

and prophet and is worshiped as a god” (Adelphus, ll. 318–19). Gautier says that because of Muhammad’s military success, the Saracens thought he must be God; Embrico asserts that Libyans worship Muhammad in his floating coffin.²¹ Thus the images of Saracen idolatry examined in chapter 5 could be accommodated with a cursory knowledge of Muhammad’s life. In this way, William of Malmesbury, writing in about 1125, can assert the Saracens are monotheists yet still maintain that they had erected a statue of Muhammad in the temple of Jerusalem.²²

These twelfth-century authors, like their predecessors, do not see Islam as an independent phenomenon, a distinct religion. Rather, they see the law of the Saracens as part of a panoply of diabolically inspired error that threatens the souls of Christians and the hierarchy of the church. Faced with this perceived threat (from Saracens, Waldensians, Cathars, Jews, or others), many twelfth-century authors responded with hateful slander, not refuting their adversaries but vilifying them, denigrating them so that their readers could not take them seriously. There were other twelfth-century Christians, however, who attempted a more serious rebuttal of Islamic doctrine.

Mozarabic Christian Polemics Against Islam: Eleventh to Twelfth Centuries

As Europe north of the Pyrenees confronted new heresies and sent waves of crusaders to face the Saracen infidels, Spain too faced military and religious turmoil. Wars of conquest, often motivated (or at least justified) by ideologies of crusade and jihad, pitted the Christian rulers of the north against the new Almoravid Muslim dynasty. These conflicts provoked emigration and conversion of large numbers of religious minorities: many Muslims moved south, many Christians and Jews went north into the expanding Christian kingdoms. Large religious minorities remained in the urban areas: Muslims and Jews in the newly conquered Christian towns, Christians and Jews in the Almoravid empire. Some converted to the majority religion, responding to a mix of social and economic pressure and spiritual turmoil; others clung to the faiths they had been born into.

This atmosphere produced a number of polemical and apologetical works between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. At least five Christian writers wrote polemics against Islam in twelfth-century Spain: four of these authors are (or are said to be) converts to Christianity, two from Judaism and two from Islam. All of them show knowledge of Islam, of the Koran,

and the Hadîth; all of them know (and continue) the traditions of Eastern Christian anti-Islamic polemics embodied in the *Risâlat al-Kindî* (a text with which many in Spain were familiar).²³ Moreover, all five of them, it seems, were written in Christian territories recently wrested from Muslims—at least three of them in Toledo, which had been conquered by Alfonso VI in 1085.

These texts, which attest to the frequency of interfaith disputation and polemic in Spain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, survive for the most part in fragmentary form. Three of them survive only as fragments cited by Muslim authors. The Cordoban Muslim al-Khazrajî was prisoner in Toledo from 1145 to 1147. There, “one of the Goths,” a Christian priest, wrote to him, sending him a brief polemical tract against Islam; al-Khazrajî responded with his own refutation.²⁴ In the early thirteenth century, a writer known simply as “the Cordoban Imâm” (*al-Imâm al-Qurtubî*) refuted two other Toledan works of Christian apologetics: one, *Tathlîth al-wahdâniyah*, written by a convert from Islam to Christianity, the other the *Mashaf al-âlam*, probably written by a Mozarabic priest named Augustine.²⁵ A fourth text, the *Liber denudationis*, written in Arabic in the twelfth century, survives only in a sloppy and much abridged Latin translation in one sixteenth-century manuscript.²⁶ The fifth text is the brief anti-Islamic chapter that Petrus Alfonsi inserts into his *Dialogues against the Jews* (1110) and that is based almost entirely on the *Risâlat al-Kindî*. I do not attempt to give a thorough analysis of these texts here; that has been done elsewhere.²⁷

These five texts illustrate that Spain (and in particular Toledo) had become a center of polemical exchange between Christians, Muslims, and Jews. The role of converts in these disputes is central. The anonymous author of the *Liber denudationis* claims to be a convert from Islam: he describes his former religion as “blindness and stupidity,” out of which God led him.²⁸ Petrus Alfonsi similarly describes his former religion (Judaism) as a “tunic of iniquity” that he shed when he was baptized in 1106 under the protection of his godfather Alfonso I of Aragon in the cathedral of Huesca—a building that had itself undergone a conversion, as it had been a mosque only ten years earlier.

