

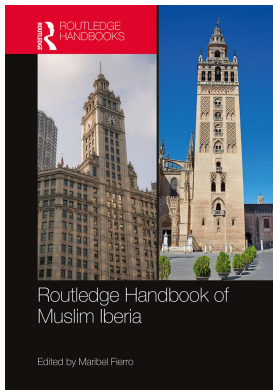
This article was downloaded by: 10.3.98.104

On: 22 Sep 2020

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



The Routledge Handbook Of Muslim Iberia

Maribel Fierro

Centralization and Consolidation

Publication details

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315625959-3>

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Published online on: 30 Apr 2020

How to cite :- Xavier Ballestín. 30 Apr 2020, *Centralization and Consolidation from:* The Routledge Handbook Of Muslim Iberia Routledge

Accessed on: 22 Sep 2020

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315625959-3>

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3

CENTRALIZATION AND CONSOLIDATION

The Cordoban Umayyads and the Amirids

Xavier Ballestín

During the period of the Cordoban Umayyads, almost three centuries long (138/756–400/1009), al-Andalus changed from being the westernmost and most isolated country in the Islamic *umma* to become a shining beacon in the West, with his own caliphate and a civilization where literature, science, diplomacy and prestige surpassed any other realm in Europe. A degree of rhetorical disguise should help the reader to come at the matter at hand, notwithstanding it, the achievements of the Umayyads in al-Andalus and the Maghrib, as well as their failure in the first quarter of the fifth/eleventh century, are a matter where rhetorical excess is, at least, difficult to avoid.

The first Umayyad, the falcon of Quraysh: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil (138/756–172/788)¹

‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mu‘āwiya ibn Hishām – a grandson of Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 104/723–125/743), the Umayyad caliph in Damascus whose rule can be labelled as the heyday of his dynasty – managed to survive the defeat of his family in the East at the hands of the Abbasids (132/750) and fled toward the West. The Umayyad refugee tried to settle as a ruler in Ifrīqiya and the Maghrib, but to no avail as he failed in rebuilding his dynasty in either area and was even on the verge of being jailed and killed. When despair started to take its toll, he received news that the situation in al-Andalus was ripe to attempt a takeover. On the one hand, the Arabic settlers were replaying the infighting between Qays and Yaman that ignited the demise of the Umayyads in the East, and on the other, the freedmen and clients – *mawālī* – of the Umayyads settled in al-Andalus were ready to give their support to a member of the dynasty.

Table 3.1 The Cordoban Umayyads Compiled by X. Ballestín

The Cordoban Umayyads/genealogical chart

- | |
|--|
| A) Name with accession and death dates
B) Name and <i>laqab</i>
C) Name and ordinal number |
|--|

The Umayyad *umarā'* (138–316/756–929)

- A) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mu'āwiyah ibn Hishām (138–172/756–788)
 B) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ad-Dāḥil
 C) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān I
- A) Hishām ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān (172–180/788–796)
 B) Hishām ar-Riḍā
 C) Hishām I
- A) Al-Ḥakam ibn Hishām (180–206/796–822)
 B) Al-Ḥakam ar-Rabaḍī
 C) Al-Ḥakam I
- A) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥakam (206–238/822–852)
 B) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Awsaf
 C) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān II
- A) Muḥammad ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān (238–273/852–886)
 C) Muḥammad I
- A) Al-Mundhir ibn Muḥammad (273–275/886–888)
 C) Al-Mundhir I
- A) 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad (275–300/888–912)
 C) 'Abd Allāh

The Umayyad caliphs (316–400/929–1009)

- A) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh (300–350/912–961)
 B) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān an-Nāṣir li-dīn Allāh
 C) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān III
- A) Al-Ḥakam ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān (350–366/961–976)
 B) Al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir bi-llāh/
 C) Al-Ḥakam II
- A) Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam (366–399/976–1009)
 B) Hishām al-Mu'ayyad bi-llāh
 C) Hishām II

'Abd al-Raḥmān decided eventually to cross the sea and land on the beach of Burriana, in the province of Málaga.² News of his landing arrived at Cordoba and the governor, Yūsuf al-Fihri, counselled by his close adviser and grey eminence, al-Ṣumayl ibn Ḥātim – both belonging to Qays – sent a messenger to the Umayyad and showed their goodwill and their sense of *realpolitik* with an offer to share the rule of al-Andalus

with him. Nevertheless, the parleys were broken. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān prepared to battle against Yūsuf with the vindictive help of the Yaman Arabic settlers, incensed by Yūsuf and al-Ṣumayl’s partisanship for their own kin and tribe, the Qays. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān was also helped by the Umayyad *mawālī* in al-Andalus, the most faithful and loyal supporters of the recently arrived Umayyad, and by the Berber settlers, as the mother of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān was a slave concubine (*jāriya*) belonging to the tribe of Nafza.

The battle ended with ‘Abd al-Raḥmān defeating the army of Yūsuf and being proclaimed *amīr* in the Cordoban mosque. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān had an eventful and troublesome rule fighting against the Arab settlers from Yaman, who realized that he was not ready to comply with them in crushing the Arab settlers from Qays, and also fighting the attempts of the Arab Qays settlers to depose him. Besides this, the Abbasids tried to overcome him, and Charles the Great launched his ill-fated expedition against Saragossa when the governor of the city agreed with the Frankish king and next-to-be emperor to open the city gates to a Frankish army. The venture ended with their defeat at Roncesvalles, in the Western Pyrenees, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ended his rule unchallenged. No foe, internal or external, succeeded in defeating him and the token of his victory was the succession of his own son, Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, known as Hishām al-Riḍā.

It was not a meagre achievement for ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, nicknamed ad-Dākhlī, that is, ‘the one who entered’. Ibn ‘Idhārī al-Marrākushī, a seventh/thirteenth-century Maghribi scholar, who wrote *al-Bayān al-mughrib fi akhbār al-Andalus wa’l-Maghrib*, covered in this work the full list, arranged in a chronologically annalistic order, of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s forays, battles, and people defying his authority, including Arab settlers from Qays and Yaman, Berber settlers, and relatives of the ousted governor, Yūsuf al-Fihri. The nature of the source, a compilation in which Ibn ‘Idhārī made a thorough and intensively abridged report of previous sources, most of them lost, does not allow for a detailed list, but a dry, short and cumbersome one. The most poignant data comes when the author points out that in the year 154/771 no expedition takes place, that is, excepting this single year the first Umayyad *amīr* spent his time quelling uprisings and engaging his foes in the battlefield or in sieges.³

Hishām al-Riḍā: the appointment of an heir apparent (172/788–180/796)

The Cordoban Umayyads received the attention of the most distinguished Andalusī historian, Ibn Ḥayyān, a man who lived in the age of the eventual destruction of the Umayyad dynasty and resented bitterly the radical changes brought upon his life and career by the upheavals of the *fitna* (dealt with in Chapter 4). Ibn Ḥayyān wrote an extensive work on al-Andalus history, *al-Muqtabis*, a full set of volumes written as a thorough compilation of previous and contemporary sources, where each Umayyad ruler receives due and detailed attention. Despite the editorial history of this compilation, which has sometimes been as hazardous and broken as Ibn Ḥayyān’s life,⁴ and the hypercritical approach to late Islamic medieval sources dealing with early Islam, *al-Muqtabis* is an invaluable source for the knowledge of

the political and cultural history of the Cordoban Umayyads. In fact, its usefulness goes well beyond the frontiers of dynastic history. The main problem is that the volumes dealing with ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s rule, as well as Hishām’s, his heir and second Umayyad *amīr*, are not extant.

Notwithstanding the loss of some of *al-Muqtabis* volumes, there are enough sources available to ascertain the main trends of Hishām’s policies or, at least, his struggle in ruling the country against his brothers, ‘Abd Allāh and Sulaymān, who challenged him and viewed his proclamation as a treason. They fought him with the help of the Franks and with the help of the Berbers settled in Sharq al-Andalus (the eastern area of the Iberian Peninsula), always ready to defy Umayyad authority. The struggle between the brothers lasted until Hishām allowed Sulaymān, former governor of Toledo, to leave Tudmir, where he had been holding some strong points and cities, and to settle in the Maghrib with 60,000 *dīnār* delivered to him by his brother the emir (174/790).⁵

The main issue behind the fighting between the Umayyad brothers and the rightful *amīr*, Hishām al-Riḍā, was the appointment of an heir apparent (*walī ‘l-ahd*), chosen of his own free will by the ruler. If a pattern should be remarked for the Umayyads in the East it was that power and kingship remained in the hands of brothers and nephews, but ‘Abd al-Raḥmān had only a single surviving brother, al-Walīd, who had managed to avoid capture and death by the Abbasids and was living in Cordoba. The *amīr* ‘Abd al-Raḥmān intended to have one of his sons as heir apparent. The main problem was to choose which one of them (Sulaymān, Hishām, ‘Abd Allāh) should be the new *amīr* and their father had not pronounced unambiguously which one of them should take his place as ruler in al-Andalus. Sulaymān and Hishām had received, respectively, the governorships of Toledo and Mérida when the news of their father’s death were known, and both hurried toward Cordoba and the palace, where their brother ‘Abd Allāh had been instructed by the late ‘Abd al-Raḥmān to deliver the seal to the first arriving, and he was Hishām, who had outpaced his elder brother, Sulaymān, and received the oath of allegiance (*bay‘a*) from the people in the palace. The honorific surname (*laqab*) of Hishām was al-Riḍā, that is, “favoured by God”, “satisfaction, contentment in”, as if his accession to power had been a result of universal consent, and it was not. The appointment, accession and succession of an heir apparent would be, as it was for the Abbasids and Fatimids, the touchstone of dynastic power and rule. With the later Cordoban Umayyads, that is, the Cordoban caliphs, with their ability to rule unchecked and unhindered, there was no room for a replication of the situation developed at the death of the first Umayyad, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. But this was an achievement in the long run, as we shall see.

