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Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain

Professor Wolf's book offers important new insights into the so-called 'martyrdom movement' that occurred in Córdoba in the 850s. It includes a biographical treatment of the ninth-century Cordoban priest Eulogius, who witnessed and recorded the martyrdoms of over forty Christians at the hands of Muslim authorities. Eulogius' hagiographical task was complicated by the fact that many of the Christians in Córdoba at the time resented the provocative actions of the martyrs that had led to their executions, claiming that their public denunciations of Islam were inappropriate given the relative tolerance of the emir.

The purpose of this study is threefold: firstly, it analyzes the way in which Eulogius' martyrologies recast both the events and the ideal of sanctity to make the Cordoban martyrs look more like their ancient Roman counterparts. Secondly, it explores the reasons why an important ecclesiastic like Eulogius would want to defend such dubious martyrs in the first place. And thirdly, having come to an understanding about the motives of Eulogius, the study returns to the question of the motives of the martyrs themselves.

This work will be of value to scholars and others with an interest in the history of Muslim Spain, the history of Christian-Muslim interaction, and historical ideas of sanctity.

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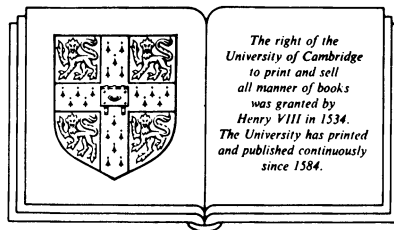
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KENNETH BAXTER WOLF

*Assistant Professor of History,
Pomona College, Claremont,
California*



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To the memory of my father,
Baxter Keyt Wolf,
a different kind of artist

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Note on transliteration and names

Arabic names and terms have been transliterated consistently with two exceptions: first, words that have entered the English language, such as, emir, caliph, dinar, Allah, mosque, and muezzin; and second, plural forms which, if transliterated accurately, would require confusing orthographic changes. Instead I have simply added an “s” to the singular form, as in the case of *dhimmīs*. I have used al-Andalus interchangeably with Muslim Spain to refer to those parts of the Iberian peninsula under Muslim rule. Readers will find “Andalusian Christians” in place of “Mozarabs” since the former allows for reference to Christians living in Muslim Spain without automatically implying acculturation.

For the sake of consistency, I have rendered all of the names of the martyrs and polemicists in their Latin forms even when there is an English equivalent. Hence “Paulus” instead of Paul and “Joannes” instead of John. Though it may seem awkward, the alternatives are more so. The exceptions are names of figures, such as Augustine or Gregory, whom we know from sources other than the documents pertaining to the martyrdoms. For place names, I have been less consistent. If there is a common English equivalent, I have used it. If not, I use either the Spanish or Latin forms depending on reader accessibility.