

**Apocalypse and Martyrdom in ninth-century Cordoba**

**Andrew Sorber**

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This essay is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted or will be submitting for a degree or diploma or other qualification at any other University.

Drew Sorber  
Corcoran Department of History  
University of Virginia

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## Introduction

“Has it not been prophesied that each of these lies will be professed and according to the truth it is said, denoting the danger of these last times, “will cause even the elect to stumble?” (Mt 24:24). Even the Elect, those scouts [*speculatores*] of the fold of God and those honored with holy orders, are scandalized by the truth, which is Christ, fearing to struggle publically”<sup>1</sup> Intended for the Christian elites in 854 Umayyad Cordoba, Paulus Alvarus composed an apocalyptic tract in order to galvanize the fractured Cordoban Christian leadership to publically confront the forces of the Antichrist, or for Alvarus, Islam. Calling this tract the *Indiculus Luminosus* (Shining little list), Alvarus wrote the *Indiculus* to attack those who had recently condemned a group of Christians who had sought martyrdom by denouncing and insulting Muhammad and Islam in front of the Cordoban *qadi* (judge).<sup>2</sup>

While the "voluntary martyrs" have garnered a large body of scholarship, these studies only rarely discuss the *Indiculus* and its apocalypticism. When they do the latter has often been discarded as a veneer for an anti-Islamic polemic.<sup>3</sup> However, a focused study of the various contexts which prompted Alvarus to write the *Indiculus*, something lacking in previous studies of the text, illuminates the degree to which Alvarus engaged with the concerns of the Cordoban Christian leadership, while recasting the current events into the prophesied apocalyptic drama. Explicating the social, political, ethnic and religious conflicts fracturing Cordoban society during the 850s, conflicts which confound any notional sense of peaceful *convivencia*, this study suggests that Alvarus, the earliest extant Latin author to write extensively on Islam, used apocalyptic to make sense of the present conflicts and add urgency to his vision of proper Christian interaction with Islam.

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<sup>1</sup> Paulus Alvarus, *Indiculus Luminosus*, CSM1, pp. 287-8 [Henceforth *IL*, c.15, 287-8]. A chapter breakdown of the *Indiculus* can be found at the end of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> For two recent studies of the martyrs specifically, see K. Wolf, *Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain* (Cambridge, 1988); J. Coope, *The Martyrs of Cordoba: Community and Family Conflict in an Age of Mass Conversion* (Lincoln, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> K. Wolf, "Muhammed as Antichrist in Ninth Century Córdoba" in Mark Meyerson and Edward English (eds.), *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in medieval and early modern Spain: interaction and cultural change* (Notre Dame, 1999) pp. 3-19 (esp. 14). While not exhaustive, these works have engaged with the *Indiculus* substantially: C. Tieszen, *Christian Identity amid Islam in Medieval Spain* (Leiden, 2013); F. Delgado León, *Alvaro de Cordoba y la polemica contra el Islam el Indiculus Luminosus* (Cordoba, 1996); E. Colbert, *The Martyrs of Cordoba (850-859): A Study of the Sources* (Washington D.C., 1962); F. Franke, *Die freiwilligen Märtyrer von Cordova und das Verhältnis der Mozaraber zum Islam (nach den Schriften des Speraindeo, Eulogius und Alvar)* (Münster, 1958); C. Sage, *Paul Albar of Cordoba: Studies on his Life and Writings* (Washington D.C., 1943).

*Paulus Alvarus*

Details of Paulus Alvarus' life occasionally emerges from within the twenty letters preserved in his letter collection,<sup>4</sup> the *Vita Eulogii* he wrote after his friend's death, his own poetic *confessio*, a few surviving poems, and his *Indiculus Luminosus*. His *Vita Eulogii* described his education alongside his friend Eulogius at the hands of Abbot Spereindeo, whom Alvarus would later ask to author a tract against a heresy now lost to identification.<sup>5</sup> Alvarus appears as a wealthy layman from an established "Cordoban" family, married with three daughters, though at some point in the late 840s or 850s we learn of the deaths of his daughters and the loss of a monastery his family had founded.<sup>6</sup> As a member of the "senatorial" class, Alvarus saw himself within the intellectual leaders of Christian Cordoba, addressed in the *Indiculus* as the *peritissimi*,<sup>7</sup> responsible to marshal opposition to heresy and Islam, often characterizing the latter as among the former.<sup>8</sup> This group, may have had a more corporate identity. Alvarus seems to have seen himself as a leader or possibly a representative of this group, also referred to as a *fraternalis... collegia*. This prominence may also suggest why Alvarus found himself in an epistolary argument with Bodo, a Frankish deacon who according to the Annals of St Bertin converted to Judaism in the late 830s, underwent circumcision, changed his name to Eleazar, married, and traveled to Spain.<sup>9</sup>

Admittedly, while this might say more of Alvarus' individual tenacity and purpose than that of the *collegia* as a whole, it nevertheless provides the first witness to Alvarus' self-styling as an author. As such, Alvarus repeatedly modelled himself on Jerome, about whom he even wrote heroic verses.<sup>10</sup> Often presenting himself as a passionate and furious apologist, he explained in the *Indiculus* that he fought against "those from the land of the Chaldeans," not the "community of the faithful," but nevertheless felt compelled to "cloak [his] face" throughout the work.<sup>11</sup>

For the purposes of this study, this ought to alert the reader to Alvarus' self-image he crafted, as a leading apologist for the Christian leadership of Cordoba, weaving scripture into his depiction of the present to justify his actions. However, it also demonstrates the degree to which

<sup>4</sup> All contained in Gil (ed.), *CSMI*.

<sup>5</sup> *IL*, c.1, 272-3; *IL*, prologue, 270-2; Millet-Gérard, 22-3, 37; Colbert, 158; Sage, 13-14; Wolf, *Martyrs*, 16.

<sup>6</sup> L. Mateo-Seco, "Paulo Alvaro de Cordoba. Un personaje simbolo de la cultura mozarabe" in Enrique de la Lama, Marcelo Merino, Miguel Lluch-Baixuli, Jose Eneriz (eds.), *Dos Mil Años de Evangelización, los grandes ciclos evangelizadores. XXI Simposio internacional de teología de la Universidad de Navarra* (Pamplona, 2001) 210-2; Alvarus, Ep. 9, *CSMI*, 211-4; Sage, 32-4; John of Seville, Ep. 3, c.9, *CSMI*, 161; Cabaniss, "Albarus," 102; Sage, 10.

<sup>7</sup> *IL*, c.1, 272-3; Millet-Gérard, 22-3.

<sup>8</sup> Colbert, 158; *IL*, prologue, 270-2.

<sup>9</sup> For the most recent treatment of Bodo's conversion, and the dispute with Alvarus, see F. Riess, "From Aachen to Al-Andalus: the journey of deacon bodo (823-76), *Early Medieval Europe* 13 (2005).

<sup>10</sup> Alvarus, *Carmina*, *CSMI*, 344-362.

<sup>11</sup> *IL*, c.1, 272-3; cf. Revelation 16.

he sought to hid himself within the tract because of the potential for opposition. After all, half of the treatise presented the first sustained Latin treatment of Islam, and the *Indiculus* obliterated the same boundary which, when crossed, brought about the deaths of the voluntary martyrs, namely, insulting the Prophet.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Alvarus and the Cordoban Martyrs' Movement*

Writing in 854, Alvarus called on the leading Cordoban Christians to support the voluntary martyrs and not to be like other false Christians "who silently watch in these last times as the persecution of the antichrist is established."<sup>13</sup> Despite the label "movement,"<sup>14</sup> the corporate character of these individual acts of martyrdom survive primarily within the martyrologies of Eulogius, a Cordoban priest and bishop-elect, which remains their primary reason for aggregation.<sup>15</sup> While links exist between some of the individual martyrs (e.g. associated with the same monastery, familial relations, occupation), this does not appear as an organized and coordinated movement.<sup>16</sup> Instead, the sources portray a sequence of spontaneous actions which others would imitate throughout the decade, while garnering support from Alvarus, Eulogius and others, the record of which ended with the death of Eulogius, the primary hagiographer.<sup>17</sup> In the *Indiculus*, Alvarus portrayed these events as a persecution, drawing parallels with early Christian martyrs, and as such described first the *passio* of the priest Perfectus, rather than the first of the actual *voluntary* martyrs, Isaac.

