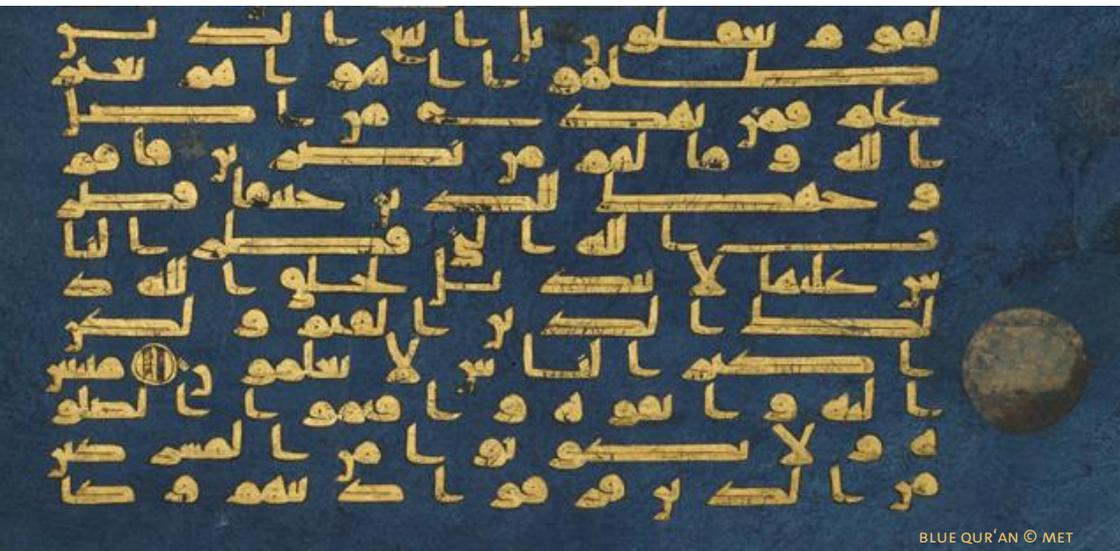




**NOT THE CONQUERORS' RELIGION: LOCAL  
BELIEFS VS. IMPERIAL RELIGION  
FEB. 10-11, 2022, UNIVERSITÄT HAMBURG**



BLUE QUR'AN © MET

The conquests of the Arab armies in the 7th and 8th centuries made Islam the dominant force in a region that extended from the Iberian Peninsula as far as the Tarim Basin. However, it has increasingly been recognized that this dominance was political and administrative rather than demographic.

Conversion by the conquered populations was a slow process and it often took centuries before Islam became the majority religion. The Arab historical sources convey the political domination of Islam, suggesting that Islamization met little resistance from the indigenous population, and that social and political advancement was contingent upon conversion to Islam.

The workshop looks behind this depiction, examining the continuation of local non-Muslim social and religious structures and their political adaptation or resistance to the new reality of the Arab-Islamic Empire by nuancing the understanding of Islamization, exploring conversion to a form of Islam other than the Islam of the conquerors, and considering this as a means of resistance to the political dominance of the new regime.

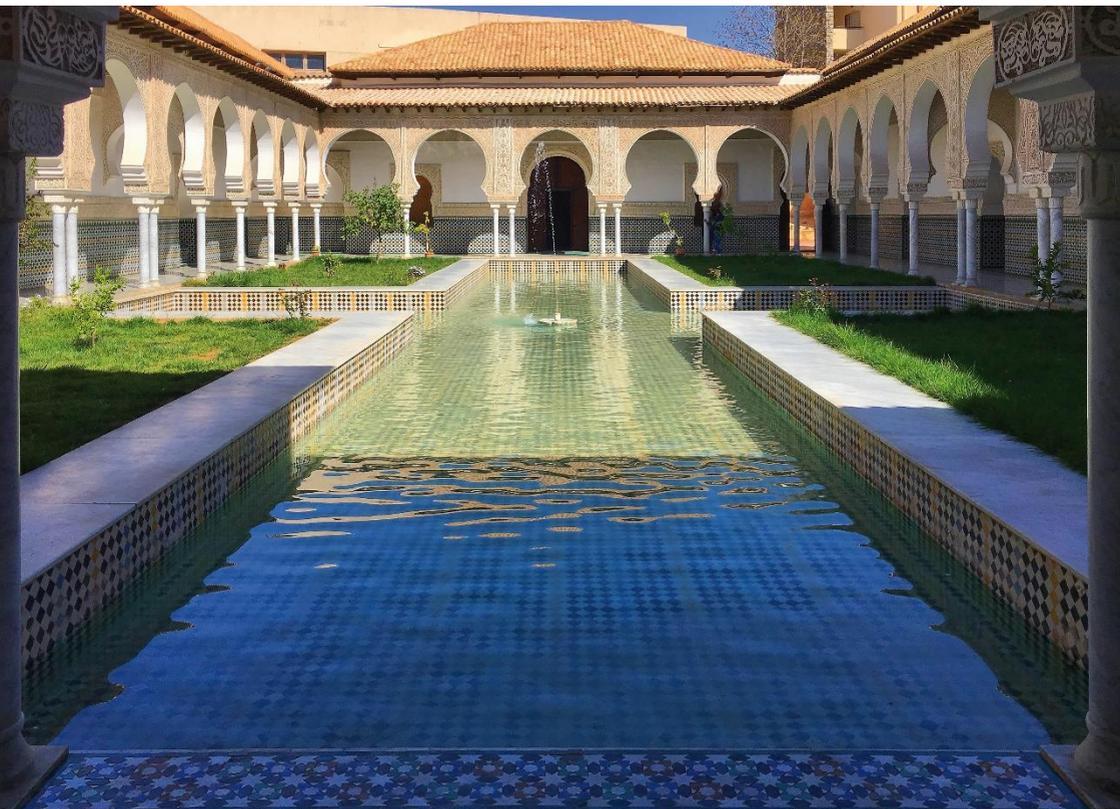
Through close reading of Arabic texts or on the basis of non-Arabic written sources or material culture, we consider how populations retained their religion as a form of resistance, or accepted Islam but embraced or developed beliefs that were distinct from those of their conquerors.