The Christian authors of these polemical exchanges paint Islam as a heretical deviation from Christianity, attacking Muhammad as a false prophet who feigned a spiritual mission to satisfy his lust and ambition. They attack the Koran as contradictory and illogical. They ridicule Muslim polygamy and the promise of sexual pleasure in heaven. They defend the Bible against the charge of falsification and craft quasi-rational “proofs” of

the Trinity. In all of this, these Mozarab authors are continuing the apologetical and polemical traditions they found in earlier Eastern texts such as the *Risâlat al-Kindî*. Yet at the same time they develop these arguments in new ways, showing a familiarity with contemporary Arabic science and with Latin theologians such as Hugh of Saint Victor and Abelard.²⁹ These authors define and explain Islam to Christendom; their strategies would subsequently be adapted by their readers, Latin polemicists against Islam in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Muhammad is the chief scoundrel for these Christian writers. Petrus Alfonsi's anti-Islamic polemic is part of the *Dialogues against the Jews*, a fictive discussion between the author's new Christian persona (Petrus) and his former, Jewish one (Moses). Just as the *Risâlat al-Kindî* has the (fictitious) Muslim correspondent, al-Hâshimî expound Islamic doctrine in order for the Christian to refute it, Alfonsi's Moses presents a summary of Muslim belief and asks Petrus why he didn't choose to convert to Islam. The centerpiece of Petrus's response is an acerbic and derogatory biography of Muhammad, who "through heated fraud feigned to be a prophet," proffering "an inane doctrine."³⁰ Closely following the *Risâlat al-Kindî*, Petrus recounts that Muhammad had first been an idolater and had enriched himself through trade and through his marriage with Khadîja. Wishing to rule over his tribe, he decided to pretend to be a prophet; he and his followers enriched themselves through war and pillage. Muhammad's loss and injury at the battle of Uhud show that he was not a true prophet, for otherwise he would have foreseen and avoided them. The three signs of prophecy, Petrus says, are "probity of lifestyle, performance of miracles, absolute truth in everything he says."³¹ Muhammad, for Petrus, fails on all three accounts.

Purity of lifestyle was for Mahomet violence, for by force he ordered that it be preached that he was prophet of God. He joyed in theft and rapacity. He burnt so with the fire of lust that he did not blush to pretend that the Lord ordered him to soil another's marriage bed through adultery, as we read about Zaynab, daughter of Ias, wife of Zayd: "God," he said, "orders you, Zayd, to divorce your wife." Once [Zayd] divorced her [Mahomet] copulated with her continually.³²

Where the *Risâlat al-Kindî* had merely reproduced the Koranic passage referring to the Zaynab affair without comment,³³ Alfonsi wishes to drive his lesson home: Muhammad is not only violent and lustful (and hence he

lacks the signs of prophecy) but also does not stoop to falsifying bogus revelations in order to satisfy his basest desires. The *Liber denudationis* recounts the story in greater detail; the main point, for the anonymous author, is to undermine the validity of the Koran: how could one pretend that God is the author of such debased and self-serving revelations?³⁴

Alfonsi, following the *Risâlat al-Kindî*, uses the legend of Muhammad's failed resurrection to help explain the successes of Islam:

After Muhammad's death, everyone wished to abandon his Law. He himself had said that on the third day his body would be borne up to heaven. When they realized that this was a lie and saw his corpse rotting, he was buried and the greater part [of his followers] abandoned [Islam]. 'Alî, the son of Abû Tâlib, one of Muhammad's ten associates, took over the kingdom at Muhammad's death. He coolly predicted and hotly admonished the people to believe, and said that they had not properly understood Muhammad's words. "Muhammad," he said, "did not say that he would be resurrected before his burial or while men watched. He said rather, that after the burial of his body the angels would, with no one knowing, bear him up to heaven. Therefore, when they did not immediately bury him, he began to decompose, so that they might bury him immediately." By means of this argument ['Alî] kept the people for a while in their original error.³⁵

Here Muhammad functions as Antichrist (although Alfonsi does not use the term), promising (but failing) to rise from the dead on the third day: his rotting corpse is presented as evidence of his error. Yet 'Alî's clever lie keeps the people in error; hence Alfonsi is able both to denigrate Muhammad and explain the success of Islam.

