued from the sack of Constantinople, the Crusades were a costly business, not only financially but in terms of lives. With the growth of the Paulician movement in France, the Catholic Church was forced to direct its attention towards securing its position in Europe itself. This change in emphasis was probably one of the major reasons for the failure of the Fifth Crusade, which started in 1218. The Church had committed itself to attacking the Muslims of Sicily and North Africa, the Muslims of Turkey and Palestine, the Muslims of Spain, and now the Paulician Catharii of France. It was impossible to maintain a successful degree of aggression on all fronts at all four points of the compass for very long. Inevitably the Church was forced to reduce its ambitious activities, and to direct its attention towards its enemies who were nearest Rome.

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The persecution of the Paulician Catharii in France began in earnest at the very beginning of the thirteenth century. As we have seen, it was directed at those Unitarians who were settled in Albigeois, and they are often referred to as the Albigenses.

A papal legate called Peter was assassinated in 1208 and the Albigenses were held responsible. Pope Innocent III called for a crusade to be directed against them. Simon de Montfort was chosen to lead it. The massacre of Béziers was perhaps his most notable victory. Reginald, the Bishop of Béziers, was with the crusading forces, and when they arrived before the city he obtained from the legate authority to offer the town hall exemption if the heretics, of whom he had a list, were delivered up to him.

When he entered the town, and called its chief inhabitants together, the offer was unanimously spurned. Since most of

the families in the town had at least some Unitarian members, they were not willing to expose their own relations and friends to torture and death, which anyone handed over to the papal legate would face:

Catharians and Catholics were too firmly united in bonds of common relationship and old associations for one to betray the other...This unexpected answer stirred the legate to such wrath that he swore to destroy the place with fire and sword...the legate's oath was fulfilled by a massacre almost without parallel in European history. From infancy in arms to tottering age, not one was spared - seven thousand, it is said, were slaughtered in the Church of Mary Magdalen to which they had fled for asylum - and the total number of slain is set down by the legates at nearly twenty thousand. <sup>7</sup>

Since the population of Béziers was at least one hundred thousand people, it is likely that the number of slain was much higher than the official record, for:

...when Arnaud was asked whether the Catholics should be spared, he feared the heretics would escape by feigning orthodoxy, and fiercely replied, 'Kill them all, for God knows his own.' <sup>8</sup>

This massacre, whose details writers of European history often choose to omit, together with the Battle of Murat in 1213 in which Simon de Montfort won a decisive victory over the Unitarians, signalled the beginning of another intense burst of activity of the Church against the Paulicians. The mediaeval version of the Inquisition was launched into action and it mercilessly persecuted the 'heretics' and burnt their books. Like the other Unitarians of the past there is hardly any record left today of the Paulician Catharii. They and their books have been virtually wiped out.

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It is often claimed that the Mediaeval Inquisition was not initiated specifically to exterminate those who affirmed the Divine Unity. It is said that initially this institution was more concerned with reconditioning corrupt priests and converting people to the religion of the Catholic Church. This is supported by the words of Pope Innocent III who, in his opening address to the great Lateran Council in 1215, declared:

The corruption of the people has its chief source in the clergy. From this arise the evils of Christendom: faith perishes, religion is defaced, liberty is restricted, justice is trodden underfoot, the 'heretics' multiply, the schismatics are emboldened, the faithless grow strong, the Saracens are victorious. <sup>9</sup>

As the Mediaeval Inquisition evolved, however, it soon directed its activities away from the curing of its own corruption, and turned its attention towards the elimination of 'heretics'. The success of the Mediaeval Inquisition in this field was largely due to two factors. Its functions were supported by extensive laws, and they were carried out by able administrators. All the ecclesiastical bulls and canons, especially those of Pope Innocent II, were incorporated into the secular law of Italy and France. The work of capturing 'heretics', and extorting their confessions before handing them over to the secular authorities for punishment, was performed by the mendicant orders of the Franciscans and the Dominicans.

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The two great orders of the Franciscans and the Dominicans grew out of an attempt to return to a simple life of poverty based on the life of Jesus as related in the official gospels. Both of their leaders, Francis and Dominic, received papal recognition at the beginning of the thirteenth century, when their respective followings were still very small. The

two brotherhoods grew rapidly, since the first members provided a far healthier and more honest example and source of guidance than the corrupt priests of the Official Church.

Their two movements, however, were quite distinct and separate from those of the Waldenses and the Paulician Catharii. Although they had begun in an attempt to regain a way of life closer to that of Jesus, the Franciscans and the Dominicans never rejected trinitarian dogma. They were thus a regenerative energy within the structure of the Official Church and not apart from it. Since these brotherhoods were based on a high standard of obedience, both amongst themselves and to the Pope, they soon proved themselves to be invaluable agents for the head of the Church:

...their peculiar devotion to the Holy See rendered them specially useful in organizing the papal Inquisition which was to supercede by degrees the episcopal jurisdiction, and prove so efficient an instrument in reducing the local churches to subjection. <sup>10</sup>

The mediaeval version of the Inquisition has sometimes been said to have been founded on April 29, 1233, the day on which Gregory issued two bulls making the persecution of 'heresy' the special function of the Dominicans. The first bull was addressed to the clergy. After reciting the necessity of subduing 'heresy', and discussing the raising up by God of the preaching friars, who devote themselves in voluntary poverty to spreading the Word and extirpating misbelief, Gregory proceeded to tell the bishops:

We, seeing you engrossed in the whirlwind of cares and scarce able to breathe in the pressure of overwhelming anxieties, think it well to divide your burdens that they may be more easily borne. We have therefore determined to send preaching friars against the 'heretics' of France and the adjoining provinces, and we beg, warn and exhort you, ordering you, as you reverence the Holy See, to receive them

kindly and treat them well, giving them in this, as in all else, honour, counsel and aid, that they may fulfil their office. <sup>11</sup>

The second bull was addressed to 'the Priors, and Friars of the Order of Preachers, Inquisitors', and after alluding to the 'Sons of perdition' who defined 'heresy', it proceeds:

Therefore you, or any of you, wherever you may happen to preach, are empowered, unless they desist from such defence (of 'heretics') or monition, to deprive clerks of their benefices forever, and to proceed against them and all others, without appeal, calling in the aid of the secular arm, if necessary, and coercing opposition if requisite, with the censures of the Church, without appeal. <sup>12</sup>

When the Dominican Friars arrived in France, they were not welcomed by the priesthood; for having found popularity with many people, the friars began to perform all the functions which the old priesthood had relied on as their main source of income. A concerted effort was made to have the privileges of the Orders removed, but it failed. A petition was made to Clement VI for the abolition of the Orders, or at least the prohibition of their preaching and hearing confessions, and enjoying the burial profits by which, especially during the time of the plague, they were enormously enriched at the expense of the parish priests. Pope Clement VI, however, denied the allegation of the petition that the friars were useless to the Church and asserted that, on the contrary, they were most valuable:

"And if," he continued, "their preaching be stopped, about what can you preach to the people? If on humility, you yourselves are the proudest of the world, arrogant and given to pomp. If on poverty, you are the most grasping and covetous, so that all the benefices in the world will not satisfy you. If on chastity - but we will be silent on this, for God knoweth what each man does and how many of you satisfy your lusts. You hate the Mendicants and shut your doors on them lest they

should see your mode of life, while you waste your temporal wealth on pimps and swindlers. You should not complain if the Mendicants receive some temporal possessions from the dying to whom they minister when you have fled, nor that they spend it in buildings where everything is ordered for the honour of God and the Church, in place of wasting it in pleasure and licentiousness. And because you do not likewise, you accuse the Mendicants, for most of you give yourselves up to vain and worldly lives." <sup>13</sup>

The friars continued their work in France and their numbers increased. By now the Franciscan friars were as numerous in France as the Dominicans. Having established their presence in the country, they turned to the elimination of heretics. As conversion became less the object, and persecution the main business, of the Inquisition, the Franciscans became equally as useful as the Dominicans, and the honours of the Church were divided between them. The two brotherhoods formed an efficient, mobile and widespread organisation. They became the perfect instrument of the Pope to eliminate 'heresy'. Once established they became very rich and very powerful, and eventually suffered the same degeneration and corruption as the old Official Church, to which they had originally grown up in opposition. The original visions and precepts of their founders were forgotten. Those who tried to keep to them were ridiculed.

St Francis himself had foretold on his deathbed, as he lay naked beneath the blanket, possessing nothing, that his Order would become so defamed that it would be ashamed to be seen in public. Lea writes:

As the Order spread it was not in human nature to reject the wealth which came pouring in upon it from all sides, and ingenious dialectics were resorted to, to reconcile its ample possessions with the absolute rejection of property prescribed by the Rule. The humble hovels which Francis had enjoined became stately palaces which arose in every city, rivalling or putting to shame the loftiest cathedrals and most sumptuous abbeys. <sup>14</sup>

Birgitta, in her 'Revelations', which were sanctioned by the Church as inspired declares that:

...although founded upon vows of poverty, they have amassed riches, place their whole aim in increasing their wealth, dress as richly as bishops, and many of them are more extravagant in their jewelry and ornaments than laymen who are reputed wealthy. <sup>15</sup>

When Pope John XXII eventually stigmatized as heretical the belief that Christ lived in absolute poverty, he transformed the last of the friars who might still be following the founders of their brotherhoods into unpardonable criminals whom the temporal officials were bound to send to the stake, under pain of being themselves treated as heretics if they did not.

By the year 1519 Erasmus was complaining in a letter to Albert, Cardinal-Archbishop of Mainz:

The world is overburdened with the tyranny of the Mendicants, who, though they are the satellites of the Roman See, are yet so numerous and powerful that they are formidable to the pope himself and even to kings. To them, when the pope aids them, he is more than God, when he displeases them he is worthless as a dream. <sup>16</sup>

It was to these rich and powerful brotherhoods that the duties of Inquisitors were entrusted, and once the Mediaeval Inquisition in France was established, they became a law unto themselves.

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The process by which the designs of the Church became the law of the land was a rapid one. At the Lateran Council of 1215, Innocent III instituted a series of severe regulations defining the attitude of the Church to heretics, and the duties

which the secular power owed to exterminate them. These regulations became a recognised part of canon law but were not immediately incorporated into the secular law.

This disparity in the two branches of the law was soon remedied by Frederic II, who had to win the favour of Pope Honorius III in order to secure his coronation. This took place in 1220 on the understanding that Frederic II would then make the persecution of 'heretics' legal. In a series of edicts dating from 1220 to 1239 he thus enacted a complete and pitiless code of persecution, based upon the Lateran canons.

Those who were merely suspected of heresy were required to purge themselves at the command of the Church, under penalty of being deprived of civil rights and placed under the imperial ban; while, if they remained in this condition for a year, they were to be condemned as heretics. Heretics of all sects were outlawed; and when condemned as such by the Church they were to be delivered to the secular arm to be burned. If, through fear of death, they recanted, they were to be thrust in prison for life there to perform penance. If they relapsed into 'error' those showing that their conversion had been fictitious, they were to be put to death. All the property of the heretic was confiscated and his heirs disinherited. His children to the second generation were declared ineligible to any positions of emolument or dignity, unless they should win mercy by betraying their father or some other heretic. All those who helped or defended heretics in any way were banished forever, their property confiscated, and their descendants subjected to the same disabilities as those of heretics.

Those who defended the errors of heretics were to be treated as heretics unless, on admonition, they mended their ways. The houses of the heretics and their receivers were to be destroyed never to be rebuilt. Although the evidence of a heretic was not receivable in court, yet an exception was made in favour of the faith, and it was held good against another heretic. All rulers and magistrates, present or future, were required to swear to exterminate with their utmost ability all whom the Church might designate as heretics, under pain of forfeiture of office.

When the papal Inquisition was officially inaugurated

and put in the charge of the friars, Frederic II hastened, in 1232, to place the whole machinery of the state at the command of the inquisitors, who were authorized to call upon any official to capture whomsoever they might designate as a 'heretic', and hold him in prison until the Church should condemn him, when he was to put to death.

The decrees made by Frederic II were strengthened by the Council of Narbonne in 1244. An elaborate series of canons were framed, which remained the basis of inquisitional action, and which ensured the full co-operation of the secular authorities. Anyone holding temporal jurisdiction who delayed in exterminating heretics was held guilty of fautorship of heresy, becoming an accomplice of heretics, and thus was subjected to the penalties of heresy. This was extended to all who should neglect a favourable opportunity of capturing a heretic, or of helping those seeking to capture him. Everyone in the land was thus compelled by fear of death to help implement Church policy:

From the emperor to the meanest peasant the duty of persecution was enforced with all the sanctions, spiritual and temporal, which the Church could command. Not only must the ruler enact rigorous laws to punish 'heretics', but he and his subjects must see them strenuously executed for any slackness of persecution was, in the canon law, construed as fautorship of heresy, putting a man on his purgation.

These principles were tacitly or explicitly received into the public law of Europe...the inquisitor was commanded to coerce all officials to their rigid enforcement, by excommunicating those who were negligent in the 'good work'. Even excommunication, which rendered a magistrate incompetent to perform his official functions, did not relieve him from the duty of punishing 'heretics' when called upon by bishop or inquisitor.<sup>17</sup>

The measures governing the jurisdiction and functions of the Mediaeval Inquisition culminated and were basically completed by the famous bull, 'Ad Extirpanda' - Towards Obliteration, which was issued by Pope Innocent IV to all the potentates and governors of Italy, on May 15, 1252. This carefully considered and elaborate law established the machinery for systematic persecution as an integral part of the social edifice in every city and state and it was soon adopted in France as well. It ordered and standardized the various offices within the Inquisition, giving them almost unlimited freedom of action. Their sole business was to arrest 'heretics', seize their goods, and deliver them to the bishop, or his vicars, who would pronounce the victim's spiritual guilt, before passing him over to the local authorities to be burnt.

The inquisitors' wages and expenses were to be defrayed by the state, their evidence was receivable without oaths, and no testimony was good against the concurrent statement of any three of them. They were entitled to one third of the proceeds of all fines and confiscations inflicted on 'heretics', which partly explains how the friars became so rich so swiftly. They were exempt from all public duties and services incompatible with their functions, and no statutes were to be passed interfering with their actions.

The governors and officials of any province or potentate were bound to help the Inquisitors whenever they visited them, and every inhabitant when called upon was obliged to assist them, under a heavy penalty if he did not. When the Inquisitors visited any district within their jurisdiction they were accompanied by a deputy of the local governor elected by themselves or by the bishop. In each place visited, this official was to summon under oath three men of good repute, or even the whole vicarage, to reveal any 'heretics' within their knowledge, or the property of such, or of anyone holding secret gatherings or differing in life or manners from the ordinary Christians. These methods, used by the inquisitors to winkle out 'heretics' when they came to a village or a town for the first time, were to be perfected by the Spanish Inquisition who introduced the famous Edicts of Grace and Edicts of Faith in order to render these measures more efficient.

The local authorities were bound to arrest all those who



were accused of 'heresy', to hold them in prison, to deliver them to the bishop or inquisitor under safe escort, and to execute within fifteen days, in accordance with Frederic's decrees, all judgments pronounced against them. The governor was further required, when called upon, to inflict torture on those who would not confess and betray all the heretics of their acquaintance. If resistance was made to an arrest, the whole community where it occurred was liable to an enormous fine unless it delivered up to justice within three days all who were implicated. The proceeds of fines, commutations and confiscations were divisible into three parts, one was given to the city, one to those concerned in the business, and the remainder to the bishop and inquisitors to be expended in persecuting heresy.

The enforcement of these dire measures contained in the bull of Pope Innocent IV was provided for with equally careful elaboration. They were to be inscribed ineffaceably in all the local statute-books, together with all subsequent laws which the popes might issue, under penalty of excommunication for recalcitrant officials, and interdict upon the city. Any attempt to alter these laws consigned the offender to perpetual infamy and fine, enforced by the ban. The governors and their officials were to swear to their observance under pain of loss of office. Any neglect in their enforcement was punishable as perjury with perpetual infamy, a fine of two hundred marks, and suspicion of heresy, which involved loss of office, disability for all official positions in the future, and the likelihood of being tortured and killed as a heretic.

Every governor, within ten days after assuming office, was required to investigate the acts of his predecessor and prosecute him for any failure of obedience. Every governor at the beginning and end of his term was required to have the bull read out in all places that might be designated by the bishop and inquisitors, and to erase from the statute-books all laws in conflict with them. At the same time Pope Innocent IV issued instructions to the inquisitors to enforce by excommunication the embodiment of this, and of the edicts of King Frederic II, in the statutes of all cities and states. He soon after conferred on them the dangerous power of interpreting, in conjunction with the bishops, all doubtful points in local laws

on the subject of heresy.

These laws, combined with the efficiency of the friars to enforce them, made the Mediaeval Inquisition into a formidable means of destruction. Its activities were surpassed only by the Spanish Inquisition which grew from it, and which may be regarded as a continuation of it. They provide perhaps the most elaborate and detailed example of an attempt to enforce the religion of the Official Church in its entire history:

"These provisions," writes Lea, "are not the wild imaginings of a nightmare, but sober matter-of-fact legislation shrewdly and carefully devised to accomplish a settled policy, and it affords us a valuable insight into the public opinion of the day to find that there was no effective resistance to its acceptance."<sup>18</sup>

In the exercise of this almost limitless authority, the inquisitors were relieved from practically all supervision and responsibility. They were not liable to excommunication while in discharge of their duties, nor could they be suspended by any delegate of the Holy See. Commissions were continually issued directly by the Pope, and those who held them seem not to have been removable by anyone else. They acknowledged responsibility only to the Pope. Their jurisdiction was thus almost unlimited, for suspicion of heresy was to be technically inferred from anything which affected the dignity or crossed the purpose of those who carried on the Inquisition.

That laymen learned to address them as 'your religious majesty' shows the impression made on the popular mind by their irresponsible supremacy...It required, indeed, courage to foolhardiness for anyone to raise hand or voice against an inquisitor, no matter how cruel or nefarious were his actions. Under canon law, anyone, from the meanest to the highest, who opposed or impeded in any way the functions of an inquisitor, or gave aid or counsel to those who did so, became at once ipso facto excommunicate. After a lapse of a year in this condition he was legally a heretic

to be handed over without further ceremony to the secular arm for burning, without trial and without forgiveness. The awful authority which thus shrouded the inquisitor was rendered yet more terrible by the elasticity of definition given to the crime of impeding the Holy Office and the tireless tenacity with which those guilty of it were pursued.<sup>19</sup>

The fear which the inquisitors instilled in people's hearts was perhaps their greatest weapon in detecting 'heretics,' although it must have often driven people to tell lies rather than the truth. The inquisitors were faced with impossible task of ascertaining the secret thoughts and opinions of the prisoner, and their methods were calculated to simplify the process by putting the words they wanted to hear into the mouths of their victims.

The first thing demanded of the offender when he appeared before the tribunal was an oath to stand to the mandates of the Church, to answer truly all questions asked of him, to betray all heretics known to him, and to perform whatever penance might be imposed on him. Refusal to take this oath was to proclaim himself at once a defiant and obstinate heretic. If he agreed to give the oath he still had to convince the inquisitors that he was speaking the truth:

That plain-spoken friar, Bernard Dalicieux, uttered the literal truth when he declared, in the presence of Philippe le Bel and all his court that if St. Peter and St. Paul were accused of 'adoring' heretics there would be no defence open for them. Questioned as to their faith, they would answer like masters in theology and doctors of the Church, but when told that they had adored heretics, and they asked what heretics, some names common in those parts, would be mentioned, but no particulars as to time and place, no facts would be furnished, and when they would demand the names of the witnesses these would be

withheld. How, then, asked Bernard, could the holy apostles defend themselves, especially when anyone who wished to aid them would himself be attacked as a fautor of heresy? It was so. The victim was enveloped in a net from which there was no escape, and his frantic struggles only twisted it more tightly around him.<sup>20</sup>

The inquisitors usually resorted to torture, which was common in judicial practice throughout Europe at this time, in order to ensure that they were obtaining the right answers. Some of the tortures which they used derived from those which had been used against the Arians and the Donatists in North Africa under the Theodosian Code. As well as what took place in secret, the accused persons were often publicly subjected to 'Judicium Dei' in the Trials by Water and Fire. These physical tests, which originated from the practices of the Franks and were popular in Europe from about 450 onwards, were sanctioned by the Church and conducted under the direction of the clergy. The outcome was regarded as the immediate judgment of God. It was expected that fire should not burn the innocent, and that the pure element of water would not allow the guilty to sink into its midst.

The most popular of these tests was the Hot Iron Test, in which the accused carried a ball of red-hot iron in his hand for nine steps. If burnt he was guilty. In the Plough Share Test the accused was asked to walk blindfold between red-hot plough-shares. If he was burnt by them he was guilty. In the Hot Water Test, the accused was asked to plunge his arm into a cauldron of boiling water, either up to the wrist or to the elbow according to the gravity of the charge. The scalded part of his arm was then bandaged. After three days had elapsed the priest examined it. If the scald was not healed, he was guilty. In the Cold Water Test the accused was thrown into deep water. If he floated he was guilty. If he sank he was innocent, but if he drowned it was taken as proof of his guilt. Perhaps the most lenient of the tests was the one in which the accused was given an ounce of dry bread or cheese to swallow. If it stuck in his throat he was guilty. One of the effects of

fear is a dry throat, so only the fearless could pass this test. These trials by ordeal were always preceded by a mass. The Council of Rheims in 1157 decreed that Trial by Ordeal should be used in all cases of suspected heresy.

In prosecutions for heresy the ecclesiastical tribunal passed no judgments of blood. It merely found the defendant to be a heretic. Once the guilt of a heretic was established, the inquisitors then handed him over to the secular authorities with the hypocritical adjuration to be merciful to him, to spare his life and not to spill his blood. The authorities were then bound to burn, or at least imprison for life, their victim, under the threat of themselves being punished as heretics if they did not. This sophisticated but transparently unjust procedure was no less than an attempt to absolve all parties concerned from being responsible for their own actions:

The penal functions of the Inquisition were based on a fiction which must be comprehended in order rightly to appreciate much of its action. Theoretically it had no power to inflict punishment. Its mission was to save men's souls...Its sentences, therefore, were not like those of an earthly judge, the retaliation of society on the wrong-doer, or deterrent examples to prevent the spread of crime; they were simply imposed for the benefit of the erring soul, to wash away its sin. <sup>21</sup>

This supposedly philanthropic argument, however, was no less than an attempt to hide the fact that the distinction made between the 'secular' authorities and the 'ecclesiastical' authorities, was entirely imaginary. The two institutions were in reality the same body whose motivating force was from within that body. The Official Church was establishing its religion in the only way possible to do so, by force. And the action of the secular authority was in no way separate from, but was an expression, an extension of, the motivating force of the Official Church:

The continuous teachings of the Church led

its best men to regard no act as more self-evidently just than the burning of the 'heretic', and no 'heresy' less defensible than a demand for toleration...The fact is, the Church not only defined the guilt and forced its punishment, but created the crime itself. <sup>22</sup>

\* \* \*

The whole might of the Mediaeval Inquisition was directed against the Paulician Catharii during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and not only those who denied trinitarianism but also anyone who refused to practise the official religion was mercilessly hounded down and killed. The fact that suspicion of heresy was reason enough to arrest and torture a man, gave the Inquisitors a wide latitude in selecting their victims. However there was no difficulty in detecting the true Paulicians, for they were easily recognizable by the Inquisitors because of the way they behaved. An Inquisitor who knew them well describes them:

Heretics are recognizable by their customs and speech, for they are modest and well regulated. They take no pride in their garments, which are neither costly nor vile. They do not engage in trade, to avoid lies and oaths and frauds, but they live by their labour as mechanics - their teachers are cobblers. They do not accumulate wealth, but are content with necessities. They are chaste and temperate in meat and drink. They do not frequent taverns or dances or other vanities. They restrain themselves from anger. They are always at work; they teach and learn and consequently pray but little. They are to be known by their modesty and precision of speech, avoiding scurrility and detraction and light words and lies and oaths. <sup>23</sup>

It is clear that their only crime was their rejection of the doc-

trine of the Trinity, for:

As St. Bernard says, 'If you interrogate them, nothing can be more Christian; as to their conversation, nothing can be more Christian; as to their conversation, nothing can be less reprehensible, and what they speak they prove by deeds. As for the morals of the heretic, he cheats no-one, he oppresses no-one, he strikes no-one; his cheeks are pale with fasting, he eats not the bread of idleness, his hands labour for his livelihood.' <sup>24</sup>

Even in the face of death, the Paulician Catharii retained their honesty and sincerity:

It was the general testimony that the perfected heretic refused to lie, or to take an oath; and one member of the Holy Office warns his brethren not to begin by asking, 'Are you truly a Cathari?' for the answer will simply be 'Yes', and then nothing more can be extracted; but if the perfect is exhorted by the God in whom he believes to tell all about his life, he will faithfully detail it without falsehood. When we consider that this frankness led inevitably to the torture of death by burning, it is curious to observe that the inquisitor seems utterly unconscious of the emphatic testimony which he renders to the superhuman conscientiousness of his victims. <sup>25</sup>

It is impossible to estimate how many Unitarian Christians were eliminated by the Mediaeval Inquisition in the name of the Official Church. The 'Liber Sententiarum', which is the record of the Inquisition of Toulouse from 1307 to 1323, after a century of merciless persecution, alone has 4000 closely printed folio pages which barely suffice to chronicle the cruelties perpetuated in the name of the God of Mercy, by the clergy of the Church of Rome. Conybeare writes:

A hundred such volumes would be needed to record the whole tale of suppression of the European Cathariis. <sup>26</sup>

The success of the Mediaeval Inquisition can be measured by the fact that there is no trace of the Paulician movement alive in Europe today. Like the Arian Goths before them, the Paulician Catharii, their books and their teaching, have disappeared off the face of the earth.

Unlike the Paulician Catharii, the influence of the Mediaeval Inquisition continued for several centuries. The activities of the inquisitors pervaded the whole fabric of society to such a degree that the traces of their ideology are still present within the legal framework of the continent today. The use of torture and of the inquisitorial process were almost exclusively adopted in all judicial processes, and the fact that they became the prominent characteristic of criminal jurisprudence of Europe may solely be ascribed to the fact that they received the sanction of the Church. Thus recommended, they penetrated everywhere along with the Inquisition:

Of all the curses which the Inquisition brought in its train this, perhaps, was the greatest - that, until the closing years of the eighteenth century throughout the greater part of Europe, the inquisitorial process, as developed for the destruction of 'heresy', became the customary method of dealing with all who were under accusation; that the accused was treated as one having no rights, whose guilt was assumed in advance, and from whom confession was to be extorted by guile or force. Even witnesses were treated in the same fashion; and the prisoner who acknowledged guilt under torture was tortured again to obtain information about any other evil-doers of whom he perchance might have knowledge. So, also, the crime of 'suspicion' was imported from the Inquisition into

ordinary practice, and the accused who could not be convicted of the crime laid to his door could be punished for being suspected of it, not with the penalty legally provided for the offence, but with some other, at the fancy and discretion of the judge.

Lea continues:

It would be impossible to compute the amount of misery and wrong, inflicted on the defenceless up to the present century, which may be directly traced to the arbitrary and unrestricted methods introduced by the Inquisition and adopted by the jurists who fashioned the criminal jurisprudence of the Continent. It was a system that might well seem the invention of demons, and was fitly characterized by Sir John Fortescue as the Road to Hell.<sup>27</sup>

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER X

- (1) E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, IV, p. 395.
- (2) *Ibid.*
- (3) H.C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition*, I, p. 77.
- (4) *Jesus Prophet of Islam*.
- (5) *Ibid.*
- (6) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, VII, p. 385.
- (7) *A History of the Inquisition*, I, p. 154.
- (8) *Ibid.*
- (9) *Ibid*, I, p. 129.
- (10) *Ibid*, I, p. 299.
- (11) *Ibid*, I, p. 328.
- (12) *Ibid.*
- (13) *Ibid*, I, p. 283.
- (14) *Ibid*, I, p. 296.
- (15) *Ibid.*
- (16) *Ibid*, I, p. 294.
- (17) *Ibid*, I, p. 226.
- (18) *Ibid*, I, p. 339.
- (19) *Ibid*, I, p. 347.
- (20) *Ibid*, I, p. 450.
- (21) *Ibid*, I, p. 459.
- (22) *Ibid*, I, p. 541.
- (23) *Ibid*, I, p. 85.
- (24) *Ibid*, I, p. 101.
- (25) *Ibid.*
- (26) F.C. Conybeare, *The Key of Truth*, preface, p. 10.
- (27) *A History of the Inquisition*, I, p. 560.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE MUSLIMS IN ANDALUSIA

Europe was darkened at sunset, Cordova shone with public lamps; Europe was dirty, Cordova built a thousand baths; Europe was covered with vermin, Cordova changed its undergarments daily; Europe lay in mud, Cordova's streets were paved; Europe's palaces had smoke-holes in the ceiling, Cordova's arabesques were exquisite; Europe's nobility could not sign its name, Cordova's children went to school; Europe's monks could not read the baptismal service, Cordova's teachers created a library of Alexandrian dimensions.

The story of the destruction of the Muslims in Andalusia is intimately linked with that of the Paulicians. It has been established that the Catholic Church equated the way of the Paulicians with that of Islam, and that its opposition to these two groups who affirmed the Divine Unity, was regarded as one and the same fight. The methods of persecution used by the Mediaeval Inquisition against the Paulician Catharii were developed and perfected by its successor, the Spanish Inquisition. These techniques of destruction were used with devastating results not only against the Muslims but also against the Jews of Spain. Furthermore, the supremacy of the Catholic Church in the south of France during the thirteenth century, made the north of Spain easily accessible to the Christian armies, which, although at one time divided against each other, were united by Pope Innocent III in their attempts to eliminate Islam in Spain. Their actions in Andalusia followed the same pattern of behaviour as had been displayed by the Church ever since its inception in the times of Constantine and Theodosius towards those who affirmed and worshipped the Divine Unity.

It will be remembered that the Muslims arrived on the shores of Africa facing the Iberian peninsula at a time when the vast majority of the Arian Goths who once lived there had been either killed or expelled from the country by the Catholics. Fur-

thermore the persecution of the Jews at that time had reached its peak. Only eighteen years before the Muslims' arrival, a revolt by the Jews had been ruthlessly crushed. Iberia was being governed by a king called Roderick under a decadent feudal system which was supported by the Catholic Church. A large proportion of the population was thus discontented with the existing status quo. They were not only prepared to aid the Muslims once they had arrived in the peninsula, but also their leaders, notably a man called Ilyan (Julian), actively helped the Muslims to plan their strategy and cross over into Andalusia.

It is said that Ilyan, who was the governor of Tangier and Ceuta on King Roderick's behalf had sent his daughter to be educated in Toledo, which was then the Visigothic capital. Roderick had fallen in love with her, been rejected by her, and accordingly raped her. When Ilyan ascertained the truth of this, he made his way to Qayrawan and approached Musa, the governor of the Muslims in North Africa:

He told him what had happened to his daughter, and anxious to revenge the outrage on his enemy, proposed to him the conquest of Andalusia, an undertaking which he represented to him as being of very easy execution. He described Andalusia as an extensive kingdom, filled with treasures of all kinds, whose inhabitants would make very handsome slaves, a country abounding in springs, gardens, rivers and a land yielding every description of fruit and plants.

Musa, who was endowed with much penetration and wit, and who had great experience in all the affairs of war, said to the Christian, 'We doubt not that you are telling the truth, but we fear for the sake of the Muslims and the dangers they may encounter. You wish them to invade a country with which they are not in the least acquainted, and from which they are separated by an intervening sea, while you are bound to your king by the common ties of the idolaters, and united to your countrymen by the

same customs and the same religion. But return to your government, call together your vassals and partisans, cross the Straits in person, and make an incursion into the territory of that king. When you have done this, and begun hostilities, then it will be time for us to follow your steps, God willing.<sup>1</sup>

Ilyan did as he was asked. He gathered a small army together, crossed over to Andalusia and soon returned laden with captives and booty. There was thus no longer any chance of reconciliation between him and King Roderick. In the meantime Musa had written to the Khalif Al-Walid ibn 'Abdu'l-Malik in Damascus and received permission to follow up Ilyan's proposals, provided that he first explored Andalusia with light troops in order to judge the real strength of Roderick's army, and to ensure that the Muslims would not be double-crossed.

On hearing of Ilyan's successful foray in Andalusia, a small force of Berbers under the leadership of a man called Tarif, crossed over and met with similar success. Ilyan went a second time to Musa and again urged him to undertake the conquest of Andalusia. Musa sent for his freedman, Tariq ibn Ziyad, gave him the command of twelve thousand Arabs and Berbers, and ordered him to invade Andalusia with the help of Ilyan and his troops. Ilyan supplied the necessary boats, and on a summer's day in 711 AD (92 AH), they set sail for Andalusia. Tariq decided to have a short sleep before they reached their destination:

They say that while he was sailing across that arm of the sea which separates Africa from Andalusia, he saw in a dream the Prophet Muhammad, surrounded by Arabs of the *Muhajirun* and *Ansar*, who with unsheathed swords and bended bows stood close by him, and that he heard the Prophet say, 'Take courage, O Tariq! and accomplish what you are destined to perform'; and that having looked round him he saw the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be the peace and salutation of his Lord, who with his Companions was entering

Andalus. Tariq then awoke from his sleep and, delighted with this good omen, hastened to communicate the miraculous circumstances to his followers, who were much pleased and strengthened. Tariq himself was no much struck by the dream that from that moment he never doubted of victory.<sup>2</sup>

He anchored close to what is now known as Gibraltar, deriving from the Arabic, '*Jabal Tariq*', the mountain of Tariq. Under the cover of darkness the army landed unobserved. Once the army had disembarked, Tariq set fire to all the boats, and informed his troops that their choice was a simple one: they must either conquer Andalusia or die in the way of Allah.

After a few small skirmishes in the south, the Muslims' presence was made known to Roderick, who had been occupied in suppressing an uprising of the Basque people in the north of the peninsula. He gathered his army together and marched out to meet Tariq at the head of one hundred thousand cavalry:

The tyrant came on a litter borne by three mules placed in a row; a vaulted canopy, sprinkled with pearls, rubies, and the richest jewels, was spread over him to screen him from the rays of the sun; he was dressed in a robe made of strings of pearls, interwoven with silk, and followed by long trains of mules whose only load was ropes to pinion the arms of the captives, for he did not doubt that he would soon make every one of the Arabs his prisoner.

...Roderick marched his army to Cordova, meaning to attack Tariq; and when he came close to him he (Roderick) chose among his host a man of tried courage and experienced in the affairs and stratagems of war; he directed him to go under some pretence to Tariq's camp, and observe all the movements of his man, so as to be able to report to him on their numbers, looks, and general appearance.

...The man did as he was commanded; he

approached the tents of the Muslims, and Tariq, having been informed of it, put into practice the following stratagem in order to overawe his enemies. He ordered the flesh of the slain to be cut piecemeal, and to be dressed as if it were to be served for the men's repast; Tariq's men did as they were ordered, they cut up the dead bodies and cooked the flesh in large cauldrons; and when Roderick's messenger saw this he doubted not but that the Muslims fed upon dead bodies. However, Tariq, having caused the human flesh to be privately removed and buried during the night, had beef and mutton dressed in its stead, and, when in the morning the men were summoned to partake of their repast, Roderick's messenger was also invited to partake of it, and he ate along with them.

The repast concluded, the messenger returned to his master, and said to him, 'Your kingdom has been invaded by a nation of people who feed upon the flesh of the slain; their description is the same as that found by you in the sealed palace; they have set fire to their vessels, and seem determined either to conquer to perish.' This news filled Roderick and his men with utter consternation, but the conquest had now become inevitable.<sup>3</sup>

The two armies met on the banks of the Guadalete, Roderick's comprising of about one hundred thousand men, Tariq's numbering somewhere twelve and seventeen thousand men. Tariq is said to have addressed the Muslims with the following words:

Where can you fly, the enemy is in your front, the sea at your back? By Allah! There is no salvation for you but in your courage and perseverance. Consider your situation; - here you are on this island like so many orphans cast upon the world; you will soon be met by a powerful

enemy surrounding you on all sides like the infuriated billows of a tempestuous sea, and sending against you his countless warriors, drowned in steel, and provided with every store and description of arms. What can you oppose to them? You have no other weapons than your swords, no provisions but those that you may snatch from the hands of your enemies; you must therefore attack them immediately, or otherwise your wants will increase, the winds of victory may no longer blow in your favour, and perhaps the fear that lurks in the hearts of your enemies may be changed into indomitable courage. Banish all fear from your hearts, trust that victory shall be ours, and that the unbelieving king will not be able to withstand the shock of our arms. Here he comes to make us the masters of his cities and castles, and to deliver into our hands his countless treasures; and if you only seize the opportunity now presented, it may perhaps be the means of your becoming the owners of them, besides saving yourselves from certain death.

Do not think that I impose upon you a task from which I shrink myself, or that I try to conceal from you the dangers attending this expedition. No: you have certainly a great deal to encounter, but know that if you only suffer for a while, you will reap in the end an abundant harvest of pleasures and enjoyments. And do not imagine that while I speak to you I mean not to act as I speak, for as my interest in this affair is greater, so will my behaviour on this occasion surpass yours. You must have heard numerous accounts of this island, you must know how the Grecian maidens, as handsome as houris, their necks glittering with innumerable pearls and jewels, their bodies clothed with tunics of costly silks sprinkled with gold, are waiting your arrival, reclining on soft couches



in the sumptuous palaces of crowned lords and princes.

You know well that the Khalif 'Abdu'l-Malik ibn al-Walid has chosen you, like so many heroes, from among the brave; you know that the great lords of this island are willing to make you their sons and brethren by marriage, if you only rush on like so many brave men to the fight, and behave like true champions and valiant warriors; you know that the rewards of Allah await you if you are prepared to uphold His words, and proclaim His religion in this island; and, lastly, that all the spoil shall be yours, and of such Muslims as may be with you. Bear in mind that Allah the Almighty will select according to this promise, those that distinguish themselves most among you, and grant them due reward, both in this world and in the world after this; and know likewise that I shall be the first to set upon you the example, and to put in practice what I recommend you to do; for it is my intention, on the meeting of the two hosts, to attack the Christian tyrant Roderick and kill him with my own hand, if Allah be pleased. When you see me bearing against him, charge along with me; if I kill him, the victory is ours; if I am killed before I reach him, do not trouble yourselves about me, but fight as if I were still alive and among you, and follow up my purpose; for the moment they see their king fall, these unbelievers are sure to disperse. If, however, I should be killed, after inflicting death upon their king, appoint a man from among you who unites both courage and experience, and may command you in this emergency, and follow up the success. If you attend to my instructions, we are sure of the victory.<sup>4</sup>

The Muslims then charged the Christian army, and after fierce fighting routed it:

...for their first ranks having given way, they were closely pursued by the Muslims, dealing death among their scattered bands and making numbers of them prisoners. What became of their king, Roderick, nobody knows; they pretend that while flying from his pursuers, he contrived to hide himself among the bushes on the banks of the river; but that he came up to a marsh and was drowned; in corroboration of which it is said that some soldiers found one of his sandals sprinkled with pearls and rubies, having the strings still fixed to it, which no doubt fell off one of his feet. So precious were its materials that when, after the battle, the division of the spoil was made, it was valued at one hundred thousand dinars. Roderick's camp was, moreover, completely plundered, and the Muslims spread right and left over the country, gaining everywhere considerable spoils, of which Tariq carefully put aside the fifth for the royal coffers, distributing the remainder among all those present at the battle, by which means the hands of his men were filled, and all, without exception, became rich.

When the people on the other side of the sea were informed of Tariq's success they flocked to him from all parts, from the East as well as from the West, and Musa dispatched immediately a messenger to the Khalif Al-Walid, informing him of the victories gained by the Muslims. Tariq, in the meanwhile, marched to Toledo, which he took; he then went to a place beyond that city, where he found in the principal church the table of Sulayman, son of Da'ud, on whom be peace, which was so beautiful that whoever gazed it the world vanished before his eyes. It was inlaid with precious stones of various kinds and hues, as well as with aromatic woods; it was, besides, most beautifully ornamented with several inscriptions in the Greek tongue.