In addition to Ibādism, Ṣufrism and Shī'ism as key features of the religious landscape of early Islamic North Africa, the spread of the teachings of the Mu'tazila school also played a role in the development of religious ambivalence. Rather than open resistance, can religious diversity be understood as a nuanced regional acceptance of or resistance to the new status quo? We are interested in how social groups adapted to the new political and religious circumstances, without fully submitting to Islamic imperial rule.



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# THURS., FEB. 10, 2022

## Room 221 (ESA O)

12.45      *Registration*

13.00      **Antonia Bosanquet & Stefan Heidemann (Universität Hamburg)**  
Welcome/Introduction

## THE CONQUERORS' RELIGION: AN IMPERIAL RELIGION?

13.30      **Eugenio Garosi (Universität Hamburg/Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität)**  
Negotiating the Conquerors' Religion: Shifting Boundaries of Islamic Expressions in the Early Islamic Empire

14.15      *Lunch Break*

14.45      **Eduardo Manzano Moreno (CSIC – Madrid)** – online  
Bargaining the Capital: The Urban Topography of Cordoba as a Proxy of Religious Resistance and Assimilation

## CHRISTIANITY: A LOCAL BELIEF

15.30      **Javier Albárran Iruela (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)**  
A Common Past for all Religious Communities? Christians and the Writing of History in Umayyad al-Andalus

- 16.15 *Coffee Break*
- 16.30 **Kati Ihnat (Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen)** – online  
Martyrs Making Martyrs in Medieval Córdoba
- 17.15 Concluding Remarks
- 17.30 *End of Day One*
- 19.00 *Dinner*

**FRI., FEB. 11, 2022**

Room 221 (ESA O)

**LOCAL NUANCES OF THE “CONQUERORS’ RELIGION”. LOCAL BELIEFS**

- 12.00 **Stefan Heidemann (Universität Hamburg)**  
Opening
- 12.15 **Yassir Benhima (Sorbonne Nouvelle/UMR 5648-CIHAM)**  
Les Pouvoirs zaydites et mu'tazilites au Maghreb  
occidental: structures et discours politiques VIIIe-IXe s.  
(The Zaydis and Mu'tazilites in the Western Maghreb:  
Doctrinal and Political Characteristics 8th – 9th Century

- 13.00      **Cyrille Aillet (Université Lumière Lyon 2-CIHAM)**  
 “Berbers”, “Kharijites” and “Knowledge Bearers”: How the Ibadis Shaped a Counter-Memory of the Islamic Conquest of North Africa
- 13.45      *Lunch Break*
- 14.15      **Clément Salah ( Sorbonne Université/Université de Lausanne)**  
 L’intégration des *mawālī* au milieu savant kairouanais et ses conséquences sur l’évolution du *fiqh* ifrīqiyyen à l’époque aghlabide (The Integration of the *mawālī* into the Scholarly Milieu of Kairouan and its Consequences on the Evolution of Ifrīqiyyan *fiqh* in the Aghlabid Period)
- 15.00      **Antonia Bosanquet (Universität Hamburg)**  
 What was the Conquerors’ Religion? Mu‘tazilīs, Murji‘īs and Qādirīs in Aghlabid Ifrīqiya
- 15.45      *Coffee Break*
- 16.00      **Ismail Warscheid (CNRS – Paris/University of Bayreuth)**  
 Remembering the Past as a Jurist: The Construction of Deviation in Post-Formative Mālikī Jurisprudence
- 16.45      **Conor Dube (Harvard University) - online**  
 Rereading of Religion of the Barghawāṭah
- 17.30      *Coffee Break*
- 17.45      Roundtable Discussion



- 18.15      **Antonia Bosanquet & Stefan Heidemann (Universität Hamburg)**  
Final Words – Future Outlook
- 18.20      *End of the Conference*
- 19.30      *Dinner*



AL-ZAYTUNA MOSQUE, TUNIS

## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**EUGENIO GAROSI** (UNIVERSITÄT HAMBURG/LUDWIG-MAXIMILIANS  
UNIVERSITÄT)

### NEGOTIATING THE CONQUERORS' RELIGION: SHIFTING BOUNDARIES OF ISLAMIC EXPRESSIONS IN THE EARLY ISLAMIC EMPIRE

With the exception of the conquerors' homeland on the Arabian Peninsula, Islam entered the societies of the nascent Islamic Empire as part of the cultural superstratum imported by the Arab conquerors and practiced by an insular, if politically hegemonic minority. For generations after the conquest, the very capacity of the Arab-Muslim imperial elite to effectively rule their newly-established empire and to extract revenues depended largely on the cooperation of the local non-Muslim elites of the former Byzantine and Sasanian domains.