al-Ḥakam al-Rabaḍī, the town of Cordoba, the ‘ulamā’ and the Umayyad *dawla* (180/796–206/822)

Al-Ḥakam, Hishām’s son, received the oath of allegiance after his father’s death without trouble. His rule is covered in the first extant volume of *al-Muqtabis* (M II-1), where Ibn Ḥayyān offers a well-documented and minute explanation of al-Ḥakam’s

rule from the beginning to the end. The wealth of the source affords details lacking for the rules of his father, Hishām, and his grandfather, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, and provides us with a thorough account of al-Ḥakam’s life and policy. He was a hotly contested ruler and opposition against him emerged from various sources.

His uncles, Sulaymān and ‘Abd Allāh, living in the Maghrib after the deal with the late *amīr* Hishām, decided to cross the sea and fight his nephew and new Umayyad *amīr*. This challenge brought Sulaymān and al-Ḥakam, uncle and nephew, to a pitched battle in Quesada,⁶ where Sulaymān was soundly beaten by the *amīr* and eventually captured. Al-Ḥakam showed no qualms when he punished Sulaymān with the death penalty, but he took under his protection the property and family of his dead uncle.

His uncle ‘Abd Allāh did not defy his nephew al-Ḥakam in the battlefield and proceeded instead to the north-eastern frontier, known as *al-thaḡhr al-a’lā* (The Upper Frontier), in search of assistance against his nephew. This brought him to the maelstrom of intertribal infighting between the Arab settlers of Yaman, the new lineages of Christian-born or Jewish-born converts to Islam, known as *muwalladūn*, the Berber tribes in the frontier, and the Franks, bent on avenging their failure at Saragossa and ready to exploit any chance for breaking through the frontier, a goal that they eventually achieved.⁷ Unable to make headway in the north-eastern frontier, and aware of his brother Sulaymān’s death, ‘Abd Allāh retreated to Sharq al-Andalus, where he received the help of the Berbers settled around the countryside of Valencia and tried to reach an agreement with his nephew, who offered terms to him and acquiesced to give his uncle a monthly stipend if he remained in Balansiya.

Sulaymān and ‘Abd Allāh’s attempts to wrest the reins of power from their nephew’s hands finished with utter failure, but it was not inconceivable that things could have taken a wrong course for al-Ḥakam. His authority in the north-eastern frontier was very weak. Also, the city of Toledo remained a thorn in the *amīr*’s flesh as its inhabitants and the settlers in the city countryside never hesitated in breaking with the *amīr*’s rule. Al-Ḥakam duly sent against them punitive expeditions that ravaged the countryside and punished dissent, but in the end, he had to come to terms with the people of Toledo as it was the most impregnable city in the whole Iberian Peninsula, and there were many trouble spots that needed the *amīr*’s attention. Al-Ḥakam managed, with a mix of guile, ruse and deceit, to decimate the prominent people of Toledo, inviting them to a banquet in their own city and killing them as they proceeded unawares to the feast hall. As their corpses were thrown into a ditch, this day was known as the Day of the Ditch (182/798).⁸

In fact, the worst crisis for al-Ḥakam’s rule was brewing in his own city, Cordoba, where the inhabitants of the Secunda suburb (*rabād*; *raval* in Catalan; *arrabal* in Spanish), helped by people of other suburbs, rose up suddenly and attacked al-Ḥakam in his own palace, where he felt so dangerously threatened that he commanded a servant to bring him a civet flask (202/818). In case of defeat and death, he expected to be beheaded and he needed to be reassured that his

head and long hair, soaked with the strong civet fragrance, would be clearly recognized.⁹

Al-Ḥakam managed to crush the uprising, to expel the survivors and to raze to the ground the suburb of Secunda. All this explains his nickname al-Rabaḍī, that is, “al-Ḥakam of the suburb” Al-Ḥakam banished the construction of new buildings in the suburb area and took the necessary measures to ensure the departure from Secunda of its surviving dwellers, numbered around 15,000 people. Some of them took shelter in Toledo, another group crossed the sea in Almería and arrived in Fes, where they settled in the *‘udwat al-andalusiyyīn*, and the most resourceful took to the sea, journeying to Alexandria and conquering Crete.¹⁰

Al-Ḥakam’s policies, even if they appear clouded by his unending struggle against rebels, encompass an articulated set of measures intended to strengthen the rule of the Umayyad Cordobans in al-Andalus and to ensure a smooth power transition, untroubled by contesting Umayyad claimants.

First, he endeavoured to appoint his sons, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and al-Mughīra, as rulers and left a written will, where all provisions for the new *amīr* accession were clearly stated, that is, no room for contingencies or unpreparedness, even if the designation of an heir apparent (*walī’l-‘ahd*) was, and would be, a matter of contention for the Umayyad family.

Second, al-Ḥakam resolved to make the necessary arrangements for building a professional salaried full-time army, paid with the proceeds of taxation and recruited from expensive purchases in the slave market, a slow and costly process. But it allowed the *amīr* to have an efficient, compliant and faithful army, whose soldiers had neither links with nor affection toward al-Ḥakam’s subjects, either Arabs, Berbers or *muwalladūn*. These men allowed him to resist and eventually quell the uprising of the suburb and their value as soldiers, as well as his loyalty, was beyond doubt. Their foreign origin, even as some of them were reportedly Christian captives, made it impossible for the Cordoban citizens to address them and to get an answer, therefore, the members of al-Ḥakam’s army were known as *al-khurs* (the dumb/mute ones). It would take a long time to replace the levies of Andalusī soldiers, Berbers, Arabs and *muwalladūn*, and the bulk of the Cordoban Umayyads army was provided by the Arabs belonging to the *jund*, who received money and allowances from the *amīr* and fought for three months under the leadership of an Arab chieftain of their own kin. But this system would not last for a long time.

Third, al-Ḥakam increased the taxes with the goal to finance the expenditures incurred by his bodyguard of salaried soldiers of servile origin. New taxes were levied; the tax liability was assessed according to more stringent criteria; even fodder and meadowland were taxed. Dhimmis and Muslims alike were outraged by this policy and hated the official in charge of censuses and the poll-tax payment on the part of those subject to the *dhimma* status, a man known as the *comes* Rabī‘, son of Theodulf, who combined an uncanny ability to extract revenue with a rather unpleasant inclination to embezzle money. As al-Ḥakam was nearing the end of his life he instructed his son and *walī’l-‘ahd* to lay the

death penalty on Rabīʿ, who was crucified upside down to the cheers and relief of Cordoban citizens.¹¹

Fourth, al-Ḥakam had to reach a *modus vivendi* with the *fuqahāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ* in al-Andalus, who considered his fiscal policy, mainly articulated in the inception of new and non-canonical taxes – assessed and levied with no regard toward Islamic law – as fully unlawful. It was not an easy matter and the unrest behind the *rabāḍ* uprising was duly fuelled by conspiracies articulated around the *fuqahāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ* in Cordoba; men like Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā al-Laythī, ʿIsā ibn Dīnār al-Ghāfiqī and Ṭālūt ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-Maʿāfirī.¹² Even if a good number of *fuqahāʾ* and *ʿulamāʾ* claimed that collaboration and service to the ruler was a grave sin, al-Ḥakam nonetheless restored some kind of balance with them in the last years of his rule.

Fifth, al-Ḥakam increasingly relied on men whose loyalty toward him was unquestionable, regardless of their backgrounds or ethnic affiliation. The paramount instance of this confidence was the career of ʿAmrūs ibn Yūsuf, a *muwallad* appointed governor of Toledo and the Upper Frontier (*al-thaḡhr al-aʿlā*), who succeeded in restoring the *amīr*'s authority in two areas where the hold of the Cordoban Umayyads was not strong. Besides this, ancient war captives who had become clients – *mawālī* – like Ḥudayr Abū Mūsā al-Madhbūḥ and Bazīʿ, enjoyed the full confidence of the *amīr*.

