

GARY BUNT HANDOUT - ISLAM IN THE WEST / AL-ANDALUS

al-Andalus - the early years:

This handout is supplied to supplement your own notes and reading. This is a brief chronological guide to the first 150 years of 'Islamic Spain' - the earliest Islamic presence on the European continent. Space limitations on this handout do not permit a full chronology (!).

692	Hassan ibn al-Nu'man al-Ghassani conquered 'al-Maghrib' on behalf of Umayyads of Damascus.
707	Musa ibn Nusayr succeeded Hassan
708	Takes Tangier
710	Musa permits his lieutenant Tariq + 500 reconnaissance mission.
711	Tariq + 9000 Berbers land at fortress (later known as Jabal Tariq). March against Roderick, northwards. Defeats Roderick, advances to Castille, Leon.
712	Musa + 18,000 Arabs take Seville, Huelva, Merida. Joins Tariq at Toledo, march to Salamanca.
714	Musa and Tariq return to Damascus. Caliph saw their adventure as beyond remit of authority. Careers end.
	Musa's son Abd al Aziz ibn Musa rules, extends power. Organises country (finance, administration). Bridges Berber-Arab divide.
	Encourages marriage to local Christian women. Abd al Aziz killed 716.
716-56	Spain has 21 governors - put in by soldiers, Damascus.
732	Abd al-Rahman b. Abdallah al-Ghafiqi (730-2) marched 80,000 men to France. Meets Charles Martel between Tours and Poitiers. Al-Ghafiqi died. Arabs flee. Why the failure? Insecure Spain; no booty; poor supplies; climate.
740	Berber unrest (symptomatic of the period). Inspired by Khawarij philosophy of equality in Islam. Berbers take Tangiers, besiege Arabs in Ceuta, threaten Cordova.
741	Damascus force under Balj ibn Bishr takes Cordova.
743	Damascus sends governor al-Khattar. Attempted pacification of Berbers. Polarisation between northern and southern Arabs.
749	Umayyads of Damascus deposed by Abbasids. Umayyads eliminated, except Abd al-Rahman and his servant Badr.
754	Badr sought support for Abd al-Rahman in al-Andalus.
755	Abd al-Rahman lands in Spain. Governor Yusuf al-Fihri seeks to neutralise him.
756	Abd al-Rahman occupies Cordova, becomes Emir. Seen as 'moderate'
761-	Puts down revolts.
774-8	Charlemagne attacks from north (with Arab help). Withdraws. <u>Song of Roland</u> Abd al-Rahman consolidates al-Andalus. Pacifies unrest. Appoints governors. Building programme commences (i.e. Cordova Mosque).
789	Hisham I acquired kingdom of al-Andalus. 'Pious' ruler.
796	al-Hakam (796-882) established spy network. Seen as 'tyrant'
798	Brutal suppression of Revolt in Toledo.
820	al-Hakam killed 13,000. Destroyed suburb of Cordova.
822	Abd al-Rahman II succeeds father. Well-educated. Military experience. Administration re-arranged. Strikes coins, builds mosques.
844	Encounters Vikings, who land at Lisbon, Seville, Cadiz. Vikings lose heavily. Abd al-Rahman II also enlarged fleet, fights Christians.
851	'Deliberate' Christian martyrs, led by Eulugio. 'The Martyrs of Cordova'. Byzantine Christian embassy.

Other notable dates:

912-961?	Abd al-Rahman III: attempts to pacify volatile kingdom. Builds palaces, confronts opponents (including Shi'i Fatimids in N. Africa). Takes Caliph title (to counter Shi'i). + deals with Christian invaders in North. United al-Andalus: Cordova as capital. Enlarges mosque. International embassies (Africa, Europe, Byzantine). Reforms army.
961-976	al-Hakam. Scholar, kept stability. Relies on officials.
976	Conflict re. Successor. Led by vizier Ibn Abi Amir, who suppressed 'legitimate' ruler Hisham.

Succession conflicts eroded the stability of the Kingdom. However, al-Andalus formed a significant part of the Arab Muslim world until 1492. The gradual 'decline' of al-Andalus is generally dated from the Berber Almoravid (from the Moroccan countryside) invasions of 1086 onwards.

Other Terminologies & spellings

Visigoths

Dhimmi - 'peoples of the book'

Mozarabs - assimilated Christians

Charlemagne

Muwalladun - Muslims whose ancestors converted from Christianity, Judaism or paganism.

Musalim - converts

Ibn Shabrut (court physician, c.912-61).

Abu Ibrahim Samuel ben Yosef Halevi ibn Nagrela (993-1063), Vizier of Granada.

Christian states in North: King Alfonso of Asturias (739-56); Carolingians (S. France) (various)

The following books provide further details:

Albert Hourani - A History of the Arab Peoples

A.G. Chejne - Muslim Spain (USA, 1974)

Bernard Lewis - The Arabs in History (London, 1984)

R W Southern - The Making of the Middle Ages ...

Thomas Glick - Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages (Princeton, 1979)

Emilio Garcia Gomez, 'Moorish Spain' chap. in Bernard Lewis (ed.) - The World of Islam (London, Thames & Hudson, 1976), pp.225-244

Note: it is helpful for you to have a background knowledge of Islamic Spain, and to place it into the context of your understanding about Islam in the West. You may find it helpful to memorise certain key dates and events. i.e. 711, 732, 1086, 1492. However, it is not necessary to memorise every date ...

HC 003 UV

Al-Andalus

Further resources

Details on the film viewed in the session:

Channel 4, The Ancient World with Bettany Hughes, When the Moors Ruled in Europe (2005) <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/the-ancient-world-with-bettany-hughes/episode-guide/series-8/episode-1>

Other information:

BBC Religions, Muslim Spain,
http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/history/spain_1.shtml

BBC, An Islamic History of Europe, (2009)
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/documentaries/features/islamic-history-europe.shtml>

‘An Islamic History of Europe’ – which is recommended - (1’28”) is available via YouTube: <http://youtu.be/xoIaCK-7z5o>

YouTube, Al-Andalus : Alhambra Palace الحمراء قصر –short film (10’00”) on architecture

<http://youtu.be/zxMi5gh7wrc>

YouTube, The Great Mosque of Cordoba 3D, http://youtu.be/xszSOgYVV_U

Saudi Aramco, A Virtual Walking Tour: the Alhambra

<http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/200604/alhambra/default.htm>

Islamic Spain and the Reconquista (interactive map),
<http://explorethemed.com/reconquista.asp?c=1>