But this was not the only jewel which Tariq found; he seized also on one-and-twenty copies of the Torah, the Gospels and the Psalms, as well as a copy of the book of Abraham, and another of that of Moses (the salutation of our Lord be upon them). He found, likewise, five and twenty royal diadems, beautifully ornamented with jewels, one for each of the kings who had ruled over the country, since it was a custom among them for every monarch to deposit there before his death a crown of gold bearing an inscription indicative of his name, personal description, duration of his life and reign, and the children he had.

He found also several books treating of the manner of using plants, minerals and animals, advantageously for man, besides many wonderful talismans, the work of ancient philosophers, and another work on the great art, and its roots and elixirs; all these precious objects, together with an immense quantity of rubies and other coloured gems, stored in golden and silver urns of beautiful workmanship, and ornamented with large pearls, were the fruits of Tariq's conquest.

After penetrating far into the country of the Christians, Tariq returned to Cordoba, and fixed his abode in that city. He is reported to have made war on the unbelievers until they came up to him like cattle, and like so many tamed beasts, and until his men were exhausted through excessive marching, and their bodies dried up through privations and fatigue, when they unanimously said to him, 'Have we not conquered enough countries, that you seem not yet satisfied?' and Tariq burst out laughing, and said, 'By Allah! were I to consult my wishes only, I would march with you until we had reached the gates of Rome, or those of Constantinople, and gained possession of those

cities, with Allah's permission; but since you are tired and weary, you had better return.'<sup>5</sup>

It is said that when Musa heard of Tariq's swift success, he began to be envious of him. Tariq had originally been ordered by Musa to raid Andalusia and then to withdraw. Under the circumstances Tariq had felt justified in pushing home his advantage after his first great victory over Roderick, and his rapid conquest of central Andalusia had confirmed this. It is said, however, that Musa feared that Tariq should rise in favour with the Khalif in Damascus, and perhaps be appointed his own superior. Musa, who was by then eighty years old, accordingly crossed over to Andalusia in 712 with a large army. After conquering several major cities in the west including Seville, he met Tariq at Cordoba, and publicly reprimanded and humiliated him for having disobeyed his original orders:

He said to Tariq, 'Bring me all the spoil you have made, and all the treasures you have found,' and Tariq obeyed and brought before him all he had taken, as well as the table; but this with only two feet, for the third he had previously taken away and hidden, foreseeing what would take place. Musa took possession of all these inestimable treasures without even thanking Tariq, who was the first to acquire them. As to the table, it was made of a solid piece of emerald, but, as stated before, it wanted one of the feet and the whole of the border, seeing which, Musa said to him, 'What is the meaning of this?' and Tariq replied, 'So I found it,' and Musa believed him, and caused a foot of gold to be wrought and to be fixed to it instead of the one wanting: he then asked him to deliver into his hands the fifth of all the spoil taken since his arrival in Andalusia, and Tariq having also complied with this demand, Musa became possessed of countless treasures. After this Musa left Cordova, and repaired to Toledo, he went even beyond that capital, reducing no less

than eighteen principal cities, gaining more spoil, and taking numbers of prisoners, after which he returned, but still persevered in making war on the unbelievers. <sup>6</sup>

According to Ibn Hayyan's narrative, Musa restored Tariq to his confidence and friendship once he had established his leadership, and together they subdued nearly the whole of the Iberian peninsula. Clearly some of their success was on account of the co-operation received from the tyrannised slaves and oppressed Jews in Andalusia, who regarded the Muslims more as saviours than invaders. Furthermore, the inhabitants of Andalusia were suitably impressed by the tolerance which the Muslims offered them once active resistance had ceased, a tolerance which the Catholics had not displayed when they were in power:

There is a surviving text of an agreement, dating from 713 AD, which was drawn up between the Arab commander, 'Abd al-'Aziz, son and successor of Musa ben Nusair, and the Visigothic prince of Murcia, Theodomir, at the surrender of the city of Oriheula...The Christians were allowed to keep their churches and their monasteries, and the Jews their synagogues. Moreover, they retained most of their personal possessions. Not only had the Visigoths taken over the Roman system of taxation, with its manifold burdens, but they had also perpetuated the *latifundi*, the large estates worked by the slaves. When the Muslims took possession of the land, many of these estates were divided and handed over to local tenants.

The slaves were for the most part set free, either by accepting Islam - no Christian or Jew was allowed to have a Muslim for a slave - or by gradually buying themselves free, something that had not been permitted under the earlier Visigothic laws.

In addition to the general tax paid by all cit-

izens, Christians and Jews had to pay a personal tax in lieu of having to perform military service. Moreover, the tax was on a sliding scale according to one's professional class, while women, children, monks, invalids, the sick, beggars and slaves were exempt.

The Christian and Jewish communities maintained autonomous jurisdiction in all disputes that did not involve the rights of Muslim subjects. They also had their own leaders, bishops, or 'counts' (*comites*), who represented them in the Muslim government...

It was, of course, quite different for those Christians and Jews who resisted to the last. They and all their possessions were regarded as booty, unless they embraced the Islamic faith.

This was not essentially a question of belief, for there is 'no compulsion in the life-transaction' as the Qur'an says. It was solely a matter of accepting Islam. No one questioned the sincerity of the conversion for it was assumed that faith would grow by itself, depending on the extent to which the God-given laws were observed. <sup>7</sup>

The majority of the inhabitants of Andalusia embraced Islam quite freely, however, especially those who had been formerly oppressed under the small Catholic ruling elite. Inter-marriages were encouraged, and in a relatively short time the basic practice of Islam had become widespread. Many of those who surrendered during the fighting were retained as slaves, and it was the responsibility of their owners to look after them.

Ma'rur ibn Su'ud relates:

"I saw Abu Dharr wearing a cloak and I noticed that his slave was wearing the like of it. I inquired from him about this and he explained that in the time of the Holy Prophet, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, he had a sharp exchange with a man and shamed him by

making reference to his mother. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said to me: 'You still have the traces of pre-Islamic culture\* in you. Your servants are your brothers whom your Lord has placed under your authority. He who has a brother under his authority should feed him out of that which he eats himself and should clothe him as he clothes himself. Do not assign a task to them which is beyond their strength and if you do so, help them in carrying it out.' " [al-Bukhari and Muslim] (8)

The practice of having slaves was thus a mercy for those who, if they had not been taken as slaves, might have been left orphaned, widowed, homeless, ill or destitute after the outcome of a particular battle, provided that the Prophet Muhammad's example was followed. He taught that the highest actions towards slaves was for their owners to teach them what they knew, to free them, and, if they were women, to marry them.

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Musa remained in Andalusia for three years. Together with Tariq he established Islam in all but the mountainous northwest corner of the peninsula. A small group of Catholics, led by a man called Pelayo, took cover in Covadonga, where the high places and hidden ravines of the Asturias provided them with ample cover. It was from this point that the Christians eventually regrouped and commenced their descent into Andalusia.

When Musa reached the Pyrenees, he, like Tariq, proposed to conquer the whole of southern France, and then to march across southern Europe until he linked up with the Muslims in the east, who by this time had reached the lands inhabited by the Paulicians near Constantinople, and had combined with these Unitarian followers of Jesus in their fight against the persecution by the Church which had been initiated by the Empress Theodora. When the Khalif of the declining Umayyad dynasty in Damascus heard of this, he, as Musa had been with Tariq, was

\* Lit. Time of Ignorance (*Jahiliyya*).

also touched by jealousy. He feared that if Musa was successful in this venture, he himself would be deposed. He therefore recalled Musa and Tariq back to Damascus, and they reluctantly turned their backs on Narbonne and Europe:

Musa left Andalus, taking Tariq with him, and leaving his son 'Abd al-'Aziz to command in his absence. Arrived in Africa, where he made a short stay, he departed for Damascus, the court of the prince of the believers, Al-Walid, then the reigning Khalif, taking with him all the spoils of Andalus, consisting of thirty skins full of gold and silver coin, necklaces of inestimable value, pearls, rubies, topazes and emeralds, besides costly robes of all sorts; he was followed by eleven hundred prisoners, men, women and children, of whom four hundred were princes of the royal blood.

Not far from Damascus, Musa was informed how Al-Walid was seriously indisposed and not expected to live, and he received a letter from his brother and heir, Sulayman, begging him to delay his entry into Damascus until his brother was dead and himself on the throne, but, instead of complying with his request, Musa quickened his march, and arrived in Damascus with all his suite before the death of the Khalif; although owing to the bad state of his health, Musa was unable to present to him his treasures, and Al-Walid died without appreciating as they deserved the many curiosities brought by Musa.<sup>9</sup>

Whether Musa reached Damascus before or after the death of Al-Walid is a controverted fact amongst historians:

Those who incline to the latter opinion pretend that Sulayman, who succeeded his brother in the Khalifate, was ill-disposed towards Musa, owing to charges and complaints laid against

him by Tariq and Mughayth who, having preceded him at court, had informed the Khalif of his rapacity and injustice, and told him how he had appropriated to himself the famous table, and deprived Mughayth of his noble captive. Musa was further accused of concealing a jewel more valuable than any that a king ever possessed since the conquest of Persia.

Accordingly, when Musa arrived in Damascus he found Sulayman very much prejudiced against him; that monarch received him angrily, reprimanded him severely, and cast upon him several imputations and charges which he tried to answer as well as he could. He then asked him to produce the table, which being done, Sulayman said to him, 'Tariq claims that it was he, not you, who found it,' 'Certainly not,' answered Musa, 'if ever Tariq saw this table, it was in my possession and nowhere else.'

Then Tariq, addressing the Khalif, requested him to question Musa about the leg that was wanting, and on Musa's answering that he had found it in that state, and in order to supply the deficiency he had caused another leg to be made', Tariq triumphantly produced from under his tunic the identical one, which at once convinced Sulayman of the truth of Tariq's assertion and Musa's falsehood. This also led the Khalif to suppose that all the other charges brought against him were equally correct; he therefore deprived him of all the riches he had acquired, and banished him to a distant province of his empire: others say that he imprisoned him, and ordered that he should be kept with the greatest vigilance; that he also fined him very heavily, whereby he became so poor that he was obliged to beg for his subsistence among the Arab tribe of Lakhm, to which he belonged, having contributed ninety thousand pieces of gold towards the payment of his fine,

which is said to have amounted to two hundred thousand. Half of this enormous sum Musa paid down, but he failed in procuring the means of paying the rest, when, having excited the compassion of Ibn al-Muhallab, a favourite of Sulayman, that courtier interceded for him with the Khalif, who absolved Musa from the payment of the remainder and pardoned him, although he gave orders for the removal of 'Abdullah, his eldest son, from the government of Africa.<sup>10</sup>

The historians who follow the former of the two opinions, namely, that Musa reached Damascus before the death of Al-Walid, relate that as soon as Al-Walid died, Sulayman summoned Musa to his presence and vented his rage on him for not having delayed his arrival in Damascus until after Al-Walid had died; and he, Sulayman, had been installed as Khalif:

They say that he told him among other things - 'You have run against my will, and disobeyed my orders, and, by Allah! I will cut off your resources, scatter your friends, and seize upon your treasures; I will deprive you of all the honours conferred on you by the sons of Abu Sufyan and the sons of Marwan, those who benefits you have repaid with ingratitude, betraying the hopes they placed in you.' And Musa answered, 'By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful! do not charge me with the faults of others; I was always faithful to the Khalifs of your family, as well as to your predecessors in command; I showed myself on every occasion the grateful servant of those who protected me and extolled me: as to your saying, O Commander of the Faithful, that you will cut off my resources, scatter my friends, and seize upon my treasures, that rests in the hands of Allah the Almighty, who is the arbiter of men's fortunes, and can take away whenever He pleases the

favours He bestows on His creatures. In Him I trust, O Commander of the Faithful, for He is the refuge of those who are accused of crimes which they never committed, and who are threatened with chastisement which they do not deserve.'

Sulayman then ordered Musa to be exposed to the sun, and his commands were immediately executed: he was left standing under a boiling sun; and as he was subject to asthma, the excessive heat, together with the fatigue of many hours' standing, brought on his complaint more fiercely than ever, and he was on the point of being suffocated several times, remaining in that state until 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, whom Sulayman had sent out to see that his orders were punctually executed, came upon the spot, and found him in a swoon.

'Umar is known to have said some time after this, 'I declare I never passed a worse day in all my life; I never was so sadly afflicted as that day when I saw the old warrior, on whom Allah had been pleased to bestow so many favours, after so many battles fought for the cause of Allah and true religion, and so many victories won, lie in that miserable plight. I went straight to Sulayman, and when he saw me he said, "What is the meaning of this, O Abu Hafz? I really think that you also wish to deny me obedience." 'Umar says, 'I thought the opportunity a favourable one, and said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful! Musa is an infirm old man, he is subject to asthma, and by Allah! you will be the cause of his death. I have come to implore your pardon for him: consider that the old warrior has fought long and bravely for the cause of Allah and his religion, and that he has been the means of gaining the many victories by which the Muslims have become rich." 'Umar added, 'and whoever prevents me

from speaking as I do in his favour, I deny him all allegiance, and I shall hate him for it.' <sup>11</sup>

These words caused Sulayman to have Musa taken out of the sun and he was eventually released on the condition that he paid a heavy fine which some say amounted to three million dinars.

Sulayman also wrote to his generals in Andalus ordering them to murder Musa's son, 'Abd al-'Aziz, whom Musa had left to command in his name and who in his father's absence had done much to unify the Muslims, fortify the frontiers and generally consolidate the conquest by taking many towns which had escaped his father's eye.

'Abd al-'Aziz was accordingly murdered in 716 whilst he was reading the *Sura* in the Qur'an called *al-Waqi'a*, 'The Event':

They say that when the head of 'Abd al-'Aziz was brought to Damascus, the Khalif Sulayman summoned to his presence Musa ibn Nusayr, and showed it to him, 'Do you know whose head that is?' said Sulayman to the wretched father. 'Yes, I do,' answered Musa, 'it is the head of a man who fasted and said his prayers. May the curses of Allah fall on it if his assassin was a better man than he.' <sup>12</sup>

Musa died shortly afterwards, possessing nothing. All historians who have written on the life of Musa agree in describing him as a man of undaunted courage and great abilities who never lost a battle. Al-Hijazi says that:

He always surrounded his person with holy men, and virtuous friends, whom Allah the Almighty selected to be the instruments of His glory and power, as well as the means of establishing the fame of Musa, a fame that shall last throughout day and night, and which the course of ages shall not impair; although it was tarnished in his days by his becoming the victim of that cruel enemy against whom a noble-

minded man had no power, I mean envy and hatred, those two vices so common in people of narrow minds.<sup>13</sup>

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After the murder of 'Abd al-'Aziz in Andalusia, there followed a period of unrest and turbulence as Islam began to be adopted by its inhabitants. The first Muslims of Andalusia were plagued by power politics and inter-tribal feuds which had existed amongst the Arabs before the coming of the Prophet Muhammad. Disputes arose between the Arabs of different families, between the Berbers and the Arabs, and also between those who had been born into Islam and those who had newly accepted it. The clashes which occurred over leadership and possession of the new dominions were inevitable. In the following forty years there were twenty-one governors who followed each other in rapid succession, sometimes appointed by the Khalif in Damascus, sometimes by the governor of Qayrawan in North Africa, and sometimes by the Muslims of Andalusia themselves. Out of this apparent disorder, however, an equilibrium was eventually reached, and the man capable of bringing so many different individuals together, 'Abdu'r-Rahman I, emerged to unite the people of Andalusia.

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'Abdu'r-Rahman I, a member of the deposed Umayyad family, arrived in Andalusia after five years of fugitive vagrancy across the North African desert, fleeing from the Abbasids who had seized power in the place of the descendants of Mu'awiya. The treatment of Musa and his sons, 'Abdullah and 'Abd al-'Aziz, by Sulayman was clearly not in accordance with the guidance brought by their Prophet. Sulayman's general behaviour could not be tolerated and it was inevitable that there should be a movement to depose a dynastic khalifate which had become so tyrannical.

The situation was not helped by the fact that the tribe which sought to wrest power from the descendants of Mu'awiyah were the descendants of Al-'Abbas, and they were both parties to an

old inter-tribal feud. Their motives were thus far from pure, which is clear from the fact that they not only attempted to murder all the known members of the Umayyad family once they had seized the khalifate, but also proceeded to retain the khalifate within their own family, in the same manner as the tyrants they had just deposed.

'Abdu'r-Rahman was one of the few members of the Umayyad family to escape with his life. When the slaughter of his relatives began in earnest, he had managed to make his way to Rah near the Euphrates, where he was joined by the surviving members of his family including his two sisters, his younger brother and his son. He had scarcely arrived, however, when he was informed that his Abbasid pursuers had surrounded the house in which they were hiding. He and his brother, who was only thirteen, ran from the house and plunged into the Euphrates. 'Abdu'r-Rahman reached the other side and witnessed the death of his brother who had turned back after being told by his pursuers that they would not harm him.

After much wandering and several more narrow escapes - he once had to hide from his pursuers under the dress of his host's wife since this was the only place of concealment in the tent where he was resting - 'Abdu'r-Rahman arrived on the shores of Africa facing Spain, with no possibility of ever returning to his homeland. The persecution which had driven him to this point, however, had brought the Muslims of Andalusia the leader they needed. They were on the brink of civil war, and the best of them welcomed 'Abdu'r-Rahman as their new ruler. He landed in Andalusia in 766 and soon many people rallied around him. Since their number was far greater than those who opposed him, he had little difficulty in defeating his opponents on the banks of the Guadalquivir on Friday the 9th of Dhu'l-Hijja, 138 AH (756 AD). Cordoba was captured the following day, and a general amnesty was granted to all who accepted him as their *Amir*.

'Abdu'r-Rahman soon proved himself to be an able governor. He set about uniting all the different tribes and groups of people in Andalusia. Initially he had to deal not only with rebellions from within Andalusia itself, but also from the attacks organized by the Abbasid Khalifs of the East from without. His technique was very simple: he was swift to execute the leaders

of those who tried to depose him, and quick to forgive their followers who subsequently accepted him. In 763, he repelled an attack made by sea in the south, and executed the Abbasid leaders. In 777, an envoy from the Abbasid Khalifate visited King Charlemagne in the south of France. They arranged to incite a rebellion within Andalusia by Abbasid supporters which would coincide with an invasion into Andalusia by Charlemagne. The twin attacks were not co-ordinated, however, and 'Abdu'r-Rahman quelled the Abbasid uprising before Charlemagne could cross into Andalusia. When Charlemagne did finally enter the country in 778, he was soon obliged to return, and suffered great losses in an ambush at Roncesvalles. There was one further attempt to declare Abbasid supremacy in the north of Andalusia two years later, but their leader was again defeated and executed. After this, what had been the main source of contention and division in Andalusia was effectively quelled. Furthermore, Charlemagne came to an agreement with 'Abdu'r-Rahman not to invade Andalusia, even offering him his daughter as a wife, an offer which 'Abdu'r-Rahman politely declined.

The disputes between the other tribes, and between the different nationalities in Andalusia were far less serious than the main Umayyad/Abbasid and Muslim/Christian conflicts and were soon settled. By dealing with all uprisings and disputes in a sure and straightforward manner, 'Abdu'r-Rahman won the respect and admiration of the people of Andalusia, who no longer desired to look elsewhere for a leader, so stirring was the example he set. He came to be called the Falcon of Andalus, and during his rule which lasted between 756 and 788, the Muslims of Andalusia, old and new, were unified.

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Islam took root in Andalusia not through compulsion, but because it provided a clearly superior and healthier way of life to a people who, up until the arrival of the Muslims, had been trapped in a corrupt, decadent and decaying social system. Furthermore, even when there were disputes as to leadership, the vast majority of the population continued their everyday lives in the practice of Islam, untouched and unconcerned by the plotting and the intrigues, which usually had their source in only a

handful of power-hungry people. The fact that little attention is usually paid in official histories to people who live simple, peaceful and uncomplicated lives, does not mean that they are any less important than the people who are given all the coverage in official histories.

It is not surprising that most official histories have little to say about the first community of Muslims in Andalusia. There is nothing outwardly dramatic about a simple life of industry and worship which derived its inspiration from the emulation of the first community which had gathered around the Prophet Muhammad in Madina al-Munawwara, 'the Illuminated City'.

The first Muslims in Andalusia affirmed that there was no god except Allah, and that Muhammad was the Messenger of Allah. Five times a day, at dawn, at mid-day, in the mid-afternoon, at sunset, and after it was dark, they did the prayer which their Prophet had taught to the first Muslims. For one month in every year they did the fast of Ramadan. They paid the *zakat*, which is a tax of one-fortieth of their savings, collected into a central fund and then immediately redistributed amongst those in the community who need it. Finally, those of them who were able to, performed the *Hajj*, the pilgrimage to the House of Allah in Makka. Their everyday life and transactions with each other were guided by the Qur'an and the pattern of behaviour which their Prophet had embodied. From a very early date the Muslims of Andalusia relied on the *Muwatta'* of Imam Malik as a reliable record not only of their Prophet's behaviour, but also of the first community which had gathered round him in Madina.

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The leader who first unified the numerous communities of Muslims which had sprung up in Andalusia, 'Abdu'r-Rahman I, the Falcon of Andalus, was, according to Ibn Hayyan, kind-hearted and well-disposed to mercy:

He was eloquent in his speech, and was endowed with a quick perception; he was very slow in his determination, but constant and persevering in carrying them into effect; he was exempt from all weakness, and prompt in his



movements; he was active and stirring; he would never lie in repose or abandon himself to indulgence; he never entrusted the affairs of the government to any one, but administered them himself, yet he never failed to consult, on such difficult cases as occurred, with people of wisdom and experience; he was a brave and intrepid warrior, always the first in the field; he was terrible in his anger, and could bear no opposition to his will; he could speak with much fluency and elegance; he was likewise a good poet, and composed verses extempore; he was, in short, a generous and munificent prince. He always dressed in white, and wore a turban of the same colour, which he preferred to any other; his countenance inspired with awe all those who approached him, whether friends or foes. He used to attend funerals and recite prayers over the dead; he often prayed with the people with the people when he attended the mosque on Fridays and other festivals, on which occasions he was in the habit of ascending the minbar, and addressing his subjects therefrom. He visited the sick, and mixed with the people, attending their rejoicings and recreations. <sup>14</sup>

'Abdu'r-Rahman made his capital Cordoba, and throughout his reign he embellished it by works which he superintended himself. One of his first acts was to supply Cordoba with water by means of an aqueduct which came from the neighbouring mountains. He planted a most delightful garden, to which he gave the name of *Mun'yat ar-Risafah*, in remembrance of a splendid villa near Damascus, which his grandfather Hisham had built, where he had spent the first five years of his life. Being passionately fond of flowers, he commissioned an intelligent botanist to procure for him in the East such among the fruits and plants of that country as could be naturalized in Andalusia; and in this manner he introduced the peach and the pomegranate called *Safari*. Ibn Hayyan has preserved for us four verses, which

he is reported to have spoken extempore at the sight of one solitary palm-tree which grew in the middle of his garden:

In the centre of the Risafah grows a palm-tree,  
born in the West, away from the country  
of the palm-trees.

I once exclaimed, 'You are like me; for you resemble me  
in wandering and peregrination,  
and the long separation from relatives and friends.

You also grew in a foreign soil, and, like me,  
are far away from the country of your birth.  
May the fertilizing clouds of morning water you  
in your exile!

May the beneficent rains, which the poor  
implore, never forsake you! <sup>15</sup>

As well as these public works, and also the time spent in governing his people, 'Abdu'r-Rahman also began the building of the great mosque in Cordoba in 786. It was subsequently extended and re-embellished by his successors and still stands today. 'Abdu'r-Rahman was also responsible for the building of a thick, strong wall around Cordoba. Furthermore he ensured that mosques, baths, bridges and castles were erected in every province of his dominions.

Inspired by 'Abdu'r-Rahman's enthusiasm and zest for life, the early Muslims of Andalusia transformed the country into a garden. They imported plants and fruits from other lands and introduced new methods of agriculture. The wonderful system of irrigation by which they converted Valencia into the 'garden of Europe' still exists, and the elaborate and equitable allotment of water is looked on with admiration by the 'experts' of today. The Muslims introduced the cultivation of sugar-cane, cotton and rice, as well as fruits such as the peach, the orange, the pomegranate and the date-palm. Not a patch of land was left uncultivated by their indefatigable efforts, and Andalusia was filled with growth.

They built mosques and public baths everywhere, even in the smallest villages, and as they became established in the land, every craft and trade was taught and practised. All the raw materials, which were in abundance, whether from the mineral.

plant or animal kingdoms, were transformed into merchandise and articles of every-day utility. They all worked at something. Every member of the family contributed his share of work for the common good. They were unsurpassed in all the skilful trades. They started the culture of silk in Andalusia, and it was through them that the arts of paper-making and glass eventually passed into Europe. The potteries of Malaga, the cloth of Murcia, the silk of Almeria and Granada, the leather hangings of Cordoba, the weapons of Toledo, were renowned everywhere. They furnished the materials for profitable foreign commerce which was stimulated by the universal reputation of their merchants for honesty and sincerity. Their strict fidelity to their engagements became proverbial. They were temperate in their behaviour and in satisfying their appetites. There were no beggars among them, for they took affectionate care of their orphans. They settled all their disputes between themselves according to the Qur'an and *Sunna* of the Prophet.

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When the rule of 'Abdu'r-Rahman I, the Falcon of Andalus, came to its close, the same mistake was made in the West as had been made in the East. His successors were chosen from his family. There accordingly followed the usual degeneration within the community which accompanies the adoption of dynastic rule. The inevitable split between the rulers and the ruled occurred as the former increased in wealth and the latter began to desire it. The Prophet Muhammad went to sleep each night possessing no money. The first four Khalifs who followed after him only ate from what the poorest person in their community could afford. They walked freely in the market place and never had guards at their doors, so complete was their knowledge and trust in Allah. While 'Abdu'r-Rahman walked freely in the streets of Cordoba and mixed with its inhabitants, his successors began to isolate themselves in their palaces. Thus the rule of Al-Hakam, who was the son of Hisham, the son of 'Abdu'r-Rahman I, witnessed an uprising during Ramadan in protest against the way of life which he had adopted:

More than one historian has recorded the fact

that Al-Hakam was the first monarch of his family who surrounded his throne with a certain splendour and magnificence. He increased the number of mamelukes until they amounted to five thousand horses and one thousand foot. Ibn Khaldun and others say that he was also the first who introduced the practice of issuing a regular pay to the troops; that he formed magazines of arms and provisions; increased the number of his slaves, eunuchs, and servants; had a body-guard of cavalry always stationed at the gate of his palace, and surrounded his person with a guard of mamelukes, called *Al-Haras* (the guard), owing to their being all Christians, or foreigners. They occupied two large barracks, with stables for their horses; and one thousand of their number were continually mounting guard on both banks of the river close to his palace.<sup>16</sup>

The uprising was led by a group of men who had once studied under Imam Malik, and who had been largely responsible for his *Muwatta'* being widely accepted by the Muslims of Andalusia. Al-Hakam quelled the uprising instantly, demolishing the suburb of Cordoba in which it had originated. Many of its dwellers crossed over to Africa, and settled in Fez in the quarter which became known as *Madinatu'l-Andalusin*. One of the leaders of the uprising, named Talut, remained in hiding in Andalusia for over a year. When he finally came out into the open, he was brought before the king:

Being admitted to the hall of audience, Al-Hakam reproached him in the harshest terms, and charged him with his crime, saying, 'How did you come to rebel against me? You are a disciple of the Imam Malik, from whom you must have heard, that the long rule of a bad king is preferable to civil war for one hour? By Allah! You must have heard your master say so.' 'I did,' answered Talut humbly. 'Well then,' said

Al-Hakam, 'return to your dwelling; you are forgiven.'<sup>17</sup>

It is said that Al-Hakam was a tolerant ruler, who respected the counsel of his advisers and who loved learning. He not only extended the great mosque of Cordoba, but was also responsible for instituting the first university in Andalusia:

Thus when the first truly modern universities would grow up in the rest of Europe, even though they might not be aware of their intellectual heritage, it is none the less certain that they had their forerunners in the Nizamiyyah University and the Bayt al-Hikmah of Baghdad and the Academy of Cordoba and the Qarawiyan of Fes.<sup>18</sup>

Cordoba thus became the greatest centre of learning in Europe at a time when the rest of the continent was plunged in ignorance, and in its flowering Cordoba was clearly one of the wonders of the world. Quoting an earlier writer, Lane-Poole wrote:

To Cordoba belong all the beauty and ornaments that delight the eye or dazzle the sight. Her long line of Sultans form her crown of glory; her necklace is strung with the pearls which her poets have gathered from the ocean of language; her dress is of the banners of learning, well-knit together by her men of science; and the masters of every art and industry are the hem of her garments.<sup>19</sup>

When Cordoba was at the height of its flowering there were over 200,000 houses in the city, along with six hundred mosques, nine hundred public baths, fifty hospitals and several large markets which catered for all branches of trade and commerce, including 15,000 weavers:

You could walk through her streets for ten miles in one direction at night, and always have the

light of lamps to guide your way. Seven hundred years later this would still be an innovation in London or Paris, as would paved streets.<sup>20</sup>

The scientists of this age were unrivalled in the world. Perhaps among their greatest feats were the famous waterlocks of Toledo:

Their action was as follows. At the moment when the new moon appeared on the horizon, water began to flow into the basins by means of subterranean pipes, so that there would be at daybreak the fourth of a seventh part, and at the end of the day half a seventh part, of the water required to fill the basins. In this proportion the water would continue to flow until seven days and as many nights of the months were elapsed, when both basins would be half filled; the same process during the following seven days and nights would make the two basins quite full, at the same time that the moon was at its full. However, on the fifteenth night of the month, when the moon began to wane, the basins would also begin to lose every day and night half a seventh part of their water, until by the twenty-first day of the month they would be empty, and when the moon reached her twenty-ninth night not a drop of water would remain in them; it being worthy to remark that, should anyone go to any of the basins when they were not filled, and pour water into them with a view to quicken its filling, the basins would immediately absorb the additional water, and retain no more than the just quantity, and, on the contrary, were anyone to try, when they were nearly filled, to extract any or the whole of their water, the moment he raised his hands from the work, the basins would pour out sufficient water to fill the vacuum in an instant.<sup>21</sup>

The whole of Andalusia was the most populous, cultured and industrious land of all Europe, and remained so for centuries. Its trade with the outside world was unrivalled, and in this time of economic expansion, the Jews, who had been virtually eliminated from the peninsula in the seventh century by the Christians, grew once more in numbers and flourished. The following description of their position is to be found in Hume's 'Spanish People':

Side by side with the new rulers lived the Christians and Jews in peace. The latter, rich with commerce and industry, were content to let the memory of their oppression by the priest-ridden Goths sleep, now that the prime authors of it had disappeared. Learned in all the arts and sciences, cultured and tolerant, they were treated by the Moors with marked respect, and multiplied exceedingly all over Spain; and, like the Christian Spaniards under Moorish rule - who were called Mozarabes - had cause to thank their new masters for an era of prosperity such as they had never known before.<sup>22</sup>

This tolerance of the Jews and Christians by the Muslims, characterized the early centuries of Islam in Spain. All the Jews and Christians who accepted the Muslims as the rulers of the country were allowed to retain their possessions and their beliefs and religious practices, and to continue their way of life within the framework of the society, despite the fact that both these communities denied the continuance of the prophetic tradition beyond their respective prophets, Moses and Jesus, on whom be peace.

The Muslims gave the Christians the freedom to make up their own minds. As long as the Muslims of Spain followed the guidance they had been given, they did not molest the Christians and, writes Gibbon:

In a time of tranquillity and justice, the Christians have never been compelled to renounce the Gospel or to embrace the Qur'an.<sup>23</sup>

As in the time of the reign of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, in Italy, however, the Catholic Church was not content with this arrangement. Its members felt bound to impose the official religion on anyone who would not accept their point of view. In the guidance of Islam, there are provisions for the tolerance and acceptance of the Christians and the Jews, the 'people of the Book'. In the religion of the Official Church there was only intolerance and rejection of any religion other than the one it had formulated. By claiming that God had become man, and died for humanity so that everyone who believed this would go straight to 'heaven', it logically followed that there was no longer any need for a prophet on earth. A man could do what he pleased and still go to heaven provided that he bowed before the cross and said he believed in Christ. The appearance of another prophet after Jesus, the Prophet Muhammad, was therefore very embarrassing for the Official Christians, especially when so many people accepted his guidance. In its attempts to fulfill its claims and aspirations, the Church was bound to try and subvert Islam, and to eradicate the Muslims, in the same way that it had eliminated the Unitarian followers of Jesus before them.

While the Muslims held to the guidance they had been given, they were protected. As with the Arian Goths, the Muslims became vulnerable to the activities of the Catholic Church, once they began to wander from the guidance they had been given; the dynamic process of flowering in which the community of Cordoba bloomed during the ninth and tenth centuries, inevitably meant that the original simplicity of its first Muslim inhabitants was lost. The richer it became the further it departed from the blue-print of the first community in *Madina al-Munawwara*, which had been richest when its members were most poor. The Prophet said that he did not fear poverty for his community, but riches. He also said that every nation has its trial, and that the trial of the Muslims would be wealth.

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A description by Al-Makin of the famous pleasure palace, az-Zahra', which was built at the height of the Muslims' extravagance in the tenth century illustrates the extent of the wealth around which such discord grew:

An-Nasir began the construction of the palace and the city of az-Zahra' in the year three hundred and twenty-five of the Hijra (936 AD), and the building was continued for forty consecutive years, that it is to say, twenty-five years of the life of An-Nasir and fifteen of that of his son and successor, Al-Hakam; for although the palace was completed long before the death of An-Nasir, considerable additions were made to it by his son, and the buildings for the reception of the court, the barracks for the troops, the pleasure-gardens, baths, fountains, and so forth, were never completed until the days of Al-Hakam.

During the reign of 'Abdu'r-Rahman III six thousand blocks of stone, great and small, cut into various shapes, and either polished or smoothed, were used every day, exclusive of the uncut stones used for paving and the like. The number of beasts of burden daily employed to convey the materials of construction was fourteen hundred, some say more, besides four hundred camels belonging to the Sultan, and one thousand mules hired for the occasion at the rate of three mithqals a month, making the total expense of hiring amount to three thousand mithqals monthly. In the building eleven hundred burdens of lime and gypsum were used every third day. The number of columns, great and small, supporters or supported, employed in the building amounted to four thousand; others exceed that number by three hundred and sixteen. Of these some came from Rome, nineteen from the country of the Franks, one hundred and forty were presented by the emperor of Constantinople, one thousand and thirteen, mostly of green and rose coloured marble, were brought from Carthage, Tunis, Sfax, and other places in Africa; the remainder were extracted from quarried in his Andalusian dominions, as

for instance the white marble from Tarragona and Almeria, the streaked marble from Raya, and so forth...

Ibn Hayyan says that the wonders of az-Zahra' included two fountains, with their basins, so extraordinary in their shape, and so valuable for their exquisite workmanship...The smaller one, above all, appears to have been a real wonder of art...When the Khalif received it he ordered it to be placed in the dormitory of the eastern hall called *Al-Munis*, and he fixed on it twelve figures made of red gold, and set with pearls and other precious stones. The figures, which were all made in the arsenal of Cordoba, represented various animals; as for instance one was the likeness of a lion, having on one side an antelope, and on the other a crocodile; opposite to these stood an eagle and a dragon; and on the two wings of the group a pigeon, a falcon, a peacock, a hen, a cock, a kite, and a vulture. They, moreover, were all ornamented with jewels, and the water poured out from their mouths.

Another of the wonders of az-Zahra' was the hall called *Qasr al-Khulafa'* (the Hall of Khalifs), the roof of which was of gold and solid but transparent blocks of marble of various colours, the walls being likewise of the same materials. In the centre of this hall, or, according to some, on the top of the above-mentioned fountain, which is by them placed in this hall, was fixed the unique pearl presented to An-Nasir by the Greek emperor Leo, among other valuable objects. The tiles that covered the roof of this magnificent hall were made of pure gold and silver, and, according to Ibn Bashkuwal, there was in the centre of the room a large basin filled with quicksilver; on each side of it eight doors fixed on arches of ivory and ebony, ornamented with gold and precious stones of various kinds,

resting upon pillars of variegated marble and transparent crystal. When the sun penetrated through these doors into the apartment, so strong was the action of its rays upon the roof and walls of this hall that the reflection only was sufficient to deprive the beholders of sight.

And when An-Nasir wished to frighten away any of the courtiers that sat with him, he had only to make a sign to one of his Slavonians to set the quicksilver in motion, and the whole room would look in an instant as if it were traversed by flashes of lightning; and the company would begin to tremble, thinking that the room was moving away - this sensation and their fears continuing as long as the quicksilver was in motion. The abundance of quicksilver in Spain made An-Nasir conceive the idea of employing it in the manner above described; and it was perhaps the effect produced by that mineral which led to the belief that this hall was perpetually turning round and followed the course of the sun, or, as others have it, that it moved around on the reservoir as on a pivot; and such was An-Nasir's care for this building that he would commit the superintendence of it to none other than his son and successor, Al-Hakam. In one thing, however, we find all authors agree, namely that there never was built a more splendid hall than this, either in the times preceding Islam or afterwards...

We might go to a great length were we only to enumerate all the beauties, natural as well as artificial, contained within the precincts of al-Zahra' - the running streams, the limpid waters, the luxuriant gardens, the stately buildings for the accommodation of the household guards, the magnificent palaces for the reception of all the high functionaries of the state; the throng of soldiers, pages, eunuchs and slaves of all nations and religions, sumptuously attired in

robes of silk and brocade, moving to and fro through its broad streets; or the crowds of judges, katibs, theologians, and poets, walking with gravity through the magnificent halls, spacious ante-rooms and ample courts of the palace. The number of male servants in the palace has been estimated at thirteen thousand seven hundred and fifty, to whom the daily allowance of fresh meat, exclusive of fowls and fish, was thirteen thousand pounds; the number of women of various classes, comprising the harem of the Khalif, or waiting upon them, is said to have amounted to six thousand three hundred and fourteen. The Slavonian pages and eunuchs were three thousand three hundred and fifty... Travellers from distant lands, men of all ranks and professions in life, following various religions, princes, ambassadors, merchants, pilgrims, theologians, and poets, who were conversant with edifices of this kind and had surveyed this, all agreed that they had never seen in the course of their travels any thing that could be compared to it; they said more, they confessed that they had never heard, or imagined, in all the course of their lives of any building similar to this; and all the Andalusian writers bear testimony that it was in their time the chief wonder which travellers to Andalusia in those ages desired to behold...

This naturally brings to our recollection the great palace which Al-Mansur Ibn Dhi Nun, King of Toledo, built in that city, and in the construction of which he is said to have lavished countless treasures. He not only employed all the best artists of his age, but he sent also for architects, geometers, and painters, from distant lands; made them execute the most fantastic and wonderful works, and rewarded their labours with the greatest magnificence. Adjoining his palace he planted a most luxuriant gar-

den, on which he made an artificial lake, and in the centre of this he built a kiosk of stained glass, adorned with gold. His architect so contrived this that by certain geometrical rules the water of the lake was made to ascend to the top of the dome over the kiosk, and then, dropping at both sides, join the waters of the lake. In this room the Sultan could sit, untouched by the water, which fell everywhere round him, and refreshed the air in the hot season; sometimes, too, wax tapers were lighted within the room, producing an admirable effect upon the transparent walls of the kiosk...

An Andalusian historian has said that such were an-Nasir's passion and taste for building that besides the erection of the magnificent palace that we have just described, and the considerable additions made to the great mosque, he also undertook and completed during his reign several public works for the improvement and ornament of his capital. Of this number was a most magnificent aqueduct, which conveyed excellent water from the mountains of Cordoba to the palace of *An-Na'urah* ( the Water-wheel), in the western part of the city, by means of tubes geometrically arranged over arches connected one with the other. The waters thus conveyed, in admirable order, and by dint of extraordinary science, were discharged into a vast reservoir, on which was a colossal lion of wonderful workmanship, and so beautifully imitated that the sight of it was only sufficient to cast fear into the hearts of the beholders, and that none devised by the Sultans of former times had been equal to it, either in likeness or in magnificence. It was covered with the purest gold, and its two eyes were two jewels of inestimable value, which sent forth torrents of light. The waters of the aqueduct entered into the hind part of this monster, and then poured out from his mouth

into the aforesaid basin, which circumstance, united to the beautiful appearance of the animal, to its terrible and overawing aspect, to the two eyes which shone forth as if they belonged to a human creature, never failed altogether to produce the most extraordinary effect in the minds of those who beheld it for the first time. After supplying this palace, and irrigating with profusion every corner of its gardens, notwithstanding their great extent, the superabundant water went to augment the Guadalquivir. Every author we have consulted on the subject agrees in saying that this aqueduct, with the reservoir, and the figure pouring the water into it, must be considered as one of the most amazing structures ever raised by man; for if we attend to the length of it, to the unfavourable nature of the ground through which it was conducted, the magnitude and solidity of the construction, the height of the piers over which the water was made to flow, sometimes ascending, sometimes descending, we shall scarcely find among the works of ancient kings which have reached us anything to be compared to it...