Drawing from original documentary evidence of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries from the entire MENA region, the contribution explores the ways in which this system of governance influenced the formulation and proclamation of Islamic identities during the early centuries of Muslim imperial rule. In particular, I argue that the contours of the conquerors' religious identity as expressed in public promulgations were subject to negotiation, depending on geographical factors as well as on the targeted readership and/or spectatorship. Special attention will be devoted to the incorporation and perpetuation of elements of substratal religious traditions into those communicative acts designed to engage non-Muslim local elites as a means towards fostering social cohesion. A second focal point of the presentation will be the ways in which attempts to "naturalize" Muslim officialdom conversely facilitated the incorporation of Islamic(ate) features into the writing culture of Christians' and Zoroastrians' circles.

**Eugenio Garosi** (Ph.D., 2019, in Arabic Studies and Ancient History from LMU, Munich and University of Basel) is a member of the research group on Arabic Papyrology at LMU, Munich, and currently a fellow at the RomanIslam Center at the University of Hamburg. He has worked on several research projects, including "Change and Continuities from a Christian to a Muslim Society" (Basel), "The Arabic Papyrology Database" (Munich) and "Cultural Brokerage in Pre-modern Islam" (Jerusalem). His research focuses on social history of the early Islamic Empire, Arabic Papyrology and Diplomatics, and diglossia in pre-modern Islamicate societies.

## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**EDUARDO MANZANO MORENO** (IH-CSIC/THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS) ONLINE

### **BARGAINING THE CAPITAL: THE URBAN TOPOGRAPHY OF CORDOBA AS A PROXY OF RELIGIOUS RESISTANCE AND ASSIMILATION**

In this paper, I want to put forward a number of ideas by addressing the following question: how did contacts between communities unfold immediately after the Arab conquest of a specific city, like Córdoba? The main points I want to raise include the following: Firstly, Arab written sources in al-Andalus do not provide significant information on this issue because they were composed at a time when the community conflicts that had been provoked by the conquest had become mainly irrelevant: although we can identify here and there contradictions and shreds of evidence that indicate the existence of such conflicts, sources tend to present a historical narrative void of this kind of disputes, as a reflection of a situation in which these disputes were no longer significant. Secondly, an interesting, and hitherto unexplored tool to document early conflicts and resistances is the topographical analysis of the configuration of pre-existing cities like Córdoba. In the long term, we can document a number of topographic changes that may well be the result of the silent struggles between communities and of the diehard resistance to their assimilation. My argument is that conflicts for the control of urban space were not resolved at the time of the conquest, but rather in its aftermath, and that slow changes (and their final outcomes) reflect these conflicts. rebels rather than destroy them.

**Eduardo Manzano Moreno** (MA, Area Studies, SOAS, University of London; Phd. Medieval History, Complutense University) is a British Academy Global Professor at the University of St. Andrews and a Research Professor at the Instituto de Historia, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid. He has been Visiting Professor at the Universities of Oxford, Chicago and London and was the Director of the Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales of the CSIC between 2006 and 2012. His last book, *La Corte del Califa. Cuatro años en la Córdoba de los Omeyas*, was published in 2019.

## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**JAVIER ALBÁRRAN IRUELA** (UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE MADRID)

### A COMMON PAST FOR ALL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES? CHRISTIANS AND THE WRITING OF HISTORY IN Umayyad al-Andalus

In 10th-century al-Andalus, different narrative lines were produced to address the past and to make use of it as a tool for legitimizing power. The main one was the connection of al-Andalus, and the Umayyads of Damascus in particular, with the history of the Islamic world. But these existed alongside other memories of the past that, rather than being incompatible, can also be seen as complementary. In this paper, I aim to focus on what role the Andalusi Christian communities – still very numerous at that time – played in this process of writing the history of al-Andalus that took place in the 10th century, and what this process can tell us about the relationship between religious communities within the Iberian Peninsula. The idea, therefore, is to try to answer questions such as: were there common/shared historical discourses between different Andalusi religious communities? Was there some degree of common historical awareness or common memory? Was there any vision about a common past or about the common past? If so, what were the sites of memory of this shared history? And, ultimately, was there an attempt to build a common history – which included pre-Islamic history – for all the communities of al-Andalus, for the *ahl al-Andalus*, serving as one of the legitimating frameworks of the caliphal power? And, if so, what role did the Christians of al-Andalus play in this phenomenon and what role did the local beliefs of these communities – and the memories attached to them – play in the diffusion of the imperial religion and its vision of the past?

**Javier Albárran Iruela** (is Assistant Professor of Medieval History at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Since 2020, he holds a PhD on Medieval History from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. His dissertation, titled “The Discourses of Holy War and the Memory of the First Battles of Islam. Al-Andalus, 10th–13th Centuries”, aimed to study the articulation of the discourse of holy war and its relation to the remembrance of the *maghāzī* and the *futūḥ* in al-Andalus. He is currently researching the creation of sacred spaces in the Medieval Islamic West and in the Islamic

response to the Christian conquest of al-Andalus. He has published several monographs, book chapters and articles in journals such as *Al-Masaq*, *Al-Qantara*, *Al-'Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā: The Journal of Middle East Medievalists* or the *Journal of Medieval Worlds*. His new book *Ejércitos Benditos. Yihad y Memoria en al-Andalus* (ss. X–XIII) has been published by the University of Granada Press (2020). Likewise, he has recently co-edited a special issue on *ribāṭ*, frontier and spirituality in the journal *Cuadernos de Arquitectura y Fortificación*.