Appointment and public designation of an heir apparent (*walīʾ-l-ʾahd*), recruitment of an increasingly professional and salaried army, implementation of a sound, comprehensive and powerful fiscal machinery, the tug-of-war between the requirements of Islamic law and the day-to-day intricacies of rule and taxes, and the reliance upon men directly linked to the ruler, all these features figure prominently in the policy of al-Ḥakam and their ultimate goal was the strengthening of the authority and power of the Cordoban Umayyad that ruled the country. As happened with the case of Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander, known as the Great, the son reaped the benefits of the policies of his father. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, son of al-Ḥakam, harvested the fruits of his father's rule, as will be seen.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Awsaṭ (206/822–238/852)¹³

The new ruler's accession was untroubled, but ʿAbd Allāh, the uncle of the late *amīr* al-Ḥakam, who had opposed the proclamation of the second and the third Umayyad Cordoban emirs, left Valencia and proceeded toward Cordoba. The threat to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ended when ʿAbd Allāh suffered a stroke and died shortly after in Tudmir (Murcia), the farthest point in his attempt to reach Cordoba.

Before being appointed heir apparent (*walīʾ-l-ʾahd*) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān led the armies in forays against rebels in the frontiers and prevented the Frankish army of Louis the Pious from taking Tortosa, a deed achieved with the help of the frontier army, headed by ʿAmrūs ibn Yūsuf with local levies (*ḥashd*) and volunteers (*muṭṭawwiʿa*) (193/809).¹⁴ Notwithstanding the *amīr*'s army success, the loss of Barcelona, conquered by Luis the Pious in 185/801, was irretrievable despite the

campaigns and ravages brought about by Umayyad armies in the area during the rule of al-Ḥakam and his son ‘Abd al-Raḥmān.

Peacefulness, security and good order were the hallmarks of the situation in the frontier during the rule of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, even if these trends cannot be understood in absolute terms. In Ibn Ḥayyān’s *al-Muqtabis* there is an outline of a letter sent by the governor (‘*āmil*) of Tortosa, ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā, to the *amīr* ‘Abd al-Raḥmān himself.¹⁵ The text offers the reader a minute account of expenses met by the governor with the tax income of cultivated land owned by Muslims (‘*ushūr* – tithes) and the revenue of the poll-tax required from the non-Muslim subjects (dhimmis) (*jazā*), a term also applied in some instances to other taxes. This money was spent in ransoming captives, in the maintenance and upkeep of military strongholds, in providing horses for the ablest men, and the strengthening of the frontier. Besides this, there are fiscal assignments (*qaṭā’i*) for a detachment of the salaried professional army belonging directly to the bodyguard of the *amīr* – the so-called *al-khurs*, ‘the mute’, as they were non-Arabs and initially could not speak Arabic – sent by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān himself. These men, all of them on horseback, had their wages (*al-rawātib*), their cash expenses (*al-naḥḥāqāt*) and their provisions (‘*ulūfāt*) paid with these assignments. At the end of the letter, it can be read that the fiscal agents (‘*ummāl*) of ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā each had a monthly wage of 100 gold coins, paid in silver coins (100 *dīnār darāhim*) and the governor received an annual fixed stipend of 1,000 gold coins (*yanḥaḍu ma’rūfahu li’l-‘ām alf dīnār*), every payment coming from the tax income. The governor had written the letter to the *amīr* because the latter had previously sent to the frontier a detachment of his bodyguard (*khurs*) and ‘Ubayd Allāh explained that he had with him his own detachment, 100 men strong, all of them young militarily trained people (*ghilmān*) as well as his clients (*mawālīhi*), faithful and reliable.

The data contained in this letter give invaluable information about the condition of the frontier, but we do not have other documents to check and compare with this one, a not unusual feature of Arabic sources like *al-Muqtabis* or *al-Bayān al-mughrib*. The statements given here about tax revenue, money and wages should not allow us to infer that the arrangements described could be ranked as a real and duly verified account of fiscal administration in the frontier and in the whole al-Andalus, but the lack of archival data for this age and the variety and richness of the language used enables us to consider that this letter reflected, at least for the Upper Frontier, a complex fiscal structure, which would not have worked in isolation, and required regular censuses, officials in charge of tax liability and tribute allotment, and, last but not least, coinage. In fact, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān II’s first measure upon his accession was the purchase of his brother’s shares in the foreign slaves bought by his father, known as *al-khurs* (*an abtā’a anṣibā’a ikhwatihi mim al-mamālik al-‘ajam*), 3,000 horsemen and 2,000 infantrymen.¹⁶ At least, he had enough available bodyguards for sending detachments to the frontier and his ability to buy them implies, at least, a regular payment of wages, horses, clothes, food and weapons.

The contrast between al-Ḥakam, who fought in dire straits for his own life in Cordoba, seat and headquarters of the Umayyad family, and his son ‘Abd al-Raḥmān,

who had a quite untroubled rule, cannot be sharper. The Banū Qasī, who later became a source of turmoil and dissidence for the Umayyads, did not cause trouble in the Upper Frontier and when the *amīr* found himself attacked by an unexpected and powerful foe coming out of the blue he did not hesitate in asking for their help. The call was answered by Lubd ibn Mūsā ibn Mūsā (d. 262/876) who left the frontier in order to fight the *majūs*, i.e., the Vikings, who had landed unexpectedly and followed the Guadalquivir river, ravaging the countryside of Seville and the city itself (229–230/844). This Viking onslaught receives due attention in Arabic sources and the *amīr*, who succeeded in defeating the invaders after a set of pitched battles, invested new resources in the building of a regular war fleet and a network of coastal defences and watchtowers, whose usefulness was fully revealed during the rule of his son Muḥammad. When the Vikings returned in force (244/858), there was no landing in the Guadalquivir mouth as they found the shore duly protected and a fleet ready to engage them.¹⁷

To ask if ‘Abd al-Raḥmān should have taken the necessary steps for putting a fleet to sea if the Vikings had not landed in al-Andalus is a pointless question. The building, manning and maintenance of a war fleet are a luxury that only a powerful state with huge revenue, that is, a substantial tax income, can afford. With ‘Abd al-Raḥmān we discover that the Umayyad Cordobans fulfilled this condition: *al-Muqtabis*, and other sources as well, explain with delight how ‘Abd al-Raḥmān undertook the building of a mint in Cordoba (*dār al-sikka*) and started to mint gold coins (*dīnār*) and silver coins (*dirham*), together with the construction of workshops for the production of embroidered silk and luxurious fabrics (*tīrāz*) and the building of a treasure (*khizāna*).¹⁸ In addition to these measures, he appointed a new official in care of the city market, the *ṣāhib al-sūq*. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s rule witnessed the arrival of Ziryāb, a skilled and proficient musician, poet and knowledgeable man in the culture, traditions, etiquette, literature, politesse and good taste practised in the Abbasid court at Baghdad. Ziryāb had received al-Ḥakam’s official request to come and settle in al-Andalus, but at his arrival the *amīr* was already dead. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān encouraged him to stay in al-Andalus, becoming the close confidant of the new *amīr* and opening a new and golden age of culture in al-Andalus.

As could be expected, Muḥammad, the heir apparent, became the new *amīr* upon his father death, despite the opposition of his brother ‘Abd Allāh.

The start of the *fitna*: Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (238/852–273/886)¹⁹ and al-Mundhir ibn Muḥammad (273/886–275/888)

The trend toward increasing centralization was straightforwardly clear and the consolidation of the Umayyad Cordobans’ power progressed unabated and at a good pace during the rule of Muḥammad. The centralization and consolidation of the authority, wealth and rule of the Umayyads took place in the framework of the conversion to Islam of people who were neither Arab nor Berber.

The conversion process must not be conceived as a one-sided set of changes affecting exclusively the new convert, but a two-sided process, where, on the converting side, the community losing its members to a new faith needed to adapt to new changes as the number of converts to Islam grew. On the side of Islam, the flow of new converts became a real challenge, as all of them brought to the new faith, even as they converted, a new background, a new experience and myriad personal approaches to faith, worship and communal life, depending on the convert age, gender, cultural background and social position. These are the main issues associated with a conversion process from the individual stance of the new faithful, but it must be taken into account that conversion was also a community matter, as whole groups, families, and tribes changed their previous faith to Islam.²⁰