According to Eulogius' and Alvarus' accounts, Perfectus' fate came as a result of the deceit of certain Islamic men who lured him into blaspheming the Prophet under the promise of no repercussions. He told them that the Devil led Muhammad to lead many astray, he condemned Muhammad's lasciviousness, and finally explained that Christ had prophesied that such false prophets would come at the end of the world.<sup>18</sup> When brought before the Cordoban

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Safran, *Defining*, 96.

<sup>13</sup> *IL*, c.3, 276.

<sup>14</sup> A. Cutler, "The Ninth-century Spanish Martyrs' Movement and the Origins of Western Christian Missions to the Muslims," *Muslim World* 55 (1965) pp.321-339.

<sup>15</sup> Eulogius' works are edited by Gil in *CSM2*; cf. Spanish trans. in M. Aldana Garcia, *Obras completas de San Eulogio: Introducción, traducción y notas* (Cordoba, 1998).

<sup>16</sup> Contra R. Dozy, *Histoire des Mussulmans d'Espagne, jusqu'à la conquête de l'Andalousie par les Almoravides, 711-1110* (Leiden, 1861), in G. Stokes (trans.), *Spanish Islam: A History of the Moslems in Spain by Reinhart Dozy* (Karachi, 1978) pp. 267,270,273; E. Levi-Povencal, *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane. Tome Premier, la Conquête et l'emirat hispano-umayyade (710-912)*, New Edition, (Paris, 1950) pp.228-237.

<sup>17</sup> While the "movement" is often assumed to be more organized, Cutler ("Spanish Martyrs' Movement") is one of the few to argue this explicitly. Cf. Tolan, *Saracens*, 87.

<sup>18</sup> *IL*, c.3, 274-6; Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum*, 2,1, *CSM2*, p. 397-401; Cf. Mt. 24:24.

*qadi* on 18 April 850, accused of blaspheming Muhammad, Perfectus repeated himself, believing his fate to be already sealed.<sup>19</sup>

The first voluntary martyr would come in the form of Isaac, a former secretary-to the Umayyad emir Abd al-Rahman II (r. 822-852). Having returned from a retreat at a local monastery Isaac approached the *qadi* of Cordoba, Said b. Suleiman (848-854), that he teach him about Islam, only to then interrupt Said and denounce Muhammad, as Perfectus had done. Given his previous membership within the emir's court, Isaac's behavior caused Said to ask for the emir to intervene, who then had Isaac executed in accordance with the law.<sup>20</sup> Over the next four days, seven more members of Cordoba's Christian community followed his example.<sup>21</sup> Soon a group of Christian leaders came before the emir and succeeded in getting those who sympathized with the martyrs arrested, a group including Eulogius and various other clergy.<sup>22</sup> This reaction had very little effect. Eulogius would narrate the *passiones* of at least forty further martyrdoms over the course of the 850s, punctuated briefly in 852 by the death of Umayyad emir Abd al-Rahman II and the accession of his son Muhammad I (r. 852-886).<sup>23</sup> Some would-be martyrs came before the *qadi* alone, some in small groups, and others found themselves brought before the *qadi*, the latter often being children of interfaith marriages (with Islamic fathers) who had been raised or converted to Christianity.<sup>24</sup> The primary records of the martyrs come to an end in 859, when according to Alvarus' *Vita eulogii*, Muhammad I executed Eulogius alongside a young convert from Islam, Leocritia.<sup>25</sup> While Safran notes instances when others came before the *qadi* seeking martyrdom before and after the 850s, this decade seems to have had a higher concentration of such actions.<sup>26</sup>

### *The "Tolerant Fathers" and the Urban Elites of Cordoba*

In the midst of these events, Alvarus countered those who claimed that it "was not a time of persecution," arguing that his audience lacked the apostolic zeal shown by the martyrs, who were lighting "spiritual flames in adversaries all the way to the end of the world."<sup>27</sup> Addressing the *collegia*, Alvarus recalled to them, "Did not the pastors of Christ, the Doctors of the Church,

<sup>19</sup> Eulogius, *Memoriale*, 2,1, 397-401; *IL*, c.3, 274-6.

<sup>20</sup> Eulogius, *Memoriale*, II,1, 402.

<sup>21</sup> Eulogius, *Memoriale sanctorum*, II.1, p. 402.

<sup>22</sup> Wolf, *Martyrs*, 15-16.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Coope, *Martyrs*, ix-xv.

<sup>24</sup> Millet-Gérard, 31; Coope, *Martyrs*, xv-xvii: Walabonsus, Nunilo, Alodia, Flora, Maria, Aurelius and Sabigotho (Nathalia)

<sup>25</sup> Alvarus, *Vita eulogii*, cc.14-16, 338-341.

<sup>26</sup> J. Safran, *Defining Boundaries in al-Andalus: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Islamic Iberia* (London, 2013) p. 96.

<sup>27</sup> *IL*, c.3, 274-6.

bishops, abbots, priests, nobles and great men publically declare [the martyrs] heretics?"<sup>28</sup> Throughout the *Indiculus*, Alvarus sought to demonstrate the actual consequences of their opposition to the martyrs and to show them the ideal for which they should strive. However, for a more precise reading of his critique of the Cordoban Christian elite, we must first understand the dynamics of Cordoban society in the mid-ninth century, especially the *junds*, the *muwalladun*, the Umayyad *mawali*, and the means through which they competed with one another for power.

This study will forego a comprehensive reinterpretation of the period from the invasion of al-Andalus in 711 until the 850s, but I will draw attention to a few general trends within Umayyad rulership which inform the precarious position, and corresponding behavior, of the Christian leaders Alvarus criticized. When Abd al-Rahman I (r. 756-788) fled to al-Andalus in the wake of the 'Abbasid revolt, a previous governor Abu al-Khattar al-Kalbi (c.743) had organized the conquering armies (and the survivors of the force defeated by Berber Kharijite rebels in North Africa) into *junds*, settling them in Seville, Granada, Malaga, Jaen, Beja and Cadiz, allotting to them a third of the tax revenue for their city and hinterland alongside their campaign stipends.<sup>29</sup> To establish his power, Abd al-Rahman I drew other Umayyad clients, or *mawali*, to his cause, and insulated himself with slave soldiers and mercenaries while successfully playing some of the competing *junds* against each other.<sup>30</sup> These two—admittedly loosely defined—groups held most of the land in al-Andalus, this came at the expense of the landed Visigothic aristocracy, only some of whom managed to maintain their claims through conversion, most notably the *Banu Qasi*.<sup>31</sup> However, by 827 in the towns associated with the *junds*, these became labelled *muwalladun*, a term originally meaning “home-born slaves” but which became the designation for descendants of converts, or converts themselves, who lacked a clientage connection with a powerful Arabic family.<sup>32</sup> Because of this, these *muwalladun* began to take on tribal aspects in imitation of, and competition with the Umayyads and the *junds*.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *IL*, c.14, 286-7.

<sup>29</sup> On the triple invasion, see P. Guichard, "The Social History of Muslim Spain from the conquest to the end of the Almohad regime (early 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> – early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries" in S. Jayyusi (ed.), *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*. Handbuch der Orientalistik, Erste Abteilung, Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten, vol. 12 (Leiden, 1992), pp. 679-709, esp. 682.

<sup>30</sup> Manzano Moreno, "The Settlement and Organization of the Syrian *junds* in al-Andalus," in M. Marin (ed.) 95-7. Gaiser, *Slaves*, 66; Fierro, *Mawali*, 210 n.49; Y. Lev, "David Ayalon (1914-1998) and the History of Black Military Slavery in Medieval Islam," *Der Islam* 90.1 (2013), pp. 21-43; A. Handler, "The 'abid under the Umayyads of Cordova and the *muluk al-tawa'if*" in R. Dan (ed.), *Occident and Orient. A Tribute to the Memory of Alexander Scheiber* (Leiden, 1988) pp. 229-241; H. Mones, "The Role of Men of Religion in the History of Muslim Spain up to the End of the Caliphate," in Marin (ed.), 51-2.

<sup>31</sup> E. Manzano Moreno, *Conquistadores, emires y califas. Los omeyas y la formacion de al-Andalus* (Barcelona, 2006) p. 326-7; Collins, *Spain*, 189.

<sup>32</sup> P. Crone, "Mawla," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, second edition [Henceforth, EI<sup>2</sup>]. Cf. Fierro, *Mawali*, 227-9; Safran, *Defining*, 56.

<sup>33</sup> Fierro, *Mawali*, 220-1.