MADINAT AL-ZAHRA © J. COLLINS



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## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**KATI IHNAT (RADBoud UNIVERSITEIT NIJMEGEN)- ONLINE**

### **MARTYRS MAKING MARTYRS IN MEDIEVAL CÓRDOBA**

When scholars over the centuries have asked themselves what motivated a group of almost fifty Christians to rebel against the authorities in Islamic Córdoba by seeking martyrdom, they have rarely looked at one obvious possible influence: other martyrs. Throughout Iberia, a lively cult of martyr saints was maintained from the Visigothic period, yet its role in the martyrdoms of the ninth-century Córdoba has not been adequately assessed. When these Christians sought martyrdom at the hands of the Islamic authorities, did they see themselves as reflections of the renowned martyr saints of late antiquity, like Vincent and Eulalia? Of course, we cannot know exactly what motivated each individual. But we can at least look at how their biographers, Eulogius and Paul Alvarus, fashioned their martyr contemporaries in writing: how they used tropes of earlier hagiographies, and also set out earlier martyrs as examples for their fellows to follow. Exploring their devotional world means first building a picture of saint veneration in their native Córdoba. We can do this by creatively working with the fragmented liturgical, hagiographical and archaeological sources that allow us glimpses of what saints were venerated in Umayyad Córdoba, where and how. Not only will this focus on saints' cults suggest what role the veneration of saints played in shaping the Córdoba Christians' 'rebellion' against the Islamic authorities. It will allow us to answer broader questions about the continuity of Christian practice from the Visigothic into the Islamic period.

**Kati Ihnat** is assistant professor of medieval history at the Radboud University in Nijmegen (Netherlands). She works on Christian religious culture with a particular interest in the liturgy and religious practice, and for the last decade or so on Iberia. She is currently leading an NWO-funded interdisciplinary project called 'Making a martyr in medieval Iberia' which examines the commemoration of martyr saints in the Old Hispanic liturgy to understand the meanings of martyrdom for early medieval Iberian Christians.

## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**YASSIR BENHIMA (SORBONNE NOUVELLE/UMR 5648-CIHAM)**

### **LES POUVOIRS ZAYDITES ET MU'TAZILITES AU MAGHREB OCCIDENTAL: STRUCTURES ET DISCOURS POLITIQUES VIII-IXE S.**

L'émancipation politique du Maghreb par rapport aux pouvoirs impériaux des califats omeyyade et 'abbaside a été essentiellement portée par des mouvements dissidents, empruntant des formes doctrinales variées. Si l'historiographie récente a considérablement progressé dans la connaissance de l'ibādisme dans le Maghreb des VIIIe-IXe s., la présence zaydite et proto-mu'tazilite, responsable de l'émergence du pouvoir idrisside, demeure moins connue.

En effet, l'expérience idrisside n'a pas bénéficié de la même fortune historiographique que la communauté ibāḍite. Très peu documentée, la dynastie idrisside n'a pas laissé de traces écrites officielles si l'on excepte les courtes formules emblématiques figurant sur les monnaies ou les inscriptions. La restitution de son histoire repose exclusivement sur des corpus externes, issus de contextes différents (auteurs 'abbasides orientaux ; sources andalouses ou maghrébines tardives, postérieures à la disparition de la dynastie ; littérature hérésiographique et apologétique). La réécriture de l'histoire idrisside par les chroniqueurs marocains de la fin du Moyen âge et à l'époque moderne, en pleine expansion du sharifisme, a fini par compliquer la perception de la nature politique du pouvoir idrisside et a longtemps oblitéré son obédience 'alide.

Cette présentation, en rappelant la pesanteur de ce contexte historiographique, ambitionne d'interroger les fondements doctrinaux et idéologiques du pouvoir idrisside et de ses alliés mu'tazilites. Une attention particulière sera portée à l'analyse des conditions de l'installation des premiers idrissides: grâce à l'apport de sources zaydites orientales, dont Aḥbār Faḥḥ d'Aḥmad b. Sahl al-Rāzī, l'objectif est de restituer le contexte religieux et politique de l'émergence des Idrissides et la place qu'occupait le zaydisme dans ce paysage doctrinal pluriel. Une lettre aux Berbères attribuée à Idrīs 1er permettra d'identifier les traits majeurs de la prédication zaydite et des motifs de

son opposition aux 'Abbasides. Cette analyse sera complétée par l'étude des légendes des monnaies idrissides, en scrutant particulièrement leur portée idéologique.

Dans un dernier temps, l'étude reviendra sur la nature des pouvoirs politiques issus de la dynastie idrisside. Loin de constituer un Etat structuré et centralisé, les descendants d'Idrīs se sont partagé des territoires éclatés, avec une autorité parfois faiblement enracinée. Les caractéristiques politiques de ces entités seront ainsi discutées à travers les rares bribes textuelles disponibles.