We have to mention another palace and city built by the famous Hayib, Muhammad ibn Abi 'Amir, commonly called al-Mansur, although information respecting it is by no means so abundant with us as we should wish. We know that it existed at some distance from Cordoba on the banks of Guadalquivir, and that it was a most splendid structure, second to none but the palace of *az-Zahra*, built by 'Abdu'r-Rahman III; but, owing to the circumstance of its being destroyed by the Berbers, soon after the death of its founder, during the disastrous civil wars which brought to the ground the tottering throne of the Khalifs, the memory of it was soon effaced, and such particulars as have been handed down to us give but few details...

The edifice, which stood on the banks of the Guadalquivir, not far from Az-Zahra', was begun in the year three hundred and sixty-eight of the Hijra (978 AD), the greatest part of it being completed in the short space of two years. Al-Mansur betook himself to it, with his family, servants, guards and adherents, in the year three hundred and seventy (980 AD). He, moreover, established in it the offices of the state, built magazines for grain, and erected mills; he also granted the adjoining lands to his Wazirs, Katibs, generals, and favourites, who lost no time in building magnificent houses and palaces, and planting gardens in the neighbourhood; people of all ranks and professions, anxious to fix their abodes near the ruler of the state, imitated their example, and built all round, so that in a very short time the suburbs of Az-Zahra' joined those of Cordoba.

I recollect having read in an historical work, the composition of the author of the *Kitab al-Azhar wa'l-Anwar*, which I saw in the library of Fez, the following anecdote respecting Al-Mansur, and the splendour and magnificence with which he used to surround his person while residing at his palace of Az-Zahra'. There came once to the court of Al-Mansur ambassadors from the most powerful of the Christian Kings of Andalusia; their object was to ascertain the real strength of the Muslims and gain, if possible, a knowledge of their internal affairs. No sooner did Al-Mansur hear of their arrival than he issued orders for their suitable entertainment, and began to make preparations previous to their admission to his presence. He ordered that a vast lake, several miles in length, which was in the gardens of Az-Zahra', should be planted entirely with water-lilies; he then caused four qintars of gold, and four qintars of silver, to be cast into as many small pieces as

there were water-lilies in the lake, and ordered that one of those pieces should be introduced into the cavity of each water-lily.

All this having been executed agreeably to his instructions, Al-Mansur despatched a messenger to the Christian ambassadors, and bade them appear in his presence the next morning at dawn. The Christians did as they were desired, and found al-Mansur sitting in the great hall of his palace, in a balcony overlooking the lake; at sunrise one thousand Slavonians dressed in silken robes embroidered with silver and gold, their waists being girt by sashes of gold tissue, and carrying in their hands gold and silver trays, made their appearance, and the ambassadors were very much struck to see the beauty of their personal appearance, the magnificence of their dress and ornaments, and the admirable order in which they drew themselves up on each side of Al-Mansur's throne - the five hundred with robes of gold tissue and gold trays to the right, and the five hundred with robes of silver tissue and silver trays to the left. The Christians, in the meanwhile, not knowing what was meant, were dumb with amazement; but when the first sunbeams shone upon the water-lilies in the lake, all the Slavonians left their ranks at a signal from their chief, hastened to the spot, and began plucking the flowers, placing those that had the silver pieces inside the gold trays, and those that had the gold pieces in the silver trays, and when every water-lily on the lake had been thus plucked and placed in the silver and gold trays, they appeared again the presence of Al-Mansur, and deposited their gatherings at his feet, thus raising a mountain of silver and gold before his throne. When the Christian ambassadors saw this, they were seized with astonishment, and remained deeply convinced of Al-Mansur's immense resources and countless trea-



tures; they addressed him in the most humble terms; asked for a truce, which was granted, and returned to their country, where they said to their king, 'Do not make war upon those people for, by the Lord, we have seen the earth yielding them its hidden treasures.'

It is related by Abu Idris Al-Khawlani that as Al-Mansur was one day sitting in his palace of Az-Zahra', reflecting on its beauties, listening to the murmur of the running waters and to the songs of the rare birds, inhaling the perfumes of the scented flowers, and regaling his eyes with the emerald green of the bowers and meadows - as his whole soul in short was absorbed in the contemplation of the manifold beauties surrounding him on every side - suddenly tears rolled down his cheeks, and he exclaimed in deep sorrow, 'O Az-Zahra'! May the Almighty Lord save you from the hands of the demon of war, who will before long accomplish your destruction!" And Al-Mansur, after saying this, wept bitterly and hid his face with both his hands... 'May Allah grant,' said Al-Mansur, 'that my prediction be not fulfilled; for if my presentiments tell me truth, the fire of civil discord will soon rage within the precincts of this palace and all the beauties of Az-Zahra' will disappear from the face of the earth, this splendid mansion will be pulled down and converted into a heap of ruins, the gardens transformed into a dreary desert, my treasures will be squandered and scattered, and what was formerly the scene of pleasure and mirth will be changed into a spot of desolation and ruin...'

They say also that a holy man who lived in those days, one of those austere and pious Muslims whose thoughts are entirely consecrated to God, having once directed his steps towards Az-Zahra', when he came in sight of it was so much struck by the magnificence and size of the build-

ing, the luxuriance and excellent arrangement of the gardens, and the profusion of costly ornament and gilding lavished on it, that he could not help exclaiming,

'O palace of the kings! every house in this country has contributed to your ornament and perfection: you will also when in ruin afford materials for every house.'

Few days had elapsed since that pious and holy man had made his prayer when all the treasures of Az-Zahra' were plundered and scattered over the country, and the building itself was levelled to the ground, as we have previously stated, in consequence of the horrid and disastrous civil war which soon arose in Andalus, and from which no family or tribe escaped without contributing some victim. Praise be ascribed to Allah, whose decrees are infallibly executed upon his creatures! There is no god but Him! the High! the Great!"<sup>24</sup>

Al-Mansur was the last of the 'famous' rulers during the first flowering of Islam in Andalusia. He assumed control of the khalifate in Andalusia after the death of Al-Hakam, the son of 'Abdu'r-Rahman III, who had appointed his young son Hisham to succeed him. Allegedly acting on Hisham's behalf, Al-Mansur proceeded to eliminate all those who wished to seize power. He was noted for his decisive actions and vigilance:

The following anecdote has been preserved on the authority of Shu'alah: I said one night to Al-Mansur, perceiving that he was watching, 'I am afraid that our Lord sits up too much at night, and that his body wants more sleep and rest than is allowed to it, and no-one is better acquainted than he is with the ill-effects produced by want of proper rest upon the nerves.' He replies, 'O Shu'alah, kings should never sleep whilst their subjects are at rest; for if I were to have my full sleep, there would be in

the whole of this metropolis nothing but sleepers.<sup>25</sup>

Al-Mansur was very active against the Christians who, sensing the impending collapse of unity amongst the Muslims in Andalusia, had begun to make their first incursions into the lands ruled by the Muslims. In all Al-Mansur led fifty-two expeditions against the Christians, two each year, and in 997, on his fiftieth expedition he took Santiago de Compostela, the alleged burial-spot of St James. When they arrived in Santiago everyone had deserted it, with the exception of one monk, who was allowed to go free. The tomb was not disturbed, but all the buildings were destroyed. Unfortunately Al-Mansur also destroyed other Christian places of worship on his expeditions, and this inevitably resulted in similar acts of retaliation once the Christians began to gain a foothold in Andalusia. Among the meritorious actions of Al-Mansur, the following are particularly recorded:

He wrote with his own hand a Qur'an, which he always carried with him on his military expeditions, and in which he used constantly to read. He collected and kept all the dust which adhered to his garments during his marches to the country of the unbelievers, or in his battles with them. Accordingly whenever he halted at a place, his servants came up to him and carefully collected the dust in kerchiefs, until a good-sized bag was filled, which he always carried with him, intending to have it mixed with the perfumes for the purpose of embalming his body. He also took with him his grave clothes, thus being always prepared to meet death wherever it should take him. The winding sheet was made of linen grown in the lands inherited from his father, and spun and woven by his own daughters. He used continually to ask Allah to permit him to die in His service and in war against the unbelievers, and this desire was granted. He became celebrated for the purity of

his intentions, the knowledge of his own wrong actions, his fear of his Creator, his numerous campaigns against the Christians, and many other virtues and accomplishments which it would take too long to enumerate. Whenever the name of Allah was mentioned in his presence, he never failed to mention it also; and if ever he was tempted to do an act which might deserve the chastisement of his Lord, he invariably resisted the temptation. Notwithstanding this, he enjoyed all the pleasures of this world, which make the delight of kings, with the exception only of wine, the use of which he left off entirely two years before he died.<sup>26</sup>

Al-Mansur fell ill and died while he was on his fifty-second expedition against the Christians. His son, al-Muzaffar, succeeded him, but died only six years later. He was no sooner buried than a squabble over the leadership of the Muslims developed between the family of Al-Mansur, Hisham II, the grandson of 'Abdu'r-Rahman III, who was by now incapable of ruling, and several other contenders, including a man called Al-Mahdi, who eventually seized power:

Al-Mahdi is represented by the historians of the time as a man of depraved morals, a tyrannical ruler and a blood-shedder. Ibn Bassam says that he had a garden in which the heads of his enemies were fixed on stakes sunk in the ground.<sup>27</sup>

Al-Mahdi went the way of all tyrants and was finally deposed and killed by a combined force of Muslims and Christians to whom the Muslims had turned for help. The struggle for power continued and the country was plunged into civil war. The body politic of the Muslims divided and divided again. Within fifteen years of Al-Mansur's death, the whole of Andalusia had been carved up into numerous small kingdoms, each with its own ruler. They fought amongst each other continually, often enlisting the aid of the Christians who were only too happy to oblige:

...for whilst they united their forces, and even invited people of distant nations to share in the attack, the Muslim rulers of Andalusia saw with perfect unconcern, perhaps with secret joy, the dominions of their neighbours or rivals exposed to all the devastations of the Christian foe.<sup>28</sup>

Those kingdoms which directly bordered on the land occupied by the Christians in the north of the peninsula, having lost their unity, were obliged to pay the Christians a yearly tribute in order to maintain their independence. In order to pay this tribute and to maintain the rich lives of their courts, the rulers of these petty kingdoms imposed heavy taxes on the people under their control. These taxes were far in excess of the limits of taxation defined in Islamic law. Those who fought to maintain or restore the practice of Islam in all its aspects thus found themselves fighting not only the Christians, but also the so-called Muslims. It was a hopeless struggle. They found themselves in a process of collapse and decay which could not be reversed. As long as the Muslims of Andalusia had remained united in their practice of Islam, they had continued to expand. As soon as they divided, their numbers began to diminish, and the Christians were able to commence the business of taking over the country. Furthermore, because of the unfortunate split between the East and the West within the *Ummah* of Islam, no help from the Muslims in the East was forthcoming. This disunity was one of the fundamental factors which contributed towards the eventual elimination of Islam from Spain, for it was a weakness of which the Christians took full advantage. Once the Muslims in Andalus had divided, the armies of the Church gained a foothold in the country and, aided by the Christians living within the Muslim domains, who had grown in numbers and flourished under the tolerant Muslim rule, their hold over the country continued to grow. As in the case of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, the atrocities committed by the advancing Christian armies moved the Muslims to take revenge on the Christians within their kingdoms. This only weakened their position in the land, and increased the determination of the Christians to conquer them. Retaliation brought about retaliation. Intolerance bred intolerance. Revenge stimulated revenge.

Commencing with the Burgundian Crusades of 1017, the precursors of the more notorious crusades to the east, the Christians began to make significant inroads into the Iberian peninsula. The taking of Barbastro in 1064, in which thousands of Muslims were slaughtered immediately upon a long siege having been lifted after the two sides had signed a peace treaty, set off a grim pattern for the reconquest of Andalusia by the Christians:

It was an invariable custom with the Christians, whenever they took a town by force of arms, to ravish the daughters in the presence of their fathers, and the women before the eyes of their husbands and families. But on the taking of Barbastro the excesses of this kind committed by them pass all belief; the Muslims had never before experienced anything like it. In short, such were the crimes and excesses committed by the Christians on this occasion that there is no pen eloquent enough to describe them.<sup>29</sup>

Under the leadership of Alfonso VI, town after town fell into the hands of the Christians, and by the 1072 he was the ruler of Leon, Castile and Portugal. His activities culminated in his capture of Toledo after a seven year siege:

...for, finding his own power increased through the extinction of the Khalifate, and perceiving the weak and helpless state to which the Muslims had been reduced by their wrong actions, he overran and plundered the flat country, and so pressed Al-Qadir that he obliged him to surrender his capital, Toledo, in the year 478 AH (1085 AD), on condition, however, that he should assist him in gaining possession of Valencia, which he did. There is no power or strength but in Allah, the Great!, the High!<sup>30</sup>

After the capitulation of Toledo, Alfonso VI proclaimed himself emperor of all Spain, and within a very short space of time was exacting annual tributes from virtually all the Muslim petty

kingdoms or '*taifa*' as they were called.

Toledo, the ancient capital of the Visigoths, subsequently became a great centre of learning, in which many philosophical works, which had been re-discovered or written in Muslim Spain, were translated into Latin and other European languages, and from there percolated through the rest of Europe. These works were largely based on the Greek philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle. Because of this, the last century, especially, has seen a concerted drive by the Christian 'scholars' to discredit Islam by attempting to 'prove' that Islam derives from the teachings of the ancient Greek philosophers, and can therefore be dispensed with, since it logically follows that, if this were true, it has no primary source of its own. However, the Qur'an has, of course, survived up to the present day, uncontaminated by human interference and we know too much about the Prophet Muhammad for their arguments to be convincing in the least. The truth is that the Muslims, basing themselves firmly on the Qur'an, breathed new life into the philosophical tradition whose effects are visible up till the present day.

Al-Qadir agreed to surrender Toledo to Alfonso VI on condition that the latter helped him to gain control of Valencia. The 'Christian' King kept his promise, and Al-Qadir gladly took over the rule of a city:

whose inhabitants were then untrained to war, and as little used to the hard life of a camp as to the handling of the spear and the sword. They were, on the contrary, plunged in pleasure and sloth, and thought of nothing but eating and drinking.<sup>31</sup>

Al-Qadir retained his position as ruler of Valencia by paying an annual tribute to the notorious El Cid, who was busy establishing Roman Catholicism in the east of Andalusia whilst Alfonso VI concentrated on the centre and the west of the country.

El Cid's small kingdom in eastern Andalusia had developed largely as a result of his having been exiled by Alfonso VI. He began his exile by acting as a mercenary who hired out his help to one Muslim ruler who wished to conquer another. The results

of his activities thus helped to divide the Muslims. He always kept his word, however, and did not lose himself in sensual pleasures. In this respect he was more just than the tyrants whom he either helped to overthrow or from he exacted tribute. He thus enjoyed a grudging respect from many of the Muslims who suffered under their own tyrant leaders.

It is clear, however, that El Cid was only prepared to administer justice as long as he remained in power. When, at the end of the eleventh century, a new breath of Islam swept into Andalusia from North Africa with the advent of the Muslims known as the Almoravids or Murabits, he dealt very harshly with all those who responded to this new awakening. The coming of the Murabits not only united El Cid with Alfonso VI once more, but also exposed the true nature of his activity which, once stripped of its glamour, involved the removal of the practice of Islam, and the institution of the Roman Catholicism in its place. Indeed it was the success of the Christians in this, their principal activity, which caused the Muslims of Andalusia to unite once more, and to seek the help of their brothers across the Straits of Gibraltar.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XI

- (1) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain*, I, appendix, xlv, P. de Gayangos.
- (2) *Ibid*, I, p. 266.
- (3) *Ibid*, I, appendix, xlvii.
- (4) *Ibid*, I, p. 271.
- (5) *Ibid*, I, appendix, xlviii.
- (6) *Ibid*, I, appendix, xlix, (7) *Moorish Culture in Spain*, p. 24, T. Burckhardt.
- (8) *Gardens of the Righteous*, p. 229, M.Z. Khan.
- (9) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain* I, appendix, I, P. de Gayangos.
- (10) *Ibid*, I, p. 293.
- (11) *Ibid*, I, appendix, lxxxii.
- (12) *Ibid*, II, p. 31.
- (13) *Ibid*, I, p. 298.
- (14) *Ibid*, I.
- (15) *Ibid*, I.
- (16) *Ibid*, I, p. 106.
- (17) *Ibid*, I, p. 103.
- (18) *The Falcon of Spain*, p. 145, T. Irving.
- (19) *Ibid*, p. 130.
- (20) *Ibid*, p. 131.
- (21) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain* I, p. 82, P. de Gayangos.
- (22) *The Falcon of Spain*, p. 72, T. Irving.
- (23) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, VI, p. 453, E. Gibbon.
- (24) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain* I, P. de Gayangos.
- (25) *Ibid*, II, p. 218.
- (26) *Ibid*, II, p. 220.
- (27) *Ibid*, II, p. 227.
- (28) *Ibid*, II, p. 261.
- (29) *Ibid*, II, p. 267.
- (30) *Ibid*, II, p. 255.
- (31) *Ibid*, II, p. 264.

## CHAPTER XII

## THE MURABITS IN ANDALUSIA

The Murabit movement was started in about 1029 by a Moroccan Muslim scholar, 'Abdullah ibn Yasin, who went to instruct the people of the Sanhaja tribe, who inhabited the depths of the Sahara. He built a fortress on a small island in the river Niger. These fortresses, or *ribats* as they were called, were to be found along the whole frontier between the Muslim and the non-Muslim world. As a rule the garrison of the *ribat* consisted of volunteers who, when they were not fighting *jihād* against the black idolaters on the other side of the river, were engaged in constant *dhikr* 'Allah, remembrance of Allah, in addition to the five daily prayers which every Muslim does. Those who lived this life were known as '*al-Murabitun*', the people of the *ribat*, or as they came to be known, the Almoravids or Murabits.

Under the guidance of 'Abdullah ibn Yasin, his followers rapidly grew in spiritual stature and in numbers. This movement, which began just as the first flowering of Islam in Andalusia was beginning to visibly wither, spread rapidly and dynamically through the Berber Sanhaja tribe, the neighbours of the Tuareg. They were nomads and were a rugged and hardy people. They immediately recognised the basic sanity of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad, and were awed by the diversity and depth of the Qur'an, the revelation which he had been given. Consequently they were meticulous in their observance of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, and put their trust in Allah.

By 1042 Islam had spread throughout that part of the Sahara which was inhabited by the Sanhaja and another Berber tribe, called the Lamtuna, both of whom had the distinctive custom of veiling their faces - that is to say, the men wore the veil, not the women. They were spread out over an area, as measured after the custom of the time, of six month's journey in length and over four months' in width. Everywhere the movement spread the guidance indicated in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* were closely observed:

In the lands they conquered they punished impiety, interdicted marriage with more than

four free women, burnt the wine-shops and destroyed musical instruments as being corrupters of morals. Above all they sternly suppressed all taxation unauthorised by the Koran and the *Sunna*, only permitting tithes, the customary tax, the special tax on infidel subjects, and a fifth of the booty won in holy warfare. <sup>1</sup>

The movement continued to spread very rapidly and in 1055, Morocco, which like Andalusia, had fallen into loose living, was conquered by the Murabits and given a fresh energy and reminder of the dynamic potential of an Islam which is practised. In 1061, Yusuf ibn Tashfin was appointed governor of Morocco. 'Abdullah ibn Yasin had been killed in a battle in the southern Sahara in 1059. It was Yusuf who received, and responded to, the call for aid from the Muslims of Andalusia in 1086. This action resulted in a second flowering of Islam in Spain and delayed the enroachments of the Christians for another century.

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The man largely responsible for enlisting the aid of the Murabits was al-Mu'tamid, the ruler of the area surrounding Seville. When Alfonso VI one year refused to accept his tribute and called on him to surrender all his fortresses, al-Mu'tamid decided to seek protection from Yusuf, despite the attempts of some of the other rulers to dissuade him. They argued that: "A kingdom without heirs and one long sword do not find room in the same scabbard."

To this Al-Mu'tamid replied with that saying which afterwards became a proverb among the people of Andalusia, "Better to be a camel-driver in Africa than a swineherd in Castile," meaning that he would rather be Yusuf's prisoner and guard his camels in the desert than become the captive of Alfonso and keep his swine in Castile. He then said to those who upbraided him for his resolution:

My present position is of two sorts, one of doubt and one of certainty, and I must needs

choose between the two. As to the one of doubt, it is whether I am to apply to Yusuf ibn Tashfin or to Alfonso, since it is equally possible that either of the two with whom I treat may either keep his promise faithfully or not keep it at all. This is the position of doubt; as to that of certainty, it is that if I lean for support on Yusuf ibn Tashfin, I do an act agreeable to God; whereas if, on the contrary, I lean on Alfonso, I am certain of incurring the wrath of God; and therefore, the position of doubt being in the present instance clear and evident, why should I leave what is agreeable to God to take that which is offensive to Him? <sup>2</sup>

In response to al-Mu'tamid's request, Yusuf sent a huge army to Algeciras:

He himself followed, accompanied by many Murabit chieftains, as well as *faqirs* and dervishes who, as his most venerated counsellors, were the soul of that holy war. When embarking, the Emir offered up the prayer: 'If this crossing, O Allah, be of service to Islam, let good fortune attend it; but if not, then let some mishap on the voyage compel me to turn back.' The wind was favourable, and Yusuf set foot on Spanish soil at Algeciras on June 30, 1086.

He who thus came as the saviour of Islam in Andalusia was an old man of seventy, lean and swarthy, with brows that met, a straggling beard and a piping voice. He had been born in the Sahara long before the conversion of his Lamtuna tribe, and his soul still burned with all the fervour of a neophyte. He held worldly pleasure in disdain and was austere, humble and holy. His only fare was barley bread, milk and camels' flesh; his only clothing was of wool, and he wore a veil over his face after the manner of the desert tribes, which the fakirs regarded as a symbol of the modesty that hid his nobleness and virtue. <sup>3</sup>

When Alfonso VI heard of the Murabits' landing, he prepared for war. One night he had a dream in which he was riding on a huge elephant, which was all the time beating a drum with his trunk. Troubled by such a vivid sign, he sent a Jewish spy to obtain an interpretation of the dream from the Muslims, since none of his Christian advisers possessed this science. The Jew found a Muslim who had been given the ability to interpret dreams, and pretended that the dream was his own. The *faqir*, however, was immediately certain that only one man could have had such a dream:

It was Alfonso, and he only, who dreamt the dream, and the meaning of it is that a great calamity is about to befall him and his army. The dream may be explained in those words of the Koran - 'Seest thou not how thy Lord has dealt with the people of the Elephant?' As to the elephant beating the drum with his trunk, the meaning of it is that Alfonso will receive a wound in his face, which will also happen on the same ominous day.<sup>4</sup>

The day soon arrived and the two armies soon found themselves facing each other at Sagrajas which is outside Badajoz. The night before the battle took place, one of the Muslim soldiers saw the Prophet Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in a dream. He informed the soldier that the Muslims would win a decisive victory the next day and told him that he himself would die a martyr during the battle. Joyfully the man went and told Yusuf of his dream. He then did a *ghusl* (ritual bath of purification), perfumed himself and spent the rest of the night in prayer and recitation of the Qur'an, in preparation for his approaching death and the Garden.

The news of his dream soon spread through the army, and when dawn broke the Muslims did the dawn prayer and then went into battle already confident of victory in the way of Allah. The Christians, used to deciding battles in single combat, were completely unprepared for the new tactics of the Murabits and were awed by the continuous drumming which accompanied their manoeuvres:

This weird drum-beating, which so dumbfounded the Christians, is an indication in itself of the new tactics brought into play by the Murabits, whereby compact masses, trained to regular, rhythmic and unfaltering action, moved with the various units under their own banners, adopted by the Murabit army at the same time as the drum, and the employment of bodies of Turkish archers, who fought in regular, parallel ranks, provide further evidence of this new method of warfare.<sup>5</sup>

By the end of the day the Christian army had been cut to pieces and Alfonso VI barely escaped with his life:

After the defeat of his army, Alfonso ascended a small eminence close to his camp, with five hundred of his knights, every one of whom had been more or less wounded in the conflict: from whence they all disappeared in the course of the night. All those who did not follow the example of their king were either killed or taken prisoner; the number of those who died in the battle or after it being so great that the plain was actually covered with their bodies, and that the heads of the slain, piled up in various places, formed several pulpits from which the muezzins called the faithful to prayer: indeed, had Alfonso stayed to contemplate the field of battle, he would have found it a terrible lesson to himself and to his followers.<sup>6</sup>

Yusuf refused to take any of the booty, and after being entertained by al-Mu'tamid in Seville, he returned to North Africa with his army. Soon after he had left, Alfonso VI, who had gathered another army, attacked the province of Murcia and captured Aledo from whence he again attacked al-Mu'tamid. Yusuf was again called, and in 1089 he again landed in Andalusia and with his army laid siege to Toledo, but without success. It is said that not one of the Andalusian Muslim kings came to his help

although summoned, which so incensed Yusuf that he decided to chastise them for their negligence, and to deprive them of their dominions. When the siege of Toledo proved fruitless he himself returned to Africa, but left this general to prevent the Christians from making any further inroads into Muslim Andalusia. This they did, winning many victories, and extending their frontiers northwards again. Still, however, the Andalusian Muslim kings refused to help them. When the Murabit commander informed Yusuf that:

whilst his own troops were performing a service of danger on the frontiers, waging incessant war against the Christians, and leading at the same time a life of hardship and privation, the kings of Andalusia were plunged in pleasure and sloth, and their subjects were enjoying a happy and easy life. He therefore requested him to send him his instructions respecting the said kings, and to inform him how he was to deal with them. Yusuf's answer was thus conceived: 'Order them to accompany thee to the enemy's country; if they obey, well and good; if they refuse, lay siege to their cities, attack them one after the other, and destroy them without mercy. Thou shalt begin with those princes whose dominions border on the enemy's frontier, and shalt not attack al-Mu'tamid until thou hast reduced the rest of Muhammadan Spain to obedience. To every city or town which may thus fall into thy hands thou shalt appoint a governor from among the officers of thy army.'<sup>7</sup>

Yusuf's instructions, accompanied by a third landing of Murabit reinforcements in 1090, were obeyed to the letter, and in a very short time the Muslims of Andalusia were once more united under one ruler. All taxes outside those stipulated in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* were stopped, and for the next fifty years Islam bloomed once more in Andalusia with the renewed observance of the *Muwatta'* of Imam Malik.

The Murabits, however, were unable to dislodge El Cid from

the east of Andalusia, and throughout his life he steadily and often successfully opposed them. In 1094 he captured Valencia after a long siege. Up until this point the ruler, al-Qadir, who had surrendered Toledo to Alfonso VI, had retained control of the city while paying tribute to El Cid. The arrival of the Murabits, however, was regarded as a threat both by the Muslim chieftains of Valencia who relied on heavy taxes for their wealth, and by El Cid who did not wish to relinquish power. When the people of Valencia showed a desire to accept the Murabits as their rulers, El Cid seized Valencia, and attempted to placate the Muslims there by promising to govern them according to the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. After promising to abolish all taxes outside Islam, and to restore them their lands which the Christians had seized, El Cid continued:

'I will judge your suits on Mondays and Thursdays, but if your case be urgent come any day and I will hear you; for I spend not my time with women, drinking and singing, like your masters, whom ye cannot see when ye need them. I wish to judge all your affairs myself, be as a comrade to you, defend you as a friend defends a friend and a man his own kinsfolk; I wish to be at once the *cadi* who judges and the vizier who executes judgement; and whensoever ye may disagree I will dispense justice...' Having thus ensured his popularity by a display of justice and generosity and confounded the supporters of the Murabits, who could not fail to admire his virtues, the Cid went on to add conditions, 'But ye must bow to my ruling,' he declared, 'in all such things as I shall tell you. Fail not to do so, nor disobey my commands!'<sup>8</sup>

Many of the Muslims of Valencia left the city, not wishing to live under a Christian ruler. Those who remained were dealt with fairly by El Cid, but only as long as they showed no desire to have a Muslim rule over them:

This attitude to the Spanish Muslims may be



summed up in his own declaration: 'If I act lawfully, God will leave me Valencia; but if with pride and injustice, I know He will take her away from me.' ...Ibn Alcamá admits that the Cid dealt very fairly with the Valencians. But when, in their anxiety to remain under Islam, the Moors of Spain called in the Africans, the Cid perforce took up a different stand: thenceforth the war could only end in the expulsion of the invader and the complete submission of the Spanish Moors.<sup>9</sup>

When the Murabits were called upon for help, El Cid ceased to respect Muslim law, and resorted to the mailed fist of the conqueror. He beat off all Murabit attacks, on one occasion even charging out from Valencia and routing them. He gradually deprived the Muslims in Valencia of their freedom to practise Islam. In 1096, he converted the main mosque into a church and slowly but surely the Muslims were obliged to leave their houses in the centre of Valencia and to live in the suburbs. Quoting Ibn Bassam, Menéndez Pidal writes:

The power of this tyrant became ever more intolerable; it weighed like a heavy load upon the people of the coast and inland regions, filling all men, both near and far, with fear. His intense ambition, his lust for power...caused all to tremble. Yet this man, who was the scourge of his age, by his unflagging and clear-sighted energy, his virile character, and his heroism, was a miracle among the great miracles of the Almighty.<sup>10</sup>

El Cid died in 1099, the same year as the First Crusade to the east took place. The Murabits immediately lay siege to Valencia, and regained possession of it in 1102. The whole of Andalusia was therefore once more under Muslim rule. With the death of Yusuf ibn Tashfin, however, the unity of the Murabits began to decline and, attracted by the vast wealth which the Andalusians still possessed, some of them began to fall into the same pattern

of behaviour as those leaders who had succeeded al-Mansur at the beginning of the eleventh century. Small kingdoms once again began to re-emerge and with this loss of unity, they ceased to be so vigilant about the activities of their common enemy:

In the same manner as at the overthrow of the house of Umayyad the provinces of their vast empire had been parcelled out among their generals and governors, so now every petty governor, chief, or man of influence, who could command a few followers and had a castle to retire to in case of need, styled himself a Sultan, and assumed the other insignia of royalty; and as the historian Ibn Khaldun has judiciously remarked, Andalus afforded the singular spectacle of as many kings as there were towns in it.<sup>11</sup>

These divisions caused great contention between the Muslims, between Murabit and Murabit, between Murabit and Andalusian, and even between the different Arab tribes who still refused to forget their pre-Islamic differences. Once more the signs of civil war emerged, and while the Muslims were thus engaged, the Christians were not idle. Alfonso I, King of Aragon, was able to make fresh inroads into the northeast of Andalusia beginning with the capture of Saragossa in 1118. Aided by the Christians already living in Andalusia he was able to make extended incursions into Muslim territory, and in 1121 even reached the walls of Granada, which he did not attack, returning to his kingdom after a few skirmishes.

The movement of the Catholic Christians into Andalusia, which had been stemmed by the coming of the Murabits, thus began to gain momentum again. However it was once again checked by the coming of yet another wave of Muslims from North Africa, the Alhomads or the Muwahhids.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XII

- (1) *The Cid and his Spain*, p. 213, R. Menendez-Pilal.
- (2) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain*, II, p. 273, P. de Gayangos.
- (3) *The Cid and his Spain*, p. 216, R. Menendez-Pilal.
- (4) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain*, II, p. 282, P. de Gayangos.
- (5) *The Cid and his Spain*, p. 219, R. Menendez-Pilal.
- (6) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain*, II, p. 287, P. de Gayangos.
- (7) *Ibid*, p. 295.
- (8) *The Cid and his Spain*, p. 340, R. Menendez-Pilal.
- (9) *Ibid*, p. 425.
- (10) *Ibid*, p. 428.
- (11) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain*, II, p. 309, P. de Gayangos.

## CHAPTER XIII

## THE MUWAHHIDS IN ANDALUSIA

The Muwahhid movement began in the High Atlas Mountains around 1121. It was led by a scholar called Muhammad ibn Tumart, who was subsequently became known as al-Mahdi, he who is rightly guided. He had studied the ideas of al-Ghazzali, the great Persian Sufi, in the east, and when he returned to the High Atlas, he was the means by which a great revival of Islam was initiated, at a time when the rule of the Murabits had begun to degenerate not only in Andalusia but also in North Africa. He was not a religious innovator as many writers have erroneously asserted:

He merely preached reform and a closer adherence to the doctrines inculcated in the Koran, and to the principles of the Al-Muwahhedun or Unitarians, in opposition to the Almoravides, whom they called *Al-Mujassemun* or Corporalists, because they partook in some degree of the opinions of Muhammad ibn Keram, who described God as finite and circumscribed on all sides, and as being tangible to the hand and visible to the eye.<sup>1</sup>

As with the movement of the Murabits, the Muwahhids spread very rapidly in the early stages of their development. Ibn Tumart died in 1130, and his successor, 'Abdu'l-Mu'min, first overthrew the remains of the disintegrating empire of the Murabits, revitalizing and re-awakening the practice of Islam wherever he went. By 1145, virtually the whole of North Africa was under the rule of the Muwahhids and 'Abdu'l-Mu'min turned his attention towards Andalus, where once again the rulers of the small Muslim kingdoms were beginning to realize how grave the danger of conquest by the Christians was. In 1145, the first wave of Muwahhids landed in Andalusia and took Algeciras. In the next four years they spread northwards, taking Seville and Malaga in 1146, and Cordoba and Jaen in 1149. The Christians, however, continued to move southwards and the two

opposing forces finally met decisively at the town of Almeria which the Christians had taken in 1147.

In 1157 'Abdu'l-Mu'min sent over an army of 20,000 men under a general called Abu Hafis to retake Almeria. Ibn Mardanish, who was the king of Valencia and who had established himself, after the fall of the Murabits, over Valencia, Murcia and the whole of eastern Andalusia, much in the same way as El Cid, had made a pact with the Christians in order to retain his power. He immediately sought the aid of the Lord of Barcelona to help him defeat the Muwahhids. He feared that if Almeria was taken, he too would lose his kingdom to the Muwahhids. When Abu Hafis approached Almeria and laid siege to it, he was suddenly disconcerted to find himself being attacked by Ibn Mardanish from behind. However, this state of affairs did not last for long:

At last, Ibn Mardanish, perceiving all the shame of his act, in thus attacking his brethren in religion whilst engaged in the extermination of the Christians, desisted from his undertaking and marched off, leaving the execution of his vengeance for another opportunity. When the Christians inside the castle of Almeria saw Ibn Mardanish raise his tents and go away, they said to each other, 'Surely Ibn Mardanish would not decamp, unless he had heard that the Almohades were on the point of receiving re-inforcements.' Upon which they offered to capitulate, and surrendered the city to the Muslims.<sup>2</sup>

After this victory the movement of the Muwahhids in Andalusia spread very rapidly. By 1160, 'Abdu'l-Mu'min ruled over not only the whole of North Africa as far as Mahdiyya and Sfax, but also virtually the whole of the southern peninsula. He was just about to accompany another large army across to Andalusia in 1163 when he died. His son and successor, Abu Ya'qub, crossed over with ten thousand Muwahhids and settled in Seville in 1170. Ibn Mardanish died in the same year and his sons immediately acknowledged the new leader of the Muwahhids as their own, and were appointed governors by him.

The effect of these early conquests was to unite the Muslims

in the south and the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries witnessed a profound return to the practice of Islam in all its simplicity and depth, especially in the provinces of Andalusia, Granada and Murcia. This spiritual revival which coincided with the arrival of the Paulicians in Europe and especially in the south of France, witnessed the birth and life of Ibn 'Arabi, or the *Shaykh al-Akbar*, as he is known. He was born in 1165 on the 27th of Ramadan, two years before the foundation of Oxford University. It is only during the past decade that translations of his extensive writings, such as *The Seals of Wisdom* and the *Makkan Revelations*, are being made available to the West.

Some of his other works, such as *Ruh al-Quds* and his *al-Durrat al-Fakhira* provide illuminating descriptions of the men of God who filled Andalusia during this time. One of these many men was Abu Ja'far al-'Uryani:

Although he was an illiterate countryman, unable to write or use figures, one had only to hear his expositions on the doctrine of Unity to appreciate his spiritual standing. By means of his power of Concentration he was able to control men's thoughts, and by words he could overcome the obstacles of existence. He was always to be found in a state of ritual purity, his face towards the *qiblah* and continuously invoking God's Names.

Once he was taken captive, along with others, by the Christians. He knew that this would happen before it took place and accordingly warned the members of the caravan in which he was travelling that they would all be taken captive on the next day. The very next morning, as he had said, the enemy ambushed them and captured every last man of them. To him, however, they showed great respect and provided comfortable quarters and servants for him. After a short time he arranged his release from the foreigners for the sum of five hundred dinars and travelled to our part of the country.

When he had arrived it was suggested to him that the money be collected for him from two or three persons. To this he replied, 'No! I would only want it from as many people as possible; indeed, were it possible I would obtain it from everyone in small amounts, for God has told me that in every soul weighed in the balance on the Last Day there is something worth saving from the fire. In this way I would take the good in every man for the nation of Muhammad.'<sup>3</sup>

The south of Spain was filled with men such as this, and Islam flourished as it had when it first came to the Iberian peninsula. If anything, the presence of the Christians in the north of Spain strengthened their Islam, and although the territory held by the Muslims diminished, their illumination increased. The practice of Islam in Andalusia was revitalized by Sufi teachers who guided the Muslims to the practice of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and this began in turn to re-awaken the Muslims in the East and in North Africa. Thus Ibn al-'Arabi himself went eventually to Damascus, where he died in 1240, and Abu'l-'Abbas al-Mursi of Murcia, who succeeded Abu'l-Hassan ash-Shadhili, lived in Alexandria till his death in 1287. Another great Shaykh, Abu Madyan Shu'ayb, who was born near Seville in 1126, went to Morocco in his youth, and was eventually buried in Tlemcen. The living tradition continued through such Shaykhs as these, and indeed still continues today. It was on account of such men as these that the Christians were never able to eliminate Islam, for as the movements of both the Murabits and Muwahhids ably demonstrate, one enlightened man is enough to illuminate a whole country.

Throughout the last quarter of the twelfth century, the Muwahhids were very active, especially under the rule of Ya'qub, the grandson of 'Abdu'l-Mu'min, who became leader of the Muwahhids in 1184. He came to be called al-Mansur Billah and is described as:

...a monarch whose fame travelled far and wide,  
who upheld the glory of the Almohad empire,

who raised the banners of holy war, upheld the balance of justice, and spread the decrees of civil law - rendered Islam triumphant, ordained what is right and forbade what is wrong, and made his orders obeyed over near as well as distant lands.<sup>4</sup>

This activity culminated in the famous battle of Alarcos of 1195, in which Ya'qub defeated the immense crusade organized by Pope Innocent III against the Muslims of Andalusia. It is said that the Christians lost 146,000 men and 30,000 more of them were taken prisoner. Alfonso II, King of Castile, who led the attack, managed to retreat to Toledo with the remnants of his army:

They say that when he arrived in that city, he had his head and beard shaved, turned his cross upside down, and swore not to sleep in bed, approach a woman, or mount a horse or mule, until he had revenged his defeat.<sup>5</sup>

This revenge was not long in coming for after Ya'qub's death in 1199, he was succeeded by his son Muhammad an-Nasir who was not experienced in either administration or warfare. In 1212, he collected a tremendous army together of 600,000 men from both Andalusia and North Africa, in order to repulse another crusade which Pope Innocent III had instigated. Muhammad an-Nasir ignored the advice of his skilled and experienced generals and was careless in his tactics, so confident was he of his own power. His attitude cost him an army and thousands of Muslims were slain fighting in the way of Allah in the famous battle of Las Navas de Tolosa:

...the result of which was that the greater part of Maghreb was deserted and that the Franks conquered the greater part of Andalus...certain it is that this defeat may be regarded as the real cause of the subsequent decline of Western Africa and Andalus, - of the former country, because the loss sustained in the battle was so

great that her districts and towns were almost depopulated through it - of Andalus, because the enemy of God was thereby enabled to extend his conquests; for after the death of An-Nasir, the empire of the Almohades became convulsed, the princes of the royal family, who held the government of Andalus, each seized the opportunity of extending his own power and authority; and in the subsequent decline of their empire at Morocco, they came at length not only to hire the enemy's troops, but to surrender to the Christian kings the fortresses of the Muslims, that they might secure their aid against each other.<sup>6</sup>

The rulers of the Muwahhids thus shared the same destiny as the rulers of the Murabits and the successors of al-Mansur ibn 'Amir before them, mainly because they based their selection of a new leader on blood-relations rather than according to the Qur'an and the *Sunna*.