However, when they found themselves unable to compete with either, as in the later ninth century, full scale revolt remained an option.<sup>34</sup>

While Tolan claims that by the ninth century, the "Umayyad hold on Spain was firm,"<sup>35</sup> Abd al-Rahman I and his successors only maintained their tenuous power as they neutralized the various *junds* and the *muwalladun*, which relied in large part on their own clients and politically disadvantaged groups.<sup>36</sup> As the seat of Umayyad power, Cordoba became the stage where much of the competition for power played out, where these groups competed for the stipends and positions at the emir's disposal, and where each group attempted to articulate and affirm its power and position. Here the Umayyad emirs insulated themselves with eunuchs, slave soldiers, and of particular importance for the present purposes of this study, they controlled the appointments to positions of power within the city, extending from ambassadors to tax collectors, from Islamic judges to Christian bishops.<sup>37</sup> The Umayyad emirs often employed urban Christians and other politically disadvantaged groups to fill positions which helped preserve the power balance because they owed their power directly to the emir (or his servants) having no other recourse to power. Though often done personally, it was not uncommon for the emir to delegate such appointments to his Chief Eunuch or to his *hajib* (chamberlain), a position regularly held by an Umayyad *mawla*.

For most of the mid-ninth century, the Syrian Hashim ibn Abd al-Aziz held the office of *hajib*, and he, like many Umayyad *mawali* did not encourage competition, especially from non-Arabs and non-Muslims.<sup>38</sup> While various individuals could serve this role, Hashim's notoriety allows for a much simpler aggregation of examples, which delineate the various identity politics at play. Latin and Arabic sources both recall Hashim as an eminently successful *hajib*, so successful at discouraging competition that the sources lay at his door many of the mid-to-late-ninth-century revolts.<sup>39</sup> These same sources describe him opposing others nearing himself in power, and managing to see them dismissed, exiled, killed or simply reprimanded: the

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<sup>34</sup> D. Wasserstein, "Inventing tradition and constructing identity: The genealogy of Umar ibn Hafsun between Christianity and Islam", *Al-Qantara* 23 (2002) pp. 269-297; Fierro, *Mawali*, 211-3, 222, 226; M. de Epalza, "Mozarabs: an Emblematic Christian Minority in Islamic al-Andalus," in M. Marin (ed.), *The Formation of al-Andalus, Part 1: History and Society* (Aldershot, 1998) pp.183-205 (esp. 191); Moreno, *Conquistadores*, 326-7

<sup>35</sup> Tolan, *Saracens*, 85.

<sup>36</sup> M. Meouak, *Saqaliba, eunuques et esclaves à la conquête du pouvoir: géographie et histoire des élites politiques "marginales" dans l'Espagne umayyade* (Helsinki, 2004) pp.161-2; Handler, 'abid, *passim*.

<sup>37</sup> Coope, *Martyrs*, 65; Monas, "Men of Religion," 59-61;

<sup>38</sup> Fierro, *Mawali*, 225-6.

<sup>39</sup> For his role in the major *muwallad* revolt of Umar b. Hafsun, see Fierro, *Mawali*, 225-6; M. Fierro, "Four Questions in Connection with Ibn Hafsun" in the Formation of al-Andalus" in Marin (ed), *Formation*, pp. 219-328 (esp. 317-8). On al-Khusani specifically, see L. Molina, "An Arab among Muwallads: Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Salam al-Khushani," in Marin (ed.), *Formation*, pp. 115-128.

objections included his opponents' Christianity, Andalusian ethnicity, slave heritage, a *muwallad*, one Christian birth regardless of conversion, inability to prove themselves Muslims, and others to satisfy his clients.<sup>40</sup> Among other things, his ability to justify himself on the basis of different aspects of his opponents' identities hints at the anxieties resulting from the identity-conflicts the various communities of Cordoba experienced during the mid-ninth century, and their potential for exploitation.<sup>41</sup> Granted, some of these stories have the aspect of an archetypal evil advisor, nevertheless their presence in various ninth- and tenth-century sources does offer an insightful view into the political (and social) world of Cordoba, in which those accused by Alvarus sought to maintain their lives, livelihoods, and social standing. In this light one can better understand Alvarus' condemnation of the Cordoban Christian *collegia* and appreciate the reactions to the martyrs of the *collegia* and the Umayyad government. To those specifically involved in the palace administration he asked: "is it possible that these men of ours, who by their governmental duty [*palatino officio*] serve the commands of them and are not clearly connected to their errors?" Further, he added that those Christians working for the emir

claim themselves not to be stained by their foulness, nevertheless, in the presence of the heathens they do not pray openly, they do not defend their faces with the sign of the cross whilst yawning, they do not openly profess God [as] Christ in the presence of those but with fleeting words, they grasp the word of God and spirit as [Muslims], professing [Islamic] confessions by heart as if God considered all men His servants.<sup>42</sup>

While a great deal of scholarship has argued over the nature of conversion in al-Andalus, conversion to Islam remains notably absent in the *Indiculus*, as Alvarus here and elsewhere, focused more on those who remain Christians while accommodating Islamic social norms.<sup>43</sup> In the dependent position they found themselves in, broadly speaking, Christian elites had

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<sup>40</sup> see Ibn al-Qutiya, in D. James, *Early Islamic Spain: the History of Ibn al-Qutiya* (London and New York, 2009) pp. 109, 115; Ibn Hayyan, in Fierro, "Four Questions," 317-8; Al-Khushani, *Kitāb al-quḍā bi-Qurtuba*, Spanish translation by J. Ribera, *Historia de los jueces de Córdoba* (Madrid, 1914) p. 154, 160-2; Colbert, 108; Coope, 65.

<sup>41</sup> M. Marín, "Muslim Religious Practices in al-Andalus (2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> centuries) in Jayyusi (ed.), pp.878-895; M. Fierro Bello, *La heterodoxia en al-Andalus durante el periodo omeya* (Madrid, 1987); *eadem*, "Heresy in al-Andalus" in Jayyusi (ed.), pp.895-908; Ación, "El final de los elementos feudales en al-Andalus: fracaso del 'incastellamento' e imposición de la sociedad islámica" in M. Barceló and P. toubert (eds.), *L'Incastellamento. Actas de las reuniones de Girona (26-27 de noviembre 1992) y de Roma (5-7 de mayo 1994)* (Rome, 1998) pp.291-306 (esp. 295); Epalza, "Mozarabs: an emblematic Christian minority in al-Andalus," in Jayyusi (ed.) pp. 149-171.

<sup>42</sup> *IL*, c.9, 281. *Numquid ipsi nostri, qui palatino officio illorum iussis inserbiunt, eorum non sunt fetoribus, palam horroribus? Eorumque inquinati fulgentes se dicunt esse fetoribus quum enim palam coram ethnicis orationem non faciunt, signum cruces osciantes frontem non muniunt, Deum Xpm non aperte coram eos, set fugatis sermonibus proferunt, uerbum Dei et spiritum ut illi asserunt profitentes suasque confessiones corde quasi Deo Omnia inspiciente seruantes.*

<sup>43</sup> R. Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History* (Harvard, 1979); Glick, 22-3; Christys, 3; M. Fierro, Mawali, 206-9; Safran, *Defining*, 108-110; M. Penelas, "Some Remarks on conversion to Islam in al-Andalus," *Al-Qantara* 23 (2002) 193-200; de Epalza, "Mozarabs," *passim*; *idem*, "Falta de obispos y conversión al Islam de los cristianos de al-Andalus," *Al-Qantara* 15 (1994) 385-400 M Morony, "The Age of Conversions: A Reassessment," in M. Gervers and J. Bikhazi, eds., *Conversion and Continuity. Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands, Eighth to Eighteenth centuries* (Toronto, 1990) pp. 135-50.

relatively restricted options available to them: conversion, acculturation (to varying degrees), passive resistance, and active resistance. While these should be viewed as sign posts along an otherwise broad spectrum, within the *Indiculus*, Alvarus' primary concern remains Christian acculturation towards and passivity in the midst of Islam.<sup>44</sup> His complaint about the preference of Christian youths for learning Arabic instead of Latin, while perhaps exaggerated, exemplifies his frustration.<sup>45</sup> Keeping in mind that many of the martyrs spoke Arabic fluently, Safran has argued that bilingualism tended to intensify the "assertion of difference," while also demonstrating that Arabization did not necessarily entail Islamization.<sup>46</sup> This suggests a possible explanation for why the accusations of acculturation and complaints about lost Latinity only occupy a small portion of the *Indiculus*.