The age of the *amīr* Muḥammad witnessed a sharp rise in the number of rebellions and uprisings in the frontiers with an active participation of lineages of *muwallad* stock. These allied with the northern Christian kings, aristocrats and warlords to break with the *amīr*'s authority, a pattern of alliances that changed as the strength of Cordoba increased and the *muwallad* lineages sought to be accepted into the *amīr*'s obedience and forgiveness. The giving of hostages, the reimbursement of tax arrears, the stationing of detachments of the *amīr*'s army as garrisons in strongholds and cities, and the help provided by the submitting *muwallad* leaders in expeditions against the Christians, that is, *al-jihād fī sabil Allāh*, were the token of his acceptance of Cordoba's rule, which was recorded in the surrender covenant (*amān*) with a detailed account of duties to be fulfilled.²¹ This pattern repeats itself uninterrupted during the rule of the *amīr* Muḥammad and his son al-Mundhir. The main players were the *muwalladūn* of Mérida and its hinterland, close to the frontier, led by Ibn Marwān al-Jilliqī, and the *muwalladūn* of the Upper Frontier, where the Banū Qasī fought enthusiastically against the *amīr* and against other Arab and *muwallad* lineages. Also, the inhabitants of Toledo and surrounding areas, where there was no number superiority for either *muwalladūn*, Arab or Berber, fought among themselves and against the *amīr*. The *muwallad* activity in some areas was not a novelty, but the increasing pace, intensity and frequency of their struggle showed that the strength and cohesiveness of the new converts was a matter for concern, a problem aggravated by shortfalls and failure in tax collecting that went hand in hand with tax arrears and grievous assessing of tax liability. In fact, the main issue to be solved was the conflict between an increasingly and efficiently exacting tax machinery, pervading every level of society and extremely thorough, and the interest of the *muwalladūn*, Arabs and Berbers, all of them Muslims, in evading the sway of taxes, tributes and contributions, a goal that they managed to achieve as their numbers, and specifically of the *muwalladūn*, were growing. Scholars such as M. Ación Almansa and E. Manzano have correctly subsumed this growing conflict under the conflicting ways of wealth appropriation inherent to the duality tax-rent (i.e. wealth appropriation taking place through the state as tribute or the landlord class exacting payments from peasants as rent, paid in produce, coin or work). But this explanatory framework could be enriched by also taking into account the contentious issues of power transmission among the Cordoban Umayyads, which continued to plague the dynasty; the increasing number of new converts to Islam

with the subsequent decrease in tax returns for the Umayyad's treasure as they did not have to pay the poll-tax (*jizya*) required by Islamic law on Jews and Christians and the converts yearning for a better life; and, last but not least, the lines of tribal and communal affiliation that divided the community of the faithful (*umma*) in al-Andalus.²² A reading of the sources shows a situation of unending strife, general unrest, Sisyphean and unfruitful Umayyad efforts to restore order and, eventually, Muslims fighting Muslims, Arabs against non-Arabs, that is, Berber and *muwalladūn*, and against the Umayyads themselves. This was an age of turmoil, unlawfulness and violence, where the survival of the community of the faithful was in severe danger, that is the age of *fitna*, with Christian kings and counts beyond the frontier breaking the frontier almost unpunished. This drama was not lacking in players, and the main character was 'Umar ibn Ḥaḥṣūn.

'Umar ibn Ḥaḥṣūn, the *muwallad*, and Hāshim ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, the Umayyad *mawlā*: two sides of the same coin

Both men were contemporaries, and both had ability, courage, strength, shrewdness and ambition, a set of qualities allowing them to follow a political career in the administration of the Umayyad Cordobans, and everywhere. Both tried to fulfil this goal, one of them met with failure, the other became successful. The main explanation lies in the family background of 'Umar ibn Ḥaḥṣūn, the *muwallad*, and Hāshim ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, the Umayyad client (*mawlā*). The former had no link with the Umayyad ruling house besides his condition as a Muslim, the latter was the scion of a family of Umayyad clients, faithful followers and loyal supporters of the dynasty, who provided them with wealth and prestige. Hāshim ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, and like him the overwhelming majority of Umayyad clients (*mawālī*), was not intent on sharing this situation with other people. And, of course, he was not ready to accept even the presence of 'Umar ibn Ḥaḥṣūn, a *muwallad* parvenu without previous service to the Cordoban Umayyads, in the *amīr*'s palace. Both men met there. The able and recently arrived Ibn Ḥaḥṣūn was bent on making a political career. Hāshim ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, with a display of haughtiness, and as had happened before with other *muwallad* strongmen, earned the enmity of 'Umar ibn Ḥaḥṣūn, who decided to break with Umayyad rule altogether and to hoist his standard in Bobastro. Neither the *amīr* Muḥammad nor his son, heir apparent and next *amīr*, al-Mundhir, managed to stop him. In fact, al-Mundhir died, injured by a stray arrow when he besieged Bobastro, Ibn Ḥaḥṣūn's stronghold and rallying point for the struggle against the Umayyads.²³

'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad, the *fitna* and the Umayyad family (275/888–300/912)²⁴

'Abd Allāh, al-Mundhir's brother, was the right man in the right place. Upon al-Mundhir's death, according to some sources by a stray arrow in Bobastro, according to some others owing to poison administered by his own brother 'Abd

Allāh, the Umayyad army lifted the siege stealthily and withdrew to Cordoba, where ‘Abd Allāh received the oath of allegiance.

The extant volume of *al-Muqtabis* covering the rule of the *amīr* ‘Abd Allāh is a huge patchwork of the chieftains, urban and rural, Arab, Berber, and *muwallad*, who fought among them in a web of changing alliances, sudden betrayal and contested legitimacy, which developed along lines of tribal affiliation. Notwithstanding it, the Umayyad *amīr* practised a policy of wait-and-see and was ready to give his consent to the communities that required him to ratify the rulers chosen by them, as happened in Pechina, or to appoint a governor when a request was sent to him, as was the case in Tortosa. In both cases, ‘Abd Allāh had no choice but to accept what should be called a *fait accompli* in the case of Pechina and to satisfy graciously a demand of Tortosa’s people, who were in need of a governor. In fact, ‘Abd Allāh, even if he had no part in the governors’ appointment, understood that the people in Tortosa and Pechina had turned to him in order to achieve his blessing and to invest their *de facto* autonomous rule with legitimacy.²⁵

‘Abd Allāh was a very suspicious, mean, religious and cautious man, perhaps this was his nature, but perhaps the scenario of the *fitna* did not allow him to proceed otherwise. In fact, distrust and close surveillance toward his own family assured his survival, as the Umayyads, living at the lowest ebb of their political career in al-Andalus, could have viewed a change of ruler as a key to improve their situation. The lack of munificence attributed to ‘Abd Allāh might not have been a trait of his character but could have been motivated by the fact that most areas in al-Andalus had stopped sending taxes to Cordoba. Thus, the *amīr* needed to exert a tight, minute, even suffocating, control over expenditure and income, even if he retained the control of the province of Cordoba. The relationship of ‘Abd Allāh with the *fuqahā*’ and *‘ulamā*’ was very close as he needed the legitimacy provided by their support: to break with them would have been straightforward foolishness. The cautiousness and prudence of the *amīr* ‘Abd Allāh bring to us the image of, at least, a fearful man. He was a middle-aged man, he had not the training of a warrior but, when the need arose, he led the army against Ibn Ḥafṣūn at Poley (277–278/891), where the *muwallad* suffered a defeat.

Notwithstanding the prevailing conditions and the dangers threatening ‘Abd Allāh in his own palace, he succeeded in taking the unavoidable steps to ensure a smooth succession for an heir apparent carefully chosen and groomed. He was not one of his sons, cousins, uncles or brothers; he was his grandson, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, who was duly proclaimed as *amīr* upon the death of his grandfather and received the oath of allegiance.²⁶ A very difficult task awaited him, but he proved to be ready and, eventually, successful.

‘Abd al-Raḥmān, from *amīr* to *amīr al-mu’minīn* (300/912–350/961)²⁷

The proclamation of the Umayyad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh (300/912–350/961) as commander of the faithful (*amīr al-mu’minīn*) in the year 316/929 was the end of the turmoil of the infighting (*fitna*) that ravaged in al-Andalus from *circa* 261/875 and reached its culmination during the reign of his



Map 3.1 The Cordoban Umayyad Caliphate

grandfather and predecessor, ‘Abd Allāh, when the country was torn apart by northern marauding Christians and by fiercely contending Arabs, Berbers and converts to Islam who opposed the Umayyads of Cordoba. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān took the caliphal titles of al-Nāṣir li-dīn Allāh and al-Qa’im bi-amr Allāh and proclaimed his purpose of extending his authority to the whole community of believers. This led him to wage war in the Maghrib against the Umayyad’s arch foe, the Fatimid Caliphate of al-Mahdiyya (296/909–358/969), ruling in the Eastern and Central Maghrib (Tunisia and Algeria), and against the Idrissids (179/789–375/985) of the Western Maghrib (Morocco). He conquered Ceuta (319/931) across the Strait and sent money, weapons, luxurious presents and pieces of silk brocade (*tīrāz*) to the Banū Khazar of the Zanāta and to the Banū Abī’l-‘Āfiya of the Miknasa, and to every Berber tribal chieftain ready to leave the Fatimid fold. As the head of the community of believers ‘Abd al-Raḥmān renewed the *jihād fi sabīl Allāh*, brought the Caliphate armies against the Christian counts and kings beyond the frontiers and succeeded in restoring the integrity of al-Andalus. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III’s campaigns recovered to some extent the lands conquered by the Christians during the disorders of ‘Abd Allāh’s rule (275/888–300/912), and that in spite of the defeat inflicted on ‘Abd al-Raḥmān in Simancas-Alhándega (939) by Ramiro II, king of Leon, where the caliph was routed and almost captured by the defection of some frontier contingents of his army.