In the civil war and discord which resulted from this pattern of behaviour, the Catholics made swift inroads into Andalusia, and rapidly reduced the territory held by the Muslims by its outlying parts. This advance which coincided with the destruction of the Paulician Catharii in the south of France, was characterized by a grim persecution of the Muslims and the Jews, as the example provided by the conquest of Ubeda in 1212 by Alfonso IX demonstrated. After the capitulation, Alfonso IX found 70,000 Muslims living there. They offered to pay him a ransom of a million doblas in return for being allowed to continue to live in peace. He agreed to this. The Catholic Church, however, persuaded him to break his promise. All the Muslims of Ubeda were then massacred except those who were selected to become slaves. This pattern of conduct was invariably repeated by the Church army at each village and town that it came to, and the lands held by the Muslims were rapidly diminished. Cordoba fell in 1236. Valencia in 1238 and Seville in 1248. These conquests of the Catholic Christians in Andalusia coincided with the last crusades to the East. Louis IV led the Sixth Crusade in 1248, the same year as the fall of Seville. He was captured by the Muslims,

but released after paying them 400,000 pieces of gold. He then led the Seventh and final Crusade in 1254.

By the mid-thirteenth century the Christian army had conquered virtually the whole of Spain with the exception of the kingdom of Granada. Many of the Muslims who were not killed in the fighting, and who could not bear to work as slaves for the Christians, made their way to Granada. This became the last defiant stronghold of the Muslims and the practice of Islam continued to thrive there for another two and a half centuries after the fall of Seville. The Muslims of Granada regarded all those who had chosen to remain in the territories occupied by the Christians with contempt. They were regarded in no better light by the Christians, who tolerated them only because of their economic usefulness, and who eventually eliminated them in spite of it.

Once the Christians gained power in the land, the story of their subsequent persecution of the Jews and Muslims is not a pleasant one. Navarrete speaks of 2,000,000 Jews and 3,000,000 Muslims having been at various times expelled from Spain, and he is copied by Gil Gonzales Davila, the official historiographer of Philip III and IV. The institution which was largely responsible for these expulsions was the Spanish Inquisition. Its activities were so horrifying that the majority of historians have chosen to mention it very briefly, and to pass on to other matters. Any attempt to cover in detail what amounted to the genocide of two distinct and large communities in Spain is an almost impossible task. The whole story can never be told.

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In order to disguise the fact that Islam once flourished in Spain, the Muslims who once lived there have been given different names by the Catholic Church, in the same way that the Paulicians were given different names whenever they appeared in another country, in order to cover the unity of the movement. A brief summary of the terminology used to describe the Muslims of Spain is necessary at this stage, so that when they are used later on, the different terms will not cause confusion.

The most popular synonym for the Muslims is 'the Moors'.

This term is often used by official historians to describe the Muslims either before, during or after their presence in Spain. They are also often referred to as 'the Mudejares' and 'the Moriscos'. These nicknames are indicative of the process of decline and erosion of Islam.

The name 'Mudejar', which originates from the Arabic, '*mudajjal*' was originally used as a term of ridicule for those Muslims who made pacts with the Christians, and even fought their Muslim brothers with the Christians. It was also used to describe all the Muslims who remained in the North after the first wave of persecution by the Church, and who worked for the Christian nobles on their large country estates. It was used to describe all Muslims in Spain who lived outside the kingdom of Granada. Some people say that the term '*Mudejar*' might have originated from the Arabic '*mujaddan*', which means one who is dark, gloomy, tamed, servile, domesticated.

When, in the next stages of persecution, the Mudejares were eventually all forcibly baptised, they became known as the Moriscos, the 'Christian Moors'. This term was also used to describe the Muslims in the South who, after the fall of Granada in 1492, were also forcibly baptised.

These changes in name, therefore, indicate the main stages in the process by which Islam was watered down until it was no longer a reality in Spain. Bearing this terminology in mind, it is now possible to examine the process in greater detail.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XIII

- (1) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain*, II, p. 521, P. de Gayangos.
- (2) *Ibid*, II, p. 314.
- (3) *Sufis of Andalusia*, p. 63, R.W.J. Austin.
- (4) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain*, II, p. 319, P. de Gayangos.
- (5) *Ibid*, II, p. 322.
- (6) *Ibid*, II, p. 323.

## UNIT XIV

### THE MUDEJARES OF NORTHERN SPAIN

The treatment meted out to the Muslims and the Jews who remained in the territories newly occupied by the Christians became increasingly harsh as the Christians became more established in the land. The Jews and the Mudejares, as these Muslims came to be called, were tolerated only insofar as the Christians depended on them for their needs.

The Jews and the Muslims formed the economic backbone of the country, the Jews in the field of commerce and finance and the Muslims in the crafts and agriculture. The vast wealth which the Jews had accumulated made them an obvious and inevitable target of greed. It was easier to replace the Jews with Christians in their function as the financiers, tax-collectors and moneylenders of Spain. Thus initially the Jews probably suffered more extensively than the Muslims.

The persecution and ultimate expulsion of the Muslims from Spain was a much longer process than that of the Jews. They were not only far more numerous than the Jews, but also pursued all the trades and fashioned all the necessities of ordinary everyday life. It was on their industry that the material prosperity of Spain depended. Their skills were in demand in every sphere of life. Many of them were honest and hard-working farmers whose knowledge of cultivation and skill in agriculture were matchless. These characteristics were apparent in every profession and trade that they were engaged upon. They were skilled shipbuilders and were masters in erecting buildings of all kinds. As physicians their services were in great demand. The Christians relied on their labour in satisfying the fundamental needs of food, shelter, and clothing. Friar Alonso Fernandez described the Muslims of northern Spain in his '*Historia de Plasencia*' with the following words:

They were diligent in the cultivation of gardens, and lived apart from the society of Old Christians, preferring that their own life not be the object of gazing. Others were occupied in trade. They sold foods at the best stands in the cities

and villages, most of them living by the work of their own hands. Others were employed at manual trades such as tinkers, smiths, shoemakers, soap-makers and muleteers. They all paid their taxes and assessments willingly, and were moderate in their food and dress...They had no use for begging among their own people; and all had a trade and were busy at some employment...none of them took up the sterile calling of monk, cleric, or nun...All married - poor and rich, sound and lame...They preferred work that required skill rather than brawn; they were weavers, tailors, rope-makers, sandal-makers, potters, shoemakers, veterinaries, mattress-makers, gardeners, muleteers, olive-oil peddlers.<sup>1</sup>

The policy of the Christians was, therefore, to begin with, to harness the skills of the Muslims for their own profit. This, they believed, would be best achieved by taming them and making them obedient servants. They therefore set about stripping the Muslims of their way of life, while at the same time retaining their utility as slaves. Hence the popular saying, "*Mientras más Moros más ganancias.*"<sup>2</sup> More Moors more money. Ironically the Muslims were despised by the Christians because of their economic dependence on them. Lea writes about these Muslims:

They constituted the most desirable population that any land could possess...it was a curious perversity with which these good qualities were converted into accusations against them by their Christian persecutors.<sup>3</sup>

The basis of this contempt for the Muslims, however, was not founded on economic reasons. It was based on the Roman Church's denial of the fact that there had been another prophet after the prophet Jesus. For anyone who accepted the prophethood of both Jesus and Muhammad, and their respective teachings, the same teaching, the whole structure of the Roman Church was clearly superfluous and unnecessary. The only way

the Catholic Church could assure its continued existence as an institution in Spain was by stripping the Muslims and the Jews of their knowledge and of their way of life.

The Catholics thus engaged themselves upon the formidable task of changing the minds of the Jews and the Muslims, while at the same time retaining their utility as tamed and obedient slaves. In contrast with the Muslims who had made no attempt to interfere with the religion or the property of the Christians when they were in power, the Christians were vigorously opposed to reconciliation and tolerance now that they were in power. To the conscientious Mediaeval Roman Catholic, any friendship with a Muslim was regarded as a denial of the Pauline figure of Christ. If a Muslim could not be converted to the official religion, it was his duty to lay upon him such burdens that he would seek relief by becoming a Christian.

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Having virtually wiped out the Unitarian Paulicians of southern France with such efficiency, it was inevitable that the techniques and the institution of the Inquisition would be employed in Spain. Initially, however, persecution of the Jews and Christians was carried out by the Christian army and the Old Christians who were already living there. The whole machinery of the Inquisition was not established in Spain until the persecution by the Roman Catholic Church was well under way. In the codes known as *El Fuero Real* and *Las Siete Partidas*, the first issued by Alfonso 'the Wise' in 1255, and the second about ten years later, no mention of the Inquisition is made, although at this time the Mediaeval Inquisition in France was in its heyday. These codes contained stringent regulations against 'heretics', with the usual punishments of torture, burning and imprisonment, once the Church had ascertained the 'guilt' of the accused. However there were no friars to implement these measures efficiently, and in these early years their application was probably limited to those Muslims and Jews who seemed most antagonistic to the Church.

The absence of the Inquisition in the early persecution of the Muslims and Jews in Spain can be ascribed to two reasons. Firstly the persecution began well before the Mediaeval Inquisition

had been instituted in France and Italy. Secondly, it would not have been possible to use the techniques of the Inquisition immediately after the conquest of northern Spain. The techniques of the Inquisition were better suited to extermination than domestication, and in its first stage of persecution the Church was more committed to reducing the Muslims and Jews to obedient slaves than actually to wiping them out. It was only when their complete elimination became the object of the Church that the Inquisition came into its own. Initially, however, the Christian rulers were not in a position to implement this policy:

The large population of Jews and of conquered Moors gave them peculiar problems to deal with which would have been complicated rather than solved by the methods of the Inquisition, until the union of Aragon and Castile under Ferdinand and Isabella, followed by the conquest of Granada, enabled these monarchs to undertake seriously the business, attractive to both statecraft and to fanaticism, of compelling uniformity of faith. <sup>4</sup>

The early persecution of the Jews and Muslims took place simultaneously, and much of the legislation against them was directed with equal intensity at both of these groups. Similarly, once the Spanish Inquisition began its activities, the Jews came under attack just as much as the Muslims, and in fact the expulsion of the Jews from Andalusia was completed long before that of the Muslims. For the sake of clarity the expulsion of the Jews will be dealt with in a separate chapter, but it should be remembered that the following account of the measures used against the Muslims in the first wave of persecution in Spain applies equally to the Jews.

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As long as the Muslims of northern Spain remained sure of their way of life the Christians regarded them as a threat to their establishment. They therefore did their best to humiliate the



Muslims, and to make them ashamed of who they were. In 1216, the Lateran Council decreed that a distinctive garment and a badge should be worn by all Jews and Muslims. This garment came to be known as the '*san benito*.' This measure was not only humiliating, but also dangerous since it exposed the person wearing such a garment to insult and ill-treatment, especially when they were travelling on the notoriously insecure highways. The enforcement of this measure led to innumerable murders on the high roads.

Having made the Jews and Muslims instantly recognizable, the Christian nobles set about the business of reducing them to obedient slaves. The Muslims especially were gradually forced out of the towns and cities and onto the land, where they worked on the nobles' large country estates. Within a very short space of time the old feudal system, which had dominated the people before the Muslims came, was re-established. The rights and freedoms of the Muslims were rapidly restricted and diminished. In 1248, Pope Innocent IV ordered the king of Aragon 'to permit no Moors save as slaves.' Even the freedom of ordinary commercial dealings with Muslims was discouraged. In 1250 it was decreed that no-one could buy or sell anything from a Muslim unless he had first obtained a licence to do so.

Despite the humiliation and embargos, many of the Muslims held to their way of life, and the practice of Islam continued. In 1312 the Council of Vienna complained that the Muslims living in Christian lands were:

...permitted to have a priest who from the minarets of the mosques invoked Muhammad and sounded his praise and further that the people were allowed to gather around the grave of one whom they adored as a saint. <sup>5</sup>

The very words of the Council revealed their profound ignorance of the object of their persecution. There is no priesthood in Islam. The Muslims call upon and praise Allah and invoke His blessings on Muhammad. Their saints, dead or alive, are not worshipped.

The Council of Vienna ordered the princes of Spain to suppress the worship of the Muslims and to give them the alterna-

tive of either accepting Christianity or else to:

...endure a punishment which would render them a terrible example. <sup>6</sup>

This decree was obeyed piecemeal for several years. Then in 1329 the Council of Tarragona ordered all the princes to follow the resolution adopted by the Council of Vienna within two months under pain of excommunication and interdict. Spurred on by this incentive, persecution increased. In 1337, the Bishop of Tarragona requested Pope Benedict XII in a letter to empower the nobles to seize and sell the person and property of the Muslims as they were public enemies and infidels. This measure was approved of and subsequently enforced by the Church until the eighteenth century, that is, until there were no more Muslims or Jews left to persecute.

In 1385 and 1387 further laws were passed to ensure the slavery of the Muslims, and to increase the humiliation and degradation they were suffering. In 1388 it was decreed that all Muslims should kneel down when the Church's sacraments were being carried through the streets. They were forbidden to work on all Christian feast days and on Sundays, and were obliged to work on all other days. This struck at the very heart of the Muslims' week, since the day they gather together is Friday.

The height of the early legislation which was intended to reduce the Muslims and the Jews to abject slavery was reached in 1412, when many of the earlier laws were enacted:

It was decreed that Jews and Moors should wear distinguishing badges, be deprived of the right to hold office or possess titles, and should not change their domicile. In addition they were excluded from various trades such as those of grocers, carpenters, tailors and butchers; could not bear arms or hire Christians to work for them; were not allowed to eat, drink, bathe or even talk with Christians; and were forbidden to wear any but coarse clothes. <sup>7</sup>

The persecution of the Jews during this period were espe-

cially intensified, and many of them were forcibly baptized and compelled to practise the official religion on pain of expulsion from Spain. These unwilling converts became known as *conversos*.

The quarters of the Muslims and the Jews in the towns and cities were also isolated. Walled compounds were established, 'Juderias' for the Jews and 'Moreries' for the Muslims. They were surrounded by a large wall and only had one entrance. Any Muslim who had not settled within the *Moreries* within eight days had his property forfeited and was liable to whatever punishment the king thought fit. This often took the form of torture and death. Christian women were forbidden to enter the *Moreries*.

The restrictions of the 1412 legislation reduced the Muslims in northern Spain to a closely monitored community of slaves. Their trades and crafts had been made unlawful except where they worked for a Christian master, and they were forced to become increasingly dependent on the Christians to obtain their livelihood. The effect of this first wave of persecution in Spain was to drive away many of the Muslims out of the towns and into the country. Those who chose to fight made their way to Granada or took to the mountains. Those who accepted slavery remained where they were.

Despite all the measures and the attempts by the Church to make the practice of Islam as unpalatable as possible, many of the Muslims continued to hold to as much of their teaching as was possible under the circumstances. Although they were hindered in their practice of Islam they were not yet prevented from observing it. Even the ones who had chosen to be baptised, to ease the pressure on them, continued to do the prayer at home and to teach their children all that was possible of the way of the Messenger Muhammad. Thus although the Muslim communities in northern Spain had been shattered and weakened considerably, they still formed a large proportion of the population, and there was still every chance that they would again unite and fight back.

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Ferdinand, King of Aragon, was all too aware of the likeli-

hood of rebellion in Spain. He turned to the institution of the Inquisition to achieve a greater subservience of his unwilling and often unwanted, but useful, subjects. A mediaeval tribunal of the Inquisition had been operating on a limited basis in Aragon since 1238. Ferdinand now extended its activities throughout Spain. Partly, however, because of the geographical location of Spain which is isolated from the rest of Europe by the Pyrénées, its basis was radically altered. Instead of being answerable to the Pope, it was only answerable to the King. The influence of the Pope in Spain at this time is demonstrated by the exchange which took place between him and King Ferdinand in the year preceding the inauguration of the Spanish Inquisition. A group of rich Jewish *conversos* sent a petition and money to the Pope requesting tolerance in Spain. In response to this the Pope issued a bull which granted some of their requests. Ferdinand acted immediately. On the 13th May 1482, he wrote to the Pope:

Things have been told me, Holy Father, which, if true, would seem to merit the greatest astonishment. It is said that Your Holiness has granted the *conversos* a general pardon for all the errors and crimes they have committed...To these rumours, however, we have given no credence, because they seem to be things which would in no way have been conceded by Your Holiness, who have a duty to the Inquisition. But if by chance concessions have been made through the persistent and cunning persuasion of the said *conversos*, I intend never to let them take effect. Take care therefore not to let the matter go further, and to revoke any concessions and entrust us with the care of this question.<sup>8</sup>

Before this uncompromising intention Sixtus IV wavered, and in October 1482 he announced that he had suspended the bull.

In 1482, the Spanish Inquisition came into being. Its tribunal was given jurisdiction over the whole of Spain. It was based

essentially on the Mediaeval Inquisition, but was allowed to modify all previous practices to suit its own needs. Torquemada and his colleagues were allowed to draw up their own rules regardless of the views of the crown or of Rome. Their job was to domesticate the 'heretic' slaves of northern Spain and eventually to subdue the Muslims who were gathered round Granada in the South. The only condition imposed by Ferdinand on their activities was that they were to achieve their object:

'No cause nor interest, however great and firm it may be, will make us suspend the Inquisition,' he wrote...This...reflecting exactly the sentiments of Isabella, illustrates the unswerving adherence of the Catholic monarchs to be a dogmatic ideal on which they refused to compromise.<sup>9</sup>

Torquemada drew up the first Rules of the Spanish Inquisition in Seville in 1484. They were subsequently extended in 1485, 1488 and 1498. To begin with, the Spanish Inquisition had difficulty in carrying out its task. It initially met with much resistance from the general population. Ferdinand used armed force where it was necessary, but still the Inquisitors were not being very effective. Then in 1486, some *conversos* murdered an Inquisitor. Everyone turned on the *conversos* and the Inquisition came into its own:

For the *conversos* one murder, cheaply achieved at a total cost of six hundred gold florins, (which included the wages of the assassins) turned out to be an act of mass suicide which annihilated all opposition to the Inquisition for the next hundred years.<sup>10</sup>

The wholesale persecution of the Jews and Muslims in Spain now began in earnest, and where before, in the first wave of persecution, it had been concentrated in the North, now in this second wave of persecution it was also directed towards the Muslims who had gathered in the kingdom of Granada. Before tracing the consequences of this second wave of persecution, it is

necessary briefly to examine the methods which were used by the Spanish Inquisition with such devastating success.

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The methods of the Spanish Inquisition were limited in one singular aspect. They only had jurisdiction over those who had been baptized:

The important detail, however, is that heretics were by definition those who had betrayed their baptism, so that the tribunal exercised jurisdiction only over those who had been baptized. Time and again victims accused of heresy by the Holy Office claimed that they were not baptized, so removing them immediately out of its power.<sup>11</sup>

The Inquisitors therefore set about 'baptizing' as many Muslims and Jews in as short a time as possible. This was achieved by giving them the choice of baptism or death. As a result those who fought were killed, those who survived but refused to be baptized were tortured and killed, and the rest were baptized.

Once they had been baptized they were within the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisition, and if they did not behave like a Catholic Christian, they were liable to be prosecuted as heretics. They were thus put in a very vulnerable position. One of the major crimes as defined by the Church was blasphemy. Anyone committing blasphemy was liable to prosecution by the Inquisitors, and once their guilt was established, the death penalty followed. Blasphemy was defined by the Church as the contradiction of any article of faith of the official religion.

The introduction of the Spanish Inquisition therefore made it increasingly impossible to take the course of action, which many Jews and Muslims had already done, of becoming a formal convert to placate the authorities, while continuing their respective practices in their homes. For any outward sign of rejection of the religion of the Church was immediately interpreted as a 'relapse into heresy', and was punished by death.

Baptism thus took on a double edge. If a man refused to be baptized he was killed. If he accepted baptism, but did not behave like a Catholic Christian, he was killed. It was not even possible to argue that, since he had been forced into conversion his baptism was invalid and therefore the Inquisition had no jurisdiction over him:

The standard reply to this argument was simple: the mere fact that they had chosen baptism as an alternative to death or exile meant that they exercised the right of free choice: there was therefore no compulsion, and the sacrament was valid. Against such diehard reasoning no liberal theology could prevail, and *conversos* in subsequent centuries continued to be persecuted and burnt for failing to observe properly a religion they had never chosen and in which they had never been adequately instructed.<sup>12</sup>

The hypocrisy of it all is best illustrated by the instructions issued by Pope Boniface VIII who generously exempted from punishment for heresy all those whose acceptance of Christianity was by force. His definition of coercion, however, was that the fear of death was not such coercion as would exempt a man from the punishment prescribed for heretics. Those who were later asked to explain this incongruous definition and to frame it within the statutes, came to the conclusion that coercion was of two kinds, conditional and absolute. Conditional, or partial, coercion did not nullify the acceptance of baptism. Absolute coercion was said to make the sacrament invalid, but it applied only in very extreme circumstances. If a man was tied hand and foot and was baptized in that condition while uttering protests, then and then only would the baptism be invalid.

Once baptized, no-one could revoke their 'Christianity'. It was a firm principle of the official religion that once a man accepted Christianity and was baptized, he belonged irrevocably to the Church. Thus any choice of a different religion in preference to Official Christianity was regarded as invalid by the Roman Church. Instead it was interpreted as a token of heresy. According to the Church, a non-Christian could be forced to

accept the official religion, but he could not then exercise his will to reject it. Once a Muslim or Jew had been baptised his only way of avoiding the Spanish Inquisition was meticulously to behave like a Christian.

Any Muslim or Jew who had been baptized was immediately suspected of being a potential or secret heretic, and the Inquisitors felt it their duty to investigate their minds and to eliminate anyone whose words or deeds confirmed their suspicions. Their methods were even more callous and efficient than the ones employed by the Mediaeval Inquisition in France. According to Mariana:

What caused the most surprise was that children paid for the crimes of their parents, and that accusers were not named or made known, nor confronted by the accused, nor was there publication of witnesses: all of which was contrary to the practice used of old in other tribunals. Besides this it appeared an innovation that sins of that sort should be punished by death. And what was most serious was that because of these secret investigations, they were deprived of the liberty to hear and talk freely, since in all the cities, towns and villages there were persons placed to give information of what went on. This was considered by some the most wretched slavery and equal to death.<sup>13</sup>

In carrying out their work, the Inquisitors threatened not only the persons of the Jews and Muslims, but also their property. The rich Jewish *conversos* were often the first to suffer, since all that was necessary to obtain a man's property was to accuse him of heresy and arrest him:

Perhaps the most important, because the most controversial, source of revenue was that from confiscations. Under canon law a heretic was punished not only in his person but in his goods, which were seized and confiscated. If a heretic was unrepentant he was 'relaxed' to the

secular arm and burnt; if repentant he was reconciled to the Church; in both cases, however, he suffered the loss of his property. The only exception to this rule was if the heretic had come forward to denounce himself and others voluntarily during the 'term of grace', the period of thirty or forty days' grace given by the Inquisition before it started its proceedings in a district. The penitent who thus came forward to be reconciled was freed from all imprisonment and confiscation.<sup>14</sup>

Technically, all confiscations went to the crown, and it is reported that Ferdinand and Isabella divided all profits from confiscations into three sections, one for the war against the Muslims, one for the Inquisition, and one for pious purposes, but this division seems never to have been formally practised. The operations of the Spanish Inquisition incurred great expenditure, and none of the Inquisitors ever became poor men until, centuries later, they finally ran out of victims.

The early success of the Spanish Inquisitors in coercing large numbers of Jews and Muslims to be baptized was due to their use of the Edicts of Grace. These edicts were calculated to instil fear and suspicion into people's hearts, and once in that state they were more likely to accept the official religion. The only way in which anyone could be sure of avoiding loss of property, torture and death at the hands of the Inquisitors, was to denounce himself and everyone he knew to be 'heretics' during the term of grace, and to declare his desire to become a Christian:

Since reconciliation to the faith under the terms of grace involved no serious penalties such as confiscation of property, the early years of the Inquisition witnessed a vast number of voluntary denunciations...Self-denunciation became a mass phenomenon...The self-denunciations were almost without exception occasioned by the fear that if one did not confess one would be denounced: for people in this frame of mind the

Edicts offered a welcome opportunity to unburden oneself of fear rather than of guilt.<sup>15</sup>

The effects of the Edicts of Grace on the Muslim and Jewish communities was to split and divide them, and to turn people against each other:

The records of the Inquisition are full of instances where neighbours denounced neighbours, friends denounced friends, and members of the same family denounced each other. Many of these cases would have arisen through sheer malice or hatred. But there were others more significant and terrible, where fear of denunciation alone became the spur to confession and counter-denunciation. The 'term of grace' had an important clause which set the seal on all this. To denounce oneself as a heretic was not enough for one to benefit from the terms of the Edict of Grace. It was also necessary to denounce all those accomplices who shared the error or had led one into it. The chain reaction set in process by this was highly effective in uprooting 'heresy'.<sup>16</sup>

Clearly the pressure on any man with a family to denounce himself was very great. If he did not denounce himself, and was denounced by anyone else then he would be arrested and tried as a heretic. All his property would be confiscated, and even if he subsequently agreed to accept the official religion it would not be returned to him. All his dependants would therefore be put in very trying conditions. If, in order to avoid such hardship, he denounced himself, this was not enough to ensure his and their safety. He also had to reveal the names of everyone else whom he knew to be a 'heretic'. This would inevitably mean denouncing the very dependants and friends whose safety he was trying to ensure in the first place. If they in turn had not also denounced themselves and everyone they knew, then they would be subject to the very same punishment that he was trying to avoid himself and from which he was trying to protect

them. The only way to be sure of avoiding the punishment of the Spanish Inquisition was for everyone to denounce each other and to accept the official religion. Furthermore, if anyone who did not denounce himself but was denounced by others was arrested for heresy and condemned to death, the matter did not stop there. Under Torquemada's instructions issued at Seville in November 1484, the condemned man's descendants also suffered for his 'crime'.

The children and grandchildren of those condemned (by the Inquisition) may not hold or possess public offices, or posts, or honours, or be promoted to holy orders, or be judges, mayors, constables, magistrates, jurors, stewards, officials of weights and measures, merchants, notaries, public scribes, collectors, tax-farmers, or holders of any other similar public office.<sup>17</sup>

Thus anyone who refused to denounce himself was faced with the knowledge, that if he was denounced by someone else, he would die and his family would suffer. They would be deprived not only of his property, but also of any means of livelihood other than slavery.

Many of the Muslims in northern Spain had already died in the fighting during its conquest by the Christian army. Others, during the first wave of persecution of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, had made their way to Granada or emigrated to other lands. The Muslim communities in northern Spain had therefore already been considerably diminished and weakened. The effect of the term of grace on the Muslims who remained was devastating. Their communities were divided, and once their unity was destroyed many of the individual members were forced to become Christians in order to stay alive, and to survive by being slaves.

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The Spanish Inquisitors travelled from town to town in one

district after another. The Edicts of Grace would be pronounced in one district thirty of forty days prior to their arrival. After the period of grace had ended in a particular village, the Inquisitors would come and arrest all the people who had been denounced but who had not denounced themselves. No warrant was needed for the arrest and people often lay in prison for long periods without trial:

Arrest was accompanied by immediate seizure of the goods held by the accused...If a prisoner's case went unheard or undecided for years on end, the sequestration of his property involved real hardship for his dependants, deprived at one blow of their means of income and even of their own homes. For as long as the accused stayed in prison the costs of his upkeep were met out of his sequestered property, which was as a rule sold piece by piece at a public auction.<sup>18</sup>

Even if he was subsequently released, he no longer had any claim on what was left of his property, since this was the automatic penalty for not having denounced himself.

Secrecy shrouded the arrests made by the Inquisitors, and invested their activities with terror. When a prisoner was arrested, he disappeared from human view as though the earth had opened up and swallowed him. His trial might last two, three or four years during which his family knew not whether he was alive or dead:

Prisoners were cut off strictly from all conduct with the world outside and even within the prison were secluded from each other whenever possible. On finally leaving the gaol they were obliged to take an oath not to reveal anything they had seen or experienced in the cells.<sup>19</sup>

The Spanish Inquisition was thus shielded from all criticism and accountability for its actions. No-one could call into question its justice and no-one could complain of its acts, for every

mouth was sealed. Once a person was arrested he was rarely released, for this would have been tantamount to admitting having made a mistake. On rare occasions people were given a 'suspension' of their trial. They were allowed out of prison, but their trial could be re-opened at any time. Acquittals and suspensions were infrequent because the tribunal was already convinced of a man's guilt when they arrested him. All that remained was to obtain his confession and penitence. It was for this reason that the procedure of the Inquisitors on arresting someone was to bewilder their victim as much as possible:

One of the peculiarities of inquisitorial procedure...was the refusal to divulge reasons for arrest, so that prisoners went for days, months and even years without knowing why they were in the cells of the tribunal. Instead of accusing the prisoner, the inquisitors approached him and gave him three warnings over a period of weeks, to search his conscience, confess the truth and trust to the mercy of the tribunal. The third warning was accompanied by information that the prosecutor intended to present an accusation, and that it would be wisest to confess before the charges were laid. The effect of this enforced ignorance was to depress and break down a prisoner. If innocent, he remained bewildered about what to confess, or else confessed crimes the Inquisition was not accusing him of; if 'guilty' he was left to wonder how much of the truth the Inquisition really knew, and whether it was a trick to force him to confess.

When after the three warnings, the prosecutor eventually read out the articles of accusation, the accused was required to answer the charges on the spot, with no time or advocate to help him think out his defence.<sup>20</sup>

In later years the accused was allowed to rely on the services of an advocate of the Inquisition's choice if he so wished. Since

these advocates received their pay from the Spanish Inquisition, this facility was of limited utility, and few of the victims of the Inquisition availed themselves of it.

During the trial the names of all witnesses were suppressed. Even more important, all evidence which might help to identify witnesses was also suppressed. This meant that the prisoner was often deprived of any knowledge of the complete case against him. The inquisitors were in this way free to use as evidence information which had not been communicated to the accused. Furthermore the accused was not allowed to cross-examine his prosecutors. Thus:

...in reality the inquisitors were both judge and jury, both prosecution and defence, and the prisoner's fate depended entirely on the mood and character of the inquisitors.<sup>21</sup>

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The judicial procedure selected by the Inquisitors clearly indicates the presumption on their part that the accused would not have been arrested if he was not guilty. The entire trial was therefore calculated to induce his confession of guilt, and torture was always used to facilitate this. It was considered all the more necessary if he also revealed the names of all other 'heretics' known to him, which would naturally include those whom he loved and wished to protect. Torture in every case was deemed essential for, it was reasoned, if the man had nothing to hide then he would have denounced himself and all 'heretics' known to him during the term of grace.

Contrary to popular belief the methods of torture used by the Spanish Inquisition were not very refined or ingenious. They were brutal but efficient. The three main tortures used by the Inquisition were the '*garrucha*', the '*torca*' and the '*potro*'. In the torture of the '*garrucha*', or the pulley, which was also used against the Arians and the Donatists in North Africa under the Theodosian edicts, the victim had heavy weights tied to his feet. His arms were tied behind his back and fastened to a rope threaded through a pulley attached to the ceiling of the torture

chamber. He would then be drawn slowly up into the air before being allowed to suddenly drop a couple of feet in mid-air. This usually resulted in dislocated joints and pulled tendons. In the torture of the '*torca*', or water torture, a rag was stuffed down the victim's throat. Large amounts of water were then poured into the victim's mouth, and by means of the rag he was forced to swallow it all. In the torture of the '*potro*', or the rack, the victim was tied to a wooden frame with a coarse rope which was then tightened turn by turn. The torturers were limited to giving sixteen turns.

No-one was exempt from torture. Men and women of all ages and children were tortured. All the victims had to pay their torturers for the privilege of being tortured by them. They were always stripped before being tortured. Everything they said was carefully noted down. They were tortured until they confessed or died. The validity of these confessions was justified with much the same casuistry as was used to justify baptism through coercion:

Confessions gained under torture were never accepted as valid because they had obviously been obtained by pressure. It was therefore essential for the accused to ratify his confession the day after the ordeal. If he refused to do this, a legal pretext was invoked. As the rules forbade anyone to be tortured more than once, the end of every torture session was treated as a suspension only, and the refusal to ratify the confession would be met with a threat to 'continue the torture'.<sup>22</sup>

Thus a victim could be tortured repeatedly until he ratified his confession or died.

Many Muslims who refused to deny what they knew to be true died in the torture chamber. When the time came to burn those who had been found guilty of heresy, those who had died during torture were burnt in effigy. The large number of people burnt in effigy during the first years of the Spanish Inquisition's activities gives some indication not only of the perseverance of the torturers, but also of the conviction of those who were tor-

tured. It gives a rough guide to the large number of Muslims and Jews who died in the torture-chamber, or who were fortunate enough to escape after being denounced but before being arrested.

With the passage of time those who openly affirmed their belief with conviction were all dead, and torture was considered all the more necessary in isolating and discovering anyone who still maintained their belief in secret. Torture was used on anyone who betrayed the slightest sign of following their original belief. The following extract from the records of the Inquisition describes the torture of a pregnant woman called Elvira, who was suspected of being a heretic because she did not eat pork and changed her linen on Saturdays:

She was ordered to be placed on the *potro*. She said, 'Senores, why will you not tell me what I have to say? Senor, put me on the ground - have I not said that I did it all?' She was told to tell it. She said, 'I don't remember - take me away - I did what the witnesses say.' She was told to tell in detail what the witnesses said. She said, 'Senores, I have told you, I do not know for certain. I have said that I did all that the witnesses say. Senores, release me, for I do not remember it.' She was told to tell it. She said, 'Senores, it does not help me to say that I did it and I have admitted that what I have done has brought me to this suffering. - Senor, you know the truth - Senores, for God's sake have mercy on me. Oh Senor, take these things from my arms. - Senor, release me, they are killing me.' She was tied on the *potro* with the cords, she was admonished to tell the truth and the garottes were ordered to be tightened. She said, 'Senor, do you not see how these people are killing me? I did it - for God's sake, let me go.'<sup>23</sup>

Elvira finally made a confession which satisfied the Inquisitors. This was ratified by her the next day and she was 'reconciled' to the Church. Her penance and punishment was that all



her property remained confiscated, and she was given three years imprisonment and *san benito*. However after six months the imprisonment was commuted to spiritual penances, and she was told to go where she chose. Lea comments:

Thus, besides the horrors of her trial, she was beggared and ruined for life, and an ineffaceable stain was cast upon her kindred and descendants. What became of the infant born in prison is not recorded, but presumably it was fortunate enough to die. Trivial as may seem the details of such a trial, they are not without importance as a sample of what was occupying the tribunals of all Spain, and they raise the interesting question whether in truth the inquisitors believed what they assumed in the public sentence, that they had been laboring to rescue Elvira from the errors and darkness of her apostasy and to save her soul. <sup>24</sup>

Another typical torture case was that of Maria Gomes. She was arrested in 1538. Her trial began in 1540. She refused to confess. In 1541 she was taken to the torture chamber. A long series of tortures was undertaken. In 1544 she was finally convicted and sentenced to imprisonment, In 1545 she was released and ordered to fast for a year. She was forcibly made to say many prayers as part of her penance. In 1550 she was again arrested. She was thrown into a secret prison because in her confession she had disclosed the names of some people who bathed and changed into clean clothes on Friday night, and the Inquisitors wanted further details. On the 5th of March, 1551, she was again tortured with great severity. She was given sixteen turns of sharp cords round her legs and knees. A cord was also twisted around her head and then two large jars of water, about half a gallon, were made to trickle down her throat by the use of the '*torca*'. She shrieked and cried that she had nothing to confess. Lea comments:

All this was the ordinary everyday routine of the Inquisition and there is small cause for sur-

prise if the Muslims were confirmed more and more in their abhorrence of a faith propagated in this fashion. <sup>25</sup>

There was a wide selection of punishments and penances not only for those who confessed their 'heresy' under torture, but also for those who had denounced themselves as heretics during the period of grace.

If, as a result of his trial, a man confessed his heresy, he was 'relaxed' to the secular arm of the law to be burnt:

The ultimate penalty was at stake. The execution of heretics was by the fifteenth century such a commonplace of Christendom that the Spanish Inquisition practice, hallowed by the mediaeval Inquisition, for Church courts to condemn a heretic and then hand him over, or 'relax' him, to the secular authorities. These were obliged to carry out the sentence of blood which the Holy Office was forbidden by law to carry out. In all this there was no pretence that the Inquisition was not the body directly and fully responsible for the deaths that occurred. <sup>26</sup>

For, writes Lea:

It assumed that it condemned the crime and the civil judge the criminal and, in relaxing him, it adjured the judge to spare his life and not spill his blood...This shifting of responsibility to the civil power was not through any sense that the laws punishing heresy with burning were cruel or unjust, for the Church taught this to be an act so eminently pious that it accorded an indulgence to anyone who would contribute wood to the pile...In fact, when Luther argued that the burning of heretics was contrary to the will of the Spirit, Leo X included this among his heresies condemned in the bull '*Exsurge Domine*'. Consequently the secular power had no choice

as to what it should do with the heretics delivered to it; its act was purely ministerial, and if it listened to the hypocritical plea for mercy, it was liable to prosecution as a fautor of heresy and to deprivation of its functions. The Church enforced this by embodying in the canon law a provision that princes and their officials must punish duly and promptly all heretics delivered to them by inquisitors, under pain of excommunication, which became heresy if endured for a year.<sup>27</sup>

Two classes of people qualified for the stake, unrepentant heretics and relapsed heretics. The first group comprised those who refused to accept the official religion. It therefore included many Muslims and Jews who refused to betray their fundamental belief in the Oneness of God. The second group comprised those who after being pardoned for a first serious offence, had repeated the offence and were adjudged to have relapsed into heresy. It therefore included many secret Muslims and Jews who had outwardly accepted the official religion whilst practising their own faith in secret, but who had betrayed their real belief by some unguarded word or action.

If, as a result of his trial, a man confessed his heresy but convinced the Inquisitors that he had repented, which was not an easy thing to do, then he was 'reconciled' to the Church along with all the people who had denounced themselves during the period of grace. This 'reconciliation' was by no means a joyful affair for the tamed, but usually reluctant penitent:

Reconciliation, which was the fate of the majority of penitents, was in theory the return of a sinner to the bosom of the Church after due penance had been performed. In practice it was probably the most severe punishment inflicted by the Inquisition, second only in severity to the stake, for at the ceremony of reconciliation each penitent was condemned to one or other of the other punishments on the list, such as confiscation and imprisonment. Confiscation was car-

ried out in virtually all cases, so that even if a prisoner escaped with a prison sentence of a few months he came out an orthodox Catholic indeed, but facing a life of beggary. An additional rule, frequently enforced, was that anyone backsliding after reconciliation was to be treated as a relapsed heretic and so was sent to the stake.<sup>28</sup>

This method of 'reconciliation' was proof enough that the Church was more concerned with eliminating Islam and subjugating and taming the Muslims, than actually winning them over to the Christians' way of life by example.

The other punishments which the Inquisition inflicted on those who had been reconciled were, besides confiscation and imprisonment, wearing a '*san benito*', scourging, the galleys and exile from the locality.