While Alvarus did condemn such acculturation, in doing so he recast it as part of something much more important. When criticizing the "tolerant fathers" of the *collegia* for their opposition to the martyrs, Alvarus argued that

We see this has occurred in our time, while we have proffered the blood of the faithful just like a voluminous libation to the Lord in defense of the law and we have seen the bodies of the martyrs set aflame by the heathens before our eyes, and while there ought to be more abundant weeping of tears, we were amazed that the majority of the tolerant fathers have offered such condemnations.<sup>47</sup>

Such a dramatic depiction has many parallels throughout the *Indiculus*, where Alvarus reminded his audience that by opposing the martyrs, they in fact "give the palm of victory to the devil, *as much as he is in them*."<sup>48</sup> In these passages we can see central features of Alvarus' apocalyptic framework, through which he refracted the actions of his compatriots and presented them as involved in the apocalyptic drama: first, an insistence on the immediacy and urgency of the events happening around them, and second, the use of Tyconius' exegesis to explain the Cordoban church as he saw it.<sup>49</sup> After all, Alvarus felt that many in his audience "silently watch in these last times as the persecution of the Antichrist is established."<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. *IL*, c.31, 309.

<sup>45</sup> Millet-Gerard, 56-8, 60-1; Colbert, 363; Waltz, 153-6; D. Wasserstein, "The Language Situation in *al-Andalus*," in M. Marin (ed.) pp. 3-17; *idem*, "A Latin Lament on the Prevalence of Arabic in Ninth-Century Islamic Cordoba," in A. Jones (ed.), *Arabicus Felix: Luminosus Britannicus--Essays in Honour of A.F.L. Beeston on His Eightieth Birthday* (Ithaca, 1991), 1-7

<sup>46</sup> Safran, *Defining*, 99.

<sup>47</sup> *IL*, c.31, 309. *Quod nostro tempore accidisse uidemus, dum cruorem fidelium quasi in defensione legis libatum Domino uo[[]uimus et corpora martirum a gentilibus arsa oculis nostris conspeximus, et quod habundantiori est fletu plurandum, plerosque patres anathematizantes talia patjentes mirauimus.*

<sup>48</sup> *IL*, c.2, 273-4 [emphasis added]. *Et diabolo, quantum in eis est, palmam victoriae trader.* cf. Alvarus, Ep. IV, CSM1, 172. On the palm as a spiritual symbol of victory associated with martyrs, see C. Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom. Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions* (New Haven, 2012) p. 39 n.54.

<sup>49</sup> On Tyconius, see P. Bright, *The Book of Rules of Tyconius: Its Purpose and Inner Logic* (South Bend, 2009).

<sup>50</sup> *IL*, c.3, 275. ... *qui in nobissima tempora constitute AntiXpi persecutionem conspiciunt muti.*

*Indiculus Luminosus: Christian Responsibility in the Last Days*<sup>51</sup>

Throughout the *Indiculus*, Alvarus stressed the contemporaneous quality of the unfolding apocalyptic drama. The strongest influence upon such an approach was the apocalyptic attitude of Gregory the Great, who also felt that the prelude to the coming of the Antichrist would be marked by the absence of the qualities of the early church.<sup>52</sup> While Alvarus generally discussed the Antichrist in comparison with the Prophet Muhammad, he infused the entire treatise with a presentist quality, placing the present conflicts into a broader universal framework. His depiction of the antichrist took its framework from the four beasts and the eleventh horn from Daniel 7 and 11, and Alvarus placed Muhammad alongside Antiochus IV, Nero and Domitian, as one of the “precursors of the same wicked beast.”<sup>53</sup> I will leave the discussion of his depiction of Muhammad as a precursor of the antichrist for later, because while Alvarus never named the Prophet in the *Indiculus* (the subject of the second half of the *Indiculus*), Alvarus made clear that “we are speaking about this individual in our times.”<sup>54</sup>

“In our times”: Alvarus reminded his audience that his words were “confirmed by the evidence of our eyes rather than by our eloquence.”<sup>55</sup> Having just recited the *passiones* of Perfectus and Isaac, these may explain the “evidence” his audience had seen.<sup>56</sup> Adapting Matthew 24, Alvarus called to his audience’s attention to the prophecy that warned that the “danger of these last times ‘will cause even the elect to stumble.’ Even the elect, those scouts of the fold of God and those honored with holy orders, are scandalized by the truth, which is Christ, and fearing to publically struggle.”<sup>57</sup> Because he felt that the leaders of the community, the “scouts” for the remaining Christians, lacked in their zeal, Alvarus’ *Indiculus* sought not only to reveal their shortcomings, but to teach those things which ought to be attained and to uncover evidence of the enemy of the Church.”<sup>58</sup> Immediately thereafter, speaking to the “most experienced minds in the Universal church,” he called on them to oppose the “spiritual enemies of the Lord,” and “with the two-edged sword to cut back all things from the evil polluting errors

<sup>51</sup> For a sense of the work as a whole, I have included a chapter breakdown at the end of this paper.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Gregory I, *Moralia in Job*, 34.3.7; C. Straw, *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection*, (Berkeley, 1988) p. 2; R. Markus, *Gregory the Great and his World* (Cambridge, repr. 1999) pp. 51-67; Hughes, 109-11; B. McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of Human Fascination with Evil* (New York, 1994) pp. 80-2. On the sources available to Alvarus, see P. Herrera Roldan, “Sobre monjes y literatura monástica en la Córdoba emiral,” *Meridies* 7 (2005) pp. 7-28.

<sup>53</sup> *IL*, c.21, 293.

<sup>54</sup> *IL*, c. 21, 294.

<sup>55</sup> *IL*, c.21, 294.

<sup>56</sup> Perfectus, *IL*, c.3, 274-6; Isaac, *IL*, c.12, 285.

<sup>57</sup> *IL*, c.15, 287. *Huius extreme temporis designantem periculum, ‘scandalizati electi’? Electi enim quia speculatores gregis Dei et sacris ordinibus decorate, set scandalizati dum ueritatem que Xps est timented publice contestare.* Cf. Mt. 24:24.

<sup>58</sup> *IL*, praef, 272. ...sequenda sunt docet et apertis indicis hostem ecclesie.

in the false gospel, in order that the ax is placed at the root of the unfruitful tree... let it be pleasingly cut away” and committed to “eternal fire.”<sup>59</sup> This passage set the tone for his further admonitions to the *collegia fraternalis*, calling them to a sort of aggressive defense of the church. Drawing on passages following the little Synoptic Apocalypse in the Gospel of Matthew, Alvarus appended a question to his earlier condemnation of the acculturation he saw, namely

How will that be fulfilled which the Lord prophesied of the future? By preaching thunderously to none of the heathen? 'When this gospel will have been preached to all in creation, then the end will come [Mt. 26:13].' Turn to and examine the word of the great carpenter: 'When this gospel will have been preached to all creation.' Certainly preaching to the ignorant and not to the believers is meant.<sup>60</sup>

Some have seen in Alvarus the desire to evangelize his Islamic contemporaries, this misconstrues Alvarus' meaning here.<sup>61</sup> While Alvarus felt the Christian elites of Cordoba lacked “apostolic zeal,” he felt the martyrs embodied the zeal to proclaim the truth and to ignite “spiritual flames in adversaries all the way to the end of the world.”<sup>62</sup> Alvarus clarified this evangelism, with the martyrs as its embodiment, as the Lord never said that all would accept the gospel, but that the gospel must “illuminate” the whole world so that “the just reward to ministers and preachers, and eternal damnation, without end, to the despisers.”<sup>63</sup> In spite of Alvarus' use of the martyrs as exemplifying ideal behavior, he utilized various scriptural exempla throughout the first half of the *Indiculus* to demonstrate his ideal to the *collegia*.

One such exemplum encouraged his audience to imitate “Elijah, as our hero, who fought to the finish with the sword that which he fought with the tongue.”<sup>64</sup> Alongside the primary sources for his apocalyptic framework (i.e. Daniel, Ezekiel, Job), Alvarus took the majority of his exempla from the Old Testament, their similarity deriving from the bellicosity they describe. Two chapters later, Alvarus described Elijah as one who “by the zeal of God not alone with words, but gird about with a sword did not fear prophesying to cut down beyond four hundred

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<sup>59</sup> *IL*, c.1, 272. *Peritissimorum mentibus catholice ecclesie... contra hostes Domini spiritali uigore exurgere et ancipiti gladio omnes ex aduerso pollutantes herrores euangelica falce precipere, ut secures ad radicem infructuosarum arborum posita... decenter seueritate legali et euangelica bipinne excise deputetur igni eterno et incendio perpetuo conburenda.*

<sup>60</sup> *IL*, c.10, 281. *Quomodo impleuiter quod Dominus futurum esse predixit nulla in gentibus predicatione tonante? 'Quum predicatum fuerit hoc euangelium in huniuersa creatura, tunc erit finis'. Adtendite et tanti opificis sermonem discutite: 'Dum predicatum fuerit hoc euangelium in uniuersa creatura'. Et utique predication ignoratibus et non credentibus indicitur.*

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Cutler, 321-339.