Both Alfonsi and the *Liber denudationis* portray Islamic ritual and belief as a confused hodgepodge of heretical Christianity, heretical Judaism, and idolatrous survivals. Both stress the role of Muhammad's heretical teachers. For the *Liber denudationis*, they are the monk "Boheira" (i.e., Bahira), the Jew 'Abd Allâh ibn Salâm, and the Persian Salmân al-Fârisî; for Alfonsi, Muhammad was educated by a Jacobite heretic named Sergius (who, he says, had been condemned by a council of Antioch) and by two Jewish heretics, Abdias (perhaps 'Abd Allâh b. Salâm) and Ka'b al-Ahbâr.³⁶ For this reason, both authors suggest, Muslim doctrine contains a mixture of truth and error, its ritual a blend of Jewish practice and paganism.

As an example of the latter, both authors portray the pilgrimage rites at Mecca as vestiges of paganism. For the *Liber denudationis*, the practice of

kissing the black stone of the Ka'ba is nothing more or less than idolatry.³⁷ Alfonsi rejects as groundless the Muslim tradition that the Ka'ba was constructed by Abraham and Ishmael. Instead, he gives his own peculiar version of its history:

The two sons of Lot, Amon and Moab, honored this house, and the two idols were brought there by them, one made of white stone, the other of black stone. The name of the one, that was of black stone, was Mercurius, the name of the other was Chamos. The one which was of black stone was erected in honor of Saturn, the white one in honor of Mars. Twice in the year their devotees came up to these idols to pray to them, to Mars when the sun was in the first degree of Aries (because Aries is the honor of Mars). When Mars leaves Aries, as was the custom, they threw stones. [They came] to Saturn when the sun entered the first degree of Libra, because Libra is the honor of Saturn. They burned incense, naked and with heads tonsured; this is still celebrated in India today, as I said. Indeed the Arabs adored idols with Amon and Moab. Then Muhammad, coming after a long time, was not able to remove the original custom, but by a change in the custom he permitted them to make the circuit of the house covered with seamless garments. But lest he seem to enjoin sacrificing to idols, he constructed a likeness of Saturn in the corner of the house. And so that his face might not appear, he placed it so that the back side was facing out. The other idol, that of Mars, because it was sculpted in the round, he put underground and placed a stone on top of it. He ordered the men who convened there for prayer to kiss these stones and, bent over and with heads tonsured, to throw stones backwards between their legs. In bowing down they bare their rears, which is a sign of the original law.³⁸

Alfonsi stops short of calling Muslims pagans, but he implies that their monotheism is sullied by the vestiges of these pagan rites. He associates real elements of the Muslim Mecca cult (lapidation, wearing of seamless garments, the Ka'ba itself) with Talmudic descriptions of the pagan cults of Merqulis (at whose idols devotees threw stones) and Baal-Peor (to whom one bared oneself and defecated); these are linked through the story of Lot's sons, Amon and Moab, in a twist that seems to be Alfonsi's own innovation.

Both the *Liber denudationis* and Petrus Alfonsi assert that the Koran is not the fruit of a true revelation, since it was composed by Muhammad's followers after his death. Furthermore, they affirm that it cannot be di-

vinely inspired since it contains many logical contradictions and many injunctions that are clearly immoral; the Hadîth, too, show the same faults. Both polemical texts, like the *Risâlat al-Kindî* before them, stress that according to the Koran, Muhammad produced no miracles. These texts dismiss and ridicule various of the miracles attributed to Muhammad by popular Muslim tradition.³⁹ How can Muslims claim that Muhammad split the moon, asks the author of the *Liber denudationis*, when the moon, being ethereal, can neither fall nor be split? Furthermore, since the moon controls the tides, the disastrous consequences of its fall would have been noted worldwide; such was not the case.⁴⁰

But it is Muslim sexual mores, once again, that become the favorite target for the polemicists' ridicule. Both authors dwell on Muhammad's marriage with Zaynab, and the Koranic revelation said to have validated it; for both, this is proof that the Koran, far from being divinely inspired, is manipulated by Muhammad to serve his own base desires. The *Liber denudationis* dwells on the supposedly sordid details of Muhammad's other marriages.⁴¹ The *Liber denudationis* (like the *Risâlat al-Kindî* and *al-Qûtî*) attacks Muslim divorce law, which allows a man to remarry the wife he has divorced only after she has had sexual intercourse with another man.⁴² And all these texts ridicule the Muslim idea of heaven, dwelling on the sexual delights that Muhammad promised there. The *Liber denudationis* even goes so far as to claim that Muslims believe that in the next life each Muslim in paradise will be awarded for his virtue by an elongation of his penis: it will be so long, in fact, that he will need seventy Christians and seventy Jews to carry it before him!⁴³

These arguments are unlikely to carry weight with Muslims; they are meant rather to inspire in their Christian reader disgust and ridicule for Islam. Muhammad is a heretic and a heresiarch for these authors, as he was for Guibert de Nogent, Gautier de Compiègne, Embrico of Mainz, and Adelphus. Yet the Mozarabic authors base their caricature on knowledge of Islam and write for Christians who are in daily contact with Muslims. They cannot content themselves with fabricating wildly inaccurate tales of the trickster and magician who dupes the Saracens through false miracles. They need to provide their readers with an image of Islam that seems realistic at the same time that it is repellent.