The '*san benito*', which had been introduced very early on in the first wave of persecution, originated from the practices of the Mediaeval Inquisition. It was usually a long yellow garment with one or two diagonal crosses imposed on it. Penitents were condemned to wear it as a mark of infamy for any period from a few months to life. Anyone wearing a '*san benito*' was exposed to insult and ridicule, and if exiled from the locality, he faced robbery and murder on the high road, and further persecution wherever he went. Those who were condemned to the galleys of the Spanish fleet provided cheap labour, and eventually helped carry their persecutors over the seas to America, Africa and India. The sentence of those condemned to the galleys did not usually exceed ten years. It continued to be administered up until the mid-eighteenth century. Those who were scourged were usually given between one hundred and two hundred lashes:

The penitent was usually condemned to be 'whipped through the streets', in which case he had to appear stripped to the waist, often mounted on an ass, and was duly flogged through the streets with the specified amount of strokes by the public executioner. During this

journey round the streets, passers-by and children would show their hatred of heresy by hurling stones at the victim. Women were flogged in the same way as men. Nor was there any limit on age.<sup>29</sup>

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All these punishments were meted out at a ceremony known as the '*auto-da-fé*,' or act of faith. It served as the climax to the Inquisitors' endeavours in a particular village or town, before they moved on to their next destination. This display not only helped to exalt the reputation of and increase the respect for the Spanish Inquisition, but also acted as a powerful deterrent and reminder of what happened to those who dared to disagree with the Catholic Church. As far as the Spanish Inquisition was concerned the *auto-da-fé* was not a public trial, but a triumphant and telling affirmation of the glory of the official religion:

The punishment decreed was, from the point of view of the Inquisition, a penance, and this penitential aspect of its procedure must be emphasized. The tribunal devoted its efforts not merely to finding its victims guilty, but to extracting penitential confessions from them. This means that the *auto-da-fé* was literally an act of faith. It was a public expression of penance for sin and hatred of 'heresy', and all those who were present in the act were granted an indulgence of forty days.<sup>30</sup>

In the early days of the Inquisition the '*auto-da-fé*' was a relatively simple affair of the Inquisition with little emphasis on ceremonial pageantry. Initially the Inquisitors were occupied solely with the task of reconciling large numbers of 'heretics' quickly and efficiently so as to bring them within their jurisdiction. The following contemporary account of the *auto-da-fé* held at Toledo on Sunday, 12th February, 1486, during which several hundred Jews were reconciled to the Church, is a typical early *auto-da-fé* by which so many Jews and Muslims were tamed:

All the reconciled went in procession, to the number of 750 persons, including both men and women. They went in procession from the Church of St. Peter Martyr in the following way. The men were all together in a group, bareheaded and unshod, and since it was extremely cold they were told to wear soles under their feet which were otherwise bare; in their hands were unlit candles. The women were together in a group, their heads uncovered and their faces bare, unshod like the men and with candles. Among all these were many prominent men in high office. With the bitter cold and the dishonour and disgrace they suffered from the great number of spectators, (since a great many people from outlying districts had come to see them) they went along howling loudly and weeping and tearing out their hair, no doubt more for the dishonour they were suffering than for any offence they had committed against God. Thus they went in tribulation through the streets along which the Corpus Christi procession goes, until they came to the cathedral. At the door of the church were two chaplains who made the sign of the cross on each one's forehead, saying, 'Receive the sign of the cross, which you denied and lost through being deceived.' Then they went into the church until they arrived at a scaffolding erected by the new gate, and on it were the father inquisitors. Nearby was another scaffolding on which stood an altar at which they said mass and delivered a sermon. After this a notary stood up and began to call each one by name, saying, 'Is X here?' The penitent raised his candle and said, 'Yes.' There in public they read all the things in which he had judaized. The same was done for the women. When this was over they were publicly allotted penance and ordered to go in procession

for six Fridays, disciplining their body with scourges of hempcord, barebacked, unshod, and bareheaded; and they were to fast for those six Fridays. It was also ordered that all the days of their life they were to hold no public office...and that those who held these offices were to lose them. And that they were not to become money-changers, shopkeepers, or grocers or hold any official post whatever. And they were not to wear silk or scarlet or coloured clothes or gold or silver or pearls or coral or any jewels. Nor could they stand as witnesses. And they were ordered that if they relapsed, that is if they fell into same error again, and resorted to any of the forementioned things they would be condemned to the fire. And when all this was over they went away at two o'clock in the afternoon.<sup>31</sup>

The people who had been condemned to the stake were burnt after the 'reconciliation' of the 'repentant heretics' had taken place. Their incineration was the climax to and an integral part of the early *autos-da-fé*, and, in the first wave of persecution after the start of the Spanish Inquisition's operations, many people were burnt. Hernando del Pulgar estimated that in the years up to 1490, the Spanish Inquisition had already burned 2,000 people and reconciled 15,000 others. Andres Benaldez estimated in Seville alone between 1480 and 1488, the Inquisition burned 700 people and reconciled more than 5,000, without counting all those who were merely thrown into prison indefinitely, or who had died while being tortured.<sup>32</sup>

There was no age limit to victims meant for the stake. Women in their eighties and boys in their teens were treated in the same way as any other 'heretics'. When anyone was sentenced to be relaxed, he was always informed of his fate the night before the day of the *auto-da-fé*, in order to give him time in which to prepare his soul for confession and repentance:

Those who actually died at the stake were only a small proportion of the victims listed in the

records as 'relaxed'. These unlucky few were always given the choice between repenting before the *auto-da-fé* reached its climax, in which case they were 'mercifully' strangled when the flames were lit; or remaining unrepentant in which case they were roasted alive. The majority of those who were 'relaxed' were in fact burnt in effigy only, either because they had died or because they had saved themselves by flight.<sup>33</sup>

The deterrent effect of these deaths can be imagined, but not measured, and the early *autos-da-fé* were extremely effective in eliminating all the Jews and Muslims who resisted the Spanish Inquisition, and taming those who remained.

With the passage of time, the *auto-da-fé* became an increasingly pompous affair. As they began to run out of victims the emphasis was laid more on the actual religious ceremonies than on the deterrent afforded by a burning human being. This was largely due to the fact that in later years the Jews and Muslims who were still alive had already been deterred. Talking of these later *autos-da-fé*, Kamen writes:

It can be seen that the burning of victims was not a part of the principal ceremony and took place instead at a subsidiary one, often outside the city, where the pomp of the main procession was absent. The central features of the *auto* were the procession, the mass, the sermon at the mass, and the reconciliation of the sinners. It would be wrong to suppose, as is commonly done, that the burnings were the centre piece.<sup>34</sup>

An indication of the efficiency of the Inquisition and the effectiveness of the *autos-da-fé* was the fact that they ultimately ceased to be necessary:

By the eighteenth century the lack of victims and the rising cost of public ceremonies meant that *autos-da-fé* gradually fell into disuse...There

is no need to attribute this to the growth of tolerance. The simple reason was that 'heretics' had been successfully purged out of existence, so depriving the tribunal of combustible material for its fires.<sup>35</sup>

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In reading about the diverse activities of the Spanish Inquisition, and the casuistry used to justify them, it is possible to become so involved in all the details that the 'crime', towards whose elimination all this effort was directed, is sometimes overlooked or forgotten: The 'crime' was solely affirmation of the Divine Unity and of the message which all the Prophets brought, and the rejection of the religion of the Catholic Church.

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The effects of the measures employed by the Spanish Inquisition were devastating. They split the Muslim communities to a degree which the pre-Inquisition wave of persecution had been unable to achieve. Within less than ten years of beginning their operations, the process was completed whereby the Muslims who did not flee or fight to the death were deprived of their property, and pushed out of the towns and cities and onto the land, where they became the serfs of the Christian nobles and landowners. These were the Muslims who became known as the Mudejares.

Although the expulsion from the towns and cities involved incalculable suffering and countless deaths, it also brought the Muslims who survived together again. Their former communities had been irretrievably fragmented and diminished, but the survivors who were regrouped on the large estates continued to live as a community in their respective areas. Many of the Mudejares were able to retain much of their Islam within the bounds of slavery. They were not baptized and at this stage were relatively free from the activities of the Spanish Inquisition which, until the end of the fifteenth century, were concentrated more in

the towns and cities than in the more isolated villages and the countryside. Many of the landowners were more interested in making money than in converting them to Catholicism and making them behave like Catholics. The dependence of the landowners on the skills of the Mudejares provided the Muslims with a limited bargaining power which they made full use of. However, the acceptance of the Christians as their masters inevitably laid them open to the next wave of persecution which engulfed them in the early sixteenth century. The Church's objective of a Spain free from Islam could only increase their degradation, and eventually it culminated in their extinction.

Those Muslims who could not face the prospect of slavery either fought and were killed, or if they were able, emigrated to other lands. However travel for the Muslims in Spain became more and more difficult as the Church increased its mastery over the general population. Those who decided to remain and fight took to the mountains where it was difficult for the Christian soldiers to find them. They waited for the time when they could reconquer Spain. Many of them gathered in the kingdom of Granada. This had remained the last Muslim stronghold in Andalusia and two and a half centuries after the fall of Cordoba, which had taken place in 1236, it was still unconquered. Situated on a high plain, virtually surrounded by mountains, it formed a natural stronghold, and living under the shadow of the Christian swords, the Muslims who lived there during this period must have tasted Islam to the full, for nothing is so dear as when it is in immediate danger of vanishing.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XIV

- (1) *The Structure of Spanish History*, p. 90, A. Castro.
- (2) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 106, H. Kamen.
- (3) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 7, H.C. Lea.
- (4) *A History of the Inquisition*, II, P. 180, H.C. Lea.
- (5) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 9. H.C. Lea.
- (6) *Ibid.*
- (7) *The Spanish Inquisition*, P. 18, H. Kamen.
- (8) *Ibid*, p. 40.
- (9) *Ibid*, p. 42
- (10) *Ibid*, p. 43.
- (11) *Ibid*, p. 154.
- (12) *Ibid*, p. 52.
- (13) *Ibid*, p. 53.
- (14) *Ibid*, p. 150.
- (15) *Ibid*, p. 163.
- (16) *Ibid*, p. 165.
- (17) *Ibid*, p. 120.
- (18) *Ibid*, p. 168.
- (19) *Ibid*, p. 171.
- (20) *Ibid*, p. 177.
- (21) *Ibid*, p. 181.
- (22) *Ibid*, p. 172.
- (23) *Ibid*, p. 174.
- (24) *The Spanish Inquisition*, VIII, p. 234, H.C. Lea.
- (25) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 117, H.C. Lea.
- (26) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 186, H. Kamen.
- (27) *The Spanish Inquisition*, VII, p. 184, H.C. Lea.
- (28) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 183, H. Kamen.
- (29) *Ibid*, p. 185.
- (30) *Ibid*, p. 183.
- (31) *Ibid*, p. 188.
- (32) *Ibid*, p. 285.
- (33) *Ibid*, p. 186.
- (34) *Ibid*, p. 195.
- (35) *Ibid*, p. 197.

## CHAPTER XV

## THE END OF THE JEWS IN SPAIN

In the first persecution of the Jews in Spain by the Catholic Church in the seventh century, their numbers had been greatly diminished. However, after five centuries of Muslim rule during which the Jewish community had been allowed to follow their practices practically unhampered, their numbers increased considerably. Many Jews had emigrated to live in Muslim Spain during the early flowering of Islam there, and by the beginning of the thirteenth century they formed an important and influential minority in that country.

When the Christians conquered the greater part of northern Andalusia in the early thirteenth century, the Jews were probably the primary targets of their greed, and they probably possessed much more wealth than the Muslims, since they controlled all the banks, provided loans with interest which the Muslims were unable to do, and collected all the taxes. Many of them were also wealthy merchants. It was easier to replace them with Christians in their functions as the financiers of Spain than it was to replace the Muslims who fashioned all the necessities of everyday life. Furthermore, the Jews formed a far smaller group of the general population of Spain. For these reasons, together with the fact that they believed only in One God and rejected the official religion, they became the victims of intense persecution.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there were pogroms of the Jews by the Christians in all the major towns and cities of Spain. In June 1391, over four thousand Jews were murdered in Seville alone. Throughout these two centuries the Jews were the victims of the same ruthless legislation which was also directed at the Muslims. Furthermore, the laws which had been used against the Jews during the persecution of the seventh century were faithfully re-enacted and used once more. This legislation culminated in the famous laws of 1412 which isolated the Jews in their ghettos, the *Juderias*, and prevented them from continuing any of their trade except as slaves.

The choice of baptism or expulsion which was ultimately offered to the Muslims was given to the Jews at a far earlier date,

and many of them were compelled to be baptised against their will. These unfortunate Christian Jews were called '*conversos*'. They were forced into the external observance of a religion they hated, and waited only for better days, hoping that this trial would pass a previous ones had done. At this stage many of them continued to live according to their Judaic law within their homes relatively unhampered.

With the union of Ferdinand and Isabella and the introduction of the Spanish Inquisition in 1482, persecution against the Jews was intensified, and in its early years the Inquisitors probably concentrated more on the Jews than the Muslims. The effects of the terms of grace and the resulting denunciations were just as shattering for the Jewish communities as they were for the Muslim communities. It no longer was possible to be a formal *converso* and a practising Jew. Whereas the rulers only intended to tame the Muslims at this point in time, they decided to eradicate the Jews completely:

The Catholic monarchs now began a policy of systematic expulsion. In April 1482 Jews throughout the monarchy were ordered to be confined to their ghettos, and not to live outside them. At the end of 1482 a partial expulsion of the Jewish population from Andalucia was ordered...The process was piecemeal but efficient...On 31 March 1492 an edict of expulsion was issued, giving the Jews of Spain until 31 July to accept baptism or leave the country.<sup>1</sup>

It has been estimated that 50,000 Jews accepted baptism as a result of this decree, and that between 165,000 and 400,000 Jews, deprived of their property and possessions, left Spain. Many of them perished on their way to other lands. Others found it impossible to make the journey and made their way back into Spain where they became *conversos*.

The *conversos* who remained in Spain after the general expulsion of 1492 were decimated by the activities of the Spanish Inquisition. Their baptism was never a sincere attempt to bring the Jewish *conversos* into a willing and reasonable practice of Catholicism, which it was known they would never inwardly

accept. The baptism administered to them was merely a pretext to bring them within the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisition so that they could be legally killed off. All the *conversos* were regarded as potential heretics and their movements were closely watched. The smallest sign of their continuance in the practice of the Judaic rites was interpreted as a relapse into heresy and they were arrested, tortured, and often killed:

The whole period between 1480 and 1492 constituted an exercise in racial and class conflict without parallel in the history of Spain. The Jews had been reduced in number by continuous oppression and persecution, until expulsion seemed no more than the logical way to dispose of those who remained: the *conversos* were eliminated by systematic campaigns carried on in the name of orthodoxy, their fate being worse simply because they were baptized.<sup>2</sup>

Those who were able to convince the Inquisitors that they were true '*conversos*' and sincere adherents to Catholicism, were still severely limited in their actions by the operation of the doctrine of '*limpieza de sangre*', or purity of blood, by which descendants of Muslims and Jews were forbidden to hold any public office, secular or ecclesiastical, in the kingdom. In effect this meant that they could only perform the most menial of tasks while being subject to contempt and ridicule from the Old Christians. Even orthodox Roman Catholics who had a little semitic blood in them were ostracized and suffered an account of it:

If it could be proved that an ancestor had either been made to do penance by the Inquisition, or was a Moor or a Jew, then his descendant was accounted of impure blood and correspondingly disabled from all public office.<sup>3</sup>

Since intermarriage had been encouraged and practised throughout eight centuries of Muslim rule, the vast majority of the inhabitants of Andalusia had mixed blood. The discrimination engendered by the doctrine of *limpieza de sangre* was prac-

tised to such a ridiculous extent that there was a great danger that the greater part of the population of Spain would soon be branded as impure.

It was not until 1608, however, that modifications in the doctrine of *limpieza de sangre* were made. In this year, which preceded the year in which the last of the Muslims were finally expelled, it was decreed that people whose ancestors were *conversos*, but who had been Catholics within their family for five generations, were allowed to take public office. They eased the situation of those who had Jewish blood, since nearly all the Jews who had not left the country in the expulsion of 1492 had been compulsorily converted, and those who had not been subsequently killed had been practising Christians for at least five generations by the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The doctrine of *limpieza de sangre* was not finally abolished until 1865, when proofs of purity, which were still required by law for marriages and for certain government posts, were abolished. However, the Jews as such were completely eliminated long before this. Kamen writes:

If *limpieza* owed much of its strength to the Inquisition, it also owed its decline to the same body. So thoroughly had the tribunal cleansed Spain of heretical *conversos* by the beginning of the eighteenth century that the Jewish question ceased, for all practical purposes, to exist...anti-semitism degenerated into an irrational prejudice with no roots in actual conditions. The 'Jew' became a myth, a legend - no more.<sup>4</sup>

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XV

- (1) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 23, H. Kamen.
- (2) *Ibid*, p. 47.
- (3) *Ibid*, p. 125.
- (4) *Ibid*, p. 134.



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE MUSLIMS OF SOUTH ANDALUSIA

The Muslims of south Andalusia kept the Christian forces at bay throughout the first wave of persecution by the Catholic Church. However, as the Muslims within Spain were progressively eliminated or tamed, increasing pressure was brought to bear on the Muslims in the kingdom of Granada. Their pleas for help to the Muslims of other lands were not responded to in a degree sufficient to be of any use to them, and once the Spanish Inquisition was introduced and the Jews virtually eliminated, it was only a matter of time before the Kingdom of Granada was reduced by its outlying parts until Granada itself surrendered.

The process by which the Kingdom of Granada was reduced followed the same pattern as the gradual run-down of the rule of the Umayyads, the Murabits and the Muwahhids. It began with the election of a new and fine leader, Ibn al-Ahmar of the Banu Nasr, who was chosen as the Khalif of Granada in 1238, the same year as the fall of Valencia. He ruled for thirty-four years, was responsible for the building of the Alhambra, and vigorously opposed any attempts by the Christians to encroach on his kingdom.

This example was followed by his successors, and the Muslims won many outstanding victories. When in 1329, the Christians made a concerted attempt to conquer Granada, its leader, Abu'l-Walid Isma'il ibn Faraj, sought help from the Moroccan Muslims, but none was forthcoming. He therefore had no choice but to charge the huge Christian army which threatened Granada, at the head of only 5,000 Muslims.

In the ensuing battle 50,000 Christians were killed including their king Don Pedro, and 7,000 captives were taken:

A very extraordinary circumstance connected with this battle is that only thirteen horsemen, others say ten, were slain on the side of the Muslims, whose whole force consisted only of fifteen hundred horse and four thousand foot, or even less; whereas the loss of the Christians,

who were as numerous as the sands of the desert, was truly enormous. <sup>1</sup>

This victory, so reminiscent of the Prophet's victory at Badr in the early years of Islam was followed by another battle which was a reminder of the set-back for the over-confident early Muslims at Hunayn. In 1340, a Muslim called Abu'l-Hasan came over from Africa, and landed with an army of 60,000 Muslims. So confident was he of his own power that he lost heavily in the battle of Taifa, and thousands of Muslims died fighting in the way of Allah.

This victory enabled the Christians to make inroads into the Kingdom of Granada from both East and West, and in the years that followed they were helped by the division and squabbling which crept into the Muslim kingdom as leadership became a matter of family squabbles and not of suitability. These leaders attempted to bargain with the Christians and these activities further divided the Muslims of Granada. Thus in the rule of Yusuf II, who reigned towards the end of the fourteenth century, Al-Maqqari writes that:

The Muslims of Granada received many a severe blow from their Christian neighbours. Yusuf was succeeded by his son Muhammad II under whose rule the Muhammadan empire still went on decaying, until it became an easy prey to the infidels who surrounded it on every side, like a pack of hungry wolves, God Almighty permitting, that the wrong actions of preceding generations should be visited upon the wretched inhabitants of Granada. If we are to believe the historians of that city, numerous were the warnings which the Muslims of Granada received of the approaching chastisement of Heaven, and the ruin of their empire was more than once announced. <sup>2</sup>

One such warning came during the rule of Abu'l-Hasan in 1478. He was a ruler who indulged in pleasure, felt sure that the Christians would not attack him because they were divided

amongst themselves, and appears to have been completely oblivious to what had happened to his predecessors:

One day when the Sultan was as usual seated under the pavilion and the troops were passing before him, the summit and the sides of the neighbouring hill of As-Sabikah being crowded with spectators who had left their dwellings for the purpose of witnessing the pageant, God permitted that all of a sudden rain should fall down in torrents and that the river Darro should overflow its banks. Such was the fury of the devastating element, which came pouring down from the neighbouring mountains, carrying along large stones and whole trees, that it destroyed everything on its way, and that houses, shops, mills, inns, markets, bridges, and garden-walls were the prey of the devastating flood. The water reached as far as the square where the great mosque stands. So frightful an inundation had never before been experienced in the country, and the people naturally looked upon it as the harbinger of the dreadful calamities which awaited the Muslims in just chastisement for their perversity and their wrong actions.<sup>3</sup>

Despite such signs and the threat of the Christians, the last Muslims of the Kingdom of Granada divided and fought each other, often enlisting the aid of the Christians to establish their supremacy in one particular area of the kingdom. Whilst this was going on, the Christians slowly but surely gained control over the land surrounding Granada itself. By 1485, all the towns to the west of Malaga had been taken by Christians. By 1487, all the towns to the east of Malaga and Malaga itself were conquered. By 1489, only the citadel of Granada remained. It was only at this late date that the Muslims of Granada appear to have realized what was happening, and united against their common enemy. By this time, however, it was too late to stop the

inevitable consequences of theirs and the Christians' actions.

In 1491, Ferdinand began the siege of Granada. During the summer months he built a small town outside the city, indicating his intention to continue the siege through the winter. The position of the besieged Muslims became more desperate as time passed. Finally after seven months, virtually all the food in Granada was finished, and it being mid-winter there was no prospect of relief. At this point, the Khalif of Granada, Abu 'Abdullah, decided to make a treaty with the Christians, rather than see everyone starve to death. After a favourable treaty had been agreed on and duly signed, he capitulated to the Christian army in January, 1492.

Thus just over seven and a half centuries after the Muslims first landed in Spain they relinquished the last of their management over it. There were still Muslims there but they no longer had a Muslim ruler. This too was the year in which the Jews were finally expelled from Spain. Columbus may well have embarked on his epic voyage to America at this time, but for the Jews and Muslims of Spain the year of 1492 had a very different significance.

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The capitulation of Granada, only nine years after the Spanish Inquisition had come into being, is an indication of the efficiency of this institution, and the determination of the Christians to oust the Muslims from Spain. The capitulation, however, was not achieved solely by force of arms, and the Muslims of the South only surrendered once they felt that they had secured the freedom to continue their practice of Islam unmolested and unrestricted in any way. Abu 'Abdullah, the last Khalif of Granada, only agreed to surrender once a solemn and binding treaty had been witnessed by both the Christians and the Muslims. The capitulation of 1492 contained sixty-seven articles among which were the following:

That both great and small should be perfectly secure in their persons, families, and properties.  
That they should be allowed to continue in their

dwellings and residences, whether in the city, the suburbs, or any other part of the country. That their laws should be preserved as they were before, and that no-one should judge them except by those same laws. That their mosques, and the religious endowments appertaining to them, should remain as they were in the times of Islam. That no Christian should enter the house of a Muslim, or insult him in any way. That no Christian or Jew holding public offices by the appointment of the late Sultan should be allowed to exercise his functions or rule over them. That all Muslim captives taken during the siege of Granada, from whatever part of the country they might have come, but especially the nobles and chiefs mentioned in the agreement, should be liberated. That such Muslim captives as might have escaped from their Christians masters, and taken refuge in Granada, should not be surrendered; but that the Sultan should be bound to pay the price of such captives to their owners. That all those who might choose to cross over to Africa should be allowed to take their departure within a certain time, and be conveyed thither in the king's ships, and without any pecuniary tax being imposed on them, beyond the mere charge for passage, and that after the expiration of that time no Muslim should be hindered from departing, provided he paid, in addition to the price of his passage, the tithe of whatever property he might carry along with him. That no-one should be prosecuted and punished for the crime of another man. That the Christians who had embraced the Mohammadan religion should not be compelled to relinquish it and adopt their former creed. That any Muslim wishing to become a Christian should be allowed some days to consider the step he was about to take; after which he is to be questioned

by both a Mohammadan and a Christian judge concerning his intended change, and if, after this examination, he still refused to return to Islam, he should be permitted to follow his own inclination. That no Muslim should be prosecuted for the death of a Christian slain during the siege; and that no restitution of property taken during this war should be enforced. That no Muslim should be subject to have Christian soldiers billeted upon him, or be transported to provinces of this kingdom against his will. That no increase should be made to the usual imposts, but that, on the contrary, all the oppressive taxes lately imposed should be immediately suppressed. That no Christian should be allowed to peep over the wall, or into the house of a Muslim or enter a mosque. That any Muslim choosing to travel or reside among the Christians should be perfectly secure in his person and property. That no badge or distinctive mark be put upon them, as was done with the Jews and Mudejares. That no *muezzin* should be interrupted in the act of calling the people to prayer, and no Muslim molested either in the performance of his daily devotions or in the observance of his fast, or in any other religious ceremony; but that if a Christian should be found laughing at them he should be punished for it. That the Muslims should be exempted from all taxation for a certain number of years. That the Lord of Rome, the Pope, should be requested to give his assent to the above conditions, and sign the treaty himself. <sup>4</sup>

The treaty of 1492 was thus an attempt to win religious tolerance for all the Muslims left in Spain. They were no longer the rulers of the country, but it was hoped that they would at least be permitted to worship their Lord in the manner indicated by their prophet. These hopes were strengthened when the treaty was ratified by Ferdinand and Isabella to a solemn declaration

made several months later on November 29, 1492. They swore by God that all Muslims should have full liberty of faith, work and trade. The Muslims were to be regarded as free subjects of the crown, with the free exercise of their own religion.

For several years there was relative peace in the land, and Hernando de Talavera, the new archbishop of Granada, tried without much success to gain converts by peaceful means. However, this state of affairs did not last for long. One by one the solemn pledges made in the Treaty of Granada were broken, especially in the areas not immediately in the vicinity of Granada, and the areas further north.

The members of the Church who were closest to Ferdinand and Isabella urged the two monarchs to give all the Muslims the choice between baptism or exile, the choice which had proved so successful in 'converting' the Jews. They argued that it was all right to break the Treaty of Granada since this would only be to the spiritual advantage of the Muslims. If the Muslims were forced to become Christians, they said, then according to the Pauline doctrines of atonement and redemption enshrined in Catholicism, they would gain salvation in the next world.

The Inquisitors were also not at all happy with the treaty which Ferdinand and Isabella had ratified. By the end of the fifteenth century they had reduced the Muslim population and the practice of Islam considerably. The treaty had only slowed down their operations, but also it was likely that the Muslims might become strong again and attempt to rebel. Furthermore, they were convinced that the Muslims would never be converted by peaceful means. Cardinal Ximénes, the Archbishop of Toledo, was impatient to continue the activities of the Spanish Inquisition unimpeded, and finally he received permission to do so.

In 1499, on the invitation of Ferdinand and Isabella, Ximénes began a campaign to coerce the Muslims of southern Andalusia into the official religion:

As a result of his endeavours, it is reported that on 18th December 1499 about three thousand Moors were baptized by him and a leading mosque in Granada was converted into a church. 'Converts' were encouraged to surrender their Islamic books, several thousands of

which were destroyed by Ximénes in a public bonfire. A few rare books on medicine were kept aside for the University of Alcalá.<sup>5</sup>

These destructive measures were not achieved without the use of force. As a young Muslim girl was being dragged through the streets of the Muslim quarter, she cried out that she was about to be forcibly baptized, in contravention of the terms of the treaty. A crowd collected, her captors were attacked, and a riot and momentary uprising of the Muslims was the result. They besieged the house of Ximénes, and after three days fighting, negotiations were opened.

The Muslims stated that they had not risen against the king, but against the officials who had broken the king's word. They could not be contradicted, and initially peace was re-established. A further promise was given that the terms of the original treaty would again be honoured. However, it soon became clear that this was solely a means of restoring order, and that it was not intended to abide by this promise:

Ximénes immediately denounced the uprising as a rebellion, and claimed that by this the Moors had forfeited all their rights under the terms of capitulation. They should therefore be given the choice between baptism and expulsion. The government agreed with his arguments, and Ximénes then began the mass baptism of the population of Granada, most of whom preferred this fate to the more hazardous one of deportation to Africa. The speed with which the baptisms were carried out meant that there was no time in which to instruct the Moors in the fundamentals of their new religion, so that inevitably most of the new converts became Christian only in name.<sup>6</sup>

Many of these Muslims only spoke Arabic. When some of those who had been forcibly converted asked to be instructed about Christianity in their own language, Ximénes stoutly opposed it:

...saying that it was casting pearls to swine, for it was the nature of the vulgar to despise what they could understand and to reverence that which was occult and mysterious. If he could enforce outward conformity he evidently cared little for intelligent faith; he was by nature an inquisitor and not a missionary. We are not surprised therefore to learn that Talavera was obliged to baptise them without instruction or catechization, for the multitude was so great and the time was so short that there was no opportunity for such preliminaries. Nor need we wonder that such profanation of the sacrament left the neophytes as much Muslim in heart as before, with undying hatred, to be transmitted to their children, towards the religion to which they had been forced outwardly to profess conformity and towards the oppressors who had shown disregard so cynical of their solemn engagements. Nor was that hatred likely to diminish as the Inquisition, which had thus obtained jurisdiction over them, harmed them ceaselessly for a century with its spies, its confiscations, and its *autos-da-fé*.<sup>7</sup>

It is estimated that between 50,000 and 70,000 Muslims were forcibly baptized in the mass baptism of Granada by Ximénes. It is not known how many were deported to Africa, but the number was probably small not only because it was made difficult to leave, but also because the Muslims were not prepared to relinquish their kingdom so easily.

Those who refused the choice between baptism and deportation took to the mountain ranges of the Alpujarras, determined to resist the Christians to the last. They were hunted down and eliminated methodically and brutally by the Christian army, who used much the same tactics as they had employed in the conquest of the north of Muslim Spain. On arriving at one of the remote mountain villages, they would storm it and kill all who actively resisted. Sometimes they were even more extreme. At

Andarax, for example, the principal mosque, in which the women and children had taken refuge, was blown up with gunpowder. At Belfique all the men were put to the sword and the women were taken as slaves. All children under the age of eleven years were spared, but were separated from their parents and handed over to the Church to be brought up as Catholics. The survivors were always forcibly baptized, thus preparing them for further persecution from the Spanish Inquisition at a later date, and all books in Arabic, especially the Qur'an, were collected to be burnt. Cardinal Ximénes:

...was reported during his conversion campaign among the Granada Moors in 1500 to have burnt in the public square of Vivarrambla over 1,005,000 volumes including unique works of Moorish culture.<sup>8</sup>

The last community of Muslims in Andalusia was thus smashed and fragmented within a very short space of time, and the first armed rebellion of Granada was put down with such ruthless efficiency that:

...by 1501 it was officially assumed that the kingdom of Granada had become a realm of Christian Moors - the Moriscos. Those Moors who wished to emigrate to Africa could do so on payment of a sum of money, but converts were not allowed to go. Ferdinand granted the Moriscos legal equality with Christians but at the same time disarmed the population, for fear of further risings.<sup>9</sup>

Since the majority of Muslims had been 'converted', the offer of emigration was an empty one, and the 'legal equality' granted by Ferdinand was but a mockery of the terms of the Treaty of Granada which he had so blatantly permitted to be broken.

Behind the words of conciliation and peace, the general intention of the Church to eliminate the practice of Islam was unmistakable, and now that the Muslims of southern Andalusia, or the Moriscos as they were called, were within the jurisdic-

tion of the Spanish Inquisition, the Inquisitors embarked on the task of detecting 'relapsed heretics' and secret Muslims. The communities of Muslims which had survived the suppression of the rebellion, or reformed after it, were repeatedly harassed by the Inquisitors. The denunciations and self-denunciations resulting from the Edicts of Grace brought nothing but fear, suspicion and treachery in their wake, and the communities were split and the people divided against each other. Anyone who resisted these measures faced inevitable persecution from the Spanish Inquisition which ably and extensively employed all the liberties to eliminate 'heretics' that it had been given. Anyone who opposed the Inquisitors faced certain torture and death as well as the similar infliction of pain and hardship on the people he loved.

In 1507, Ximénes was appointed Inquisitor General of Spain. He co-ordinated the activities of the Inquisitors throughout Spain so effectively that the wealth of the Spanish Inquisition and the poverty of the Muslims were both greatly increased. It was during this time that the notorious Complutensian Polygot Bible was assembled in the University of Alcalá on the orders of Ximénes. It was composed of six volumes with the Hebrew, Chaldean and Greek 'original' of the Bible printed in columns parallel to the Latin Vulgate. It was finally published in 1522. This was the first time that the Bible had been printed in Greek. The people who assembled it faithfully incorporated the two famous New Testament forgeries of I John 5.7 and I Tim. 3.16 in all the texts. Although it was claimed that the texts were 'original', no manuscript written prior to the Council of Nicaea was used. The printing of the Complutensian Polygot cost Ximénes 50,000 ducats. The ease with which he could pay it was a tribute to his successful work in southern Andalusia.

The persecution of the Muslims, not only within the former kingdom of Granada but also throughout Andalusia during this period, did not take place without some protest from the more reasonable Christians. Gonzalo de Ayora, for instance, captain general and chronicler, wrote a letter of protest to the king's secretary, Miguel de Almazan, complaining of the destruction being wrought in the name of God:

The government had failed to exercise effective

control over its ministers. As for the Inquisition, the method adopted was to place so much confidence in the archbishop of Seville and in Lucerno...that they were able to defame the whole kingdom, to destroy, without God or justice, a great part of it, slaying and robbing and violating maids and wives to the great dishonour of the Catholic religion...

The damages which the wicked officials of the Inquisition have wrought in my land are so many and so great that no reasonable person on hearing of them would not grieve.<sup>10</sup>

\* \* \*

Clearly the persecution of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was a great trial for the Muslims of Andalusia, and these times of contraction were a mighty test of their Islam. Although many survived by the grace of Allah, many also died fighting in the way of Allah, not only because they abhorred the prospect of slavery and the enforced pretence of the official religion, but also because they were certain in their knowledge of the rewards of such a death. For the Jews this trial on Andalusia was a tragedy.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XVI

- (1) *Muhammadan Dynasties in Spain*, II, p. 352, P. de Gayangos.
- (2) *Ibid*, II, p. 368.
- (3) *Ibid*, II, p. 369.
- (4) *Ibid*, II, p. 388.
- (5) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 105., H. Kamen.
- (6) *Ibid*.
- (7) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 35, H.C. Lea.
- (8) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 98, H. Kamen.
- (9) *Ibid*, p. 105.
- (10) *Ibid*, p.56

## CHAPTER XVII

## THE END OF THE MUDEJARES

By the beginning of the sixteenth century the whole of Spain was under the control of the Catholics, and the unimpeded practice of Islam in its total social nexus was no longer possible. There were still Muslims, especially in the remote mountain villages of what had been Muslim Spain, but after three centuries of fighting and persecution, a large number of the Muslims of Spain were either dead or gone. Those who remained held to as much of their Islam as was possible, but they faced the prospect of increased bondage.

Having reduced the Muslims, especially in the North, to slavery, the Church now concentrated on making them into Christian slaves. The Christians began a concerted drive throughout Spain to eliminate all those who were still practising the fundamental actions of Islam, and who claimed not to have been baptised. The rural communities of the Mudejares in the north of Andalusia were especial targets. Up until this point they had been allowed a limited freedom to practise their faith by the landowners who relied on their work for all their revenue. They lived together in their own communities, were still able to do the prayer, and had not yet all been compelled to become technical Christians. The influence of the Church was now much greater, however, and with the subjugation of the Muslims in Granada, the bargaining position of the Mudejares was no longer so strong. One year after the suppression of the rebellion in Alpujarras, the process of Christianising the Mudejares was commenced in the North:

Ten years after the expulsion of the Jews, Isabella, on 12th February 1502, issued a royal order giving all remaining Moors in the realms of Castile the choice between baptism and expulsion. The majority of the native Moorish communities, the Mudejares, chose to stay and be baptised. How free such a choice was is illustrated by the fact that emigration was made literally impossible. The historian Galindez de

Carvajal says that although Moors were technically allowed to leave if they chose, in practice the authorities would not allow them go and instead forced them to accept baptism. Under such conditions the mass of the remaining Moorish population of Castile came into the Catholic fold.<sup>1</sup>

The process of converting the Mudejares of Castile to the official religion was speeded up by dividing their families. Under Isabella's decree, all males under the age of fourteen and all females under the age of twelve were separated from their families and handed over to the Church to be brought up as Christians. Isabella's decree signalled the beginning of a fresh campaign against the Mudejares throughout the North, but there was one important and significant exception:

Whether to placate his nobility or in pursuit of a moderate policy, Ferdinand repeatedly warned the inquisitors of Aragon not to persecute the Moorish population or resort to forced conversions.<sup>2</sup>

By this means Ferdinand kept the subjects closest to him in a tranquil state, and turned a blind eye to what was happening in the rest of Spain.

Another brake on the Christianising of the Mudejares at this stage was the influence of the nobles and the landowners, especially those of Valenica, which had the largest rural population of Muslims in Spain. They regarded the activities of the Spanish Inquisition amongst their slave labour with dismay, since any disruption of the workforce involved a loss in their profits. The situation of the Mudejares in Valenica has aptly been compared to a colonial regime, or the southern states of the United States of America where the Muslims, like the negroes, whose ancestors incidentally were also often Muslims, formed a depressed mass hated by the Old Christian proletariat of the towns, and despised, but exploited and therefore defended, by the Old Christian colonial aristocracy.

When Charles V was crowned king, fresh requests were

made by the nobles to overhaul the Spanish Inquisition, and to instil a little justice into its procedure. As a result of these protestations the new king promised that they would neither be expelled nor forcibly baptised. His Catholic advisers, however, ensured that the liberties enjoyed by the Inquisitors would not be restricted in any way. By this stage even the papacy, which had been responsible for the institution of the Inquisition in the first place, could not influence the Spanish Inquisition, so inflexible was its hold on the land. In July, 1519, Pope Leo X:

...issued three briefs, one to Charles, one to the Inquisitor General, and one to the tribunal of Saragossa, reducing the powers of the Inquisition to the bounds of ordinary canon law, and revoking all special privileges granted by his predecessors. Charles and his officials refused to allow the publication of the briefs in Spain, and instead a firm protest was sent to Rome. The pope now shifted his position and suspended the briefs without revoking them.<sup>3</sup>

The designs of the Spanish Inquisition were ironically aided by the greed of the nobles, and unwittingly advanced by the anger of the poorer Christians who were also exploited by the landowners. In 1520, there was a revolt of the commons against the nobles. The commons, angered by the exploitation by the nobles, formed into brotherhoods, notably the '*Comuneros*' of Castile and the '*Germania*' of Valenica, and attempted to pressurize the nobles into giving them more rights and a better deal. The Mudejares were not involved in the revolt to begin with. However, some of the *Germania* conceived of the idea of baptising them by force, not as a measure of religious zeal, but as an act of hostility to the nobles. They reasoned that by baptising the Mudejares and therefore giving them equal rights to Christians, they would be emancipating them on one hand as well as strengthening their own bargaining position by depriving their lords of the support arising from the numbers and obedience of the Mudejares. Since the baptism of the Mudejares was exactly what the Inquisitors wanted, it would not be surprising to discover that they were responsible for this movement in the first



place.

The *Germania* formed into large bands and commenced the mass baptism of the Mudejares of Valencia. They were joined by many men who were more interested in plunder than achieving a political ideal. They went from village to village in a career of devastation, robbery, murder and baptism. The village of Manices was solely inhabited by Muslims. Fearing that they would all be killed en masse, they agreed to be baptised. In the village of Poplop, on the other hand, the large Muslim community decided to resist. The Christian mob laid siege to the town. Bitter fighting followed. Finally the Muslims capitulated after they had been promised 'the safety of life and property'. They were all collected in a nearby castle and were 'massacred to man.'<sup>4</sup> There was no hesitation in making an example of this community for those who chose to resist the *Germania's* attempts to 'emancipate' them. In the case of Urgelles, a force of 3,000 Christians attacked the town. The Muslims were given the choice of either accepting Christianity or death. When the village surrendered, they were forcibly led to the church in batches of twenty to twenty-five, and baptised, although they made it quite obvious that they were not consenting to their 'conversion' willingly.