<sup>62</sup> *IL*, c.3, 274-6. *...zelo iustitie usque ad consummationem seculi flammis spiritalibus in aduersos cyere.*

<sup>63</sup> *IL*, c.10, 282. *... set ut predication ecclesie omni mundo generaliter clareat, per quo ministerio et predicatoribus inferatur deuitum premium et contemtoribus iustissimum eternum sine fine supplicium.* Tieszen notes that this is the same motivation Eulogius ascribed to two of the martyrs, Servus Dei and Rogellius (Eulogius, *Memoriale*, II.13.1, p.432) in Tieszen, “From Invitation to Provocation: ‘Holy Cruelty’ as Christian Mission in Ninth-Century Cordoba,” *Al-Masaq*, 24,1 (2012) pp. 21-33.

<sup>64</sup> *IL*, c.6, 278-9. Cf. 1 Kings 18: 36-40.

worshippers of Baal and consume fifty-two with fire."<sup>65</sup> Next came Moses, not the liberator of the Children of Israel from Egypt, but "Moses the law-giver of God" who found his people in idolatry, and commanded, "Let [each] man place a sword on his thigh. Go and return from the gate all the way to the gate through the middle of the camp and let each kill his father and friend and his neighbor. And there were killed that day around twenty thousand men."<sup>66</sup> He gives less space to the equally bellicose examples of David and Samuel, comparing with Saul and Eli, who were soft when the Lord required hard things.<sup>67</sup>

Two examples I have yet to mention, Jahel and Judith, hold a unique place within the *Indiculus*. Quoting Judges 5:23-6, he recites the praise of Jahel, to whom Sisera fled after being defeated by the Israelite army, only to be killed by her, a tent-spike driven through the temple.<sup>68</sup> Alvarus used the second, poetic, telling of this episode instead of the earlier narrative because the latter includes a curse on those who passively stood by as Jahel single-handedly defeated Sisera. The passage reflects Alvarus' own perception of his own situation, with martyrs acting as Jahel, their opponents, the idle and cursed. His next exemplum, Judith, he placed alongside Jahel as one who also cunningly "killed a king," namely Holofernes.<sup>69</sup> Alvarus concludes the two exempla by challenging his audience:

if they do not accept the impending battle from men of vigorous severity on account of faith, at least let them learn manliness from women raised from the enemy as a monument: *let the stronger sex be ashamed to be overcome by the female sex*. At last that appears to be sacrilege to all!<sup>70</sup>

Alvarus' sarcasm reached its apogee in using these female examples to galvanize his masculine audience who he felt should be ashamed, outmatched by these righteous females. While a large number of the martyrs were themselves women, it is noticeable that he did not use Ruth, Deborah, Mary or other popular scriptural women, choosing instead those whose righteous behavior expressed itself in violent confrontation. These exempla suggest a further relevance to Alvarus and his audience, as a significant portion of the martyrs were themselves women, often born of an interfaith marriages.<sup>71</sup> While I will discuss in greater detail the sexual

<sup>65</sup> *IL*, 283; 1 Kings 18:38-46: Alvarus is apparently using a variant *Vetus Latina* text that I have yet to be able to identify. Gil's emendations to the manuscript have not helped in this regard.

<sup>66</sup> *IL*, c.11, 283-4; cf. Exodus 32:27-28.

<sup>67</sup> *IL*, c.8, 284; cf. 1 Kings 15:33/Psalm 105:30/1 Kings 3-4.

<sup>68</sup> *IL*, c.8, 279; Judges 5:23-6 - Curse ye the land of Meroz, said the angel of the Lord: curse the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to help his most valiant men. Blessed among women be Jahel the wife of Haber the Cinite, and blessed be she in her tent. 25. He asked her water and she gave him milk, and offered him butter in a dish fit for princes. 26. She put her left hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workman's hammer, and she struck Sisera, seeking in his head a place for the wound, and strongly piercing through his temples.

<sup>69</sup> *IL*, c.8, 280; Judith 13.

<sup>70</sup> *IL*, c.8, 280 [emphasis added].

<sup>71</sup> Moreno, *Conquistadores*, 339-40; Millet-Gérard, 31. For a closer study of the familial implications of the martyrs movement, see Coope, *Martyrs*, 16-35, 80-91.

aspects of Alvarus depiction of Muhammad, marriage and the interreligious incongruities (at least at the normative level—indirectly led to some of the martyrdoms, when the Islamic relatives of a child of an Islamic father and Christian mother brought the individual before the *qadi*, accused variously of apostasy or blasphemy.<sup>72</sup> Though unnamed, Alvarus' audience would have known of Flora and Maria, whom Eulogius met whilst imprisoned himself and for whom he wrote the second of his martyriological works.<sup>73</sup> While others simply exemplified what Alvarus felt Cordoba needed, these two Old Testament women publically struggled, as by 854, at least Flora and Maria had done, having shamed and overcome their male coreligionists.<sup>74</sup>

When he turned from martial exempla, he called his audience to "recollect the severity of Peter and Paul against Simon [Magus] and Elymas or Ananias and Saffira."<sup>75</sup> While only Ananias and Saffira end up dead, all these examples allow Alvarus to refine his message, to underscore the necessity of what he terms "holy cruelty" (*crudelitatem... sanctam*).<sup>76</sup> Tieszen shows precedent for such thinking in Tertullian, whose work was adapted by Jerome, one of Alvarus' main sources.<sup>77</sup> While these patristic sources offered "holy cruelty" as part of a surgical metaphor within the Church, revitalizing it, Alvarus' exempla remain consistently outward looking and violent. After all, using Jerome's words, Alvarus argued that "piety for God... is not cruelty."<sup>78</sup> Franke has suggested that this attitude is best understood as having been developed within a monastic and ascetic context, where such language was quite common.<sup>79</sup> More specifically, this language likely found its root in the metaphorical combat imagery found in many tales of early martyrs.<sup>80</sup>

In contrast to the outward-facing bellicosity he propounded, Alvarus often criticized those of the Christian leadership who he felt fought the church itself, keeping in mind his desire to not appear as attacking the church.

God forbid that the catholic and universal church fight against its own *viscera*,  
again, God forbid that sons raise arms against their mother. On the other hand,

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<sup>72</sup> See the cases of Flora, Maria, Aurea, Aurelius, Alodia, Nunilo and Sabigotho, discussed in Millet-Gerard, 31. On interfaith marriage more broadly, see S. Spectorsky, "Women of the People of the Book; intermarriage in early *fiqh* texts" in *Judaism and Islam: Boundaries, Communication, and Interaction, Essays in Honor of William M. Brinner* (Leiden and Boston, 2000) 269-78; M. Marin, "Marriage and Sexuality in al-Andalus," in E. Lanz (ed.), *Marriage and Sexuality in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* (New York and London, 2002) pp. 2-20; Coope, *Martyrs*, xv-xvii; *eadem*, "Marriage," 164.

<sup>73</sup> Eulogius, *Documentum Martyriale*, CSM2, pp.159-475.

<sup>74</sup> *IL*, c.8, 280.

<sup>75</sup> *IL*, c.8, 284; cf. Acts 5:1-10, 8:9-24, 13:8-11.

<sup>76</sup> *IL*, c.11, 284; cf. Tieszen, 117-8; Franke, 27.

<sup>77</sup> Tieszen, "Holy Cruelty,"

<sup>78</sup> *IL*, c.11, 284. Cf. Tieszen, "Holy Cruelty," 29-33.

<sup>79</sup> Franke, 26-7.