These authors also need to provide their Christian readers with defensive arguments to parry the polemics of Muslims. They need, in particular, to be able to defend the Bible, the incarnation, and the Trinity. The *Liber denudationis* refutes the charge of *tahrîf* (falsification of the scriptures) by

relying on arguments found in oriental Christian apologetics such as the *Risâlat al-Kindî*: it cites passages from the Koran that praise the Torah and Gospels. It also argues that it would be impossible for so many Jews and Christians, spread over the earth and speaking many different languages, to modify the text of the holy writ.⁴⁴

To defend the incarnation to Muslims is a more difficult task. All five of the Mozarabic texts argue for the possibility or plausibility of the incarnation based on analogies to events attested in the Koran (and hence accepted by Muslims). The Koran acknowledges that God spoke directly to Moses through the intermediary of the burning bush.⁴⁵ Both the *Tathlîth al-wahdânîyah* and the priest Augustine's *Mashaf al-'âlam* argue that God is present, incarnated, in Jesus in the same way that he was present in the burning bush.⁴⁶

The Trinity is the most common object of scorn among Muslim critics of Christianity. Early Eastern Christian apologists defended the Trinity, and at times claimed to be able to prove it, by identifying it with an essential triad of divine attributes (see chapter 3). Both the *Tathlîth al-wahdânîyah* and Petrus Alfonsi use such arguments to “prove” the Trinity. In the sixth of Alfonsi's *Dialogi*, Moses asks Petrus who the three persons of the Trinity are. Petrus responds that they are substance, wisdom, and will (*substantia*, *sapientia*, and *voluntas*). Having claimed to prove the existence of God the creator through the evidence of his creation, Petrus goes on to prove the existence of the Trinity:

Since indeed it is proven that substance truly exists and that it is the creator of all things, the beginning of all beginnings, and the maker of all things made, it is necessary that it have wisdom and will, namely that it know what it wishes to do before it does it, and that it also will to do, because, before the work comes forth in appearance, it is first formed in the imagining soul, and this imagination is wisdom. And since it thus knew, either it did it or it did not do it. It did not do it if it did not will it. If indeed it did it, then it willed it. And this is the will. Thus the creator of the world could not create anything, before there existed in Him both knowing and willing.⁴⁷

Moses responds “that is true.” Petrus concludes from this “Thus God is substance, wisdom, and will.”⁴⁸ Moses asks if wisdom and will are inseparable from and coeternal with God; Petrus responds yes, since to imagine God without either wisdom or will would be to ascribe accident to him.

Moreover, God could not have created either wisdom or will, since he needs both wisdom and will in order to create. Petrus equates substance with the Father, wisdom with the Son, and will with the Holy Spirit; the rationalistic explanation of the Creation, for Alfonsi, requires the existence of the Trinity. *Tathlith al-wahdâniyah* gives essentially the same argument, though its triad differs slightly: it is power, knowledge, and will.⁴⁹ Both authors are working within a well-established tradition of Arab Christian apologetics; both emphasize supposedly rational and scientific proofs. Reason (*ratio*) can disprove Judaism and Islam and prove the essence of Christian truth.

Of these five texts, four, written in Arabic, continue the traditional apologetical strategies of *dhimmi* Christians, strategies examined in chapters 3 and 4. Yet there seems to be a resurgence in these texts, which now have a sharper, polemical edge, sparked perhaps by the Christian conquest of Toledo and the Almoravid response. A free, aggressive tone is possible in Christian Toledo—without the disastrous personal consequences that it would have entailed in Umayyad Córdoba. Moreover, it is these texts, and texts like them (in particular the *Risâlat al-Kindî*) that Latin Christians will consult when they wish to learn about (and refute) Islam.