The baptisms were not always so orderly. At Consentaina, the Christian rioters ran amok. They killed all the Muslims in the mosque and began an orgy of murder, rape and robbery. Those who survived were baptised. As they were herded into the church they saw their friends and relations lying dead on the road. At Gandier, the rioters celebrated their victory by killing some Muslims and baptising others, shouting 'Death to Moors' and 'Dogs to be baptised'. The dead lay where they fell. "A witness stated that he saw a hundred and fifty Moors between the tower gate and San Antonio."<sup>5</sup>

Wherever the armies of the *Germania* went, the story was the same. At Valldigna, for instance, they killed a number of Muslims and looted their property. When they were tired, they, "gave the rest two hours to choose between baptism and death."<sup>6</sup>

Once the Muslim population of a village had been subdued, the mosques were converted into churches, and then the army would leave for the next village. It is recorded that as soon as the immediate danger had passed, those Muslims who still survived continued to hold regular prayer in those mosques.

Two years after the revolt had begun, the movement of the *Germania* was suppressed. The result of their activities between 1520 and 1522 was not the emancipation of the Mudejares, but the forcible baptism of thousands of Muslims and the deaths of many others. Where before there had been Mudejares there were now Moriscos, technical Moorish Christians, and behind the political casuistry of the official account of what took place the next step in the elimination of Islam from Spain had been clearly taken. The new Moriscos were now within the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisition, and the Inquisitors were eager to begin their work of searching out the 'relapsed heretics' amongst them:

To the argument that the conversions had taken place under compulsion, the standard answer was once again given, that to choose baptism as an alternative to death meant the exercise of free choice, which rendered the sacrament of baptism valid. The Inquisition was therefore ordered to proceed on the assumption that all 'properly' executed baptisms were valid. The task was now to save the Moriscos from relapsing into their old faith.<sup>7</sup>

The landowners, who felt that their pockets had suffered enough already from the uprisings of the *Germania*, viewed the proposed activities of the Spanish Inquisition among their already shrunken workforce with dismay. Although they dared not actively oppose the Inquisitors, they at least made their dissent vocal. Their complaints about the past and proposed disruption of their labourers, and the disastrous effect it would have on the economy, induced Charles V to make some show of being a just and merciful monarch. He extended a promise of goodwill and peace towards the Muslims who were still alive in Andalusia, and renewed his old promise to the landowners not to expel or baptise their labourers. It appears from his subsequent actions, however, that any attempt to mitigate the suffering of the Muslims was only used as a means to pacify and placate the nobles, until he could persuade them to accept the wisdom of his real intention which was to establish uniformity of faith through the Official Religion in his Spanish dominions.

To achieve this end, Charles began by ensuring that forcible baptism was in fact valid. He ordered an investigation into the validity of the mass baptisms which the Germania had imposed on the Mudejares of Valencia. It was subsequently found, even by the judges who were clearly prejudiced against the Muslims, that the degree of violence being used to spread the Official Religion was a crime, which in the ordinary course of events should be punished. However, they added, the result of this criminal activity was good since, according to the Pauline doctrine of the Roman Church, all who became 'Catholic' Christians were saved. Therefore, they reasoned, the mass baptisms of Valencia were valid despite the violence with which they had been administered, and furthermore this mode of baptism should be continued. In this way, they said, God works to bring good out of evil. If all the Muslims were to be baptised, they would be saved from perdition and from the demon in the Next World. All forced baptisms were therefore valid, and furthermore, the converts should be compelled to adhere to the Catholic faith in order to ensure their salvation after death. Those who upheld them in 'apostasy', including the landowners, would be prosecuted and punished.

The investigators concluded by affirming the need for the support of the Spanish Inquisition. If the baptisms were not upheld, they argued, or if the converts were allowed to relapse into their former ways, then it might create doubt in the minds of the established Catholics as to the 'efficaciousness' of baptism. This was yet another reason why the forced baptisms should not only be upheld but should also continue to be administered. The findings of the commission of inquiry received universal approval from all the statesmen and leaders of the Catholic Church, and of course the Spanish Inquisition, who would have excommunicated and prosecuted for heresy anyone who publicly came to any conclusion opposed to this.

Having officially established the validity of forced baptism, the only impediment facing Charles V in his desire to establish uniformity of faith throughout his dominions and especially in Spain, was the fact that he had solemnly promised not to persecute the surviving Muslims. This promise was even more of an embarrassment to Charles on account of his recent commitment to suppressing the movement of the new Reformist Church

under Martin Luther. In the Edict of Worms in 1521, at which Charles V presided, Luther and his followers had been condemned as 'heretics' and put under the ban of the Empire. Charles was therefore faced with the incongruity of his two contradictory decisions. How could he persecute one group of heretics and not the other? He could not fulfill his obligation to persecute the Protestants if he did not also suppress the worship of the Muslims.

His predicament was resolved by the timely assistance of the Pope. Fortunately, it seemed for Charles V, the 'vice-regent of God' on earth as appointed by the Roman Christians, had assumed the power of releasing men from their oaths, of abrogating compacts, and of setting aside all human laws where it seemed either necessary or expedient. In 1524, Pope Clement VII issued a bull freeing Charles V from all obligations resulting from the binding promises he had made to protect the life, religion and property of the Muslims. Summarizing the contents of the papal brief, Lea writes:

It recites the papal grief at learning that in Valencia, Catalonia and Aragon Charles has many subjects who are Moors and with whom the faithful cannot hold intercourse without danger; they even live with the temporal lords who make no effort for their conversion, all of which is a scandal to the faith and a dishonour to the emperor, besides which they serve as spies, for those in Africa to whom they reveal the design of the Christians. It therefore exhorts Charles to order the inquisitors to preach the word of God to them and if they persist in their obstinacy the inquisitors shall designate a term and warn them that on its expiration they shall be exiled under pain of perpetual slavery, which shall be rigorously executed. The tithes of their temporal possessions, which they have never hitherto paid, shall accrue to their lords in recompense for the damage caused to them by the expulsion, under condition that the lords shall provide the churches with what is necessary for

divine service, while the revenues of the mosques shall be converted into benefices. The portentous document concludes with a formal release to Charles from the oath sworn to the Cortes not to expel the Moors; it absolved him from all censures and penalties of perjury thence arising and grants him whatever dispensation is necessary for the execution of the premises. Moreover it confers on the inquisitors ample faculties to suppress all opposition with censures and other remedies, invoking if necessary the aid of the secular arm notwithstanding all apostolical constitutions and the privileges and statutes of the land.<sup>8</sup>

In other words, the Pope granted Charles V permission to eliminate the remaining Muslims of Andalusia by whatever means were necessary. Lea comments:

If Clement had hesitated at first in thus authorizing this breach of faith he had gotten bravely over his scruples; there is no word in the brief signifying that it had been asked of him; he took the responsibility of the initiative and Spanish writers were justified in assigning to him the credit of having suggested the action and induced Charles to adopt it. The whole matter was treated as belonging exclusively to ecclesiastical jurisdiction and its execution was committed wholly to the Inquisition as the most appropriate and efficient instrument.<sup>9</sup>

For eighteen months Charles held the papal brief without publishing it, but it untied his hands. Once it was clearly and publicly established by the Catholic Church that the forced baptisms of the Mudejares already performed, together with any such similar baptism in the future, were valid, he acted:

...early in September, 1525, he addressed, on the 13th, letters to the nobles informing them of his

irrevocable determination not to allow a Moor or other infidel to remain in his dominions except as a slave; he recognised that expulsion would affect their revenues and leave their lands depopulated, wherefore he earnestly desired to avoid it and consequently urged them to go to their estates and co-operate with the inquisitorial commissioners in procuring the conversion and instruction of their vassals. A brief letter of the same date to the Moors informed them to submit to baptism; if they do so, they shall have the liberties of Christians and good treatment; if they refuse he will provide for it by other means. This was followed the next day by an edict for proclamation everywhere; it was addressed to the Moors telling them of his resolve that no-one of another faith should remain except in slavery; as he desires their salvation and protection from all ill-treatment he gives them this notice before executing his intention; he guarantees them all the privileges of Christians and, under a penalty of 50,000 florins and the royal wrath, everyone is ordered not to impede the conversion and respect all converts.<sup>10</sup>

Behind Charles' concern for the Muslims' "salvation and protection from ill-treatment" was the veiled threat that if they did not cease to follow their prophet they would suffer for it. His promise to grant them "all the privileges of Christians" was as empty as the promises which he had originally made to them and to the landowners, and which he was just about to break. It is ironical that Charles V should break one promise by making another. It, as its predecessor, was never kept.

Armed with his papal insurance against being accountable for his actions, Charles issued on November 25th 1525 a decree for the expulsion of all Muslims from Valencia by the 31st December, and from Catalonia and Aragon by 31st January 1526. This decree was reinforced by another papal brief which ordered, under pain of major excommunication, all Catholic

Christians to aid in enforcing the imperial decrees, and that the Muslims must listen, without replying, to the teaching of the gospel. As in the case of Isabella's decree of 1502, it was made impossible for the Mudejares actually to leave the country. They were therefore forced to 'choose' the alternative:

The unfortunate Moors came forward in their thousands to accept a religion which they neither believed, nor loved, nor ever intended to practise. By 1526 Morisco Spain was a reality.<sup>11</sup>

In this manner, the last of the Mudejares were baptised and changed into Moriscos. Many of them submitted to this transformation with a minimum of struggle:

Antonio de Guevara who was foremost in the work, boasts that in Valencia he baptised 27,000 families of Moors, but the Moriscos subsequently related that this wholesale administration of the sacrament was accomplished by corralling them in pens and scattering water over them, when some would endeavour to hide themselves and others would shout, 'no water has touched me.' They submitted to it, they said, because their *alfaquiés* assured them that deceit was permissible and that they need not believe the religion which they were compelled to profess.<sup>12</sup>

Certainly even these baptisms, in which the least of physical force was exercised, were a mockery of the baptism of Jesus by John, peace be upon them, in the river Jordan fifteen centuries earlier.

Many of the baptisms of the last of the Mudejares, especially in the rural areas, took place with a much greater struggle, and the methods so recently displayed by the *Germania* were adopted throughout northern Andalusia, wherever the Muslims put up any resistance:

The Germania had builded better than it knew.  
It had given an impulse which blind fanaticism

had eagerly developed until the movement was spreading far beyond the narrow boundaries of Valencia, and the wild work of the lawless bands of Agermanados was to be adopted and systematized and perfected by the supreme powers in State and Church.<sup>13</sup>

The Christian armies went from village to village, killing all who resisted them and baptising and impoverishing those who remained. Thus in the town of Benaguacil, for example, the Mudejares of the neighbouring villages took refuge and closed the gates. The Christians laid siege to them and ravaged the surrounding countryside. After five weeks they were forced to capitulate. They were duly baptised and the penalty of slavery and confiscation was commuted to a fine of 12,000 ducats.

A large number of the Mudejares, as their brothers in the kingdom of Granada had done, took to the mountains. As in the Alpujarras of the south, so in the Sierra de Espadan of the north, they gathered together and prepared to fight to the death. They elected a man called Qurban as their leader. He took the name of Salim. They built huts to live in and dug trenches round them. They waited in the winter fastness of the mountains for the Christian army to come. A force of three thousand was sent to destroy them, but it was repulsed with heavy losses. This led to a nationwide mourning on the part of the Christians. All church altars throughout Spain were draped with black cloth. Feeling against the Muslims ran high. A second army of seven thousand soldiers was assembled. It was joined by a large number of adventurers who had come for plunder. When the two forces met, the Muslims put up a stiff resistance but were overpowered by the sheer weight of numbers. Muslims were massacred, excluding women and children, who were taken as slaves. All the survivors were forcibly baptised.

Those who escaped regrouped at the Muela de Cortes, but they were soon hard-pressed and surrendered at discretion. Three of their leaders were then strangled to death, the rest were deprived of their arms, their books were burnt and they were compelled to be baptised, and to submit to the Gospels:

Thus was Valencia Christianized and pacified;  
the Moriscos, as we may now call them, were

disarmed, the pulpits used by their alfaquíes were torn down, their Korans were burnt and orders were given to instruct them completely in the faith - orders as we shall see, perpetually repeated and never executed.<sup>14</sup>

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Many stories grew up round the mass baptism of the last of the Mudejares, which had begun in Valencia and which subsequently spread throughout Andalusia. It is recorded that after the forcible conversion of the Muslims in one town, the image of the holy sepulchre in the Christian Church wept for twenty-four hours, and the images of the Virgin Mary and associated angels wept for thirty-six hours. The tears were so profuse that they were collected and preserved in a sealed vase. In 1590 King Philip asked for, and was given, a portion of these tears. When the last of the Muslims were finally expelled from Spain in the early seventeenth century, the tears in the vase and the tears in the king's possession disappeared from their containers.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XVII

- (1) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 105, H. Kamen.
- (2) *Ibid*, p. 106.
- (36) *Ibid*, p. 62.
- (4) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 63, H.C. Lea.
- (5) *Ibid*, p. 65.
- (6) *Ibid*.
- (7) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 106, H. Kamen
- (8) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 83, H.C. Lea.
- (9) *Ibid*, p. 84.
- (10) *Ibid*, p. 85.
- (11) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 107, H. Kamen.
- (12) *Ibid*, p. 108.
- (13) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 81, H.C. Lea.
- (14) *Ibid*, p. 95.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## THE MORISCOS OF NORTH ANDALUSIA

By the beginning of 1526, the whole of the surviving Muslim population of Spain had been baptised in one way or another. It was not altogether clear who was Christian and who was Muslim, for the haste in which the whole operation of baptism had been undertaken had led to considerable confusion. Despite the ecclesiastical assurances given to Charles V not everyone was sure whether:

...the sacrament so hurriedly and irregularly administered had been rightly performed.<sup>1</sup>

However, these doubts were settled by declaring that all Muslims living in Spain were now presumed to have been baptised, and that they were to be technically regarded as Christians. Thus:

By the mid-sixteenth century every soul in the peninsula was nominally Catholic, and the Inquisition had no further need to discriminate between the baptised and the unbaptised.<sup>2</sup>

The whole Muslim population of Spain was now within the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisition, and the punishment of any Muslim found worshipping his Lord in the manner indicated by Islam was death. This is evidenced by the fact that the Edicts of Grace, which the Inquisitors had first employed when there were still a large number of Jews and Muslims in Spain, were replaced by Edicts of Faith:

...which omitted the term of grace, and instead threatened the penalty of excommunication against those who did not denounce heretics, whether themselves or others. Together with the Edict of Faith went a statement describing in detail the practices of heretics, especially judaiz-

ers, Muslims, Illuminists, and Protestants.<sup>3</sup>

The significance of this change in name, is that there were no longer any communities of Muslims openly practising Islam in the northern part of Andalusia. The need for the term of grace, which in the past had been so effective in dividing such communities and compelling their members to accept baptism, was therefore obsolete. Instead the emphasis was now on eliminating those Muslims who continued to practise their faith in secret.

Faced with the prospect of enduring still more persecution at the hands of the Inquisition, the surviving Muslims of Spain made one last attempt to gain respite from the unchecked zeal of the Inquisitors:

In January 1526 the leaders of the Moriscos succeeded in obtaining from the crown and Inquisitor General Manrique a secret concordia or agreement that if they submitted to baptism they should be free for forty years from any prosecution by the Holy Office, since it would be impossible for them to shed all their old customs at once.<sup>4</sup>

This agreement was only concluded after the Muslims had paid Charles V 50,000 ducats. This bargain was as bad as all the previous ones in which the king had been involved, for the Spanish Inquisitors soon managed to argue its way round the terms of the agreement:

In 1528 this *concordia* was made public, and in that same year the Cortes of Aragon meeting at Morizon asked Charles to prevent the Inquisition prosecuting Moriscos until they had been instructed in the faith. Their request was timely, for the guarantee was no more lasting than the concordia to mean that it could bring to trial those converts who had slipped back into their Moorish rites and customs, and the figures for victims in these years shows that inquisitorial rigour was unabated. From 1528 to 1530 there

were one hundred and six cases of heresy cited before the Inquisition of Valencia. In 1531 there were fifty-eight trials for heresy, and about forty-five people were burned for the same crime that year. From 1532 to 1540 the number of people tried for heresy came to 441. These figures would include several Jewish *conversos*, but the majority were certainly cases of Moriscos.<sup>5</sup>

Thus for a period of twelve years between 1528 and 1540, an average of at least one Morisco a week was being burned alive in Valencia alone for refusing to deny what he affirmed: that there was no god except God and that Muhammad was the Messenger of God.

The figures for the number of Moriscos being burnt alive in the whole of northern Andalusia during this period are not available, but if the figures of Valencia are anything to go by, they were probably not inconsiderable. It should also be remembered that the pre-trial torture in prison, which was considered essential in extracting confessions from secret Muslims and deemed invaluable in obtaining the names of other 'heretics' from the accused, was of such an intensity that a large number of prisoners died in prison before they could be burned at the stake. Although the Inquisitors kept records of their activities, these were by no means complete, and many deaths such as these were never included in the official records.

Such was the 'gentleness' with which, some contemporary writers claim, the Inquisition sought to 'induce them to obedience'. These were the 'benign' methods which were adopted to convert them to Christianity. The clerical writers of this period marvel at the 'devilish and inexpugnable obstinacy' with which the Muslims held to their beliefs, and resisted the 'kindly efforts made for their salvation'.<sup>6</sup>

The work of the Inquisitors was facilitated by the fact that very little effort was made to instruct the Moriscos in their new religion:

Moriscos had been converted by force and had therefore never been more than perfunctorily

catechized. No proper missionary work among the population was undertaken and many parishes lacked clergy completely.<sup>7</sup>

It was therefore made impossible for the Moriscos to imitate the actions of the Christians even if they had wanted to, while for the Inquisitors, who could arrest anyone merely on the suspicion of heresy, the life-style of the Muslims was evidence enough of their 'guilt'.

It is true, that in the case of the Morisco children who were separated from their parents to be brought up as Christians, there was a concerted attempt to instruct them in the official religion. This action in itself, however, was enough to dissuade the parents from accepting the Catholicism, even if there had been anyone to teach it to them. Furthermore, there was also a language barrier since the majority of Moriscos in the rural areas spoke only Arabic:

The Spanish priests spoke no Arabic and most of them were like the bishop of Orihuela, who considered it the duty of the Moriscos, as subjects of the Spanish crown, to learn the Spanish tongue. In their communities the Moriscos still retained all the practices of their old faith as well as the traditional social customs which set them apart from the Christian population. This distinctive existence made it impossible to assimilate them into the body of a religiously united Spain. The important fact, however, is that it was the Christians who made such assimilation impossible.<sup>8</sup>

The Muslims of the northern part of what had been Muslim Spain therefore were given the impossible task of behaving in a manner which no-one would teach them, and in which they did not believe. Although Charles V talked of having a 'religiously united Spain', none of the Catholic Church's actions were calculated to bring this about:

Failure was to be expected from the very start.

As long as the Moriscos remained a depressed minority and continued to be despised for their social position and race, there was no hope of them entering the Christian community voluntarily. In Lea's words, 'they were Christians as regards duties and responsibilities, but they remained Moors in respect to liabilities and inequality before the law.'<sup>9</sup>

The most that was done was to convert all the mosques into churches, and to make sure that the Muslims no longer used them in the manner to which they had been accustomed. There were eager hands to seize the revenues of the mosques and other lands held in trust, but very few priests to lead the Church services.

Further attempts to indoctrinate the Moriscos were made later on in the sixteenth century, after thirty years' intensive persecution by the Spanish Inquisition had eliminated those who were strongest in maintaining their practice of Islam. It is recorded that in 1568 Juan de Ribera, Archbishop of Valencia, offered the priests more money to make work among the Moriscos more congenial. His example was followed by the Bishop of Segorbe. Juan de Ribera also set up a seminary for Morisco children who by this time had been so far removed from the full social nexus of Islam that they had little or no idea of the life which their Muslim forefathers had lived.

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Clearly the prolonged and extensive persecution of the surviving Moriscos of the North during the mid-sixteenth century did not take place without criticism and demands for its immediate cessation from some of the Christians. The noble landowners especially continued to raise their voices in protest as their income was correspondingly lowered. It would appear that on the whole the aristocracy only defended the Moriscos when it suited their own, mainly financial, interests. Their position was clearly outlined in a letter written by an inquisitor in Zaragoza to the Supreme Council in Madrid in 1553:

Since the lords have no other more appreciable incomes on which they can live and maintain their houses and estates, they deeply regret that the Inquisition punishes the vassals; whence many unjust complaints against the Holy Office and against those who are in it.<sup>10</sup>

Among the more important protests made against the Spanish Inquisition during the sixteenth century was the long memorial drawn up on 5th August 1533 and read to Charles at the Aragonese Cortes held at Morizon:

The sixteen articles of the protest included complaints that 'some inquisitors of the Holy Office, in the voice and name of the Inquisition, have arrested and imprisoned people for private offence in no way touching the Holy Office'; that they had extended their jurisdiction illegitimately by prosecuting cases of sodomy, usury and bigamy, questions which had nothing to do with heresy; that the inquisitors of Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia had an excessive number of familiars, whose identity was kept concealed, thus provoking numerous abuses. As for the Moors, said the protest, addressing itself to the Inquisitor General, 'Your Reverence knows well the way in which they were "converted", and the little or no teaching or instruction in our Holy Catholic Faith which has been given them, and the lack of churches in the places where they live. Yet despite this lack of teaching and instruction, they are being proceeded against as heretics.' Worse still, the Inquisition was illegitimately seizing the land they had confiscated from the Moorish converts. To all these complaints Alonso Manrique, the Inquisitor General, gave a firm, negative reply. The protests were shelved.<sup>11</sup>

Any of the nobles who dared make any further protest, and



many of them kept silent for fear of being charged with impeding the Inquisition and arrested as fautors of heresy, were given the usual reply that the aim and purpose of the Inquisition was not the injury but the salvation of the Muslims. If the torture and burning alive of 'obstinate heretics' helped others to accept the Official Religion, then these methods were justified since these new concerns were of far greater importance, it was argued, than the financial anxieties of the landowners.

Any landowner who persisted in opposing the Inquisition faced certain persecution himself:

The fact that the tribunal acted against nobles only when they tried to protect their vassals against the Holy Office...The most famous case is that of Sancho de Córdoba, Admiral of Aragon, who was made to abjure his errors, fined two thousand ducats, and confined by the Inquisition, for protecting Moriscos against the tribunal.<sup>12</sup>

The fact that the Spanish Inquisition could punish such an influential noble solely because of his 'excessive tolerance' towards his Morisco labourers for whom he had attempted to have a mosque rebuilt in 1569, clearly indicates the strength and influence of the Inquisitors at this time. Whereas at the beginning of the sixteenth century they had little or no access to the slave labour of the landowners, they now had complete and unimpeded jurisdiction not only over the labourers but also the landowners themselves.

Throughout the sixteenth century the Spanish Inquisition harried the surviving Muslims of in the north of what had been Muslim Andalusia. Whereas in the fifteenth century it had concentrated its efforts in all the major towns and cities, it now directed its attention towards eliminating those Muslims who had regrouped in the rural areas, and especially towards eradicating the last surviving pockets of Islam which still existed in the more remote parts of the countryside.

The effects of the Edicts of Faith on the rural communities of the Moriscos in the north were as shattering as the persecution which had taken place around Granada in the south, under the

leadership of Ximénes. The fear, suspicion, and anger which sprang from the denunciations induced by the methods of the Inquisitors, split these communities in the same way as they had divided the Muslims who had once lived in the towns and cities. Muslims were compelled to denounce their friends and relations as secret heretics. Torture was used to persuade children to accuse their parents, and parents to accuse their children. It is recorded that one person alone gave evidence against 4000 secret Muslims. They were all killed.

It is impossible to delineate all the activities of the Spanish Inquisition which followed the mass baptism of the Moriscos of northern Andalusia in the sixteenth century. Lea describes a "very pathetic case"<sup>12</sup> of thirty-two people in one village who accepted baptism. They were the wives and daughters of Muslims who had been burnt alive. They were ordered to condemn their dead husbands and fathers as 'heretics'. Failure to do so would have meant that they too would be burnt alive. It is impossible to catalogue all these events, not only because they were so numerous, but also because the 'official' historians have chosen not to detail them. Furthermore it is impossible to relate the disruption in the lives of those Muslims who were still alive and the strain under which they lived. This can only be imagined, for they were prevented from the open performance of far more than the five pillars of Islam:

These were well-defined religious ceremonies admitting of no explanation, but there were numerous others, innocent in themselves, which implied suspicion of heresy, and suspicion was in itself a crime. Under skilful management, including the free use of torture, arrest for these simple observances might lead to further confessions, and the opportunity was not to be lost. Abstinence from pork and wine was amply sufficient to justify prosecution, and we hear of cases in which staining the nails with henna, refusal to eat of animals dying a natural death, killing fowls by decollation, the zambras and leilas, or songs and dances used at merry-makings and nuptials, and even cleanliness, were

gravely adduced as evidence of apostasy.

In pursuance of this policy, elaborate lists of all Moorish customs were made out for the guidance of Inquisitors; abstracts of these were included in the Edicts of Faith, where everyone who had seen or heard of such things were required under pain of excommunication to denounce them; the Moriscos were subjected to perpetual espionage, and any unguarded utterance, which might be construed as inferring heretical learning was liable to be reported and to lead to arrest and probable punishment. It is true that from these slender indications the inquisitorial process frequently led up to full confession, but this did not render the position of the Moriscos less intolerable, and constraint and anxiety contributed largely to intensify his detestation of the religion which he knew only as the cause of persecution.<sup>14</sup>

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XVIII

- (1) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 69, H.C. Lea.
- (2) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 155, H. Kamen.
- (3) *Ibid*, p. 163.
- (4) *Ibid*, p. 108.
- (5) *Ibid*, p. 110.
- (6) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 110, H.C. Lea.
- (7) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 107, H. Kamen.
- (8) *Ibid*.
- (9) *Ibid*, p. 110.
- (10) *The Structure of Spanish History*, p. 94, Castro.
- (11) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 654, H. Kamen.
- (12) *Ibid*, p. III.
- (13) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 61, H.C. Lea.
- (14) *The Inquisition of Spain*, VIII, p. 329, H.C. Lea.

## CHAPTER XIX

## THE MORISCOS OF SOUTHERN ANDALUSIA

The fate of the Moriscos in the South was no different to that of the Moriscos in the North. Their mass baptism which had been organized by Ximénes in the first years of the sixteenth century was completed well before the mass baptism of the Mudéjares in the North, and if anything the subsequent persecution by the Spanish Inquisition was more severe in the South than in the North. The Muslims of Granada had not been finally subjugated until the beginning of the sixteenth century, and despite the mass baptisms, their spirit was still alive and relatively untamed. In 1526, therefore, the Inquisition of Jaen transferred its residence to Granada, and increased the pressure on its inhabitants to abandon Islam. As well as employing its customary methods, it passed an edict forbidding the Moriscos to use the Arabic language and even to use their Muslim names. For the majority of Moriscos this meant the imposition of silence whenever they were in the presence of a Catholic Christian, for Arabic was the only language they knew. They were also forbidden to wear Muslim dress:

...tailors were not make garments nor silver-smiths jewels after their fashion; their baths were prohibited; all births were to be watched by Christian midwives to see that no Moorish rites were performed; disarmament was to be enforced by a rigid inspection of licences; their doors were to be kept open on feast-days, Fridays, Saturdays, and during weddings, to see that Moorish rites were abandoned and Christian ones observed; schools for the education of children in Castilian were to be established in Granada, Guadix and Almeria; no Moorish names were to be used and they were not to keep *gacis* or unbaptised Moors either free or as slaves.<sup>1</sup>

The provisions of the Edict prohibited virtually every aspect

of Islam in a Muslim's life from birth to death.

No Morisco woman was allowed to act as a midwife. A Christian midwife was posted in every Morisco village. She supervised all the pregnant women and as soon as a baby was born, the priest was called and the baby was baptised. There was thus no opportunity to call the adhan (call to prayer) into the child's ear at the time of birth, and if the baby was a boy, he could not be circumcised, nor could a ram be sacrificed in thanksgiving. The most that the Moriscos could do under the circumstances was to bathe the baby where the priest had touched it, in an attempt to 'undo' the baptism.

It was also impossible to wash and bury the dead in accordance with Islam. Anyone who wrapped a dead person in a clean cloth before burial was immediately regarded as a relapsed heretic and punished as such. Similarly it was not possible to perform the funeral prayer or to recite Qur'an at a dead person's grave. To begin with the Moriscos were allowed to have their own graveyards, but restrictions were subsequently placed on them. It was permitted:

...that cemeteries could be established near the churches changed from mosques, but Old Christians were not to be debarred from burial there if they wished. This partially satisfied them and it continued until 1591 when it was ordered that they should be buried inside of the churches, which was so abhorrent to them that they vainly offered more than thirty thousand ducats if king or pope would allow them to be interred elsewhere, even though in dunghills.<sup>2</sup>

Between birth and death the Muslims faced continual persecution, and in the process the family structure was severely affected.

Not only were Moriscos prohibited from marrying according to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* but also they were prevented from having more than one wife. These provisions struck at the heart of both existing and proposed marriages. Any Morisco having more than one wife was not only prosecuted for bigamy, but also punished for adhering to a 'heretical practice'. Further-

more his children were stigmatized as being illegitimate. Marriage between first cousins which is permitted in Islam was prohibited by the Catholic Church. It was possible, however, to buy a dispensation from the Pope to make such a marriage lawful. This was a great source of income for the Holy See where the marriages between rich Christians were concerned, but the majority of Moriscos were poor, and the only reason for applying for such a dispensation was in order to avoid such marriages being interpreted as a sign of heresy.

Although the family structure was therefore considerably limited, far more important was the fact that the way in which the Moriscos brought up their children was drastically altered. What Kamen writes of the Jews in Spain applies equally to the Muslims:

Native Judaism decayed swiftly and within a generation whole communities had become Catholic in practice, remaining Jewish only insofar as they revered the history of their fathers.<sup>3</sup>

Since the Muslims were severely restricted in their practice of Islam even within their own homes, the pattern of behaviour which a child learns from its parents from a very early age by sheer imitation, was utterly changed. The children never saw their parents doing the ritual washing and then the prayer as a part of their daily life. They never heard the call to prayer five times a day, nor listened to the recitation of the Qur'an. The parents could not even afford to say 'Allah' in the presence of their young children. The children had to be kept ignorant of Islam at least up to the age of reason, for fear that a childish indiscretion might betray the whole family.

This necessary dissimulation meant that most of the Morisco children were brought up to behave like Christians. When these children grew up, they might learn about Islam in secret, but when they themselves became parents they had less experiential knowledge of Islam to pass on to their children, and more knowledge of the ways of the Catholics to transmit, no matter how much contempt they had for the Christians themselves. By the time this process had passed through several generations in

a family, not only would their knowledge of Islam have been severely limited, but also any understanding of the behaviour which such knowledge entails. To anyone not actually performing the five pillars of Islam and embodying the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, their experiential meaning would be nil. Many of the secret Muslims were left with a silent affirmation of '*La ilaha illa'llah, Muhammadun rasulu'llah*' in their hearts, but outwardly their life-style was not that of a Muslim, and they were correspondingly robbed of knowing experientially the meaning of what they secretly believed.

It was not only the structure of the Muslim family which suffered but also, as a consequence, the everyday life of the community. Social intercourse was limited, especially by the knowledge that there were 'familiar' present whose identity was not always known. It was their job to spy on the Moriscos and to reveal anyone who betrayed any sign of being a relapsed heretic. The Moriscos were not allowed to lock their doors, and the familiar would make spot checks, especially at the times of the prayer, to make sure no-one was behaving like a Muslim. Any Morisco found working on a Christian feast-day or not attending mass was fined by the Catholic Church, and it was one of the familiar's jobs to report such breaches of the official religion.

The pivot of the Muslim's week, the *Jum'a*, the Day of Gathering, was eradicated, and anyone who was even found making the customary preparations for *Jum'a* such as having a bath, putting on clean clothes and perhaps some perfume was immediately denounced as a heretic. The focal point of the Moriscos' week was thus changed to that of the Christians, which was on a Sunday.

Similarly the pivot of the Muslim's year, the fast of Ramadan, was effectively proscribed. This fast, which is regarded as the cure for the whole year before it and which colours the whole year following it, had been a time of coming together within the Muslim communities. Its abolition by the Christians only served to engender fragmentation where once there had been union. Furthermore the payment of *zakat*, the yearly payment by each Muslim of two and a half percent of his savings into a central fund which is then redistributed throughout the community, was brought to a halt. Thus the Muslim system of economics, which can only properly function when every indi-

vidual in the community pays his *zakat*, was obliterated in Spain.

Instead the Moriscos were obliged to pay heavy taxes to their Christian overlords, which usually amounted to a third of their annual income. This was in addition to the ground rents which had to be paid to the Spanish Inquisition which had seized the property of the Muslims in the first place:

Padre Fonseca says that they paid the tithes and first-fruits to the church, but only in consequence of the great pressure and diligence employed by the rectors, and he adds that it often happened that when the harvest came to be divided - one half or one-third to the lord according to the custom of the place, so much for the tithe and first-fruits and so much for the balance of old indebtedness, which they always had, the husbandman would return home with little or nothing of his crop. There was no compassion felt for this, he says, for it was generally deemed advisable to keep them impoverished and in subjection.<sup>4</sup>

The Muslims were thus reduced to the condition of the serfs who had once worked the land of Spain until they were released by the Muslims led by Tariq eight centuries before.

Finally the performance of *Hajj*, the pilgrimage to the House of Allah in Makka during which Muslims from all over the world meet and praise their Lord together, was made virtually impossible. The Moriscos of Spain were thus cut off from meeting their brothers from other parts of the world, and in this respect the effects of the persecution in Spain were felt by Muslims on the other side of the world.

The Moriscos of southern Spain, and equally of northern Spain in these aspects, suffered as a result of the persecution by the Catholic Church in every dimension of their existence, whether as an individual or within the family, or within the community. It is not always possible to appreciate this fact when reading about the elimination of Islam in the Iberian peninsula. The account of events and dates and decrees and details often only serves to cover over the nature of the human situation

which it purports to describe.

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The hardship caused by the Inquisition in southern Spain after the decree of 1526, was so great that the Moriscos entreated the King to ease their situation. After they had paid Charles V 80,000 ducats he agreed to suspend the edict, but this promise, like the ones he had made to the Moriscos in the North, was soon broken. Its breach was facilitated by the his departure from Spain in 1527 since in his absence there was no-one with whom the Moriscos could lodge an effective complaint. Charles V's famous invasion of Rome in the same year, which directly preceded his coronation as Emperor by the Pope, surpassed all previous conquests of that city in its brutality and inhumanity:

Churches, palaces and the houses of private persons were plundered without distinction. No age or character or sex was exempt from injury. Cardinals, nobles, priests, matrons, virgins were all the prey of soldiers and at the mercy of men deaf to the voice of humanity...Rome, though taken several times by the northern nations who overran the empire in the fifth and sixth centuries, was never treated with so much cruelty by the 'barbarous' and 'heathen' Huns, Vandals or Goths, as now by the bigoted subjects of a Catholic monarch.<sup>5</sup>

The example set by Charles V in the sack of Rome was followed by the Christians in Spain, and one after another the terms of the 1526 agreement which Charles had agreed to suspend were implemented in the virtually unabated persecution of the Moriscos of southern Spain. The Muslims were, however, permitted to retain their way of dress on payment of an annual tax. In 1563, this tax was still being paid, and it is recorded that the tax amounted to 20,000 ducats for that year.

The disarmament of the Muslims, which had been instituted by Ximenes during his mass baptism campaign in the kingdom

of Granada, was continued and Lea writes:

One of the sorest disabilities inflicted on the Moriscos was the deprivation of arms, for it was not only a humiliation, but it left them defenceless at a time when violence was constant and to an Old Christian the blood of the despised race was little more than that of a dog.<sup>6</sup>

The public concordia of 1528, which permitted all the Moriscos of Spain forty years to learn the ways of the official religion unmolested, included a pledge that all arms which had been seized would be returned, but this was never fulfilled.

As in the North, so in the South, the Spanish Inquisition interpreted the terms of the agreement to mean that they could punish all Moriscos who did not behave like Christians as relapsed heretics, and they continued their activities without pause. For the next forty years the Moriscos of the South were subjected to continuous espionage and the enforced performance of a practice at which they revolted. They were exposed to extortion, legal and illegal, by the 'familiares' specially appointed by the Church to keep a close watch on them and to fine them for any breaches of the official religion, and the threat of denunciation hung continually over the Muslims' heads:

In short they were defenceless and everyone, cleric and layman, pillaged them systematically.<sup>7</sup>

Those who refused to compromise died fighting. Those who outwardly affirmed Christianity, but who waited for the day when they could re-establish their way of life were humiliated and lived in fear. Those who accepted the official religion were in loss.

This wave of persecution culminated in an edict, based on the edict of 1526, which was passed in 1567 by Philip II shortly after the abdication of Charles V who, having had to accept the validity of the Protestant churches in some of his kingdoms, was faced with the old contradiction of persecuting one group of heretics while tolerating another, and, unable to resolve it, decid-

ed to abandon the affair altogether. The edict of 1567 was far more severe than its predecessor:

By this measure all the rites, customs, and language of the Moriscos were forbidden under penalty. Books in Arabic were destroyed and Moorish clothes were forbidden. The list of prohibitions amounted to the suppression of every national characteristic of the Moriscos.<sup>8</sup>

Even the last of the public baths, which the Muslims had built everywhere when they first came to Spain, were destroyed:

In 1567 a solemn ceremony took place and 'all the artificial baths' that were in Granada were destroyed. The people forgot the custom of washing themselves frequently, in Spain as in Europe, until well into the nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

The measures of the new edict were too much for the Muslims of Granada and in 1586 the second rebellion of the Alpujarras took place. The leader of the Muslims who gathered in these mountains was called Abu Humiya. He proclaimed,

We are no band of thieves, but a kingdom.<sup>10</sup>

This was the last heroic and desperate attempt made by the Muslims of Spain to win justice for their community. Some watched the inevitable outcome of the rebellion with sympathy. A Spanish ambassador wrote to a friend of his in France:

The Moriscos are in revolt, but it is the Old Christians who drive them to despair. These many years they have suffered injustice, murder, robbery and rapine: in one parish the Moriscos ask for their priest to be removed 'for all our children are being born with blue eyes like his.'<sup>11</sup>

The task of quelling the rebellion was assigned to a general

called Mondejar:

His object was to pacify the land as speedily as possible and while he granted letters of security to all places which submitted, he relaxed nothing in the vigour of his military operations; he ordered that no prisoners be taken and at the Guajaras, in revenge for a preliminary reverse, by his command there was a general massacre, without sparing age or sex.<sup>12</sup>

Mondejar's task was made easier by the fact that the Muslims led by Abu Humiya were not only hampered by their lack of arms which had been largely confiscated previously, but also by the intense cold of winter. Mondejar's campaign began in January and ended in February 1569, two months in the snows of winter. His methods used against the mountain villagers, on whom the Muslim guerillas depended for food and shelter were ruthless:

Perhaps the most signal instance of submission concerns an incident too characteristic to be omitted. At the capture of Jubiles, January 18th, the non-combatants, who had taken refuge in the castle, surrendered to the number of 300 men and 2100 women. They were brought down to the town and the women were placed for safety in the church, but, as it held only about one-half, the rest bivouacked in the gardens with guards around them. During the night a soldier tried to carry off a girl; a young Morisco in female dress defended her with a dagger and wounded a soldier, others crowded in with the result that in a wild tumult all the prisoners were butchered save those in the church, who were saved only by barricading the doors.