<sup>80</sup> Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 132-9.

the church does not repel but receives martyrs; does not defame but praises [them]; does not pull down but extols [them]; and we venerate and honor the sense of these venerable martyrs.<sup>81</sup>

Redirecting the accusation at his audience for neither supporting nor emulating the martyrs, Alvarus drew from another Tyconian source for his inter-ecclesial housecleaning. Mentioning the church not fighting its own *viscera* possibly recalls one of the lost works attributed by Gennadius to Tyconius, namely *de bello intestino*.<sup>82</sup> Hughes, *inter alia*, argues that this is a Donatist polemic, which would likely prove an interesting source for Alvarus' purposes here, not least because of the behavior of some of the Cordoban clergy, Eulogius most famously, who refused to say Mass under the authority of a bishop they judged as unworthy.<sup>83</sup> While Alvarus' allusion is too elusive for any further exploration of what, if anything, he may have gained from this specific Tyconian work, elsewhere he affirmed his reliance on Tyconius, claiming that he did "not deviate from the *rules of exegesis* in any way."<sup>84</sup>

This may have come through an intermediate source (potentially Augustine, Cassiodorus, or Isidore of Seville), still, Alvarus' exegesis and argument rely heavily on Tyconius' *Book of Rules*, explicitly quoting the title, and continuously depicting the church as a mixed body of Christ.<sup>85</sup> In contrast, the enemies of the church, in Tyconius' model which Alvarus used, become "through this *rule* derived in the *members of this dragon*."<sup>86</sup> This Tyconian hermeneutic, never previously identified within the *Indiculus*, gave Alvarus a form through which he could formulate the conflict within the Cordoban Christian community, portraying the contention as part of the larger triumphalist Christian narrative. Adapting the Tyconian framework,<sup>87</sup> he depicted the martyrs' critics as willingly aiding the devil, and as part of his body, forestalling the apocalyptic triumph of Christianity.<sup>88</sup> He ascribed their behavior to their "cold love for the faith" and "earthly fear and fear of sword blows," resonating with ideas of the power of the emir's government in Cordoba, as well as with the Tyconian idea of being part of the devil.<sup>89</sup> He continued this line of attack in calling upon the "fraternal *collegia* [to] review in

<sup>81</sup> *IL*, c.1, 273, [emphasis added].

<sup>82</sup> Gennadius, *de Viris Inlustribus*, in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, 1952) p.389. "He wrote books *On internal war* and *Expositions of various causes* in which for the defence of his friends, he cites the ancient councils and from all of which he is recognized to have been a Donatist."

<sup>83</sup> Kyle Hughes, *Constructing Antichrist: Paul, Biblical Commentary, and the Development of Doctrine in the Early Middle Ages* (Washington D.C., 2005) p.84.

<sup>84</sup> *IL*, c.32, 310.

<sup>85</sup> Bright, 15. Bright refers to the mixed character of the church as the "linchpin" of Tyconius' system on 182, and discusses Tyconius' reception in her first chapter, 15-35.

<sup>86</sup> *IL*, c.32, 310; Bright, 15-6.

<sup>87</sup> For a brief overview of Tyconius' hermeneutic, see J. Covacs and C. Rowland (eds.), *Revelation: The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ* (Blackwell, 2004) pp. 15-17.

<sup>88</sup> *IL*, c.2, 273-4; *IL*, c.10, 281-3; *IL*, c.32, 310.

<sup>89</sup> *IL*, c.2, 273-4. cf. Matthew 24:12.

what degree and in what condition motivated by a frenzied commotion it took up the arms of rebellion against the Lord," by opposing the martyrs.<sup>90</sup>

Having spent the first half of the *Indiculus* concentrating on the church, the Christian community and especially its leaders,<sup>91</sup> in the twenty-first chapter, he shifted his focus to the place of Islam within the broader scheme of prophesied history, and specifically, the character of its Prophet.

"...the precursor of the damned man."<sup>92</sup>

At the beginning of the twenty-first chapter of the *Indiculus* Alvarus outlined the second half of the work. Beginning with the prophecies of Daniel regarding the antichrist, and relying on Jerome's explication of them, Alvarus intended to add to this a discussion of Job's images of the Leviathan and Behemoth, as expounded upon by Gregory I, as these two relate to the antichrist.<sup>93</sup> In his adherence to Tyconius' *Rules*,<sup>94</sup> specifically the sixth rule *de recapitulatione*, Alvarus could seamlessly interpret chronologically distant events from scripture as occurring presently, and more importantly, Alvarus used Tyconius' hermeneutic to harmonize the expositions and interpret them, conflating previous antichrists, Muhammad, and the final antichrist.<sup>95</sup>

Beginning with Daniel 7—specifically, the vision of four beasts rising out of the sea which Daniel described as four great kingdoms on the earth—Alvarus inserted Islam into the four kingdoms paradigm, though emerging as the eleventh horn on the fourth beast, which uprooted three of the other horns: these three "horns" signifying the Greeks, the Visigoths, and the "Franks, who flourish under the name of Romans."<sup>96</sup> Expounding on the interpretation of Daniel 7:25's "time, times and half-time," Alvarus argued that this successful Islamic triumph would prove ephemeral, having only sixteen years before their fall, describing the year in Incarnation dating, in the Spanish Era, as well as according to the Islamic calendar.<sup>97</sup> However,

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<sup>90</sup> *IL*, c.14, 286.

<sup>91</sup> *IL*, c.14, 286-7.

<sup>92</sup> *IL*, c.21, 294. *damnati hominis precursorem*.

<sup>93</sup> *IL*, c.21, 293.

<sup>94</sup> *IL*, c.32, 310.

<sup>95</sup> *IL*, c.21, 293.

<sup>96</sup> *IL*, c.21, 293; cf. Daniel 7:23-5. Admittedly, I have yet to find an acceptable explanation for the insertion of the Franks. ...*dum Gregorum* [read: Grecorum], *Francorum que sub nomine Romanorum uigebant prouincias ocupabit et Gothorum occidentalium*.

<sup>97</sup> *IL*, c.21, 294-5.

for fear of predicting something unknowable, he immediately added, “but we have relinquished this knowledge to God alone.”<sup>98</sup>

After this brief excursion in the realm of prediction, Alvarus turned his attention to the embodiment of Islam, Muhammad, who he compared to the prophesied king in Daniel 11, who

shall make no account of the God of his fathers: and he shall follow the lust of women, and he shall not regard any gods: for he shall rise up against all things. But he shall worship the god Maozim in his place: and a god whom his fathers knew not, he shall worship with gold, and silver, and precious stones, and things of great price. And he shall do this to fortify Maozim with a strange god, whom he hath acknowledged, and he shall increase glory and shall give them power over many, and shall divide the land gratis.<sup>99</sup>

This passage from Daniel provided the major characteristics Alvarus wished to ascribe to Muhammad: first, his irreligiosity, as Alvarus depicted Islam as led by the devil with pagan and heretical characteristics; and second, his “lust of women,” a point Alvarus gave a lot of space to. Here the context in which Alvarus wrote the *Indiculus* becomes even more important: how might Alvarus convince his coreligionists of the evils of Islam when they lived, as he did, in a society dominated by Islamic cultural forms, which cultural forms often provided the means for the identity-politics of competition within Cordoba. Within the *Indiculus*, Alvarus had the task of recasting various features of Islamic worship, belief and history into an apocalyptic mold, thus depicting daily interaction on par with the struggle against the devil himself. Through a Tyconian hermeneutic, Alvarus refracted Jerome and Gregory’s accepted exegesis to depict Muhammad and his followers as the apocalyptic “persecution of the Antichrist,” in support for his earlier calls for public defiance.<sup>100</sup> However, beneath the Tyconian interpretation and apocalyptic exegesis lies the genuine apocalyptic anxiety to which Alvarus sought to appeal. After all, Alvarus would only have written the *Indiculus* if he felt its central concern would resonate with his audience.

Turning to Alvarus’ depiction of Muhammad as irreligious, he argued that Muhammad attacked the “faith of the trinity... fabricating words by petulant insolence against God the highest, balancing lofty things and interweaving obscure things, which are truly depravities of the Antichrist.”<sup>101</sup> Previously, Alvarus denounced the angelic revelation of the Qur’an, using Galatians 1:8-9 to illustrate that through Muhammad, “That evil speaking angel is revealed who

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<sup>98</sup> *IL*, c.22, 295. ... nos uero hec Dei soli intelligentie relinquimus.

<sup>99</sup> Daniel 11:37-9.

<sup>100</sup> *IL*, c.3, 276.

<sup>101</sup> *IL*, c.21, 294. ...dissipare conauit et contra fidem Trinitatis... contra Deum excelsum sermons petulanti contumacia fabricans, grandia trutinans et fumosa illa contexens que uere Antixpo sunt.