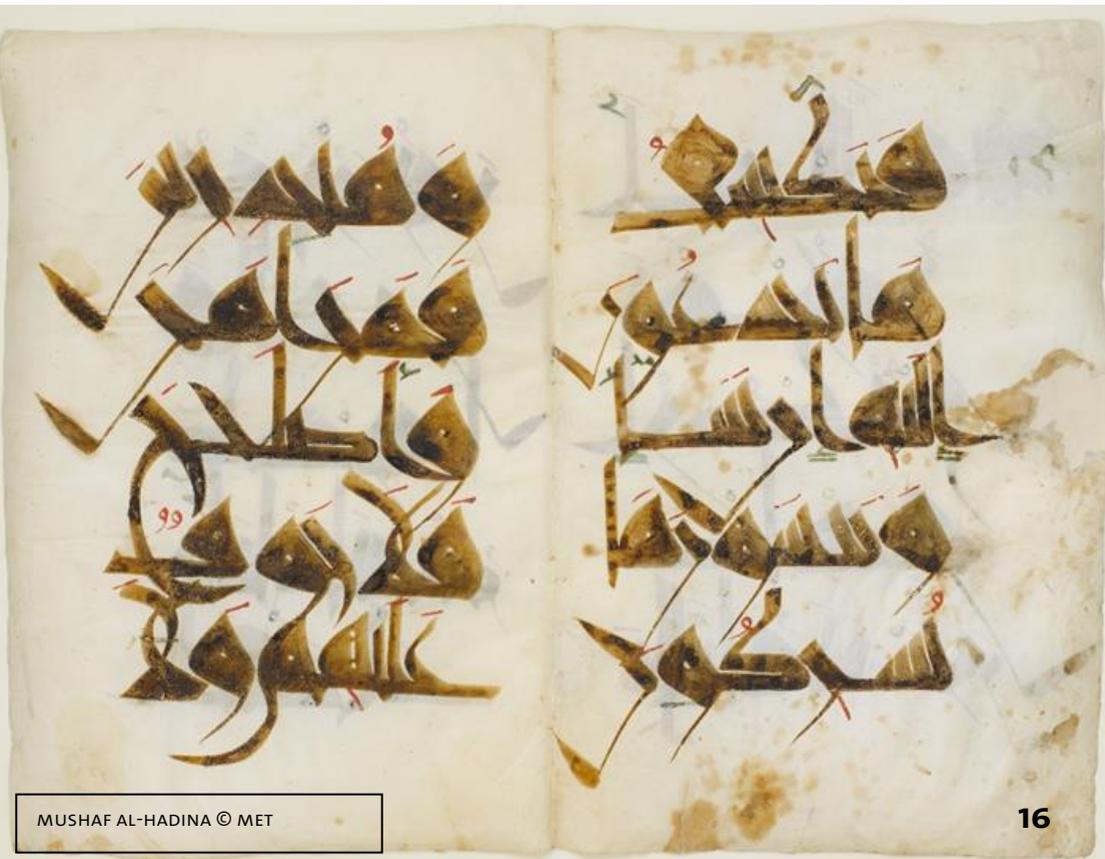
## TRANSLATION

### **THE ZAYDIS AND MU'TAZILITES IN THE WESTERN MAGHREB: DOCTRINAL AND POLITICAL CHARACTERISTICS (8TH – 9TH CENTURY)**

The political emancipation of the Maghrib from the imperial powers of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid caliphates was essentially carried out by dissident movements, who had adopted various doctrinal forms. While recent historiography has made considerable progress in the knowledge of Ibāḍism in 8th–9th-century Maghrib, less is known about the Zaydite and proto-Mu'tazilite presence which was responsible for the emergence of Idrīsid power in the region. Indeed, the Idrīsid experience has not enjoyed the same historiographical fortune as the Ibāḍite community. Very poorly documented, the Idrīsid dynasty has left no official written traces apart from the short emblematic formulas appearing on coins or inscriptions. The reconstruction of its history is based exclusively on an external corpus, coming from different contexts (eastern 'Abbasid authors; late Andalusian or Maghribi sources dating after the disappearance of the dynasty; heresiographic and apologetic literature). The rewriting of Idrīsid history by Moroccan chroniclers in the late Middle Ages and in the modern period, during the expansion of Sharifism, has complicated the perception of the political nature of Idrīsid power and has long obliterated its 'Alīd obedience. By recalling the importance of this historiographic context, this presentation aims to question the doctrinal and ideological foundations of the Idrīsid power and its Mu'tazilite allies. Particular attention will be paid to the conditions in which the first Idrīsids were established. Using the contribution of eastern Zaydite sources, including Akhbār Fakhkh of Aḥmad b. Sahl al-Rāzī, the aim is to reconstruct the religious and political context of the emergence of the Idrīsids and the place that Zaydism

occupied in this plural doctrinal landscape. A letter to the Berbers attributed to Idrīs I will allow us to identify the major features of Zaydite preaching and the reasons for its opposition to the 'Abbasids. This analysis will be completed by a study of the legends of the Idrīsīd coins, with a particular focus on their ideological significance. Finally, the study will return to the nature of the political powers that emerged from the Idrīsīd dynasty. Far from constituting a structured and centralized state, the descendants of Idrīs were distributed across fragmented territories, with a sometimes weakly rooted authority. The political characteristics of these entities will be discussed through the rare textual snippets available

**Yassir Benhima** is a lecturer in the History of the Arab World and Islamic Studies at Université Paris 3- Sorbonne Nouvelle, as well as being a member of CIHAM. He is the author of *Safi et son territoire : une ville dans son espace au Maroc (XIe-XVIIe s.)*, and is co-editor of *Construire la Méditerranée, penser les transferts culturels. Approches historiographiques et perspectives de recherche*.



## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

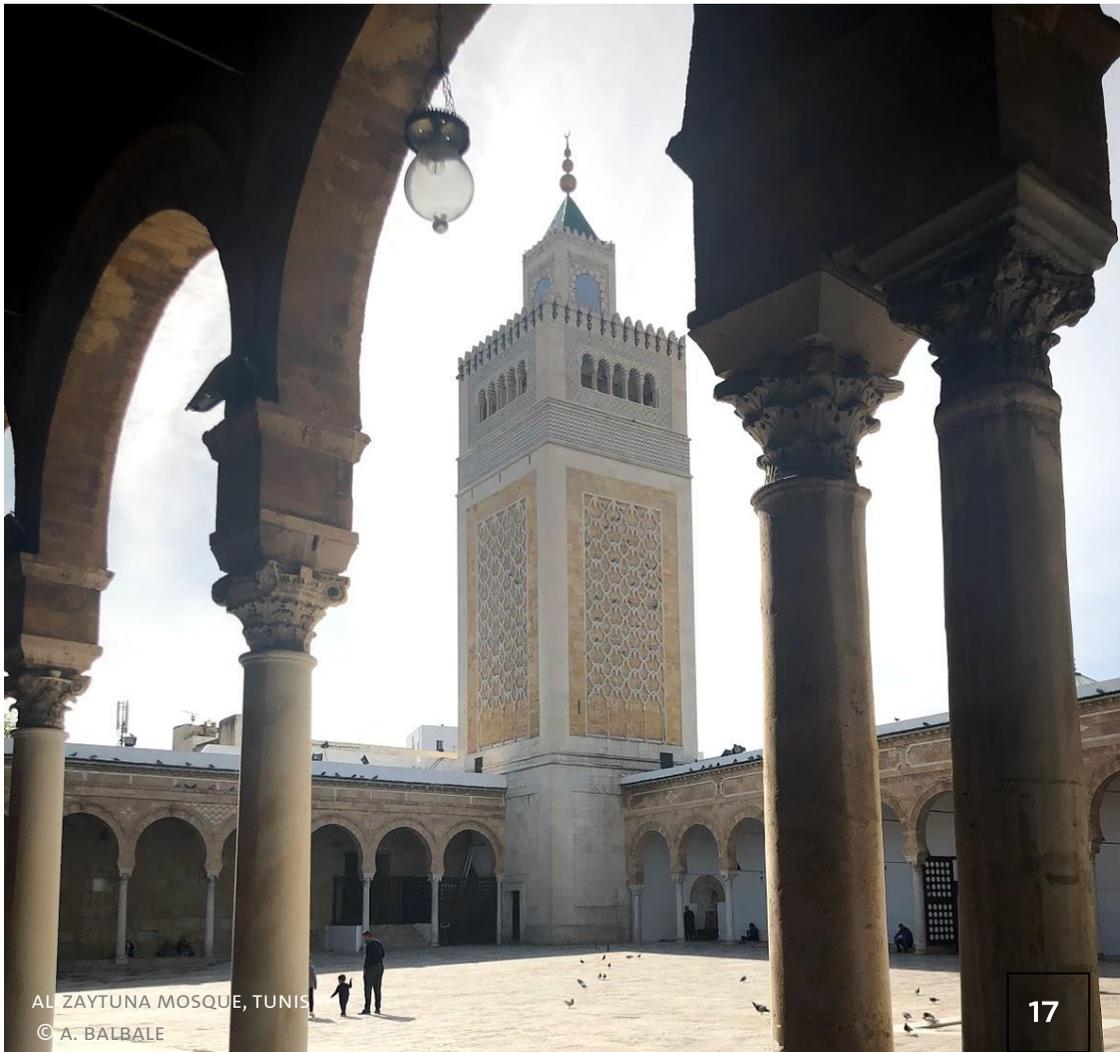
CYRILLE AILLET (UNIVERSITÉ LUMIÈRE LYON 2/UMR 5648-CIHAM)

### “BERBERS”, “KHARIJITES”, AND “KNOWLEDGE BEARERS”: HOW THE IBADIS SHAPED A COUNTER-MEMORY OF THE ISLAMIC CONQUEST OF NORTH AFRICA

The uprisings that separated a broad part of the Maghrib from the eastern rule, around the middle of the eighth century, represented a major challenge for the incipient Abbasid Empire. What went wrong? In their attempt to explain the situation in the West, the caliphal sources used two globalizing categories to stigmatize their adversaries. The new ethnic label of “Berbers” came to represent the native dwellers opposed to the “Arabs” who had come from the East. The description of the Berbers as rebellious, unsubmitted and uncivilized people became widespread in mainstream culture as well as in hadith literature. Moreover, this nation was closely associated with the alleged third “stream” of Islam, the “khawārij”, who had symbolized fierce opposition to legal authority since the Umayyad period. In their picture of the Islamic conquest of the Maghrib, most authors highlighted the wildness of the “Berbers” as well as the violence of the conquerors. But on the other side, in the areas where the caliphal authority had been rejected, a counter-memory soon came to light. A good example of this can be found in Ibadi sources. The Ibadis created the first autonomous imamatés along with the Ṣufrīs and their vision of the past challenge the caliphal narrative. Instead of being considered a periphery, the West becomes a new cradle for the religion and the Berbers are the new chosen people who did not submit to a foreign rule but willingly adopted the new faith and contributed to their own islamication. My contribution will analyse these two competing historical visions and try to see how they interplayed.