The survivors were kept in captivity, and:

When the district was pacified he demanded them, and their husbands and fathers unresistingly delivered them up to be sold into slavery. There could, as he says, be no greater proof of obedience than bringing their wives and children from the furthest points of the Alpujarras to such a fate.<sup>13</sup>

The forces under Mondejar's command were divided into several groups. Those who were not under his direct supervision were far more undisciplined and unruly. They plundered as they felt like, and even the villages, which had already surrendered and been given written safeguards by Mondejar, were not safe:

Even worse was what occurred at Valor el bajo, where Aben Humaya was reported to be concealed. Mondejar sent a force there under Alvaro Flores and Antonio de Avila with orders to require his surrender and to summon those who had harboured him to appear for trial. When the troops reached the village, the chief men came out, exhibited their safeguard and asked what was required of them, for they would obey. In reply the Spaniards fell upon them, killing about two hundred - in fact all who did not escape to the mountains while the troops were pillaging and gathering in the women and children. The men organized and came down: they asked whether Mondejar had been given orders to sack the place, for if so they would submit, but as no such orders could be shown they attacked the soldiers encumbered with spoils, routed them, killed Antonio de Avila, recovered their women, and gained a quantity of arms.<sup>14</sup>

Within two months Mondejar pacified the Moriscos of the Alpujarras, and the last rebellion of the Moriscos of Spain was crushed. The persecution of the Moriscos of Andalucía, however, continued. Mondejar was relieved of his command of the army,

and Don Juan of Austria, the king's half-brother, became its leader.

Don Juan was given the task of eliminating the majority of the Morisco men so that any chance of another rebellion in the future was completely ruled out. The army under his command went from village to village in the former kingdom of Granada, killing and raping wherever it went. Perhaps Don Juan's biggest undertaking was the expulsion of the Moriscos from the Albaycin, the part of the city of Granada into which the Moriscos had been segregated. The men were herded together, their hands were tied and they were marched out of the city. The women who were not retained as slaves followed in their footsteps:

The number of men thus deported was 3,500, that of the women considerably greater. Even the chroniclers are moved to pity in describing the misery and despair of the unfortunate thus torn from their homes, forced without warning to leave everything behind him and hurried off to the unknown. Many died on the road of grief, of weariness, of hunger, or were slain by those set to protect them, or were robbed and sold as slaves.<sup>15</sup>

With the expulsion of the Moriscos from Granada, it became clear that the Catholic Church would not rest until there was no longer a Morisco who could hold his head up. The surviving Morisco men of Spain were thus forced to fight to the death or to live in utter humiliation. Many chose the first alternative, and Don Juan's army turned on them wherever they regrouped. What had begun as the quelling of a rebellion was now declared to be a '*guerra à feugo y à sangre*', war by fire and blood.

The Moriscos sent repeated requests for help from the Muslims in North Africa, but these were not responded to on a national scale. No assistance was organized by the rulers of the country. Only those who wished to go to the Moriscos' aid made their way over to southern Spain, and their numbers were not sufficient enough to be of any practical use. In the meantime Don Juan's army continued to ravage the countryside, and the Moriscos were systematically massacred:

The war was carried on with vigour, though with the same rapacity and brutality. At the storming of Galera, Don Juan gave no quarter to the men and had four hundred women and children butchered in cold blood because their captors endeavoured to secure them for themselves, while forty-five hundred others were preserved as slaves.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, the war ended in 1571, literally because there was hardly anyone left to kill. Marauding bands of soldiers roamed the countryside, searching out the last Moriscos who had any fight left in them. The price they received for each dead Morisco was 20 ducats. The whole area surrounding Granada was thus completely depopulated of Moriscos, and many Christians subsequently migrated there to take over the empty dwellings and untended fields. It is estimated that 60,000 Moriscos were killed during the mass elimination of Muslims in Andalusia between 1567 and 1571, at a cost of 3,000,000 ducats. The last rebellion of the Moriscos in Spain was undeniably crushed.



## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XIX

- (1) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 215, H.C. Lea.
- (2) *Ibid*, p. 202.
- (3) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 215, H. Kamen.
- (4) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 186, H.C. Lea
- (5) *Charles V, II*, p. 333, W. Roberts.
- (6) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 190, H.C. Lea.
- (7) *Ibid*, p. 186.
- (8) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 109, H. Kamen.
- (9) *The Structure of Spanish History*, p. 108, A. Castro.
- (10) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 103, H. Kamen.
- (11) *Ibid*, p. 108.
- (12) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 242, H.C. Lea.
- (13) *Ibid*, p. 243.
- (14) *Ibid*, p. 245.
- (15) *Ibid*, p. 251.
- (16) *Ibid*, p. 255.

## CHAPTER XX

## THE LAST OF THE MORISCOS IN SPAIN

The Moriscos who had been compelled to flee from the former kingdom of Granada were hounded and persecuted wherever they went:

The fate of the exiles was hard. Leonardo Donato, tells us, as an eyewitness, that many perished through miseries and affliction, which can readily be believed...an elaborate edict of October 6, 1572, in twenty-three sections, prescribed the regulations under which they were permitted to exist. They were to be kept under perpetual surveillance. Every individual was to be registered in his place of domicile.<sup>1</sup>

Since any Morisco who had formerly lived in or around Granada was regarded as a potential troublemaker, their movements were severely restricted. Under the terms of the edict, they had to report to the Christian authorities virtually every day. If any Morisco went missing for more than a day his family were immediately questioned as to his whereabouts. They were not allowed to live together in communities, and if they were found gathering together, they were separated. They were forbidden either to write or to speak in Arabic, and the penalties for doing this were severe: thirty days prison in chains for the first offence, double the sentence for the second offence, and for the third offence men were given a hundred lashes and four years in the galleys while women and youths under seventeen were given four years in prison. These fierce penalties must have soon eliminated those surviving Moriscos who knew only Arabic.

In order to prevent their influence from disturbing the Moriscos in the North, who by now were considerably tamed, their movements in the north were severely curtailed, whilst any attempt to return from whence they had come was effectively prevented:

Access to Granada was sternly prohibited; any Morisco found within ten leagues of the Granada border was to suffer death if a male over the age of 16; between that and ten and a half, and all females over nine and a half were to be enslaved, while younger children were to be given to Old Christians to be brought up until they reached the age of twenty. If found within ten leagues of Valencia, Aragon or Navarre the penalties were the same, except that death was commuted to service for life in the galleys.<sup>2</sup>

The last of the Moriscos from Spain were therefore only allowed to live in those parts of Spain where there was no possibility of them causing any trouble to the Catholic Christians, and there is no doubt that the measures of the 1572 edict were at least successful in crushing and containing any possible source of further rebellion:

If anything could obviate the dangers always apprehended from the Moriscos, such a system would effect it, but it was not calculated to merge them with the population or diminish their abhorrence of Christianity.<sup>3</sup>

\*                    \*                    \*

The Moriscos who remained in the northern parts had had their numbers considerably diminished by the unimpeded activities of the Spanish Inquisition during the mid-sixteenth century, and by the end of the sixteenth century the outward practice of Islam in Spain was virtually non-existent. After three centuries of continuous persecution the Muslims who had refused to compromise their Islam were long gone. They had either emigrated to other lands or died fighting. When the relatively small number of Moriscos in Spain at this time is compared with the original population of Muslims who inhabited Andalusia in the thirteenth century, it becomes clear just how many Muslims had died. However, those who remained retained as much of the

Muslim way of life as was possible under the circumstances, and it is not known how much more they were able to practise in secrecy:

A Dutch archer of Philip II, who accompanied the king in his journey to the Cortes of Morizon in 1585, affords us a contemporary glimpse of the Moriscos of the time. On crossing the Aragon border he observes that the population of the lands of the nobles is almost exclusively Moorish while that of the royal towns is Old Christian. The Moors, he says, are with difficulty brought to live in the latter. The town of Muel, the seat of a flourishing industry of Hispano-Moresque lustreware, belonged to the Marquis of Camarasa and was populous with New Christians, who had maintained their laws since they conquered the land. They would not taste pork or wine, and he saw that, on the departure of the royal train, they broke all the glassware and pottery that had been used for the obnoxious food and drink. There were about two hundred households and only three Old Christians - the priest, the notary and the inn-keeper - while all the rest would rather make a pilgrimage to Mecca than to Compostela. The church was naturally little visited, as it was closed except on Sundays and feast-days, when the New Christians were forced to hear mass.<sup>4</sup>

The Moriscos of the northern regions had thus developed into a distinct minority group within the general population of Spain, who were neither one thing nor the other. Settled on the land, they worked for the Catholic nobles, and although they lived together in communities of '*aljamas*' as their compounds were called, they could not follow the way of Islam openly and in its full social nexus. On the other hand, the majority of them could not bring themselves to follow the official religion, other than performing those actions which were necessary to avoid

persecution by the Inquisition, but which were otherwise empty of all meaning. This was belied by the fact that although the Church had done its utmost to impose the official religion on the Moriscos, at the same time its members were quite convinced that the Moriscos were all 'heretics' and incapable of becoming Christians. It was for this reason that it was never made existentially possible for the Moriscos to join the Catholic Christian community as such. Not only had they been deprived of their property in the towns and cities, and been prevented from working as their own masters, but also, on account of the racist ideology of '*limpieza de sangre*', or purity of blood, these descendants of the former Muslims could neither intermarry with the Old Christians nor take any public work.

The last of the Moriscos of Spain were openly despised and ill-treated by the Catholics. They were only tolerated because of their utility as the slave labour of Spain. The continued existence of the Muslims in Spain had only ever been viewed in terms of their economic worth, and the casuistry employed in referring to 'converting' them and 'receiving' them into 'the bosom of the Church' had only ever been a pretext to bring them within the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisition, so that those who resisted bondage and continued to openly affirm their Islam could be legally killed off. It is not surprising that under such circumstances the Moriscos had become a clearly definable section of the population in Spain both racially and culturally, and that they had come to despise their masters as much as their masters despised them.

A general view of the Moriscos at the end of the sixteenth century, which moreover expresses the popular prejudices against them, is to be found in Archbishop Ribera's second memorial:

The Moriscos, he says, are of two classes. One is free from vassalage to lords, such as all those expelled from Granada, although they may have settled on feudal lands, and those who are scattered in various places of Castile such as Avila, Olmeda and many others. The other class are born vassals of lords, such as those of Aragon and Valencia. The first live among

Christians, and for the most part speak our language and use our dress and bear bear arms, but are as thoroughly Moors as those of Valencia, with greater opportunities to live as such, for, as they have not public *aljamas* nor live apart, they are not watched by their priests, which is no small reproach to the latter and their bishops. The latter dwell in communities, having their *aljamas* and a superintendent. The former bear arms and many of them being muleteers they maintain communication with the others throughout Spain. In the army they serve as spies. They are avaricious and economical, and are the sponge of the wealth of Spain; there is no doubt that they possess most of the gold and silver, for though there is great scarcity of money they are rich, although they pay heavy tribute and give their lords one third of what they produce and their lords exact from them not only the ordinary rents and services but many gifts and loans. Wherever they go they reduce the people to poverty. He had seen in Andalusia how the competition of those driven from Granada had reduced the number of Old Christians. They are hard-working and thrifty, and spending little on food or drink and clothing, they work for what would not support an Old Christian, so they are preferred by purchasers and employers; they monopolize the mechanic arts and commerce as well as working by day's labour. As they do not buy bread or meat or wine the excise for the king and for local needs which is mostly levied on these articles, falls more heavily on the Old Christians. Thus we are peopling our country with heretics and destroying the faithful.<sup>5</sup>

The prejudices of Archbishop Ribera were shared by several other contemporary writers of the period, and without exception they criticize the Moriscos for working so hard for so little pay:

This indictment of underselling and cheapening labour indicates one of the grievances which stimulated popular enmity. The Venetian envoy, in 1595, describes the Moriscos as constantly increasing in numbers and wealth; they never go to war but devote themselves exclusively to trade and gain. Bleda, it is true, argues that if they worked or sold cheaper than Old Christians they at least raised families and spent money and thus were far less injurious than the foreigners who brought gewgaws to Spain and carried the money away, thus impoverishing the land. Cervantes, on the other hand, gave utterance to the popular feeling in his *Colloquio de los perros*: the Moriscos multiply, they all marry, they never put their children into religion or the army, they pay nothing for teaching them, for all their science is to rob us. They spend little and hoard what they gain, so that they now have most of the money in Spain; it is a slow fever which kills as certainly as a raging one.<sup>6</sup>

It is ironical that, in their attempts to transform the Muslims of Spain from people who worshipped and bowed before their Creator, to willing producers of goods and mere economic units robbed of all humanity, the Catholic Christians should despise most those who were most affected by this policy. The last of the Moriscos of Spain were hated for living in a manner which the tireless persecution of the Christians had forced them to adopt:

It was not alone religious hatred, but the fact that the Spaniards were to a great extent consumers and the Moriscos were producers. The Spaniard sought a career in the Church or the army or the service of the state; he despised those on whose labor he lived, he grudged them the earnings of toil and thrift; to them he attributed the gradual depauperization which was the result of his own false view of life and

mistaken policy, and he was eager to find some excuse for stripping them of their accumulations and reducing them to a greater depth of poverty.<sup>7</sup>

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XX

(308) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 265, H.C. Lea.

(309) *Ibid*, p. 266.

(310) *Ibid*, p. 267.

(311) *Ibid*, p. 207.

(312) *Ibid*, p. 208.

(313) *Ibid*.

(314) *Ibid*, p. 211.

## CHAPTER XXI

## THE END OF THE MORISCOS IN SPAIN

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, Spain was in an impossible situation. It had become clear by this stage that there was no way by which the Moriscos could be converted into obedient and willing Christians. The Catholic Church had robbed the Muslims of their open practice of Islam, but it could not convince them of the validity of the official religion. The result of three hundred years of continual persecution was a bitter antagonism between the old Christians and the Moriscos. The Moriscos distrusted and hated the institution of the Catholic Church whose members had been responsible for the successive breaches of all the treaties made between the Muslims and the Christians. The Christians despised the Moriscos and regarded them as obstinate heretics and avaricious second-class citizens who deserved all the ill-treatment that they suffered, and who were not entitled to protection by the law.

The country was plagued with ignorance and fear and superstition. Anything that went wrong was blamed on the Moriscos, and rumours became common that Moriscos became cooks to poison their masters, and Moriscos killed Christians in order to drink their blood. The Moriscos for their part were still being harried by the Inquisition and this could only increase their hatred for their masters:

At any moment the treachery or trial of one might involve a whole community. In 1606, a girl of nineteen named Maria Pez, daughter of Diego Paez Limpati, brought desolation on the Moriscos of Almagro by accusing her parents, sisters, uncles, cousins, kindred and friends. Incriminations of course spread. The girl's father was burned as an impenitent because he would not confess; her mother, who confessed, was reconciled and condemned to imprisonment for life and in all twenty-five Moriscos of Almagro suffered, of whom four were relaxed to the secular arm. As confiscation accompanied

the sentence in every case the Inquisition probably gathered a fairly abundant harvest. The Moorish communities were constantly subject to devastation of this kind.<sup>1</sup>

The ill-feeling between the Christians and the Moriscos had reached such depths that Philip I was obliged to seriously consider what should be done about the Moriscos. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century they had grown rapidly in number, and although they were no longer to be seen outwardly practising Islam, another revolt seemed possible if not probable. It was evident that the violent methods used by the Spanish Inquisition had failed to secure more than an outward show of conformity on the part of the Moriscos who were not killed. It seemed that the only remedy lay in bringing them to their knees by the use of further force, and the more reasonable proposals which a few lone voices had made in the past were clearly out of the question. When they were again suggested to the king, they were rejected, for they were none other than a partial recognition of the way of Islam.

The first of these proposals had been that the Moriscos be forced to intermarry with the Old Christians until they had been absorbed into the general population of Spain. Such intermarriage, which had happened freely and spontaneously when the Muslims first came to Spain, was however dismissed out of hand. It was not only illegal by the law of the country, but was also completely contrary to the doctrine of '*limpieza de sangre*', or purity of blood, which was indelibly placed within the hearts of many of the Catholic Christians of this age.

The second proposal was even more liberal and therefore even more vehemently rejected. It was suggested that the Moriscos be allowed to live as they please, and to practise Islam if they wished. They could then be attracted to the official religion by kindness and so converted to Roman Catholicism voluntarily. Furthermore, the Pope would not permit it, since it would be tantamount to the recognition of the freedom of conscience forbidden by the canons of the Church. Such a notion was a 'Protestant heresy' and totally unacceptable to the Roman Catholic Church. Furthermore, according to the Pope, the official baptism was an indissoluble marriage of the soul with God. It

had been decided in the Council of Trent in 1565 that all children of baptised parents must be baptised at birth, and must be coerced with penalties where necessary to lead a Christian life. The Moriscos were the newly baptised children of the Catholic Church, it was argued, and it was therefore the responsibility of the Church, as a kindly mother, not to neglect them or to part willingly with any of her children. Besides which, if the Moriscos were allowed to openly live in the way of Islam, many Christians might be 'seduced' into joining them, thus laying the official religion open to doubt.

The other proposals put before Philip II were, in keeping with the traditions established by the Church, far more violent. They were coloured not only by fear of revolt within Spain, but also by the possibility of armed invasion from without. In 1580 at Seville a Morisco conspiracy abetting invasion from Morocco had been discovered, and the Muslims in Turkey were constantly making fresh conquests:

The constant threat from Turkish expansion, and the repeated descents made on Spanish coasts by marauders, made official tolerance of the Moriscos even less likely. In 1579 in Andalusia and in 1586 in Valencia, Moriscos were forbidden to live near the sea coasts because of the easy routes available for escape as well as for invasion.<sup>2</sup>

These fears of invasion from without were increased after the defeat of the Spanish Armada by the British in 1588, a victory which left Spain virtually unable to repulse an invasion by sea. The possibility of a Muslim reconquest of Andalusia seemed ever more likely, and it was in the light of these circumstances that the following suggestions were made:

Firstly that all the Morisco children should be separated from their parents and distributed amongst the Old Christians. This was rejected since it had been tried in the past without great success, besides which there were now 40,000 Morisco babies being born every year, a number too large to distribute. Furthermore a measure like this might provoke rebellion.

Secondly that the Morisco children should be all forced to

attend Christian schools, so that even if their parents could not be programmed with the official religion, at least their children would. This suggestion however was also rejected as being impractical, since there were no existing schools for Morisco children.

Thirdly it was suggested that the proposal made by the Duke of Alva in 1581 of loading all the Moriscos into ships and then throwing them into the deep sea, should be reconsidered. This proposal together with that of Martin de Salvatierra, bishop of Segorbe, who in 1587 suggested that all the Moriscos should be expelled like the Jews before them, was at first rejected due to pressure from the Moriscos' noble overlords.

The proposal of expulsion, however, gained increasing support, especially from the Catholic Church, and in 1590, it was again seriously suggested that the king should proceed against all the Moriscos without exception, and without sparing the life of a single one. They should either be killed, perpetually exiled, or put in the galleys for life. Archbishop Ribera suggested enslaving all the males and sending them to work in the mines of the Indies. The children of the Moriscos should be retained and as they came or working age, they should be sent there to provide additional labour. He calculated that 4000 or more youths would be sent to the Indies each year if his proposal was adopted.

That these proposals were made in all seriousness is made clear by the Edicts of 1591 and 1593 which called for the surrender of all remaining arms in the Moriscos' possession, a necessary preparation for any act of genocide or mass expulsion:

Two inquisitors traversed the land and collected 7076 swords, 3783 arquebuses, 489 crossbows, 1356 pikes, lances and halberds and large numbers of other weapons. Knives were permitted, but these increased in size until they became formidable; after two or three officials of the Inquisition had been killed with them when making arrests, a royal edict of 1603 limited them to be pointless. The result of these precautions was seen when the edict of expulsion was enforced and the desperate wretches who

essayed a hopeless resistance were slaughtered.<sup>3</sup>

Preparation for the expulsion and genocide of the Moriscos was thus completed, and all that was needed was the public sanction of the Catholic Church.

Ferocious and inhuman as these projects were, they troubled no-one's conscience. There were plenty of learned theologians who were willing to certify that all these proposals for the final elimination of the Muslims of Spain were well within the limits of canonical law. By virtue of their baptism, they argued, the Moriscos were Christians. By virtue of their private actions and what they secretly believed, they were 'heretics' who had betrayed their baptism. Therefore they deserved to die. The very fact that they were permitted to remain alive was an excess of generosity and mercy. Their 'guilt' was so obvious, that neither formal proof nor trial were necessary to condemn them. A common sentence of death involving them all would be a service to God.

All the proposals which had been put forward as a means of solving the 'Morisco problem' were examined by the Sacred Congregation of Rites. Under Fray Bleda it was declared that there was nothing in them contrary to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. It produced 'irrefutable' ecclesiastical authorities which clearly showed that the king could order all the Moriscos in Spain to be sold as slaves or massacred in a day, if he so wished. Bleda himself favoured, and urged, massacre in preference to expulsion. His writings and views were universally approved of by the Church in Spain. All his printing expenses were paid for by the king.

Fray Bleda's arguments in favour of the Moriscos' massacre or mass expulsion were authoritatively examined by Pope Clement III, who pronounced them to be free from all error. The final sanction and approval of the Catholic Church for the final elimination of all remaining Muslims in Spain was thus clearly made. It came at a time when fear of another Muslim invasion was at its height:

A report in 1596 AD claimed that there were twenty thousand Moriscos in Andalucia and

Toledo with an income of over twenty thousand ducats a year. The old fear that native Moors might aid an invasion of Spain by Turkish forces now gained a hold on the popular mind.<sup>4</sup>

It was only the influence of the nobles and landowners which prevented the expulsion of the Muslims at this stage. Although the leaders of the Catholic Church wished to be rid of the Moriscos, the nobles stressed the economic crisis which would ensue if their wishes were fulfilled, and continued to emphasize the evils of expulsion, and cited:

...the poverty it would entail on the nobles, the churches, the monasteries, the gentry and citizens, whose wealth was invested in the rents charged upon the Morisco settlements, amounting to eleven millions of ducats, the diminution of the royal revenues for guarding the coasts, the desperation of the Moriscos leading to rebellion, and the enmity of the people to the nobles.<sup>5</sup>

The Church, however, as had been demonstrated in the mass baptisms of the Mudejares in northern Andalusia three-quarters of a century earlier, was more powerful than the nobles, and it was only a matter of time before its leaders had their way.

There was a brief respite in the debate while the kingship passed hands. Consumed by gout and strangled with asthma, King Philip II lay on his deathbed for nearly two months. He could hardly move, but was given enough life to render him conscious of his own suffering. He was covered with tumours and abscesses which, when they opened, continued to discharge until the stench in the death chamber could not be overcome by the strongest perfumes. Finally his reign of forty-two years ended and he died on 13th September 1598. The Muslims of Spain regarded his lingering death as a sign from God and a part of the retribution for all the wrongs which Philip II had perpetrated against them.

Philip III was made king, but at this stage he was no more than a figurehead. The Duke of Lerma, Marquis of Denia,

became the ruler of 1599, he expressed the opinion that all Moriscos between the ages of fifteen and sixty years deserved death. Men and women over sixty years of age should be shipped to Africa, while children under fifteen should be handed over to the Roman Catholic Church. Treatment of the Moriscos grew worse, but still nothing was to be done to implement these proposals on a national scale.

In 1602 a plot involving the Moriscos and Henry IV of France, who was not on good terms with Spain, was uncovered. Decrees were immediately passed giving the Moriscos a month to sell their property and leave the country. Death and confiscation of property were promised to all who remained. These decrees were not actually implemented throughout the country, but they caused much unrest, especially amongst the Muslims. In the years that followed the Moriscos were making repeated requests for help from the Muslims in Morocco. As a result of this, the movements of the Moriscos in Spain were even more severely limited by the decrees of 1608 which:

...reinforced the state of virtual serfdom in which most Moriscos lived, by forbidding any to change their domicile or lord or to move from one province to another, under pain of death.<sup>6</sup>

For another year the presence of the Moriscos was tolerated in Spain, but it was clear that the present state of affairs could not be maintained indefinitely. The tension throughout the country inexorably tightened until it reached breaking point. The decision to expel the last of the Muslims from Spain was taken.

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In early September 1609, what was left of the Spanish fleet were summoned to Valencia which contained half the Moriscos in the peninsula and therefore was potentially the most dangerous province. In all there were sixty-two galleys and fourteen galleons, carrying about eight thousand disciplined troops, which, with the land forces, formed an aggregate which indicated the magnitude of the undertaking and the dangers anticipated.



ed in the execution. By the 17th September they arrived at their several destinations at Alicante, Denia and the Alfaqués of Tortosa, and commenced landing the men. Possession was taken of the Sierra de Espadán and the frontiers were guarded to prevent the entrance of any Aragonese who might come to the Valencian Moriscos' aid in the event of any resistance to the expulsion.

On the 21st September, the lords and large landowners who were to help organize the expulsion of their vassals received their instructions from the king. In his letters to them he reminded them of the constant appeals for help made by the Moriscos to the Turkish Muslims, to Mulay Gidan, to the Protestants and to the other enemies of Spain, who had all promised to aid them. He pointed out the obvious danger of this together with the service they would render to God by ending the 'heresy and apostasy' of the Moriscos once and for all. He therefore announced that he had resolved to expel them all, and asked the nobles to co-operate with Mexia, the viceroy, who was in overall charge of the expulsion. Mexia, he said, would inform them what they would gain from the property of their vassals, and in addition he promised that he would in every way ensure that they were compensated for the losses caused to them by the expulsion.

On the 22nd September 1609, the edict of expulsion was published. It commenced with the customary recital of the 'treasonable correspondence' of the Moriscos with the enemies of Spain, and of the necessity of placating God, in other words the Pope, for their 'heresies', wherefore, in view of the failure of all efforts to convert them, the king had determined to send them all to Barbary.

That, in comparison with the measures of Ferdinand and Isabella and of Charles V, the conditions of the expulsion were less inhuman, reflects the consciousness of weakened power to overcome resistance. These conditions were that, under irremissible pain of death, within three days after the publication of the edict in the several towns and villages, all Moriscos of both sexes, with their children, should depart for embarkation at the ports designated to them by a commissioner. They could take what possessions they could carry on their backs. They would find vessels ready to convey them to Barbary, and would be fed on the voyage, but they must take what provisions they could.

During the three days all must remain in their places of residence, awaiting the orders of the commissioner, and after the three days anyone found wandering from his habitation could be robbed by the first comer and carried to the magistrates, or be killed in case of resistance. As will be seen this last provision was interpreted by many Christians as legal permission to rob and kill the departing Moriscos.

The edict also made provision for the lords and nobles whose work-force was to be so suddenly depleted. All real estate and all personal property which the Moriscos were unable to carry with them was to become the property of the lords. Anyone therefore who should hide or bury their possessions, or set fire to houses or harvests would be put to death together with all the inhabitants of the place. In order to preserve the houses, the sugar mills, the rice crop, and the irrigating canals, and to instruct the new Christian settlers in their use, six per cent of the Moriscos were to be allowed to remain, but these were to be only husbandmen, the oldest and those who had manifested the best tendency to become Christians.

There were specific provisions covering the children of the Moriscos. Children under four years of age desiring to remain could do so with the consent of their parents or guardians. Children under six, whose fathers were Old Christians, were to stay as well as their Morisco mothers. If the father was a Morisco and the mother an Old Christian, he was to go and children under six were to stay with the mother.

Those Moriscos, who for two years had lived among the Christians without ever visiting the *aljamas*, or compounds where most of the Morisco communities lived, and who had been willingly taking communion in Catholic churches, were permitted to remain in Spain. Hiding or sheltering fugitives was forbidden under pain of six years on the galleys, and all soldiers and Old Christians were strictly forbidden to insult or injure the Moriscos by word or deed. Furthermore and finally, in order to prove to the Moriscos that the transfer to Barbary was to be executed in good faith, after every instalment had been carried over ten Moriscos were to be allowed to return to report to those Moriscos still awaiting embarkation how satisfactory their treatment had been.

When the nobles heard that the decree of expulsion had

been passed, they lodged their protests, but these were of no avail in dislodging the influence of the Spanish Inquisition. The expulsion was the last stage in the creation of a closed society. As such, it was part of the process furthered inexorably by the Holy Office and by the machinery of Castilian government. Every stage of the 'Morisco problem' was controlled and directed by the Inquisition, whose concurrence by itself made the expulsion possible. Within Valencia it was the ecclesiastics who favoured the expulsion and the nobility who opposed it. Despite the provisions for their compensation in the 1609 decree, the nobles:

...went in their numbers to assure the king and the Duke of Lerma that Valencia would be utterly ruined if the Moriscos were expelled, since they were the ones who did all the work.<sup>7</sup>

The decision to expel the Moriscos had been made, however, and nothing could reverse it. On the 27th September 1609, Archbishop Ribera preached a sermon which was greatly praised at the time as having largely facilitated the acceptance of the decree by the Christians of Spain:

With considerable skill he justified the expulsion by scripture texts forbidding friendship and intercourse with the infidel and the heretic. He told his hearers that the Moriscos had offered to aid the Turk with 150,000 men, that the next spring would have seen the Turkish fleet upon their shores, and he drew an awful picture of the time when their brethren and children would have been slain and throughout Spain the name of Mahomet would have been venerated and that of Christ blasphemed. It was to prevent this that the king had employed a remedy which, besides being the only one, was so admirable, so divine, that it could not have been devised by human prudence without illumination from above, as an example for the whole world and the admiration of all who live and shall hereafter live. Who could exaggerate

the Christianity, the prudence, the magnanimity and the greatness of this work? The churches which had been filled with dragons and wild beasts, will be filled with angels and seraphim. All should humbly make confession, and he first of all, that he had lived for forty years in what they committed. Nor did he neglect to offer material consolation to the nobles and entry for the temporary diminution of their revenues until matters should settle themselves, assuring them that this would be fully made up by the greater certainty of their collections.<sup>8</sup>

Besides the nobles, the only other people who were initially opposed to the decree were the Moriscos themselves. At first their leaders attempted to have the decree annulled, but then suddenly and unexpectedly submitted to it:

It was agreed that resistance was hopeless and submission inevitable, the most potent argument being that after defeat their children would be taken and brought up as Christians, while prophecies were talked of which promised an unexpected blessing. It was consequently resolved that all should go, including the six per cent allowed to remain and anyone staying was held to be an apostate. This had such an effect that those who had been striving to be chosen in the six per cent and offering large sums to their lords now refused to stay, although promised whatever terms they chose to ask. The Duke of Gandía suffered especially from this; the cane-crop was the largest ever known; all the operatives in his sugar-mills were Moriscos, and no-one else knew the processes...The only inducement that would tempt them he could not meet, for they offered to stay if guaranteed the free exercise of their religion; he applied to the viceroy, but Ribera declared that this was a concession beyond the power of

either king or pope, for they were baptized.<sup>9</sup>

This example of double-think, the practice of holding two contradictory views simultaneously, was typical of the Catholic Church at this time. The Moriscos, who were technically Christians, were not allowed to embrace Islam openly because they had been irrevocably baptized and therefore were technically members of the Catholic Church until the day they died. However even those who behaved like Catholics could not remain because they were Moriscos. The official baptism was thus too strong to release the Moriscos from the official religion, and too weak to keep them within the Catholic Church. The Moriscos were doomed to expulsion by the Church because they were not accepted as Christians, nor were they allowed to live as Muslims.

Once the decree had been accepted by both nobles and the Moriscos, preparations for the Muslims' departure began in earnest. The Moriscos began selling as much as they could of their possessions for almost nothing. The whole country became a market. Horses, cattle, fowls, grain, sugar, honey, cloths, household effects and jewelry were sold at a fraction of their value and finally were given away. Many of the nobles complained about this, for under the terms of the decree, most of these articles were meant to comprise part of their compensation. The viceroy, therefore, issued a proclamation on October 1st, 1609, forbidding, under pain of nullity, the sale of all real property, animals, grains, oils, censos or debts, but this led to imminent danger of rebellion and was not enforced.

In a very short time the expulsion was under way, and although there was little or no resistance from the Moriscos, it did not take place as peacefully as the terms of the decree had guaranteed:

When once the shock was over of abandoning their possessions and leaving the homes of their ancestors, the prospect of reaching a land where they could openly enjoy the practice of their faith and be free from grinding oppression inspired many of them with intense eagerness to be off. They competed for places in the first

embarkation, and the commissioners had no trouble in marshalling them and conveying them to the designated ports in large companies. The troops marched out to meet them and escort them to the galleys, which was necessary to protect them from the robbers who flocked thither. Food was furnished to those who needed, the sick were tended, and strict orders were issued that no-one should injure them by word or act so that good reports might encourage those who were to follow. While thus all proper effort was made to smooth the path of the exiles it was impossible to restrain the savage greed of the Old Christians, who had been accustomed to regard the Morisco as a being entitled to no rights. They sallied forth in squads, robbing and often murdering all whom they encountered. Fonseca tells us that in going from Valencia to San Mateo he saw the roads full of dead Moriscos. To check this a royal edict was issued, September 26th, ordering that guards should be provided to keep the roads safe, at the cost of the towns and villages. This proved ineffectual and, on October 6th the viceroy reported to the king that the robberies and murders were continuing, giving rise to more anxiety than the deportation of the Moriscos.<sup>10</sup>

Since three days had passed since the publication of the edict, these thefts and murders were largely condoned by the authorities on account of the provision which stated that anyone found wandering from his habitation after these three days had elapsed could be robbed by the first comer and carried to the magistrates, or be killed in case of resistance. As the process of expulsion continued, the increasing number of thefts and murders of Moriscos along the wayside could only have further inflamed the hatred between Moriscos and the Christian.

About 15,000 Moriscos were shipped from Spain in the first three months after the decree. Once they were gone the possibility of organized resistance on a large scale by the Moriscos disap-

peared, and those who remained suffered increasing harassment as they waited for the ships to take them away. Some could not bear it. They revolted, despite their almost complete lack of arms, and fled into the mountains. Their rebellion was put down with the same brutal thoroughness characteristic of the past, and it followed almost the same pattern as that which occurred during the resistance to the mass baptisms of the Mudejares nearly a hundred years before. At one place in the Sierra del Aguar 3000 Moriscos died fighting. In the Muela de Cortes 9000 Moriscos surrendered after being given a promise of safe conduct. However 6000 of them were then butchered on the spot, and the 3000 survivors, mainly women and children, were then herded to the ports.

Throughout the expulsion, the children of the Moriscos were exposed to great hardship. From the outset considerable efforts were made to neutralize the permission finally given by the authorities for children to accompany their parents on the journey. Balaguer, Bishop of Orihuela, exerted himself throughout his bishopric to have them left, pledging himself to have them brought up as carefully as if they were his own, but the parents declared that they would rather dash out their brains than have them brought up as Christians. Many children, however, were forcibly taken from their parents:

Dona Isabel de Velasco, wife of the viceroy, set the example, and by the advice of the theologians employed her servants, who brought her several...she also sought out women about to be delivered and hid them so that the infants should be baptized. <sup>11</sup>

As the treatment of the Moriscos grew worse, and especially as a result of the massacre of those who resisted, many of the children were orphaned, and they were either sold or stolen, for autumn was approaching and food was becoming scarce:

When provisions ran out while in confinement awaiting embarkation they sometimes sold their children to escape starvation for all...The same thing occurred among those who rebelled in the

Sierra del Aguar, after they surrendered and were on their way to embark at Denia, when children were sold for a handful of figs or a little bread...In this disastrous attempt at resistance and that at Muela de Cortes the soldiers captured large numbers of children and sold them, both at home and abroad, for 8, 10, 12 and 15 ducats apiece. <sup>12</sup>

The treatment of those shipped from Spain was not any better, once the first large shipment of Moriscos had been delivered, thereby removing any likelihood of successful rebellion by the Moriscos. As the process of expulsion continued, they were exposed to increased deprivation and abuse:

The fate of the exiles was deplorable. Torn from their homes without time to prepare for the new and strange life before them, and stripped of most of their property, at the best the suffering was terrible, but man's inhumanity multiplied it tenfold. In whatever direction they turned they were exposed to spoliation or worse. While the voyage to Africa, in the royal ships, was doubtless safe enough, the masters of the private vessels which they chartered had no scruples in robbing and murdering them. Many who sailed were never accounted for as arriving; others were merely deprived of their valuables and forced to sign the letters which enabled the masters to claim the passage-money deposited. <sup>13</sup>

There were cases where the masters of these ships were punished for their crimes:

Fonseca relates that he witnessed in Barcelona, December 12, 1609, the execution of the captain and crew of a barque which had started from Valencia for Oran with seventy Moriscos. Falling in with a Neopolitan felucca, the united crews conspired to kill the passengers and

divided the spoils, amounting to 3,000 ducats. Under promise of pardon a dissatisfied sailor revealed the crime in Barcelona when not only the Spaniards were duly punished, but the Viceroy of Catalonia wrote to the Viceroy of Naples with details which enabled him to seize and execute the crew of the felucca. <sup>14</sup>

Such retribution was, however, an exception to the general rule, in an undertaking where the pickings were many and the victims generally despised. There were few eyewitnesses, other than the perpetrators of these crimes, and it is significant that the ten men who, according to the provisions of the decree of expulsion, were to return after each shipment to assure the remaining Moriscos of their satisfactory treatment on the voyage, never actually did so.

Once those who had survived the voyage were disembarked they faced further hardship, for they were landed in that part of Africa controlled by the Spanish, and there were no Muslims near at hand to help them. Thus landing at Oran, their journey was only half-completed, for they still had to travel to the lands which were still in possession of the Muslims, and their treatment on the way was awful:

In Barbary, as a rule, the sufferings of the exiles were terrible. They were landed at Oran, whence they had to make their way to the Moorish states; they had the reputation of bringing money with them, and were plundered and slain and their women were taken from them without mercy, after the first embarkation had been safely convoyed. <sup>15</sup>

It was later estimated that of the total number of Moriscos expelled from Spain two-thirds perished as a result, and Lea writes that in fact the general estimate was that the proportion was at least three-quarters.

Some of the few Moriscos who survived the ordeal were forced to return to Spain, in spite of the savage edicts which consigned anyone attempting to do this to the galleys. They were,

however, initially accepted provided that they expressed the desire to live as Christians and to serve as slaves:

The question was raised whether this was permissible under the edicts, and a number of theologians signed an argument, addressed to the Viceroy of Valencia, to prove that, as the Church receives and baptizes Moors desiring to become Christians, it could not reject those already baptized who returned to its bosom, even although moved by servile attrition, which is defined as sufficing by the Council of Trent. Fray Bleda took the alarm, and May 7, 1610, addressed the king on the subject, warning him of the fate of Saul for sparing the Amalekites. To this Philip replied, May 23rd, thanking him and telling him that orders had been issued to the viceroy that not a single Morisco should be left in the kingdom. <sup>16</sup>

Once the majority of Moriscos in Valencia had been expelled, the Moriscos of Aragon and Catalonia were herded to the ships beginning in May, 1610. Their treatment was no better than that of the Moriscos of Valencia, and any attempt at resistance was immediately and ruthlessly quelled:

When, in the expulsion from Aragon, some 12,000 were quartered in a meadow on the banks of the Tagus, they saw an Old Christian couple steal a child, when they raised such a tumult that it was necessary for the commander, Don Alexos Mary Mon, to come and quiet it; he ordered the most riotous to be hanged in front of his quarters, which subdued them, after which he commuted the sentence to the galleys. <sup>17</sup>

Aware by now of the dangers of the journey by boat, many of the Moriscos of Aragon and Catalonia avoided the ports of embarkation and fled north, and between 20,000 and 25,000 of

them made their way into France. They were not welcomed by the Christians living there and were forced back into Spain. Their suffering was pitiable. Most of them were killed between the forces of the two nations, neither of whom wanted them. Many of them died of illness and exhaustion:

So many of them sickened and died in the summer heat that it was feared they should bring pestilence to the ships. <sup>18</sup>

Some of them fled to Italy where their treatment was no better. Others who were younger and stronger managed to reach Constantinople, where their descriptions of the treatment of the Moriscos in Spain caused the Khalif Ahmad to write to the rulers of Spain:

...to ask the royal protection for the exiles, because the governors and officials had stripped them of their property and had put some of them to death, while others were scandalously ill-treated by the ship-masters, who robbed them and landed them on desert islands, carrying off to slavery their wives and children. <sup>19</sup>

Although the letter concisely enumerated the depredations being inflicted on the Moriscos, it did nothing to bring them to a halt, and the remainder of the Moriscos from the northern regions were expelled in one way or another. Although the majority were shipped to Barbary, some went to France by boat:

Perhaps the most accurate statement is to be found in a letter of July 25, 1511, from one of the refugees to a friend in Spain, relating how about a thousand of them, mostly from Extramadura, reached Marseilles, where they were welcomed with promises of good treatment, but this suddenly changed when the news came of the assassination of Henry IV, which was attributed to the King of Spain. Victims were wanted, and

the Moriscos were accused of being Spanish spies; they were in much personal danger for awhile and were stripped of most of their money by a judicial sentence. To remedy this the queen sent a judge, but he was so greedy that when one of the Moriscos bribed him with a hundred ducats he returned one of light weight and demanded to have it replaced. <sup>20</sup>

These Moriscos were subsequently forced to leave France. They sailed to Italy where they were not allowed to stay, and eventually made their way to Algiers.