Paul warned will attempt to destroy the way [via] by another authority."<sup>102</sup> Later, discussing the call to prayer, Alvarus described how "every day they cry out, in this rite of savages, with an enormous and monstrous roar, shouting like madmen from their smoky towers, their dissolute lips and jaws thrown open as if belching, 'so as if to fortify Maozim with a strange god whom he has known.'"<sup>103</sup> Wolf understands the demon in the guise of Gabriel as the "strange god" mentioned here, and notes how Alvarus later described how the Muslims called Maozim "Cobar" coming from the Arabic *akhbar* (greatest).<sup>104</sup> Unlike later western anti-Islamic polemics, which depict Islam exclusively as a heresy, or other traditions which give it a pagan cast, Alvarus moved freely between the two, relying on Tyconian recapitulation to adapt Hieronymian and Gregorian exegesis to Muhammad and his Cordoban followers, regardless of their original exegetical intent.<sup>105</sup>

Informed by such Tyconian recapitulation of antichrists, Alvarus depicted Muhammad as "the author of all wickedness and iniquitous authors of diverse errors [who] ruled all heretics," and that he "will be confirmed king above all the sons of pride."<sup>106</sup> Adapting a passage from Jerome's *Commentary on Matthew*, Alvarus argued that "all heresiarchs are antichrists," noting specifically the language from 1 John 2:18, which explains that "there are many antichrists."<sup>107</sup> Describing the *hajj*, Alvarus interpreted it according to Daniel 11, that yearly they "have worshipped Maozim 'in his place'—Just as the prophet [Daniel], [inspired] by the divine spirit, said [they would]—up to the present time, and they refer to these days by the accustomed name and call that month 'Almorram,' [*al-Muharram*] just as the worshippers of the idol previously established."<sup>108</sup> Describing the pilgrimage as a vestige of earlier idol worship, Alvarus sought to use the language of scripture to take something familiar to his audience, and alienate it by casting it as a prophesied idolatry.<sup>109</sup>

Similarly, in chapter 26, he employed Job's image of the Behemoth, 'animal' via Gregory's exegesis, to claim Mohammad was "unlettered and he knew to read or write nothing."<sup>110</sup> Alvarus used this theme of ignorance, following Gregory very loosely, to conflate the antichrist with Mohammad and his followers, interpreting Job 40:16 as "All beasts of the field

<sup>102</sup> *IL*, c.8, 280.

<sup>103</sup> *IL*, c.25, 298-99; trans. in Wolf, "Muhammad," 12.

<sup>104</sup> Wolf, 12 n.38.

<sup>105</sup> For later, though still relatable views, see B. Whalen, *Dominion of God: Christendom and Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Harvard, 2009) pp.44, 62. For a more comprehensive view, see J. Tolan, *Saracens. Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York, 2002) esp. 105-70.

<sup>106</sup> *IL*, c.31, 309-311.

<sup>107</sup> *IL*, c.34, 313.

<sup>108</sup> *IL*, c.25, 299; trans. Wolf, "Muhammad," 12-4; cf. Franke, 118,121-2, 117-8, 126, 130.

<sup>109</sup> Wolf, "Muhammad," 13-4 n.42

<sup>110</sup> *IL*, c.26, 300-1.

play there' or in the hearts of the most impious demons or in this law of many novel heresies... which is composed of doctrines of the heathen philosophies of the Jews clothed by a covering of heathen pigments."<sup>111</sup> Using Gregory as an authority for his own exegesis, Alvarus attacked Islam again as simply repackaging Judaism, now further intermingled with errors of diverse heresies.<sup>112</sup> Thus, by reading Jerome and Gregory through the Tyconian lens, Alvarus adapted their works to his own ends in order to attack Muhammad from within their authority.

In this spirit, Alvarus used the sexual desire ascribed to Daniel's apocalyptic king, as well as the bestial images discussed by Gregory of the Behemoth and Leviathan, to denounce Islamic sexuality. While Alvarus certainly intended to shame those who might defend their acculturation, as various scholars have observed, this remained only one of his purposes as he discussed Muhammad's sexuality.<sup>113</sup> First, Alvarus' work expanded on that of Abbot Speraindeo, the teacher of both Alvarus and Eulogius, who described the Islamic vision of paradise as a brothel.<sup>114</sup> While Alvarus claimed embarrassment for not sharing more, but this came in between two of his most colorful attacks on Muhammad.<sup>115</sup> Adding to the depictions of his teacher, Alvarus painted the Muslim afterworld paradise as a brothel, with virgins whose perforated hymens would be remade painlessly in order to endlessly "delight both with the sweetness of pleasure."<sup>116</sup> Adapting Jerome's interpretation of the king of Daniel 11, which saw a discrepancy between the sexuality of the king and of a deceitfully-chaste Antichrist, Alvarus used his Tyconian hermeneutic to navigate between what Jerome saw as a potential contradiction, and argue that "certainly in this earlier beast [Muhammad] the desire of women is affirmed and is confirmed as absent in the last [the Antichrist]."<sup>117</sup>

Alvarus claimed to report "their disturbing teachings," as he explained how Muhammad had received exceptional sexual prowess as a gift from Aphrodite and "that he had a greater quantity of this liquid for his foul activities than the rest that he could distribute this fluid with less effort than could other men; and that he had been given the endurance in coitus and indeed the abundance of more than forty men for exercising his lust for women."<sup>118</sup> This sort of hypermasculinity, Alvarus contended, was supported by scripture, as

All of those who come to the sect of this most foul one are transformed into pimps and adulterers, for in accordance with [his] orders, they break their

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<sup>111</sup> *IL*, c.27, 301-2.

<sup>112</sup> *IL*, c.27, 301-2; González Muñoz, 18.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Franke, 117-8; Wolf, Muhammad, 5-6; Gonzales Munoz, 21-22; Coope, *Martyrs*, 50; Tieszen, 87.

<sup>114</sup> Eulogius, *Memoriale*, 1.7. 375-6; on Speraindeo, see Hoyland, 228-30. For a similar depiction of Islamic paradise, see Theophilus of Edessa (d.785), in Hoyland, 404.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Tieszen, 87.

<sup>116</sup> *IL*, c.24, 297-8. Trans. in Wolf, *Muhammad*, 11.

<sup>117</sup> *IL*, c.22, 296; cf. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 11:37-39, p. 138.

<sup>118</sup> *IL*, c.24, 296-7; trans. in Wolf, "Muhammad," 9.

marriage vows and come together again in adultery to their greater shame. By multiplying their mistresses and being subject to three or four wives, these seducers, or better yet pimps, all become whinnying horses and braying asses. Thinking it shameful to refuse any request, they applaudingly [*sic*] make licit for themselves everything they seek regarding women, usurping natural laws and seeking—woe is me!—new paths for their lust.<sup>119</sup>

Discussing the multiplicity of mistresses, polygamy, or the open enjoyment in sexuality, all of which Alvarus saw as adultery and against “natural law,” he offered more caricatures of Islamic sexuality than any of the earlier texts discussed by Hoyland.<sup>120</sup> Even in this formative period for Christian and Muslim views of sex and marriage, one cannot mistake the stark contrast between them.<sup>121</sup> Given contemporary Christian views of sexuality as solely procreation within marriage, and the early Islamic acceptance of polygamy, concubinage, and general “sympathetic understanding of human sexual needs,”<sup>122</sup> all of which likely visible to some degree in mid-ninth-century Cordoba, Alvarus criticism testifies to this incongruity beyond his own dislike of Islam. While Alvarus retold the story of Muhammad's marriage to Zaynab, Zayd's wife, and recounted it as the first case of Muslim polygamy, the previous quotation lent itself to his apocalyptic presentism, confirming its truth “*by the evidence of our eyes* rather than by our eloquence.”<sup>123</sup> By the 854 writing of the *Indiculus*, seven of the voluntary martyrs born from mixed marriages had already died, whose efforts Alvarus placed alongside the scriptural heroines Judith and Jahel, in order for his audience to “learn manliness from women raised from the enemy.”<sup>124</sup>

Alvarus' intentionally shocking description of Muhammad's sexuality, depicted as predation as much as lascivious excess, likely sought to again recast something Cordoban Christians had grown accustomed to, and reimagine it in terms of a greater conflict. As described in biblical prophecy, Jerome and Gregory's exegesis, and Alvarus' adaptation of the lot, this apocalyptic conflict mapped well onto the socio-political landscape of mid-ninth-century Cordoba. Alvarus articulated this struggle as one pitting the Church against the Dragon, between Christ and the Antichrist, in which the Christian leadership could no longer afford to “silently watch in these last times as the persecution of the antichrist is established.”<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> *IL*, c. 23, 297; trans. in Wolf, “Muhammad,” 10. The animal references are derived from Jeremiah 5:8 and Ezekiel 23:20.

<sup>120</sup> Hoyland, *Seeing Islam, passim*.

<sup>121</sup> Sectorsky, 277; Coope, “Marriage,” 164; Millet-Gérard, 31.

<sup>122</sup> Marin, “Marriage,” 3-4.