After this defeat, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān focused on the last stage of the construction of his new palace-complex city, al-Madīna al-Zahrā’ (The most shining city), lying five kilometres north-west of Cordoba, where architecture, space

arrangements and the full structure of the palatial city conveyed a message of unity, order, prosperity, conceived and developed in detail by the caliph and his heir apparent, al-Ḥakam.²⁸ The caliph's full attention in the building of al-Madīna al-Zahrā' did not divert him from learning the lessons of his defeat at Simancas-Alhándega, which prompted him to take the necessary measures for avoiding a new disaster and to restore the confidence and readiness of the army. He decided, after a long life of campaigns, sieges and battles, neither to lead in person another foray nor to wage war with large armies, but to harass the frontiers with a set of continuous incursions, staged from Cordoba, carefully planned in advance, and led by men that enjoyed the trust of the caliph, most of them Umayyad *mawālī*, closely linked with the dynasty before the landing of 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil in Burriana (138/756). These men received the help and guidance of the garrisons and governors deployed on the border, who had life-long experience of fighting counts and Christian kings and were under 'Abd al-Raḥmān's close surveillance. This new approach to war eventually brought peace to the frontier and the caliph was able to benefit from dynastic troubles in the Christian kingdoms of Leon and Navarra, allowing him to intervene in their internal policies, as they sought the caliph's alliance and help.²⁹

'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir succeeded in redressing the defeat of Simancas-Alhándega and proceeded to introduce changes in the army, which were not new and can be traced back to al-Ḥakam al-Rabaḍī. Both Umayyads distinguished themselves for their concern in building a professional salaried full-time army and Caliph al-Nāṣir invested a huge amount of money in buying slaves to replenish the army ranks, to provide it with fully reliable military commanders and, eventually, to dispense with the Arab soldiers enrolled and registered in the *jund*. These slaves were known as *ṣaqālība* (sing. *ṣiqḻabī*), a name related to their origin, that is, the Slavic communities of the Balkans and Eastern Europe, even if this name has been used as a generic denomination for slaves bought in Eurasia, neither African nor Turks. The caliphal guard at al-Madīna al-Zahrā' amounted to 3,950 *ṣaqālība* and the eunuchs in charge of al-Nāṣir's *ḥuram*, that is, the women of his extended family, all belonged to the *ṣaqālība*, to whom the caliph entrusted high dignities and bestowed largesse. The caliph's upper hand in his dealings with the Christian kingdoms and counties can be explained by the above-mentioned changes in the strategic approach in war. Nevertheless, it would have been fruitless without a careful and active diplomacy policy that encompassed the whole Iberian Peninsula, the post-Carolingian world, the Mediterranean basin, the Maghrib and Byzantium.

Box 3.1 Hasdai ibn Shaprut (ca. 900–910–ca. 970)

David J. Wasserstein

Of a Jewish family originally from Jaén, Hasdai b. Isaac b. Ezra ibn Shaprut worked for 'Abd al-Raḥmān III al-Nāṣir and al-Ḥakam II al-Mustaṣhir, rising to become a senior official in the customs. The prototype of the court Jew, he used his medical knowledge to treat a royal invalid in northern Spain, strengthening Cordoban influence there as

a result. His multilingual abilities enabled him to persuade an envoy from the Holy Roman Emperor Otto to obtain a revised, and much more respectful, letter from his sovereign to Cordoba. And he helped in the local revision of the Arabic version of the *Materia Medica* of Dioscorides sent by the Byzantine emperor as a gift to 'Abd al-Rahmān III. His success in all these roles gave him the position and the means to protect and further the interests of the Jews of al-Andalus. He deepened existing contacts between Jews in al-Andalus and the Jewish academies (*yeshivot*) in Iraq, Sura and Pumbedita, to which he sent financial support. Exploiting his contacts with the Byzantine rulers, he also corresponded with the Jewish kingdom of the Khazars beyond Byzantium. The surviving remnants of the correspondence are valuable sources for our knowledge of the Khazars, by his time declining almost to disappearance. His greater significance in Jewish history (which also contributed to early scholarly interest in his life and career) derives, however, from his support for a major Jewish cultural renaissance at home. He not only imported manuscripts of Jewish texts from the East but offered patronage to religious scholars, grammarians and poets, from al-Andalus itself and abroad. In consequence, the period from around 950 saw a remarkable florescence of Jewish cultural activity in Cordoba. His activity in the Jewish sphere parallels that of al-Ḥakam II al-Mustansir in the Islamic both in fertilizing intellectual and cultural richness and, still more, in making what looks (and in the Middle Ages looked) like a deliberate attempt to break the earlier Andalusī dependence on the religious centres and cultural models of the East and create a major new focus for Jewish culture in the West, in al-Andalus. Whether this would have occurred without the impetus given by his support has recently been questioned – Jewish cultural revivals took place elsewhere in the Islamic world in the Middle Ages too – but the Iberian revival stands out both for its quality and for the sheer bulk of what was produced; and the chronological coincidence of the Jewish renaissance there with the Islamic supports the ideas both of a calculated policy, unlike in other areas, and of the significance of Hasdai himself as patron of the renaissance.

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In 337/948 the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitos sent an embassy to Cordoba and the caliph was presented with the gift of the *Historia adversos paganos* by Paulus Orosius and the Greek original of Dioscorides' *Materia medica*, which prompted him to ask the Eastern Roman emperor for a man able to help in the translation of the Greek text. The request was fulfilled with the arrival in 340/951–952 at Cordoba of the monk Nicholas, a scholar proficient in Greek and Latin, who remained in al-Andalus for ten years and worked closely with Hasdai ibn Shaprut, the leader of the Cordoban Jewish community who worked

in the caliphal administration. The embassies between Byzantium and al-Andalus continued in the age of al-Ḥakam, heir and successor of Caliph ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, and Romanos, heir and successor of Constantine.³⁰ Otto I, the Holy Roman emperor, decided to send to Cordoba in 342/953 a delegation with the monk John of Gorze, a pious man dearly committed to achieve the caliph’s conversion to Christianity and ready to bring abuse on him if he refused. The goal of the delegation was to ask the caliph to put an end to the activities of Muslim freebooters, settled near Fraxinetum/Farakhshinṭ – la Garde Freinet³¹ – roaming at will and preying unchecked on Christian shipping and sea lanes.³² The main question underlying the legation of Otto I in 342/953, as well as the previous arrival for the first time in Cordoba, in 330/March 942, of Amalfitan merchants bringing luxurious merchandise and settling in the city,³³ and the subsequent presence of Amalfitan merchants with the messenger of the lord of Sardinia³⁴ in 330/August 942, was the high profile of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir’s policy against the Fatimids, which required the mastery of seafaring, trade networks, shipping lanes, and the building of a powerful war fleet with safe anchorages, shipyards, trained sailors, weaponry, and skilled admirals.³⁵ Al-Nāṣir managed to achieve these goals and his accomplishment brought to Cordoba all concerned with the results of trade, shipping and seafaring, three areas where the merchants of Amalfi excelled, besides other cities and polities engaged in trade around the Western Mediterranean basin.

If a late report should be given credence, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir had only fourteen days of full happiness during his forty-nine years of rule. Nevertheless, he left behind a rich, peaceful, prosperous country, united under a single ruler who, for the first time, managed to appoint his heir apparent with no trouble at all.

Al-Ḥakam al-Mustansir bi’llāh, the caliph scholar (350/961–366/976)³⁶

Al-Ḥakam was the eldest son of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir li-dīn Allāh, who decided to appoint him heir apparent and to rule in close partnership with him. This measure was intended to make al-Ḥakam a knowledgeable ruler in the matters of power exercise and a man able to cope with the hard and ungrateful load of governance. Al-Ḥakam, who became caliph when he was forty-six years old, had had enough experience and chances to hone his skills as a ruler, in fact, he ruled al-Andalus with fairness, protected the frontiers and his age became the Golden Age of Islamic culture in al-Andalus. Caliph al-Ḥakam, who had followed the same learning path as all the young men belonging to elite families, excelled in the critical analysis of the sayings of the Prophet (*ḥadīth*), knew the most ensnaring and taxing issues of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and had a deep love for books, libraries, culture, literature, rhymed prose and poetry. There is no doubt that al-Ḥakam had an outstanding record as a scholar, but if this trend would qualify him as a wise ruler, he was nonetheless a very uncommon Umayyad ruler. That is, his father, Caliph ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, left behind twelve sons and ten daughters, a not very high figure if we consider the Umayyad *amīr* ‘Abd al-Raḥmān II (206/822–237/852) and his

hundred children, fifty boys and fifty girls, even if a degree of hyperbole can be accepted. Al-Ḥakam had only two children with a woman, the slave-singer Ṣubḥ: the first, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, died very young, and the second, Hishām, was born in 354/965, when his father was fifty years old and survived his deceased brother ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. The advanced age of al-Ḥakam al-Mustaṣir and the very young age of his surviving son, Hishām, would have been an issue, but the ruling Umayyad family in al-Andalus and his relatives numbered 469 people, and here there is no hyperbole at all. There were plenty of Umayyad people, male and adult, able to rule, who could be chosen as heir apparent. The matter was not a lack of available Umayyads, but al-Ḥakam’s unassailable conviction that notwithstanding, on the one hand, Hishām’s age, on the other, the ailing caliph’s health, the third Umayyad caliph in al-Andalus was to be Hishām, son of al-Ḥakam al-Mustaṣir and grandson of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir, no matter his age when his father died or the presence of other adult Umayyad males, brothers and relatives of the caliph scholar.