The expulsion of the Moriscos from Andalucia, from Granada and Castile, took place at about the same time as the expulsions from Aragon and Catalonia. The edict of expulsion was published on January 2nd 1610 in these areas:

Its form was somewhat different from that of Valencia. It required the Moriscos to depart, under pain of death and confiscation, without trial or sentence; it gave them thirty days in which to make their preparations; it allowed them to sell all their moveable property and carry with them the proceeds, invested in merchandise purchased off Spanish subjects, on payment of the regular export duties; it forbade the taking of money, bullion, jewels or bills of exchange, except what was barely sufficient to defray the expenses of the journey by land and sea, and it confiscated their lands to the king for the service of God and the public. <sup>21</sup>

The Moriscos of Andalucia were the most fortunate of the Moriscos to be expelled, for their journey was a short one. Morocco lay only a few miles across the Straits of Gibraltarr, and there were Muslims there to help them once they had landed. They offered no resistance to the edict and many of them looked forward to a departure which up until this point they had forcibly been prevented from making.

As in north, so in the south, they were open to robbery and

murder by the Old Christians, but their suffering was small compared to that of the Moriscos who were expelled from the north of Spain. Once they had landed on the African coast, they were not faced by the same deprivations which had plagued the Moriscos who were landed at Oran. Instead they were absorbed into the Muslim communities of Morocco, many of them settling in the town of Fes.

Once the majority of Moriscos had been expelled from Spain, there was a drive throughout the country to make sure, as Philip II had promised, that not a single Morisco was left in the kingdom, and that those who had gone into hiding were driven out. The last area of Spain to be purged of Moriscos was that of Murcia in the south, which was not finally cleared until the first months of 1614. From this time on Philip's promise was virtually a reality.

It was, however, impossible to carry out such an absolute undertaking completely, and inevitably there were Christians with varying amounts of Morisco blood in their veins who remained. Of Muslims, however, whether open or secret, there was no longer any visible trace, and in this respect the aim behind the mass expulsion of the last of the Moriscos of Spain had been successfully realized. It was inevitable, however, that the most harmless and least distinguishable of the Moriscos, together with the numerous Morisco children who had been sold to, or stolen by, Christians during the expulsion, should remain. Once the doctrine '*limpieza de sangre*' was finally removed from the law of the land, they were gradually absorbed into the general population of Spain, until today the word 'Morisco' is only to be found in history books.

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The final elimination of the last of the Muslims from Spain was thus transformed from proposal to fact in a very short space of time, and nine centuries after the Muslims had first landed in Andalusia, their descendants were driven from the land which their labours had enriched and adorned. It was not known how many Moriscos were exiled. The estimates range between one and three million. Lea writes:

History records many vicissitudes, but few so complete as this...Cardinal Richelieu characterized the act as the boldest and most barbarous recorded in human annals.<sup>22</sup>

The aim of the Catholic Church, which had been to eliminate all who affirmed and worshipped the Divine Unity and who rejected the official religion in Europe was thus virtually realized. The process of elimination had begun with the removal of the Paulician Catharii from France and Italy, and the conquest of the northern regions of Muslim territory; it had continued with the treacherous overthrow of the kingdom of Granada, and, with the expulsion, came to its inevitable and logical conclusion. Islam was no longer to be found in Andalusia. Only the works of the hands of the Muslims who once lived there remained as a reminder of those who had gone before to the ones who were to come after. Many of them still bear the Arabic inscription engraved or carved into them:

*La Ghalib illa'llah*

There is no conqueror except God.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XXI

- (1) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 108, H.C. Lea.
- (2) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 112, H. Kamen.
- (3) *The Inquisition of Spain*, p. 379, H.C. Lea.
- (4) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 112, H. Kamen.
- (5) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 319, H.C. Lea
- (6) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. III, H. Kamen.
- (7) *Ibid*, p. 115.
- (8) *The Moriscos of Spain*, p. 325, H.C. Lea
- (9) *Ibid*, p. 327.
- (10) *Ibid*, p. 328.
- (11) *Ibid*, p. 323.
- (12) *Ibid*, p. 360.
- (13) *Ibid*, p. 363.
- (14) *Ibid*, p. 360.
- (15) *Ibid*, p. 363.
- (16) *Ibid*, p. 364.
- (17) *Ibid*, p. 323.
- (18) *Ibid*, p. 345.
- (19) *Ibid*, p. 362.
- (20) *Ibid*.
- (21) *Ibid*, p. 345.
- (22) *Ibid*, p. 365.

## CHAPTER XXII

THE END OF THE CHRISTIAN UNITARIANS  
AND PROTESTANTS IN SPAIN

Although the Spanish Inquisition was instituted primarily to dispose of the Jews and Muslims in Spain, it was also very active in eliminating any Christian Unitarians who appeared in Spain and also any followers of Luther or Calvin who made their way into the country. In order to have a more complete picture of its activities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and also a clearer understanding of the nature of the Catholic Church itself, a brief study of the role of the Inquisition in this sphere is necessary.

Considering the widespread and extended tyranny of the Mediaeval Inquisition and the Spanish Inquisition throughout Europe and Spain, it was inevitable that there should be a revolt within the structure of the Catholic Church against these two institutions and the person ultimately responsible for their organization. This is the meaning of the 'Reformation'. It was not essentially a reform, but a revolt against the misused 'authority' of the Pope.

A true reform could only have been in the form of an attempt to return to the original way of life embodied by the prophet Jesus, peace be upon him. Those who had already attempted this had been virtually destroyed by the Mediaeval Inquisition. Although the Reformers abolished many of the corrupt practices of the Roman Catholic Church, such as the use of indulgences and dispensations, they had no means to return to the prophetic guidance of Jesus. The worship instituted by the Reformist Church was not based on the original practices of Jesus, and however much they tried to part company with the Roman Catholic Church, the Reformist Church retained all the fundamental official beliefs and doctrines, based on the mythical event of the crucifixion and on a philosophy preached by Paul and developed by the Platonists.

In the great mysteries of the Trinity and the incarnation the reformers were severely orthodox: they freely adopted the theology of the



four, or the first six councils; and with the Athanasian creed, they pronounced the eternal damnation of all who did not believe the Catholic faith. Transubstantiation, the invisible change of the bread and wine into the body of Christ, is a tenet that may defy the power of argument and pleasantry; but instead of consulting the evidence of their senses, of their sight, their feeling, and their taste, the first Protestants were entangled in their own scruples, and awed by the words of Jesus in the institution of the sacrament. Luther maintained a corporal, and Calvin, real, presence of Christ in the eucharist; and the opinion of Zwingli, that it is no more than a spiritual communion, a spiritual memorial, has slowly prevailed in the reformed churches. But the loss of one mystery was amply compensated by the stupendous doctrines of original sin, redemption, faith, grace, and predestination, which had been strained from the epistles of St. Paul. These subtle questions had most assuredly been prepared by the fathers and schoolmen; but the final improvement and popular use may be attributed to the first reformers, who enforced them as the absolute and essential terms of salvation. Hitherto the weight of supernatural belief inclines against the Protestants, and many a sober Christian would rather admit that a wafer is God, than that God is a cruel and capricious tyrant.<sup>1</sup>

As well as being confused about the attributes of God, the Reformers were just as misinformed about the nature of Jesus. Having accepted the doctrine of Trinity and the supposed divinity of Paul's figure of Christ, they were bound, like the Roman Catholics, to subscribe to the doctrine of incarnation which is the logical consequence of adopting the doctrine of the Trinity:

In the name of the fourth general council, the

Christ, in one person, but in two natures, was announced to the Catholic world...During ten centuries of blindness and servitude, Europe received her religious opinions from the oracle of the Vatican; and the same doctrine...was admitted without dispute into the creed of the reformers who disclaimed the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. The synod of Chalcedon still triumphs in the Protestant Churches, but the ferment of controversy had subsided, and the most pious Christians of the present day are ignorant or careless of their own belief concerning the mystery of the incarnation...The volumes of controversy are overspread with the knowledge or belief of its private members; and the forms of orthodoxy, the articles of faith, are subscribed to with a sigh or a smile of the modern clergy.<sup>2</sup>

Thus although the Protestant movement began as a revolt against the Roman Catholic Church, it was doomed, like the movements of the monks and the friars, to a similar destiny simply because it retained the same basic doctrines, on which all its actions were based, as the Roman Catholic Church. The Reformist movement thus ended up by being yet another variation and extension of the "Official" Church, even to the extent of condemning and killing as a 'heretic' anyone who affirmed and worshipped the Divine Unity. It followed the same pattern of behaviour as the Roman Catholic Church, and with the passage of time ended up by being a rich landowner completely identified with the rulers of the land, the complete antithesis of the way in which Jesus had lived. Inevitably there were revolts against this structure, and a fresh reformist movement within the Protestant "Official" Church would begin. The same pattern of behaviour with the same outcome would be repeated again, and continues to be so even today.

Despite the fundamental similarity and agreement between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches in their beliefs and doctrines, there was bitter opposition between them because the main contention was over the loyalty owed to the Pope, and not the obedience owed to their Creator and the

prophet Jesus. In Spain, Charles V was bound to oppose the Reformist movement, and it was because of his loyalty and obedience to the Pope that he inevitably had to condemn Luther and his followers as heretics in the Edict of Worms in 1521.

Naturally the Spanish Inquisition, which derived its authority and *raison d'être* from the Pope, was committed to eradicating any manifestation of Protestantism in Spain, and the Protestants were ruthlessly put down by this institution when and wherever they materialized in Spain. The Lutherans, a term which covered any and every kind of Protestant, were methodically exterminated throughout the second quarter of the sixteenth century, during the same period in which mass baptisms and the subsequent persecution of the Mudejares took place. All their writings were seized and destroyed, and even the writings of Erasmus were identified with the 'new German heresy'. Thus not only the Jews and the Muslims were subject to the scrutiny of the Spanish Inquisition, but even the Official Christians themselves. In December 1533 Rodrigo Manrique, the son of the Inquisitor General who had so calmly rejected the long list of written protests made by the nobles at Morizon in the same year wrote to Luis Vives:

You are right. Our country is a land of pride and envy; you may add: of barbarism. For now it is clear that down there one cannot possess any culture without being suspected of heresy, error and Judaism. Thus silence has been imposed on the learned. As for those who take refuge in erudition, they have been filled, as you say, with great terror.<sup>3</sup>

The persecution of the Protestants in Spain reached its peak in the mid-sixteenth century under the auspices of Inquisitor General Valdes, who was of the opinion that:

...those errors and heresies of Luther and his brood which have begun to be preached and sown in Spain are, in the way of sedition and riot.<sup>4</sup>

Since the influence of Protestantism in Spain was being spread more through the medium of books than of actual people, Valdes made sure that all literature entering the country was closely scrutinized. A decree passed in 1588 banned the introduction of all foreign books in Spanish translation unless a licence had been granted. This decree, which complemented the laws of censorship already passed by the Spanish Inquisition, provided for the confiscation of all property and the death of anyone found possessing a book which was defined as forbidden. The index of forbidden books was extremely comprehensive:

Books were forbidden if they fell into any of the following categories - all books by heresiarchs; all religious books written by those condemned by the Inquisition; all books on Jews and Moors with an anti-Catholic bias; all heretical translations of the Bible, even by Catholics; all devotional works in the vulgar tongue; all controversial works between Catholics and heretics; all books on magic; all verse using scriptural quotations 'profanely'; all books printed since 1515 without details of author and publisher; all anti-Catholic books; all pictures and figures disrespectful to religion. These categories allowed little room for dissent. The date 1515 was no doubt chosen because it excluded all the anonymous literature of the Erasmist-Protestant period.<sup>5</sup>

Anyone found possessing such literature, or expressing any of the ideas contained within it, was enthusiastically burned by the Spanish Inquisition. There were great autos-da-fé in Valladolid and Seville especially, in which all the outspoken adherents of Protestantism in Spain were eliminated.

The Church was cleverly influencing popular opinion against the Protestants not only by punishing them in this manner, but also by identifying their movement with that of the Jews and the Muslims, and Archbishop Siliceo of Toledo, for instance, claimed in 1547:

It is said, and it is considered true, that the principal heretics of Germany, who have destroyed all that nation and have introduced great heresies, are descendants of Jews.<sup>6</sup>

Kamen writes that this opinion was common in Spain. Similarly Castro argues that the mysticism of St John of the Cross and Saint Teresa:

...is not to be explained outside the ascetic and mystic tradition preserved by the Castilian Moriscos.<sup>7</sup>

By directing the hatred held for the Jews and the Muslims against the Protestants, and by effective censorship and the application of capital punishment where necessary, Protestantism never gained popularity in Spain and the movement there was over almost before it had begun:

Protestantism never developed into a real threat in Spain, and was never accepted by any considerable section of the population. Consequently Spaniards remained in ignorance of what the new heresy was, and were taught to regard it only as a sinister threat to their country and a direct blasphemy of God.<sup>8</sup>

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The other kind of revolt which took place within the structure of not only the Roman Catholic Church but also the Protestant Church was made by those who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, and consequently the doctrine of incarnation. They acknowledged Jesus as a prophet, not God, and affirmed the Divine Unity.

Often these Christian Unitarians arrived at this belief after coming into contact with the living tradition of Jesus's original teaching. This was the story of many who encountered the Paulicians as their movement spread across Europe from Asia Minor

to southern France. It appears that the Illuminists, or '*allumbra-dos*' as they were called in Spain, were the tail-end of this movement. They were mercilessly searched out and killed as 'heretics' by the Spanish Inquisition throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They affirmed and worshipped the Divine Unity and rejected the official religion, and it is probable that they received their teaching from the Paulician Catharii, some of whom must have taken refuge in Spain during the fierce persecution they endured in the south of France in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The rejection of the doctrine of the the Trinity by Christians also took place, by the gift of God, when a man reflected on his experience of life and connected this with what he could glean not only from the surviving remnants of the Unitarian writings so ruthlessly destroyed by the Church, but also from the Official Bible itself. Such was the case of Peter Waldo and the Poor Men of Lyons, who, it will be remembered, rejected the doctrine of the Trinity and the supposed divinity of Jesus, before they subsequently met and united with the movement of the Paulician Catharii in 1190.

Perhaps the most notable Christian Unitarian who arrived at his conviction by the intelligent use of his reason during the sixteenth century was Socianus, who was born in Italy and subsequently settled in Poland. His writings were severely suppressed in Spain, especially, his famous Racovian Catechism:

Originally published in the Polish language, it came to be translated into almost all the languages of Europe. In time his teaching spread everywhere, and his school of theology became known as Socianism. Harnack in his '*Outlines of the History of Dogma*' ranks Socianism along with Roman Catholicism and Protestantism as the last of three final stages of Christian Dogma. It is largely due to Socianus that Unitarianism has acquired an entity of its own within the Christianity of today. Harnack declared that Socianism had these characteristics: it had the courage to simplify the questions concerning the reality and content of religion and to discard

the burden of the ecclesiastical past. It broke the contracted bond between religion and science, between Christianity and Platonism. It helped to spread the idea that the religious statement of truth must be clear and apprehensible if it is to have strength. It tried to free the study of the Holy Scriptures from the bondage of old dogmas which themselves were not in the Scriptures. It was said by someone that 'The ignorance of the laity is the revenue of the clergy.' The teachings of Socianus did much to diminish both.<sup>9</sup>

Although the influence of Socianus himself was never really felt in Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there were men like him, who, irrespective of what they were told in the official Christian schools, arrived at the affirmation of the Oneness of God by the independent use of their own intellects. The outstanding example of this in Spain was Michael Servetus, who was a contemporary of Socianus.

The story of Servetus is an illuminating one, since it also illustrates the true nature of the Protestant revolt which Luther embarked upon in 1517 when Servetus was six years old. Servetus was born in Villanueva in 1511, the son of an Old Christian judge. During his early education he showed a remarkable aptitude for his studies, and when he was older he studied medicine and later became a very successful doctor. He also examined the content of the official Bible very closely. When he found that the doctrine of the Trinity was nowhere a part of its teaching:

He decided to tell the world the truth as he had found it, for it followed from this discovery that if the Christians accepted that there was only One God, then all cause for strife between the Christians and the Muslims would be ended; and both communities could live together in peace. This inexperienced youth, his imagination fired with enthusiasm, felt that this end would most easily be achieved with the help of the leaders of the Reformation, who had after

all already broken away from the Catholic Church. The new Protestant churches would become Unitarian, and a world of toleration would become a possibility.<sup>10</sup>

Servetus made repeated attempts to join with the Protestants, but they rejected him. However his attempts to contact them put him in great danger from the Spanish Inquisition, and in 1532 he was forced to flee to France, where he lived under an assumed name. His books, the most famous of which are *The Errors of Trinity* and *The Reformation of Christianity*, were all condemned as vehemently by the Protestants as by the Catholics. Ironically his appeals to the Reformists only caused them to unite with the Roman Catholic Church at a time when they otherwise appeared to be divided. Such a union was necessary to protect the 'official' religion. Luther publicly condemned Servetus in 1539. Calvin would have nothing to do with him, and despite the repeated attempts made by Servetus to win him over to his views, rejected the beliefs expressed in his letters. In 1546 Calvin wrote to Servetus and said that if he ever came to Geneva he would not allow him to escape with his life. Calvin was as good as his word. When Servetus later came to Geneva and went to see him, still believing that a meeting of minds was possible, Calvin had him arrested by the Roman Catholics and thrown into prison on a charge of heresy. He escaped but was recaptured, and was brought before the Inquisition in Geneva. At his trial he was found guilty of heresy. Some of the judgement runs as follows:

'Servetus confesses that in his book he called believers in the Trinity, Trinitarians and Atheists. He called this Trinity a diabolical monster with three heads...He called the infant baptism an invention of the devil and sorcery...This entails the murder and ruin of many souls. Moreover he wrote a letter to one of the ministers in which, along with other and numerous blasphemies, he declared our evangelical religion to be without faith and without God, and that in place of God we have a three-headed

Serbirus. Addressing Servetus the Court says that you had neither shame nor horror of setting yourself against the Divine Majesty of the Holy Trinity, and so you have obstinately tried to infect the world with your stinking heretical poison...For those and other reasons desiring to purge the Church of God of such infections and cut off the rotten member...we now in writing give final sentence and condemn you, Michael Servetus, to be bound and taken to the Champel and there attached to a stake, and burned with your book to ashes. And so you shall finish your days and give example to others who would commit the like.' <sup>11</sup>

On the 26th of October 1553 Servetus was fastened to the trunk of a tree fixed in the earth, his feet just touching the ground. A crown of straw and leaves sprinkled over the brimstone was placed on his head. Bundles of wood intermingled with green oaken faggots still in leaf were piled round his legs. His body was then bound to the stake with an iron chain and a coarse twisted rope thrown round his neck. The wood was then lit. The fire tormented him, but did not burn him severely. Seeing this a few onlookers felt compassion for him, and added more fuel in order to end his misery. According to one eye-witness, Servetus was writhing for about two hours before he died. A copy of *The Errors of Trinity* had been tied to his waist before the wood was lit. It is said that the book was rescued by someone, and that the half-burnt book still exists. Celsus relates that the constancy of Servetus in the midst of the fire induced many to go over to his beliefs. Calvin made it an express subject of complaint that there were so many people who cherished and revered his memory. As Castillo, a follower of Servetus, said 'To burn a man is not to prove a doctrine.' In later years the people of Geneva were to remember him by erecting a statue; not to Calvin but to the man he was responsible for burning alive.

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By threatening the apparent validity of the official religion,

Servetus was doomed to persecution, and through his death was given the dubious honour of uniting an apparently divided Church. The fact that both the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches were responsible for the arrest and death of Servetus, for the same reasons, clearly indicates the fundamental agreement and similarity between these two main branches of the Church.

Although the Spanish Inquisition was ultimately responsible for the actual death of Servetus, it was the influence of this institution which made it impossible for him to remain in Spain, and there were many men like him who were forced to flee from Spain to the rest of Europe, where the Christian Unitarian movement was receiving new impetus and life from the writings and example of Socianus. The logic of the Spanish Inquisition compelled its members to persecute not only those who affirmed and worshipped the Divine Unity, but even those who affirmed the same doctrines as the Roman Catholic Church, but questioned the authority of the Pope. The whole Christian population of Spain was therefore under the eye of the Spanish Inquisition, and anyone with an enquiring mind was in danger of losing both it and his life.

The height of the absurdity to which the people of Spain were subjected to was reached on November 22nd 1599 when Philip II commanded all Spaniards living outside Spain to return to their home country. It was hoped by this measure that the orthodoxy of the official religion in Spain could be maintained without any foreign influence being able to affect its 'purity'.

The effect of this decree, insofar as it was successful, was to make Spain an almost completely closed society socially, politically and spiritually cut off from the rest of Europe. Spaniards were only allowed to study in the official institutions of learning, and they were closely monitored by the Spanish Inquisition. All 'dangerous' books and men were destroyed, and anyone betraying signs of Protestantism or Unitarianism in his thought was banned from attending the places of 'higher education' and from holding any public office. This policy, together with the extended application of the doctrine of '*limpieza de sangre*' which prevented anyone with Jewish or Moorish blood in their veins from receiving a state education plunged the majority of the population of Spain into ignorance. This was the only way

in which the Church, acting through the Spanish Inquisition, could maintain acceptance of the official religion throughout the country, and ensure its continued existence in the face of the prophetic teachings of Jesus and Muhammad:

Nowhere was the imposition of orthodoxy so effective and complete as in the one country where an institution of international dimensions devoted its entire resources to the task.<sup>12</sup>

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XXII

- (1) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, VII, p. 70, E. Gibbon.
- (2) *Ibid*, VI, p. 36, and VII, p. 73.
- (3) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 75, H. Kamen.
- (4) *Ibid*.
- (5) *Ibid*, p. 91.
- (6) *Ibid*, p. 82.
- (7) *The Structure of Spanish History*, p. 84, A. Castro.
- (8) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 81, H. Kamen.
- (9) *Jesus, Prophet of Islam*.
- (10) *Ibid*.
- (11) *A History of Unitarianism*, E.M. Wilbur
- (12) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 103, H. Kamen.

## CHAPTER XXIII

## SPAIN WITHOUT ISLAM

The rigid orthodoxy of the Church in Spain during the seventeenth century transformed the peninsula into an economic wilderness and a spiritual desert. The final expulsion of the Moriscos not only resulted in the loss of virtually the entire agricultural workforce of the country, but also in the absence of any worship of the One God as indicated in the Prophetic traditions. There were virtually no Jews, no Muslims, and no Christian Unitarians in the country, and even the spirit of enquiry which the Protestant movement had engendered in its early years was suppressed.

The people who remained were constricted within the bounds of the official religion which could only be maintained by repression. Their thoughts and daily activities were strictly curtailed by their fear of the Spanish Inquisition, which continued its work of stamping out any traces of 'heresy' that might still be lingering in the land. The *san benitos* of dead 'heretics', which had been hung in all the churches to remind the Christians of the fate of those who dared to question the official religion, remained where they were; and the descendants of those who had once worn them continued to suffer and be persecuted according to the principles of the doctrine of *limpieza de sangre*, and the whims of the Spanish Inquisition. Foreign travellers report having seen these *san benitos* still hanging in the churches well into the nineteenth century.

It was also a popular notion that secret communities of Jews and Muslims still continued to live in Spain, and even as late as 1787, Joseph Townsend, who journeyed through the country, wrote:

Even to the present day both Mahometans and Jews are thought to be numerous in Spain, the former among the mountains, the latter in all great cities. Their principal disguise is more than common zeal in external conformity to all the precepts of the Church; and the most apparently bigoted, not only of the clergy, but of the

inquisitors themselves, are by some persons suspected to be Jews.<sup>1</sup>

Thus although the Jews and Muslims had been virtually wiped out, those whose ancestry could be traced back to them still continued to be regarded with suspicion, whilst even the Old Christians were carefully scrutinized to ensure that they did not incline towards Unitarianism or Protestantism. Denunciations and the fear, suspicion and hatred which accompanied them, continued to be a part of Spanish life for as long as the Inquisition survived.

The whole of Spain was plunged into superstition and ignorance, and it was inevitable that, because of the absence of affirmation and worship of the Divine Unity, the phenomenon of the witch-hunts which were sweeping through the rest of Europe and England at this time should find its way over the Pyrenees and into Spain.

The eradication of witchcraft in Spain was naturally undertaken by the Spanish Inquisition, and the manner in which this elimination was carried out shows how powerful the Inquisitors were even after the final expulsion of the Moriscos. In 1611, Salazar Fria was sent to Navarre to stamp out witchcraft. The Inquisitor's operations lasted for one year:

During the time of his mission, Salazar declared, he reconciled 1,802 persons: of these 1,384 were children between the ages of 9 and 12 in the case of girls, and between 9 and 14 in the case of boys...After close examination of all the confessions and evidence about murders, witch-sabbaths, and sexual intercourse with devils, Salazar came to his astounding conclusion. 'Considering the above with all the Christian attention in my power, I have not found even indications from which to infer that a single act of witchcraft has really occurred. Moreover, my experience leads to the conviction that, of those availing themselves of the edict of grace, three-quarters and more have accused themselves and their accomplices falsely. I fur-

ther believe that they would freely come to the Inquisition to revoke their confessions if they thought that they would be received kindly without punishment...there were neither witches nor bewitched until they were talked and written about.'<sup>2</sup>

Witchcraft, like Protestantism, never became a major issue within Spain, and its practice if and when it occurred was either denied or ignored:

Although the Inquisition was still obliged to follow European opinion and regard witchcraft as a crime, in practice all testimony to such a crime was rejected as delusion, so that Spain was saved from the ravages of popular witch-hysteria and witch-burnings at a time when it was prevalent all over Europe.<sup>3</sup>

Instead the Spanish Inquisition busied itself with the task which its predecessor the Mediaeval Inquisition had originally been instituted to deal with. Anyone found betraying signs of affirmation and worship of the Divine Unity and rejection of the official religion was immediately apprehended, arrested, tortured and punished.

The Spanish Inquisition, however, had been so efficient in carrying out its duties to the Pope, that it became increasingly difficult to continue them. The vast majority of 'heretics' in Spain had been removed in one way or another, and the 'secret heretics' who remained were not easy to detect. Furthermore, the Spanish Inquisition of the early seventeenth century was faced with grave economical difficulties.

Due to the final expulsion of the Moriscos, Spain was plunged into a financial depression. The country had lost virtually its entire agricultural workforce as well as many of its most skilled craftsmen, and it was not only the nobles and landowners who consequently suffered a substantial drop in their incomes and standard of living. The middle class bourgeoisie and the Church itself had made much of their money from lending money to the Moriscos at high interest, and from charging

them high rents to live on the land which had originally been confiscated from the Jews and the Muslims. With the expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain the revenue from these highly profitable business activities also disappeared. Ironically the organization which suffered most in this respect was the Spanish Inquisition itself:

In 1611 the tribunals of Valenica and Saragossa complained that the expulsion had resulted in their bankruptcy since they were losing 7,500 ducats a year which they had formerly received from ground rents.<sup>4</sup>

Immediately before the expulsion both these tribunals had derived just under half of their income directly from the Morisco population, and with the increasing lack of fresh heretics to pursue, the confiscation of property, which had been one of their chief sources of income in the past, diminished considerably:

In both cases the triumph of the Inquisition in bringing about the elimination of the entire nation of 'heretics' led ironically to its decline as the financial sources of its existence dried up.<sup>5</sup>

The Spanish Inquisition was saved from being "hoist with its own petard", however, by the activities of the Portuguese Inquisition. This new branch of the Inquisition had not really begun its work in earnest until about 1540. It soon became as efficient as the models it was based on, and its persecution was so harsh that many thousands of refugees, the majority of them Jewish *conversos* and Moriscos who had originally sought shelter in Portugal from the persecution in Spain, were driven back into the country. They met what they had been fleeing from, and their savings put the Spanish Inquisition on a better financial footing, while their bodies fed the inquisitorial flames. There were concerted waves of persecution of these refugees from Portugal, one between 1650 and 1680, and another much later on between 1720 and 1752.

The development of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies abroad during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also kept



their Inquisitors in business. The widespread use of Jewish conversos and Moriscos as galley slaves, meant that their knowledge and beliefs were transferred and implanted in whatever countries their colonial masters settled. It was therefore deemed necessary to establish the Inquisition in all the colonies of Portugal and Spain. It will be remembered, in connection with the probable extent of the influence of the Paulicians, that the Inquisition was at work as far east as Malabar and as far south as Abyssinia. It also wreaked considerable havoc in South America, and a book by Las Casa called 'A very brief account of the destruction of the Indies,' which revealed the nature of its activities was banned by the Inquisition. The tribunal of Saragossa ruled that:

This book contains a narrative of very terrible and savage events, whose like does not exist in the histories of other nations, committed, says the author, by Spanish soldiers, settlers in the Indies, and ministers of the Catholic king. It is advisable to seize these narratives as injurious to the Spanish nation, since even if they were true it would have sufficed to make a representation to his Catholic Majesty and not to publish them throughout the world, so giving the initiative to enemies of Spain and to 'heretics'.<sup>6</sup>

It is interesting to note in this context that the cessation of the Crusades against the Muslims in the East coincided with the opening up of the sea routes to the East and West Indies. This indicates that the intention behind the Crusades was not only religious but economic. The object was to get to India, and not just to spread the teaching of Jesus:

It was hoped to join forces with a legendary Indian Christian king and with his aid conquer the whole world. In his efforts to reach India, Columbus discovered America, and Vasco da Gama discovered a new route to India. Both these discoveries did not discover their legendary king nor did they eliminate Islam, but

they colonized much of the world, and their leaders and traders became wealthy as a result.<sup>7</sup>

Every since its inception, the official religion had been used as a means of controlling the general population of a country, and of maintaining and retaining the balance of wealth and authority in the hands of a relatively small group of people who desired power. Since all prophetic guidance clearly militates against this way of life, the Church was always committed to eradicating those who adhered to it, and it is important to remember that the considerations behind the elimination of those who affirmed and worshipped the Divine Unity, and rejected the official religion, were therefore not spiritual, but economic.

Once the official religion had been established in the colonies of Spain and Portugal, the Inquisition ceased to have any practical value. However it was not until the late eighteenth century that the Spanish Inquisition in Spain itself began to decline, not only because it had eliminated nearly all people who could be defined as 'heretics' but also because eventually popular feeling against the institution could no longer be contained.

The Jesuits, a movement which like the monks and friars had begun as an attempt to rediscover the simple life of the obedience embodied by Jesus and ended by being re-absorbed into the body of the Church, had become increasingly influential in the affairs of state during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They had risen to new and unprecedented importance by their monopoly of the post of royal confessor throughout the long reign of Philip V, and inevitably became increasingly involved in and allied with, the Spanish Inquisition. This alliance was clearly established during the internal conflict which troubled Spain in the eighteenth century between the Jesuits who sided with the Pope and the Jansenists who supported the King. When the Jesuits were ultimately expelled from Spain in 1767, the Count of Campomanes, who had shared responsibility for their expulsion declared that:

The tribunals of the Inquisition today compose

the most fanatical body in the State and the one most attached to the Jesuits; the inquisitors profess exactly the same maxims and doctrines; in time it is necessary to carry out a reform of the Inquisition.<sup>8</sup>

This reform was never carried out, but opposition continued to grow. A leaflet sent into Catalonia in about 1794 asked the Spaniards:

Are you fighting for the infernal Inquisition that did not exist in the time of the good sans-culotte lord Jesus Christ?...the infernal Inquisition that, using the name of a God of peace and goodness, brings desolation to your families and commands thought itself.<sup>9</sup>

As time passed, criticism of the Spanish Inquisition became more vocal and specific. In 1811, the leader of the liberals in Spain, Antonio Puigblanch, published a pamphlet called 'The Inquisition Unmasked'. He pointed out that:

- Since the Inquisition was an ecclesiastical tribunal, its rigour was incompatible with the spirit of meekness which ought to distinguish the ministers of the Gospel.

- The system of rigour adopted by this tribunal was opposed to the doctrine of the Holy Fathers and the discipline of the Church in its most happy times.

- The Inquisition, far from contributing to the preservation of the true belief was only suited to encourage hypocrisy and excite the people to rebellion.

- The form of trial used in this tribunal trampled on all the rights of the citizen.

- The Inquisition had not only obstructed the progress of science in the countries wherein it had been established, but had also propagated pernicious errors.

- The tribunal had supported the despotism of kings, and had itself exercised it.

- As the Inquisition owed its origin to the decline of the discipline and remissness of the clergy, it opposed obstacles to their reforms, which was indispensably necessary if the nation was to

prosper.

The arguments of Puigblanch were accepted. It was decreed on 22nd February 1813 that the Spanish Inquisition was 'incompatible with the constitution'. However it was not actually abolished. It continued to function on a very limited basis, and in 1826, the last official execution for 'heresy' under the aegis of the Spanish Inquisition took place:

Cayetano Ripoll was a school-master who fought the French during the War of Independence, was taken prisoner to France and there became converted to Deism. On his return to Spain he was denounced for not taking his pupils to mass and for substituting the phrase 'Praise be to God' in place of 'Ave Maria' in prayers at school. He was arrested in 1824, imprisoned and tried, and condemned to hanging and burning after a delay of two years. The burning was only symbolic: a barrel with flames painted on it was placed under the gibbet. The hanging was real, and was carried out on 26 July 1826.<sup>10</sup>

This last hanging was only a token of the Spanish Inquisition's former power in Spain, and finally, three and a half centuries after it had first been instituted by Ferdinand and Isabella; it was quietly disbanded. On the 15th July 1834, a formal decree was made by which:

...the Inquisition was definitely suppressed, all its properties and canonries applied to the extinction of the public debt, and just payment of salaries made to all its former officials. From this date the Inquisition ceased to exist in Spain.<sup>11</sup>

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It has been argued that the Spanish Inquisition was not truly representative of Christianity as such. However the entire histo-

ry of the official religion from its beginnings in the teachings of Paul of Tarsus up until the dissolution of the Spanish Inquisition, indicates quite clearly that although the Inquisition's pattern of behaviour was certainly not modelled on the teachings of the prophet Jesus, it was typical of those who formulated and established the religion of the Official Church during the reigns of Constantine and Theodosius and after. From that time on those who affirmed and worshipped the Divine Unity in accordance with the guidance of Jesus (whether Arians or Paulicians) and the Messenger Muhammad, were persecuted by the Official Christians. The Mediaeval and Spanish Inquisitions were no more than an effective development of the Inquisition established by Theodosius in 382, and of the other inquisitions such as those of Justinian and Theodora which were based on it. From its beginning therefore, we can see how genocide has been a constant element in Christianity.

No community following a prophetic teaching could ever be induced by argument to follow the religion of the Official Church. Force, it was believed, was the only persuasion, and as the history of Islam in Andalusia clearly demonstrates, this was no persuasion at all. This genocide was to continue after the demise of the Inquisition. Colonial occupation in Africa, the sub-continent of India, the Arab countries and Asia provide an ongoing record of Church-directed sanctions, punishments, assassination and mass murder. One thinks immediately of the dreadful slaughter of Sufis in Morocco in the nineteenth century, the mass murder, also by the French working closely with the official religion, of the large Sanusi communities in southern Libya, and the tragic murder of three great Nigerian Muslim leaders in intrigues closely involving the Vatican. Indeed, so extensive is the continuing policy of Christian coercion, that its modern forms will require a study of their own. Missionary activity has proved no less horrific than the Inquisition. We can regretfully say is proving, since the official religion still plays a ruthless and dynamic political role, particularly in Africa.

The most significant result of Spanish Inquisition was the eradication of all prophetic guidance in Andalusia, which in turn resulted in the delay of the emergence of Islam in Europe for several centuries.

What Puigblanch failed to observe, and could not possibly

have been able to observe in his pamphlet, 'The Inquisition Unmasked', was that the new 'scientific movement' which he accused the Spanish Inquisition of hindering, was in fact the inevitable result of the activities of the Inquisition itself. For when the general public became discontented with religion and its lack of any spiritual foundation, and began to tire of the tyranny of the Inquisitors it was inevitable that they would reject the religion of the Official Church. Due to the lack of an easily accessible prophetic guidance, there was no choice but to try and work out a rational explanation and understanding of existence for themselves. It was from this dilemma that the modern 'scientific spirit' was born.

Today many modern scientists have acknowledged that much of the so-called Western civilization's learning and knowledge derives from the discoveries made by the Muslims of Andalusia and the Middle East.

The remnants of learning which escaped the destruction of the Spanish Inquisition, or which were retained by the Catholic Church because they were considered useful, and which were all that remained of the Andalusian Muslims' once-flourishing culture, were allowed to percolate through Europe during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was these fragments of knowledge which formed the basis of much of the empirical scientists' theories and inventions, and on which today's modern technology rests. Yet even this technology and the accompanying way of life which stems from it, dwindle into insignificance when compared with the civilization and quality of life which the Muslims of Andalusia once possessed.

The duration of the activities of the Mediaeval Inquisition and the Spanish Inquisition was nearly six centuries, the same length of time in which Islam flourished in Andalusia. When the way of life which the activities of the Church established in the land is compared with the way of life which resulted from the activities of the Muslims, the difference between the two is very marked. On one hand there was the devastation and disruption caused by the rigid imposition of the official religion. On the other hand, there was a flowering of a way of life, grounded in worship of the One Lord and Creator of all the worlds, which made peaceful co-existence a reality as long as the people held to the guidance revealed through the last prophet. On one hand a

community of people destroyed 'in the name of God'. On the other hand, a community of people who lived 'in the name of God'. One way brought death. The other way brought life.

\*                      \*                      \*

As the history of those who affirmed the Divine Unity indicates, it never proved possible to completely eradicate prophetic guidance from the world. If anything the persecution was a means by which those who were following a prophetic guidance were strengthened in it, and also by which this Prophetic guidance was rapidly and effectively spread to other lands throughout the world. Although the prophetic guidance of Jesus was eventually distorted and virtually destroyed in the process, the guidance brought by the prophet Muhammad who came after him to renew and complete the prophetic tradition, is still intact and alive and can be followed.

There are again Muslims in Andalusia and their numbers are growing. One of the meanings of Andalusia in Arabic is 'to become green at the end of the summer'.

There is no God. Only Allah.  
Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER XXIII

- (1) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 230, H. Kamen.
- (2) *Ibid*, p. 207.
- (3) *Ibid*, p. 208.
- (4) *Ibid*, p. 114.
- (5) *Ibid*, p. 115.
- (6) *Ibid*.
- (7) *Jesus, Prophet of Islam*.
- (8) *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 253.
- (9) *Ibid*, p. 267.
- (10) *Ibid*, p. 282.
- (11) *Ibid*.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ahmad Thomson was born in Chipata, Zambia, on the 23rd of April, 1950, towards the end of the British colonial period in Africa. Educated in both Zimbabwe and England, and widely travelled, he was fortunate enough to escape having too rigid a cultural moulding or social conditioning, and accordingly, although brought up as a Christian, recognised and embraced Islam for what it is when he encountered it, clearly and existentially embodied by real Muslims.

Soon after embracing Islam, the author met Colonel Muhammad Ata-ur-Rahim, who had come to England in order to pursue his studies of Jesus, peace be upon him, and Christianity in greater depth, and at the suggestion of Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Murabit they began to work together. As a result of their joint research three books were written, **Jesus, Prophet of Islam**, **Jesus in Qur'an**, and **Blood on the Cross** which was completed after the author had been on pilgrimage to Makka and after Colonel Rahim had died, *'alayhi rahma*.

Other books written by Ahmad Thomson include **Dajjal - The King who has no clothes**, which is a contemporary study of the Anti-Christ written from a Qur'anic perspective and based on some of the recorded sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on him and his family and his Companions and all who follow him and them in what they are able with sincerity until the Last Day. Amin.