

Art History 331
Muslims, Jews, and Christians in Medieval Iberia
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TWO VIEWS OF THE CRUSADES AND THE CRUSADERS

1. **Fulcher of Chartres, Chronicle of the First Crusade, M.E. McGinty trans. (quoting Pope Urban II):** "Now that you, O sons of God, have consecrated yourselves to God to maintain peace among yourselves more vigorously and to uphold the laws of the Church faithfully, there is work to do, for you must turn the strength of your sincerity, now that you are aroused by divine correction, to another affair that concerns you and God. Hastening to the way, you must help your brothers living in the Orient, who need your aid for which they have already cried out many times.

For, as most of you have been told, the Turks, a race of Persians, who have penetrated within the boundaries of Romania even to the Mediterranean . . . , have overcome them, already victims in seven battles, and have killed and captured them, have overthrown churches, and have laid waste God's kingdom. . . .

. . . I, with suppliant prayer--not I, but the Lord--exhort you, heralds of Christ, to persuade all of whatever class, both knights and footmen, both rich and poor, in numerous edicts, to strive to help expel that wicked race from our Christian lands before it is too late.

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O what a shame, if a people, so despised, degenerate, and enslaved by demons would thus overcome a people endowed with the trust of almighty God, and shining in the name of Christ! O how many evils will be imputed to you by the Lord Himself, if you do not help those who, like you, profess Christianity!

2. **From The Autobiography of Ousama Ibn Mounkidh (1095-1188), G.R. Potter trans.:** "Glory be to Allâh, the creator and author of all things! Anyone who is acquainted with what concerns the Franks can only glorify and sanctify Allâh the All-Powerful; for he has seen in them animals who are superior in courage and in zeal for fighting but in nothing else, just as beasts are superior in strength and aggressiveness.

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[re two patients who were in the process of being cured by a native doctor] It was at this point that a Frankish doctor came up and said: 'This man is incapable of curing them.' Then, turning to the knight, he asked, 'Which do you prefer, to live with one leg or die with two?' 'I would rather live with one leg,' the knight answered. 'Bring a stalwart knight,' said the Frankish doctor, 'and a sharp hatchet.' Knight and hatchet soon appeared. I was present at the scene. The doctor stretched the patient's leg on a block of wood and then said to the knight, 'Strike off his leg with the hatchet; take it off at one blow.' Under my eyes the knight aimed a violent blow at it without cutting through the leg. He aimed another blow at the unfortunate man, as a result of which his marrow came from his leg and the knight died instantly. As for the woman, the doctor examined her and said, 'She is a woman in whose head there is a devil who has taken possession of her. Shave off her hair!' His prescription was carried out, and like her fellows, she began once again to eat garlic and mustard. Her consumption became worse. The doctor then said, 'It is because the devil has entered her head.' Taking a razor, the doctor cut open her head in the shape of a cross and scraped away

the skin in the centre so deeply that he bones were showing. He then rubbed the head with salt. In her turn, the woman died instantly. . . .

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The Franks understand neither the feeling of honor nor the nature of jealousy. . . .

One day, going to his bedroom, [a] wine-merchant found a man in bed with his wife. 'What has induced you to come in to my wife?' he asked. 'I was tired,' the other said, 'and I came in to rest myself.' 'But how,' said the Frank, 'did you dare to go in to my bed?' 'I found a couch smoothed over like a rug and I went to sleep on it.' 'But my wife was sleeping by your side.' 'The bed belonged to her, could I turn her away from it?' 'By the truth of my religion,' the husband answered, 'I swear to you that if you do it again we shall see an estrangement between us.' That is what discontent is with a Frank and that is the measure of his jealousy.

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[re the punishment of a man suspected of tricking the Franks] They fitted up an enormous cask, filled it with water and placed a wooden plank across it. Then the suspect was bound, hung by a rope from his shoulders, and thrown into the cask. If he were innocent, he would sink into the water and would be pulled out by means of this rope without being allowed to die. On the other hand, if he had committed any fault, it would be impossible for him to sink in the water. The unfortunate man when thrown into the cask tried hard to reach the bottom but did not succeed, and had to submit to the rigor of their judgment (the curse of Allâh upon them!). They passed a red-hot silver stiletto over his eyes and blinded him."