Ṣubḥ al-bashkunsīyya, slave-singer (*jāriya*), childbearing mother (*umm walad*) and The Great Lady (*al-sayyida al-kubrā*)

The mother of Hishām was a slave-girl trained for singing, for making and reciting poetry, ready to indulge in very polite and fashionable conversation during literary gatherings with the caliph himself and with courtiers in the inner circle of the Umayyad palace in Cordoba or in al-Madīna al-Zahrā’, all of them keen on showing their proficiency and mastery in poetry, Arabic language and culture. Orientalism used to see slave-girls in Islamic palaces as no better than unpaid prostitutes, but Gender Studies and a more unbiased approach to the hidden world of the *ḥaram* have changed this view, at least from the scholarly viewpoint. From this vantage point, Ṣubḥ, born in the northern half of the Iberian Peninsula or in the Frankish world, bought in the slave market and brought to Cordoba, was a woman with the knowledge, touch and skill to gain al-Ḥakam’s affection with her training as a slave-singer girl. There are some hints about the relationship between al-Ḥakam, the caliph-*faqīh*-scholar-bibliophile, and Ṣubḥ, the mother of the late ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and the surviving Hishām. Al-Ḥakam loved her passionately and she bore him two sons despite his mature age, a gift that the caliph repaid by showing the utmost care toward the slave-girl, who attained the category of *umm walad* – literally, mother of a child – and eventually, the title of *Al-sayyida al-kubrā*, The Great Lady. Besides love, affection, nightly poetry sessions or scholarly discussions about difficult Arabic words, a very strong and common bond linked al-Ḥakam and Ṣubḥ: to ensure that their only surviving son, Hishām, could become the new caliph.

Ja‘far ibn ‘Uthmān al-Muṣṣafī, close friend, ancient teacher and faithful servant

An Umayyad caliph, a Fatimid Imam-caliph, an Abbasid caliph, that is, any powerful Muslim ruler, or man invested with political authority, was used to

see, to speak, to command and deal with quite a high number of people, a relationship marked, of course, by hierarchy, precedence, status and etiquette. Even so, these rulers relied on an inner circle of advisers and officials to alleviate them from day-to-day tasks and to discuss capital matters of policy. The closest person to al-Ḥakam al-Mustanşir, and his trusted friend and confidant, was Jaʿfar ibn ʿUthmān al-Muṣḥafī, also known as al-Muṣḥafī (d. 372/983). His father, ʿUthmān ibn Naşr, had taught al-Ḥakam when he was heir apparent, and Islamic scholarship gives a place of honour to teachers, prophetic tradition transmitters and people involved in the search of knowledge. Al-Ḥakam acknowledged his debt toward ʿUṯmān ibn Naşr’s teachings, putting his trust in his teacher’s son. Al-Muṣḥafī became personal secretary of al-Ḥakam before his accession to the caliphate and received, in his colleague and friend’s last years, the dignity of *ḥājib* (lit. the man in charge of the veil), the highest civil authority in al-Andalus, just behind the caliph himself.

Al-Muṣḥafī knew the most intimate and dearest wishes of his friend, Caliph al-Ḥakam al-Mustanşir, who suffered a bout of hemiplegia in the last years of his life. As al-Ḥakam’s ailing health and late age were bringing him to a slow and painful death, al-Muṣḥafī did his best to assure him that Hishām, al-Ḥakam’s only son and heir, could be proclaimed caliph, despite being a child at the time of his father’s death and against the wishes of the late caliph’s Umayyad relatives, all of them adult, male and sound, but unused to the daily tasks of rule. Al-Muṣḥafī succeeded in a very difficult undertaking. The person who helped him to overcome the court parties and to fulfil the dearest wish of al-Ḥakam was a young man in his thirties, Muḥammad ibn Abī ʿĀmir, who will be known by his honorific name, or *laqab*, al-Manşūr, which means “the victorious”.

Box 3.2 Almanzor

Xavier Ballestín

His full name was Abū ʿĀmir Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik al-Maʿāfirī, known by the honorific title al-Manşūr (325/938–392/1002) which means “the victorious”. This title appears in Spanish, Catalan and Latin chronicles as Almanzor/Almansor.

Almanzor, or Muḥammad ibn Abī ʿĀmir, belonged to a southern tribe, Maʿāfir, and was born in a family settled in the Iberian Peninsula from 92/711 onwards: that is, the first member of the Almanzor family to settle in al-Andalus arrived there with the army of Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād. His life and career are a clear instance of astonishing success, a fact stressed in the Arabic sources, and grudgingly acknowledged in the Latin sources, even if some Muslim scholars, in al-Andalus and al-Maghrib, writing with the benefit of hindsight, viewed the roots of the eventual collapse of Umayyad power and political unity in al-Andalus in his policies toward the Umayyads, the incumbent caliph, the army and the Arabs in al-Andalus.

He led around fifty-two campaigns against Christian kingdoms and counties in the northern half of the Iberian Peninsula, storming the main cities and defeating the Christian armies everywhere between 366/976 and 392/1002, bearing in mind that it was not an age of pitched battles. His campaigns also brought the Umayyad armies to the Maghrib. From the viewpoint of classical Islamic jurisprudence, al-Manṣūr was paramount in the practice of *jihād fi sabīl Allāh*, striving in the path of God to protect the community of the faithful and to bring humiliation and defeat to the unbelievers.

The young al-Manṣūr started his career following in the steps of his own father, a renowned pious and ascetic Islamic scholar, who died in Tripoli (Libya) or in Raqqada, near Qayrawan, on his way back from the pilgrimage to Mecca, around 349/961. In order to achieve this goal, like most male youngsters in well-to-do Muslim families, he studied Islamic law to become a jurist, heard the sayings of the Prophet from renowned traditionists and acquired a deep knowledge of the Arabic language, culture and literature. There is nothing unusual in the young al-Manṣūr's training: all elite families took pains to provide their sons with this kind of knowledge.

But this knowledge eventually brought him to exert the full authority associated with the caliphal dignity, on behalf of the caliph himself. Hishām al-Mu'ayyad conferred to al-Manṣūr in a formal declaration, read aloud in the mosques of al-Andalus, the rule in his name. After al-Manṣūr's death, his two sons, al-Muẓaffār and al-Nāṣir, were granted the same powers. While the first continued his father's policies of being the *de facto* ruler while maintaining the caliph as the head of the community of the faithful, the second opened the gates for the civil war (*fitna*) and the fall of the caliphate when he replaced Hishām.

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The career and background of Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Āmir, known as al-Manṣūr

Al-Manṣūr (325–392/938–1002) was born in a family whose ancestor, 'Abd al-Malik, an Arab man belonging to the Ma'āfir tribe of the Qaḥṭān confederation, arrived with the overwhelmingly Berber army of Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād, who landed in Algeciras bay in 92/711, near the mountain that will be known as the mountain of Ṭāriq – Jabal Ṭāriq (Gibraltar).³⁷ 'Abd al-Malik lived in Carteya and in Torrox, where al-Manṣūr was born. Like most male youngsters in well-to-do Muslim families, he acquired in Cordoba the learning that would enable him to become an Islamic scholar (*faqīh*) with a deep knowledge of jurisprudence, prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*), Arabic language, culture and literature. There was nothing in his early years or in his training as a *faqīh* that could be singled out as a main

source or driving force behind his political career, in fact, Islamic scholars tried to avoid close relationship with the trappings of power. The common trend in all sources, pointed out by all historians and ever present in al-Manṣūr's life, was the excellence achieved in his studies, which made him a very able and competent official, to whom the most demanding and difficult tasks were entrusted and fulfilled with full effectiveness.

His first appointment in the administration of the Umayyads of Cordoba was the stewardship and property management (*wakāla*) of the new-born first son of Caliph al-Ḥakam al-Mustaṣfir and his slave-singer-poet-lover (*jāriya*), a child called 'Abd al-Raḥmān like his grandfather. This first designation and his full career as an official allowed him to establish a wide network of alliances, a working knowledge of the administration, and to enjoy the full confidence of Ṣubḥ and al-Muṣḥafi, the two power brokers behind the caliph.