**Cyrille Aillet** is a Professor of Islamic Medieval History at the Université Lumière Lyon 2 (France). As a specialist of the Islamic West (al-Andalus and Maghrib), I mostly deal with political culture, the spread of Islam and Arabic language among local communities and the building of ethnical and religious identities. I first focused my

investigations on the Mozarabs of Spain [Les Mozarabes. Islamisation, arabisation et christianisme en péninsule Ibérique (IXe-XIIe siècle), 2010]. Then, I headed three projects on Ibādism in Medieval North Africa, funded by the Agence Nationale de la Recherche, the Max van Berchem Foundation of Geneva and the Institut universitaire de France. This led to several publications: C. Aillet, P. Cressier and S. Gilotte, Sedrata. Histoire et archéologie d'un carrefour du Sahara médiéval (2017); C. Aillet, L'ibadisme dans les sociétés de l'Islam médiéval. Modèles et interactions, Berlin-New York (2018) and ultimately Id., L'archipel ibadite : une histoire des marges du Maghreb médiéval, Lyon-Avignon, CIHAM Edition, 592 p. (2022).



## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**CLÉMENT SALAH** (SORBONNE-UNIVERSITÉ (UMR 8167) / UNIVERSITÉ DE LAUSANNE (IHAR)

### L'INTÉGRATION DES MAWĀLĪ AU MILIEU SAVANT KAIROUANAI ET SES CONSÉQUENCES SUR L'ÉVOLUTION DU FIQH IFRĪQIYEN À L'ÉPOQUE AGHLABIDE

La question de l'intégration des populations non-arabes converties à l'islam (*mawālī* sg. *mawlā*) aux sociétés islamiques est une question centrale, largement traitée dans le domaine des études islamiques. Depuis les travaux de M. Talbi, différentes recherches se sont proposés d'interroger le rôle que jouèrent ces populations converties ou certains de ses plus illustres représentants au sein de la société *ifrīqiyyenne* (Mahfoudh, 2006 ; Raghib, 2013). M. Chapoutot-Remadi (2018) a ainsi récemment montré que les *mawālī* constituèrent « en quelque sorte l'épine dorsale du gouvernement des Aghlabides tout au long de leur règne ». Cependant, bien que constatant que certains des *mawālī* sont devenus des *fuqahā'* et des cadis de renom, l'intégration de ces convertis aux élites savantes reste encore à interroger et historiciser : qui étaient ces *mawālī*-savants ? Quand et comment intègrent-ils les milieux savants ? Étaient-ce des populations locales converties à l'islam ou des convertis orientaux ? Formèrent-ils un groupe social hétérogène ? S'assimilèrent-ils à l'élite savante arabe issue des conquêtes ? Ou, au contraire, bouleversèrent-ils ses conceptions théologiques et juridiques ?

En nous appuyant sur une méthode prosopographique conséquente au dépouillement de diverses sources littéraires de haute époque, nous nous proposons dans cette présente communication d'interroger l'intégration des *mawālī* aux élites savantes et, dans une moindre mesure, aux élites judiciaires de Kairouan à l'époque aghlabide (184/800-296/909). Pour ce faire, nous interrogerons et tenterons d'historiciser l'intégration de ces populations converties au milieu savant kairouanais afin d'illustrer le rôle qu'ils jouèrent sur cette élite. Nous montrerons, ainsi, que les *mawālī* furent à Kairouan d'importants relais du *mu'tazilisme* et du *murǧī'isme* d'une part, ainsi que de la doctrine juridique *ḥanafite* d'autre part. Notre exposé s'intéressera, en dernière partie, au rôle que les *mawālī* prirent dans l'évolution du fiqh kairouanais : nous montrerons que les spécificités du « *mālikisme ifrīqiyyen* » tel

qu'il se développe à la mort de Saḥnūn b. Sa'īd (m. 240/854) sont intrinsèquement liées à cette évolution de contexte social *ifrīqiyen*.

**Clément Salah** is a doctoral candidate at Sorbonne-University (France) and at University of Lausanne (Switzerland) under the supervision of Mathieu Tillier and Wissam Halawi. He is preparing a thesis on the formation and the evolution of Maliki law in Ifrīqiya in which he combines a prosopographic approach to the edition of some legal manuscripts kept in Kairouan. In addition to his work to this field, he carries out various works related to the issue of the automatic handwritten text recognition (HTR) as evidenced by his participation in RASAM, a dataset for the recognition and analysis of scripts in Arabic Maghrebi. He also teaches Arabic at the University of Lausanne.



## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**ANTONIA BOSANQUET** (ROMANISLAM CENTER/UNIVERSITÄT HAMBURG)

### WHAT WAS THE CONQUERORS' RELIGION? MU'TAZILĪS, MURJĪTĪS AND QĀDIRĪS IN AGHLABID IFRĪQIYA

Little is known about the theological debates that dominated the religious circles in early Islamic Ifrīqiya, or how these related to the concerns of the *mālikī* legal scholars during this period. This presentation will address this question using recently edited manuscripts stored in the archive of the Mosque of Kairouan. The texts offer a rare insight into the development of theological thought in Ifrīqiya beyond the elites mentioned by the historical texts. Using these and other sources, I argue that the religious landscape of early Islamic Ifrīqiya was characterized by a variety of different theological positions and that the homogeneity associated with *mālikī* orthodoxy did not develop until the later decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century. The presentation also explores the extent to which social and political circumstances were relevant for the formation of Ifrīqiyān religious discourse and for its portrayal by later historians.

