

**ANDALUSĪ CHRISTIANITY:**  
**The survival of indigenous Christian**  
**communities**

**Alwyn Harrison**

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**Volume I of II**

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This thesis comprises an attempt to re-evaluate the experience and the survival of the indigenous Christian population of al-Andalus. It is a response to two problematic aspects of the historiography, whose authority has only recently begun to be questioned: first, the inordinate focus upon the polemical and problematic mid-ninth-century Cordoban hagiography and apologetic of Eulogius and Paul Albar, whose prejudiced vision has not only been accepted as a source of social history, but also projected onto all Andalusī Christianity to support the second – the assertion that conversion happened early and *en masse*, and led to their eradication in the early twelfth century.

Eulogius and Albar's account of a Córdoba oppressed and Christians persecuted (a trope herein dubbed the *ecclesia destituta*) has dominated thinking about the indigenous Christians of al-Andalus, due to its championing by Catholic historians since the texts' rediscovery and publication in 1574, and by nineteenth-century Spanish nationalists to whose ideological and patriotic purposes it was amenable. The Cordobans' account is here re-evaluated as regards its value as a historical artefact and its internal problems are outlined. The discrepancies between the picture created by Eulogius and Albar and that of other contemporary reports, and the problematic hagiography, are then explained to some degree by the literary models Eulogius had at his disposal – of primary interest are the classical pagan poetics of Vergil, Horace and Juvenal and the late antique theology of Augustine.

Albar's famous despair at the Arabisation of the Christian youth has, in conjunction with Eulogius' *ecclesia destituta* and the relative scarcity of documentary evidence for the Christians of Andalusī territory, formed the crux of assumptions regarding the speed and extent of Arabisation and conversion. In reassessing Richard Bulliet's 'curve of conversion', which seemed on a faulty reading to prove these assumptions, the second part of the thesis seeks to argue that profound Arabisation did not impact until a century later than is thought and resulted not in assimilative decline but in a late cultural flowering, and show the long, and in many places unbroken, survival of indigenous Christian communities in al-Andalus to the early fifteenth century.

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