The most widely read and influential of these texts was the anti-Islamic chapter of Petrus Alfonsi's *Dialogues against the Jews*. Alfonsi composed them in 1110 and subsequently immigrated to England and then to France; from there, his *Dialogues* circulated among monastic readers interested in Old Testament exegesis, Judaism, and Islam. Sixty-three extant manuscripts of the *Dialogues* (along with another sixteen manuscripts containing adaptations of the text) testify to its popularity. Vincent de Beauvais included an abbreviated version of the text in his *Speculum historiale* (c. 1250), which survives in more than two hundred medieval manuscripts. Several scribes recopied only the anti-Islamic chapter, and the Dominican Humbert of Romans, in his *Tract on the Preaching of the Crusade*, recommends it alongside the Latin translation of the Koran as essential reading for understanding the religion of the adversary. Dozens of medieval writers on Islam based their descriptions of Muhammad's life, of Muslim law, and of the pilgrimage rites at Mecca on Alfonsi's *Dialogues*.⁵⁰ The popularity of Alfonsi's work contributed to the increasing tendency to link anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim polemics: whereas earlier anti-Jewish polemicists had contented themselves largely with arguing for Christian interpretations of the Torah and the Prophets, Alfonsi focused on the Talmud and the Koran as two illegitimate pseudorevelations that formed the bases for two erroneous

religions. Both Talmud and Koran, for Alfonsi, could be attacked through scriptural and rational-scientific argumentation, and key elements of Christian doctrine (the Creation and the Trinity) could be proven. The Muslim or Jew, since he is rational, could be brought to the Christian truth, as Moses is in Alfonsi's *Dialogues*. This linkage of anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim argumentation and this insistence on the irrationality of both rival faiths represents a crucial turning point in the portrayal of both Islam and Judaism in medieval Europe.

Peter of Cluny Attacks Saracen Heresy

One of Petrus Alfonsi's readers was Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, who used Alfonsi's tract in the anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish polemical tracts he composed in the 1140s and 1150s.⁵¹ A comparison of the two authors' approaches shows the cultural gulf that separates them, one an Andalusian with a philosophical education and the other a Burgundian monk steeped in the reading of the Bible and the church fathers. Alfonsi, true to the traditions of Christian Arab apologetics, presents Christianity as the foremost among the three monotheistic faiths. He uses his philosophical and scientific knowledge to attack the writings of rival faiths and to attempt to prove the doctrines of his own. Here he is one not only with the spirit of interreligious apologetics in the Arab world (in Spain and elsewhere) but also with the spirit of the twelfth-century renaissance in Latin Europe, where theologians increasingly apply logic and science in order to explain or prove Christian doctrine. Peter of Cluny, on the contrary, models his approach to Islam on that of the church fathers to the multiple heresies of antiquity; he wants to provide a definitive refutation of Saracen "heresy" worthy of being placed alongside the antiheretical treatises of Augustine or Jerome. For this he uses the *Risâlat al-Kindî* and Alfonsi's *Dialogues*, but his approach is quite different from either of theirs.⁵²

In 1142–43 Peter traveled to Spain and assembled a team of translators. He had Robert Ketton produce a full, Latin version of the Koran, which was subsequently given extensive marginal annotations; it is the first translation of the Koran into Latin, indeed probably the first complete translation into any language.⁵³ Other translators produced Latin versions of other Muslim texts and of the *Risâlat al-Kindî*. Using this collection of texts (often referred to as the *Collectio toletana*), Peter himself composed two anti-Islamic tracts: the first, his *Summa totius haeresis Saracenorum*, describes

and vilifies Islam to a Christian readership; the second, the *Contra sectam siue haeresim Saracenorum*, attempts to refute Islam on its own terms and enjoins its Muslim readers to convert to Christianity.