Rather than a simple binary between an imperial religion brought by the conquerors and a plurality of local, sectarian beliefs, the texts discussed in this presentation suggest that the Aghlabid rulers and the religious elite of Ifrīqiya maintained an ambiguous stance towards several key questions, and that this was influenced as much by local concerns as by the province's relation with the eastern Islamic caliphate.

**Antonia Bosanquet** (PhD Freie Universität Berlin, 2016) is a researcher at the RomanIslam Center of the University of Hamburg. Her work focuses on the integration of the Aghlabid province of Ifrīqiya into the Islamic Empire and the relevance of slave trading, Ibāḍism and Islamic law to this process. Her last book, *Minding their Place: Space and Religious Hierarchy in Ibn al-Qayyim's Aḥkām ahl al-dhimma* analysed a compendium of laws relating to Jews and Christians living under Islamic rule, written by the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century jurist and theologian, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya.

## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**ISMAIL WARSCHIED** (CNRS-PARIS/UNIVERSITY OF BAYREUTH)

### REMEMBERING THE PAST AS A JURIST: THE CONSTRUCTION OF DEVIATION IN POST-FORMATIVE MĀLIKĪ JURISPRUDENCE

Within the history of *mālikī* jurisprudence in the western Islamic lands, the question of how to deal with those differing in beliefs and practices was fundamental in constructing one's assumptions of the proper way of being Muslim. It seems that the crucial point here was less the regulation of individual faith – although this certainly mattered, too – than the conceptualization of a public order that preserved the 'signs' or 'symbols' of Islam (*sha'ā'ir al-Islām*) against the community's supposed external and internal enemies. The identification of such internal enemies greatly varied over time. Nevertheless, it concentrated on two central discursive figures: those who deviate because of their beliefs (*zanādiqa, ahl al-hawā'*) and those who deviate because of their community-threatening violence (*al-muḥāribūn, al-bughāt*). My presentation will retrace the discursive construction of the first group and its relation to the second through an analysis of some post-formative *mālikī* texts. I aim to show how jurisprudential reasoning produces a particular way of remembering the past in which the early Islamic period and its frictions play a decisive role. Indeed, the embeddedness of juridical concepts within specific historical narratives and associations participates directly in their normative power to shape the present. In the case of *mālikī* conceptions of an Islamic order, this meant developing the threat of deviation into a source of legitimation for political and religious authority. Texts discussed include Ibn Rushd al-Jadd's *Bayān wa-l-Taḥṣīl*, al-Burzulī's *Jāmi' masā'il al-aḥkāṃ*, al-Wansharīsī's *al-Mi'yār al-Mu'rib*, and al-Mahdī al-Wazzānī's *al-Mi'yār al-Jadīd*.

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*islamique dans les oasis du Grand Touat (Algérie) aux XVIIe – XIXe siècles* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), “The Fulbe Jihads and the Islamic Legal Literature of the Southern Sahara (1650-1850),” in *Journal of West African History*, 6/2 (2020), 33-60, and “Le livre du desert: la vision du monde d’un lettré musulman de l’Ouest saharien au XIXe siècle,” *Annales : Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 2018/2, 359-384.



## ABSTRACTS & SHORT PROFILES

**CONOR DUBE** (NELC, HARVARD UNIVERSITY)

### REREADING THE RELIGION OF THE BARGHAWĀṬAH

This paper proposes to reconsider the much-discussed religion of the Barghawāṭah, a Berber confederation native to the western coast of modern-day Morocco that was depicted as a redoubt of rebellion from its earliest traces in the 8<sup>th</sup> century until the Almohad period. Their belief system, as presented in the Arabic sources, combines elements of pre-Islamic Berber rituals, Ṣufrism, and Shī'ism, along with a lineage of local prophets and a scripture—a “Qur’ān”—written in Berber. The degree of polemic in these representations varied, but they were unanimous in placing the Barghawāṭah beyond the bounds of Islam.

The most influential perspective on ‘Barghawāṭism’ is that of the late Mohamed Talbi, who saw it as the product of a “humiliated and threatened national soul” which did not reject Islam but rather thoroughly—and paradoxically—nativized it in a process of “medieval decolonization.”<sup>1</sup> Yet this view seems overly schematic and relies on a degree of transparency that I argue is lacking from the Arabic sources. In rereading these texts, I will show that many of the most salacious details of Barghawāṭah belief are products of outside observers, preserved in the liminal space between factual description and exoticizing entertainment formed by the genre of Arabic geographic writing.

My argument aims to move the conversation about the Barghawāṭah beyond the binary of heretic/Muslim that we inherit from our sources. I posit a process of syncretism that is concerned with the productive encounter of heterogeneous religious discourses, not with distinct and stable religious

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<sup>1</sup> Talbi, “Hérésie, acculturation et nationalisme des Berbères bargawāṭa,” in *Actes du premier congrès d'études des cultures méditerranéennes d'influence arabo-berbère*, ed. Micheline Galley with David R. Marshall (Algiers: Société Nationale d'Édition et de Diffusion, 1973), 225 and 228.

essences.<sup>2</sup> In the context of the early medieval Maghrib al-Aqṣā, the notions of conqueror and conquered, of local belief and imperial religion, are complicated by the distance from imperial centers and the instability of regional power. The Barghawāṭah's faith evinces the influence of Islamic frameworks while also underscoring their mobility and adaptability.

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<sup>2</sup> This sense of a mobile syncretism is influenced by Rosalind Shaw and Charles Stewart; see *Syncretism / Anti-syncretism: The politics of religious synthesis* (London: Routledge, 1994), 6.

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