<sup>123</sup> *IL*, c.21, 294. [emphasis added.] cf. Hoyland, 488-9, for other non-Muslim usage of the Zaynab story.

<sup>124</sup> *IL*, c.8, 280. Coope, *Martyrs*, xv-xvii: Walabonsus, Nunilo, Alodia, Flora, Maria, Aurelius and Sabigotho (Nathalia).

<sup>125</sup> *IL*, c.3, 276.

### *Conclusion*

Appealing to an underlying apocalyptic anxiety, Alvarus took the current conflicts and recast them within an apocalyptic framework in order to recapitulate biblical history and prophecy in the present struggles. While relying primarily on Jerome and Gregory for authoritative exegetical material, Alvarus' adaptation of these sources with his Tyconian hermeneutic enabled him to depict Islam as Christianity's apocalyptic opponent from under their authority. Without recognizing his reliance on and adaptation of Tyconius, any attempt to read the *Indiculus* has proven incapable of understanding the complexity of the text, to say nothing of its broader relevance to its Cordoban audience.

In the same way, the *Indiculus* takes on a completely different aspect when viewed in its mid-ninth-century urban context. As "a mode of argument... which makes sense of key problems in human experience," Alvarus' apocalypticism offered a means to explain Muslim political and cultural dominance, and by reformulating it through a Tyconian hermeneutic, encourage its opposition.<sup>126</sup> Using this framework, adapted from Tyconius, to present the mixed character of the body of Christ, Alvarus could nuance the solidarity likely presented by the "tolerant fathers," in anathematizing or imprisoning those who sympathized with the voluntary martyrs.<sup>127</sup> At the same time, a careful understanding of their socio-political context illuminates the possible motivations and concerns of the *collegia* of Christian leadership against which Alvarus wrote, something necessary in understanding a text like the *Indiculus*. While few likely shared Alvarus' apocalyptic vision in its entirety, nevertheless, the *Indiculus Luminosus* survives as a unique witness to this heavily divided urban culture and the precarious place of the Christian elites within it, something far more complicated than a simple Christian versus Muslim, or Spanish versus Arab binary, or a peaceful image of *convivencia*, for that matter.

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<sup>126</sup> S. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (Oxford, 1994) paraphrased in J. Palmer, *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2014), p.3, 17, 27.

<sup>127</sup> *IL*, c.31, 309.

Praefatio	Invocation, names the work, <i>Indiculus Luminosus</i> [bright little sign] – it illuminates good Christians and also the enemy of the church
c.1	Addresses the <i>peritissimi</i> , the <i>fraternalis... collegia</i> . Describes division in the church.
c.2	Public preaching, the need for enduring persecution and defending the faith. Need to act bravely in the sight of enemies.
c.3	Answering those who say its not a persecution, with: Its not the time of the Apostles. Relates Perfectus <i>passio</i> .
c.4	Alvarus emphasized the deceit which trapped Perfectus and those who tricked Perfectus, who are depicted as "disciples of the antichrist."
c.5	Relates earlier martyrdom of John, originally recorded by Speraindeo
c.6	So much diabolical zeal in comparison to the wisdom of Christ. Martyrs as fighting against persecution
c.7	Using OT to curse traitors
c.8	Islam is the prophesied heresy in Gal 1:8-9. Praise Jahel, who killed Sisara [Judges 5:23-6] and Judith, who killed Holofernes [Judith 10:11ff]. " Let him curse innumerable other fathers, who fighting with the zeal of the Lord unto death, have cut off enemies of God not alone with words, but with swords ... And if from men of vigorous severity they do not accept/receive on account of faith the threatening battle, at least let them learn manliness from women raised from the enemy as a monument, let the stronger sex be ashamed to be overcome by the female sex."
c.9	Note the tepidness of our words. [Rev. 3:16] We should support the best Christians, not condemn them
c.10	Is this "new thing" is born in the church by kindness or by the infernal? "Did he send the prophet as he sent the apostles?" how will the gospel be preached to all creatures if no one preaches? [not for conversion, but for condemnation.]
c.11	exemplum of Elijah, Moses, Samuel, David, Peter, Paul, in their examples of holy cruelty
c.12	the church must constantly fight
c.13	Athletes of Christ "If you are infirm, devilish, stupid, cowardly and puffed up, be quiet and do not desire to battle against your comrades, but sit down and await the outcome of the thing, learn to curb your tongue and be quiet. If you are fit, strong, courageous, if you are enduring and chosen to the battle of God, in order that strenuously and not idly hurl your javelin against your enemies."
c.14	"let the fraternal college review in what degree and in what manner it took up arms of rebellion against the Lord, motivated by a frenzied commotion." Heavy criticism of the leaders of the community, pastors of Christ, doctors of the church, bishops, abbots, presbyters, nobles and great men, for denouncing the martyrs.
c.15	All of these things are part of the dangers of the last times, where tribulation will cause "even the elect to stumble," [Mt 24:24]. Christ against Antichrist, Truth against Error.
c.16	Idol worship cannot be allowed, invokes Elijah killing the priests of Baal. Paul and other apostles fulfilled the ceremonies of the law for the salvation of the people
c.17	Examples of "holy cruelty" from 4 Macc 6:24-28. Fight for the truth even to the shedding of blood
c.18	Drawing attention to the "rabid dog," an apostate Christian and persecutor who is emblematic of the diabolical opposition to the church. Possibly Qumis b. Antonian.
c.19	Bishops and leaders, described as not men but midgets [ <i>homunculi</i> ]. Complains of men who renounce and condemn the martyrs with vigor, then run to be defended by the bishops with the same ardor. Favoring human law over divine

c.20	If we will not preach openly, let us help the right side. Mocks the "flowing questions of the philosophers and Donatus." "We the servants of God follow the footsteps of the rustics."
c.21	<b>Turning point</b> – After our defense, not let us turn to the completion of this work. Begins with Daniel, adapting Jerome, on the four beasts, and adding Muhammad as another antichrist. Predicts using Daniel ( <i>time, times, and half time</i> ) to predict that Islam will only last for sixteen more years.
c.22	Backs away from prediction (to God alone), outlines his depiction of Muhammad as the evil king prophesied in Daniel 11, and his characteristics, idolatrous, lascivious, deceitful.
c.23	Gathering all of the bad examples of Muhammad for the whole church to observe. Using the Tyconian method of recapitulation to explain the contradictory translations Jerome uses, in his commentary on Daniel, whether the Antichrist will be driven by sexual desire. "certainly in this earlier beast the desire of women is affirmed and is confirmed as absent in the last [beast]." Describes Muhammad's hyper-masculinity as a gift from Aphrodite. Denounces Muhammad's marriage to Zaynab, and Islamic polygamy, using animal comparisons from Ezekiel 23:20/Jeremiah 5:8.
c.24	On Muhammad's sexuality and idolatry as the "eleventh horn" from Daniel
c.25	describes the <i>hajj</i> and daily prayers as worshipping Maozim, from Daniel 11
c.26	The enemy can only be defeated by public exposure. Adapts Gregory on Job's Behemoth to describe Muhammad as illiterate and ignorant
c.27	Continuing to adapt Gregory's Behemoth and Leviathan, comparing the darkness of Islam, clothed in the "heathen philosophies of the Jews," with the light of Christ, the "eternal sun."
c.28	Demonstrates some Arabic facility. Still adapting Gregory, now just on the Leviathan, describing his pride and deceit. "Holy men who join members of the dragon by the deceitful head are again divided from them by perfidy."
c.29	Christ as the Light of the world, continuing the darkness against light theme.
c.30	Layering descriptions of Muhammad as Leviathan, dragon, and Antichrist, adapting Gregory
c.31	Explaining how Gregory applies here. Describing Muhammad as becoming "confirmed king above all sons of pride."
c.32	"These things which I have mentioned from the book of Job briefly perceiving the weakness of my strength, I have followed the commentaries of blessed Gregory. And because he speaking abundantly and finding more eloquently by certain shapes <b>generally and specifically</b> in this <b>rule</b> he diverted in the <b>members of this dragon</b> , closely I have found in this beast in our times having arisen to explain by that authority which I knew by the rules of exegesis"
c.33	Summarizing Christ's teachings, chastity and virginity, obedience, humility, temperance... Compares with the excesses of Islam. "He is rightly called antichrist."
c.34	All heresiarchs are antichrists, following Jerome, but adding Muhammad. Just as Christ had types, so does the Antichrist.
c.35	Final condemnation of those who are circumcised, which is a mark of the Antichrist, and praises those who "showed strength to this our exposition, and moreover, they brought this [strength] openly into the light."