Hishām al-Mu'ayyad bi'llāh (366/976–399/1009) and *al-dawla al-'āmiriyya* (371/981–399/1009)

Al-Ḥakam al-Mustaṣfir entrusted al-Muṣḥafi and al-Manṣūr with holding the oath of allegiance to his son and heir before his own death, a pledge duly renewed on al-Ḥakam's death, shortly after a failed conspiracy to proclaim al-Mughīra ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, al-Ḥakam's brother and Hishām's uncle, as caliph. Al-Muṣḥafi had no qualms when he sent al-Manṣūr to kill the Umayyad al-Mughīra, as he understood that the position of *ḥājib* was eventually conferred on him by the late caliph to ensure Hishām's rule. But there was a radical change. The death of al-Ḥakam al-Mustaṣfir (366/976) ended altogether the power of the Cordoban Umayyads. That is, the *dawla marwāniyya*, the age when the Umayyads ruled in their own right and possessed both the caliphal legitimacy and the ability to command and to forbid, had finished.³⁸ The authority, the political power, the waging of war, the striving in the path of God and to enforce good and forbid evil, in a word, the *sultān* of the legitimate Umayyad caliph, was in the hands of al-Manṣūr, also known as Ibn Abī 'Āmir, and this new *dawla* would be known as *dawla 'āmiriyya*, that is, the age where the progeny of 'Āmir exerted full political power in the name of the incumbent caliph. Al-Manṣūr attained this goal after a pitched battle at the tower of San Vicente, where he crushed the army of Ghālib ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, a freedman from the *ṣaqāliba* of the first caliph, and his Christian allies from the county of Castile (371/981). After that, no one managed to overthrow al-Manṣūr, who decided to give himself that surname, "the victorious". He felt secure and confident in the new palatial city that he had started to build in the outskirts of Cordoba, al-Madīna al-Zāhira, "The shining city". Al-Manṣūr's rule remained unchecked, even if there was no lack of conspiracies and attempts to overthrow him and replace Caliph Hishām with another Umayyad. The only real threat during his successful career came when Ṣubḥ, Hishām's mother, tried to urge her son to rule by himself and, eventually, dismiss al-Manṣūr, a dismissal tantamount to death for the man whose career had started under the acquiescence of the mother's caliph. Despite Ṣubḥ's planning, which included the stealthy removal of silver and gold from al-

Madīna al-Zahrā', and the appearance of a Berber chief of the Zanāta in the Maghrib, Zīrī ibn 'Aṭīyya, who denounced al-Manṣūr for preventing the caliph from the exercise of power, al-Manṣūr eventually surmounted the threats. He then required the caliph himself to issue a formal declaration (c. 997–998), read aloud in the mosques of al-Andalus, conferring on al-Manṣūr's sons, 'Abd al-Malik (392/1002–399/1008) and 'Abd al-Raḥmān (399/1008–1009), the title of *ḥājib* and the legitimizing caliphal approval as rulers of al-Andalus and the Maghrib upon their father's death. Al-Manṣūr died in the north-eastern frontier, near Castile, in 392/1002, and was buried in Medinaceli. His son 'Abd al-Malik left the place for Cordoba and brought the news of his father's death to Caliph Hishām, who appointed him *ḥājib* and entrusted him with the government and the day-to-day tasks of rule. 'Abd al-Malik (392/1002–399/1008), a courageous warrior who had already fought pitched battles in the northern frontier and in the Maghrib, followed the path of his father, and after his fifth incursion against the Christians (398/1007) he asked the caliph to give him an honorific surname (*laqab*). Hishām acquiesced and gave him al-Muẓaffār, "the supported and triumphant", and 'Abd al-Malik al-Muẓaffār managed to rule al-Andalus in the name of the caliph. Nevertheless, a man who had enjoyed previously the full confidence of al-Manṣūr and belonged to the inner circle of al-Muẓaffār, 'Īsā ibn Sa'īd al-Yaḥṣubī, attempted to oust al-Muẓaffār and to replace Hishām with another Umayyad, a man called Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Jabbār ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir. 'Īsā ibn Sa'īd's coup backfired and al-Muẓaffār killed him and Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Jabbār in 397/1006. The last years of al-Muẓaffār's life were spent in the daily routine of rule and *jihād*, till he died, like his father, during an incursion against the Christians, which ended before the army arrived at the frontier (399/1008).

Caliph Hishām received the news of al-Muẓaffār's death from the latter's brother, 'Abd al-Raḥmān, who was invested with the dignity of *ḥājib* and received the honorific surnames of al-Nāṣir and al-Ma'mūn, "the faithful". The appointment of 'Abd al-Raḥmān and the smooth transference of power and authority showed the strength of the *dawla 'amiriyya*, but the deeds of 'Abd al-Raḥmān (399/1008–1009) were to prove the undoing of the family and the outbreak of the *fitna*.

'Abd al-Raḥmān was the son of al-Manṣūr and of 'Abda, the daughter of king Sancho Garcés of Navarra, and the boy was known by the nickname of Sanjūl, that is, Sanchuelo, a name that has been related to his maternal grandfather, Sancho Garcés. Some sources explicitly state that the real meaning of Sanjūl was "the stupid one" and the word *sancho* means also "swine", that is, Sanjūl meant also "piglet". Those are not flattering nicknames, of course, but the Arabic sources did not mince unpleasant words for Sanjūl. What did he do to deserve the almost universal damnation of scholars, historians and men of knowledge? Besides his personal life and values, distorted in the sources, he convinced Caliph Hishām al-Mu'ayyad, childless and already in his middle age, to appoint him heir apparent. Neither al-Manṣūr nor al-Muẓaffār would have dared to take this unprecedented step, as their real power rested on Hishām's acquiescence for them to rule in his name. But Sanjūl, who ruled in the name of the caliph, threatened and pressured Hishām into producing a document, duly written by the Cordoban judge Ibn

Dhakwān, where Caliph Hishām declared that Sanjūl, that is, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir al-Ma’mūn, had to be the next caliph after his death. The document amounted to depriving the Umayyads of the caliphate that had been theirs since the age of al-Nāṣir, and before that, since the age of Mu‘āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān. A radical, sudden and unexpected change, that rallied the Umayyads against Sanchuelo, but the *dawla ‘āmiriyya* was strong, the army stayed behind them, and the Umayyads remained powerless. But things would change completely.

If a woman, Şubḥ, had helped al-Manşūr in the first stage of his successful political career, which brought about the *dawla ‘āmiriyya*, another woman, al-Dhalfā’, mother of al-Muẓaffar and suspicious that Sanjūl was responsible for her son’s illness and death, brought the *dawla ‘āmiriyya* to an end. Al-Dhalfā’ provided the Umayyads with money, help and accurate intelligence. On the one hand, they had been dispossessed of the caliphate by Sanjūl, who was neither Umayyad nor Qurashi, on the other hand, Muḥammad ibn Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbār, the surviving son of the man killed by al Muẓaffar together with ‘Īsā ibn Sa’īd, was ready to act. This Umayyad – who will be known as Muḥammad al-Mahdī – killed Sanjūl, deposed Hishām, and proclaimed himself caliph (400/1009). He destroyed the *dawla ‘āmiriyya* and started the *fitna*. Al-Madīna al-Zāhira, the palatial city of al-Manşūr, was burned, sacked and utterly destroyed. Cordoba was besieged and stormed. The golden age of al-Andalus ended.

Notes

- 1 For a comprehensive view of the surnames and honorific titles given to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān see Meouak, “Notes sur les titres”, 353–370, 362–363, 363.
- 2 Martínez Enamorado, “Y al-Dājil arribó a al-Andalus”.
- 3 Ibn ‘Idhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, vol. II, 57.
- 4 Marín, “El *Halcón Maltés* del arabismo español”. P. Chalmeta has pointed out the remarkably Hollywood flavour in ‘Abd al-Rahman’s life, which deserved a blockbuster movie: Chalmeta, *Invasión e islamización*, 349.
- 5 Manzano Moreno, *Conquistadores, emires y califas*, 195, 531 endnote 6; Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire de l’Espagne musulmane*, vol. I, 139–141; Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, 38–39. Ibn ‘Idhārī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib*, vol. II, p. 63.
- 6 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 89r-91r; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 16–28. Quesada is in Jaén, near the Sierra de Cazorla. Ibn Ḥayyān collects all the available sources reporting the war between al-Ḥakam and his uncles. The accounts about Sulaymān’s attempt to overthrow al-Ḥakam differ on how many pitched battles were held between uncle and nephew, where these engagements took place and how Sulaymān was captured and executed, but there is no disagreement around the main lines of the facts, the eventual defeat of Sulaymān, who bore the brunt of defeat in each engagement, and al-Ḥakam’s interest in giving his protection to his uncle’s family, settled in Cordoba after Sulaymān’s death. This wealth of accurate detail and thorough source compilation is the trademark of the extant volumes of *al-Muqtabis*.
- 7 The name *muwallad* (Spanish *muladí*) was used to identify new converts to Islam who were neither Arabs nor Berbers. They converted in the framework of a patronage relationship (*walā’*), which brought them to Islam as clients (*mawlā*, pl. *mawālī*) of a Muslim Arab and members of the Arab tribe to which their Arab patron, also called *mawlā*, belonged. It was not the only way to become a Muslim, even converted *mawālī* could have *mawālī* of their own and not all the *muwallads* in al-Andalus took true interest in following suit with their

- Arabic patrons. The political relevance of *muwallad*, Berber and Arab (either Yaman or Qays) lineages in the Upper March was paralleled in other areas of al-Andalus, like the countryside around Mérida (The Lower March, *al-thaḡhr al-adnā*), Toledo (the Middle March, *al-thaḡhr al-awsaḡ*), Algarve (*Gharb al-Andalus*), the Mediterranean coast (Sharq al-Andalus) and Andalucía itself. For a thorough analysis of the *muwallad* lineage of the Banū Qasī and his policy see Lorenzo, *La dawla de los Banū Qasī*. The meaning and interpretation of the term *muwallad* have been dealt by Fierro, “*Mawālī and muwalladūn in al-Andalus*” and this subject receives due attention in Chapter 9.
- 8 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 92v-95r; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 28–35. There is a word in the chapter title devoted to this matter in *al-Muqtabis*, which gives an almost graphic idea about the events: ‘hecatomb’. Ibn Ḥayyān sources do not agree in the figures.
 - 9 The story of the civet flask and the cold courage of al-Ḥakam when the people of Secunda were on the brink of victory can be found and read in detail in *al-Muqtabis*: Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 111v; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 79, where Ibn Ḥayyān expanded on the Secunda suburb rebellion, which almost managed to end altogether Umayyad power in al-Andalus: Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 103v-110r; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 55–75. In fact, the Secunda uprising, unexpected, massive and sudden, was the last, and unsuccessful, attempt to oust al-Ḥakam from Cordoba.
 - 10 For the seafaring activities of the Secunda survivors see Lirola, *El poder naval de al-Andalus*, 99–105.
 - 11 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 115r-115v, transl. 89–91; Acién and Manzano, “Organización social y administración política”, 341–342.
 - 12 Fierro, “Sobre el *Muqtabis*”, 212–215. The relationship between *fuqahā’* and ‘*ulamā’*’ understanding of fairness and virtuous rule on behalf of Islamic law (*sharī’a*) and the real exercise of power in Islamic dynasties had always been a controversial matter, which will receive due attention in Chapter 14.
 - 13 The first years of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s rule are covered in the first extant volume of *al-Muqtabis*: Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1 and vol. II-2.
 - 14 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 100r-100v; Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, transl. 48; Ibn ‘Idhārī, *al-Bayān al-muḡhrīb*, vol. II-1, 74–75. For a detailed study of the Frankish attempt and eventual failure see Suñé, “Indicios de participación *dimmi* o *muladī*”.
 - 15 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-2, 190r-190v.
 - 16 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 144v, transl. 185.
 - 17 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 185v-188v, transl. 312/325. See, for a detailed account with bibliography and sources, Lirola, *El poder naval de al-Andalus*, 111–117. The help of Lubd ibn Mūsā is thoroughly discussed by Lorenzo, *La dawla de los Banū Qasī*, 198–202. The second Viking raid brought them to Algeciras and Tudmir.
 - 18 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-1, 142v-143v, transl. 178–182.
 - 19 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. II-2. For the last years of Muḥammad and the rule of his son al-Mundhir there are no extant volumes of *al-Muqtabis*, and the chronological sequence is retaken with the *anīr* ‘Abd Allāh: Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. III.
 - 20 This approach to the conversion to Islam can be found and developed in the seminal work by Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam*. For an appraisal of the shortcomings and advantages in Bulliet’s approach and method see Penelas, “Some remarks on conversion” and Wasserstein, “Where have all the converts gone?” The conversion process and the intercommunity life in al-Andalus are dealt with in Chapters 9 and 10.
 - 21 Herrero, *El perdón del gobernante*, 60–225.
 - 22 The efficiency of the tax machinery can be ascertained in Barceló, “Un estudio sobre la estructura fiscal”. Here a text belonging to al-‘Udhri, *Tarṣī’ al-akḡbār* is thoroughly analyzed and provides a detailed account of the districts (*iqṭim*, pl. *aqāṭim*) in the province of Cordoba (*kūra Qurṭuba*), most of them inhabited by Muslims, which tributes were paid, and the amount paid by each district. The troubles met by the *anīr* Muḥammad in tax collecting have received due attention in Manzano, *Conquistadores, emires y califas*,

- 342–344, who shows how governors, promoted under the auspices of Hāshim ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, embezzled half the tax revenue: Ibn al-Qūṭayya, *Ta’rīkh ifitāḥ al-Andalus*, transl. James, 123.
- 23 The breaking point in the knowledge and analysis of ‘Umar ibn Ḥaḥṣūn is Acién’s groundbreaking book *Entre el feudalismo y el Islam*, where the policies of the *muwallad* and those of the Cordoban Umayyads are seen in light of the struggle associated to the duality tax-rent. See also Fierro, “Cuatro preguntas en torno a Ibn Ḥaḥṣūn”, and Martínez Enamorado, *Umar ibn Ḥaḥṣūn*, where the political career of Ibn Ḥaḥṣūn is viewed in the framework of a long search for political legitimacy and power exercise. For a thorough discussion about the duality tax-rent and their development in the High Middle Ages see Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*.
 - 24 The rule of ‘Abd Allāh is partially covered in Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. III.
 - 25 The governor of Tortosa was ‘Abd al-Ḥakam ibn Sa’īd ibn ‘Abd al-Salām. See Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. III, p. 52; Ballestín, “Prosopografía dels *fuqahā* ‘i *ulamā*”, 69–72. The last governor of Pechina chosen by the community and acknowledged by the Umayyad *amīr*, in this case ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, grandson and heir to ‘Abd Allāh, was ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muṭarrif ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Aṣḥab al-Ṭā’i. See al-Ḥimyarī, *Kitāb al-Rawḍ al-mi’fār*, 80; Lirola, *El poder naval de al-Andalus*, 390–392. The request of a governor forwarded to the *amīr* by the people of Tortosa should be understood in the framework of competing lineages and communities in the area, unable to settle their scores and seeking for an alien person, with no links with Tortosa, to rule them. See Guichard, *Les musulmans de Valence* vol. 2, 282.
 - 26 Fierro, “Por qué ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III sucedió a su abuelo”.
 - 27 The rule of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *amīr* and *amīr al-mu’minīn*, is partially covered in Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. V. A terse and comprehensive account in English of his life and deeds can be found in Fierro, *Abd al-Rahman III*.
 - 28 For a comprehensive assessment of archaeological research and restoration in al-Madīna al-Zahrā’ see Vallejo, *La ciudad califal de Madīnat al-Zahrā’*. The complex relationship between buildings, residences, space arrangement, and dynastic legitimacy has been dealt also by Vallejo, “El heredero designado y el califa”.
 - 29 Collins, *Caliphs and Kings: Spain, 796–1031*, 148, 150, 153–154.
 - 30 Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain*, 305–306; Signes, “Bizancio y al-Andalus”.
 - 31 Located in the Var departament in the Côte d’Azur area in south-eastern France.
 - 32 Barceló, “The earliest sketch” has given due attention to the difficulties met by John of Gorze’s delegation and the framework of diplomatic contacts between the caliphate and the Holy Roman Empire. See Paz y Meliá “Fuentes para la Historia de Córdoba”, where the Latin text of Gorze’s travel and stay at Cordoba has been translated. See Lirola, *El poder naval*, 150–153, 157, 232–236, 244, 295 where the seafaring activities of the Muslim freebooters in Farakhshinīṭ receive well-deserved attention. See also Versteegh, “The Arab presence in France”.
 - 33 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol V, 322; Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi and its Diaspora*, 235–245.
 - 34 Ibn Ḥayyān, vol V, 327; Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi and its Diaspora*, 235–245.
 - 35 Al-Nāṣir’s achievements in fleet building and control of the Mediterranean sea lanes and seafaring have received due attention in Lirola, *El poder naval*. The stepping stone for what would be called Umayyad thalassocracy can be found already in the age of the *fitna*, when ‘Iṣām al-Khawḥānī, a merchant coming back from the pilgrimage, landed in Majorca and after a short stay in the island encouraged the *amīr* ‘Abd Allāh to give his consent to conquer and settle there, a deed dated around 290/903. See also Lirola, *El poder naval*, 156–157 and Ibn Khaldūn, vol. IV, 210. In addition to this, al-Nāṣir succeeded in bringing to Umayyad authority the community of seafarers in Pechina (see n. 25), whose skills, seafaring abilities and knowledge of the sea underpinned the building of Almería, on the south-eastern coast of al-Andalus, known as the shipyard of

- al-Andalus, an honour shared with Tortosa, where new shipyards and facilities were built in the age of al-Nāṣir.
- 36 The rule of al-Ḥakam al-Mustaṣhir, the second *amīr al-mu'minīn* of the Umayyad Cordobans, is partially covered in Ibn Ḥayyān, vol. VII.
- 37 The caliphate of Hishām al-Mu'ayyad and the rule of al-Manṣūr are not covered in the extant volumes of Ibn Ḥayyān's *al-Muqtabis*, who was fifteen years old when al-Manṣūr died in 392/1002. Notwithstanding the loss of Ibn Ḥayyān's work about al-Manṣūr, the *fitna* of the caliphate, and the *mulūk al-ṭawā'if*, some parts were copied almost verbatim or duly quoted by other scholars. Ibn Bassām in his *Dhakhīra*, al-Maqqarī in his *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, and Ibn 'Idhārī in his *al-Bayān al-mughrib* collected a good deal of data on al-Manṣūr. The millennial of al-Manṣūr's death (1002–2002) witnessed the publication of new books about his life, his career and al-Andalus history. See Ballestín, *Al-Mansur y la dawla*, Bariani, *Almanzor*, and Martínez Enamorado y Torremocha Silva, *Almanzor y su época*.
- 38 *Manwāniyya* refers to Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam ibn Abī'l-ʿĀṣ ibn Umayya ibn 'Abd Shams, contemporary of the Prophet Muḥammad and caliph in the East (65/August 684/April 685) during the Second *fitna*. *Dawla* must not be understood as a regnal family, but as the age where a dynasty, a caliphal family, even a ruling clique, exerted political authority and had the reins of power in their own hands.

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