Peter of Cluny offers a rare opportunity of seeing a medieval mind at work—rare because we know what he read in order to form his conception of Islam: indeed we have the very manuscript he probably consulted when he read the *Risâlat al-Kindî*, Robert of Ketton’s translation of the Koran, and the other works whose translations he had commissioned.⁵⁴ Peter’s reading of the Koran was guided by the annotations in the margins of the manuscript, minicommentaries that guide the reader of the “diabolical Koran” by pointing out passages that would seem particularly shocking to the Christian (and especially monastic) reader. The reader is constantly told to note the “insanity,” “impiety,” “ridiculousness,” “stupidity,” “superstition,” “lying,” and “blasphemy” of what he is reading. When the Koran describes prophets not mentioned in the Bible, the comments of the annotator are as follows: “Note the unheard of names of prophets. Who ever heard of such prophets other than this diabolical one [meaning Muhammad]. . . . I think that these were not men but demons: they possessed this Satan, and in this way he concocted his ravings [presumably the Koran].” The annotations qualify Muslim traditions on Jesus and the Virgin as “monstrous and unheard-of fables.” The origins of this Christology are diabolical: “Note how inconsistent! how changeable! What vain and contradictory things are brought together in this diabolical spirit!” “Note how he everywhere says that Christ is the son of Mary, but against the Christians and the faith says that the son of Mary is not the son of God—which is the sum of all this diabolical heresy.” For the annotators, the devil and his follower Muhammad are the authors of this heresy. Numerous annotations accuse Muhammad of being too fond of women, and of playing on the Saracens’ lust by promising them houris in heaven. He threatens his followers with hellfire in order to get them to follow his law and to conquer Christian lands. All this is in line with earlier heresies: “Note that he everywhere promises such a paradise of carnal delights, as other heresies had done before.”⁵⁵

These annotations, along with the *Risâlat al-Kindî* and Alfonsi’s *Dialogues*, initiate Peter into a Mozarabic polemical view of Islam. Yet while these texts will teach him to see Islam through Mozarabic eyes, his own approach is different: it reflects his own peculiar concerns. Peter addresses his *Summa totius haeresis ac diabolicae sectae Saracenorum siue Hismahelitarum* to a Christian audience, as a preface to the translations of the Toledan cor-

pus; he probably composed it shortly after his return from Spain. Peter describes the purpose of his brief tract: “It ought to be told who [Muhammad] was, and what he taught, so that those who will read that book [the Koran] may better understand what they read and know how detestable were his life and his teachings.”⁵⁶

Peter wants to dispel the false opinions that many hold about the Saracens and Muhammad, whom some wrongly identify with the heresiarch Nicholas, whose followers are condemned in Revelation (2:6). The only source of information that he explicitly cites on Muhammad’s life is Anastasius Bibliothecarius’s Latin translation of Theophanes’s *Chronographia* (of which Cluny possessed a manuscript in the twelfth century).⁵⁷ That he should use Anastasius (and cite him) is natural: none of the texts translated in the Toledan collection provides a straightforward biography of Muhammad for the uninitiated reader. Anastasius seems to be the standard reference on the subject for writers of the early twelfth century: Hugh of Fleury incorporates parts of Anastasius’s description into his *Historia ecclesiastica*.⁵⁸ Peter fills in Anastasius’s account with information gleaned from *Risâlat al-Kindî* and Petrus Alfonsi’s *Dialogi* (it is not always clear which, since Petrus Alfonsi himself relies heavily on the Arabic text of the *Risâla*). Peter’s account of Muhammad’s life and teachings is much briefer than those of either of these sources, but he adds a clear sense of where the prophet and his followers fit in the history of error: the devil works behind and through Muhammad, leading a third of the world’s population into error.

Peter describes Muhammad as a poor, vile, unlettered Arab who achieved wealth and power through bloodshed, thievery, and intrigue. Finally realizing that a feigned religious vocation would serve his ambitions, he claimed that he was a prophet and usurped the authority of king. Then, at the bidding of Satan, a heretical Nestorian monk named Sergius came and joined Muhammad: together, along with several Jews, they forged a new heretical doctrine. “Muhammad, schooled in this way by the finest teachers—Jews and heretics—composed his Koran. He wove together, in his barbarous fashion, nefarious scripture from the fables of the Jews and the ditties of the heretics.” All this corresponds closely to Petrus Alfonsi’s description.⁵⁹ Peter goes on to describe what the Koran says about Moses and Jesus, about the torments of hell and the carnal pleasures of paradise. This mixture of truth and error inextricably woven together shows Muhammad to be the consummate heresiarch; here Peter compares Muham-

mad to earlier heresiarchs (not something done by either of his sources): “Vomiting forth almost all of the excrement of the old heresies (which he had drunk up as the devil poured it out), he denies the Trinity with Sabelius, with his Nestorius he rejects the divinity of Christ, with Mani he disavows the death of the Lord, though does not deny that He returned to heaven” (*Summa*, §9). Peter holds Muhammad’s life—in particular his polygamy—up to opprobrium. Mixing good and evil, sublime and ridiculous, Muhammad created a monstrous cult, similar to the animal Horace described with a human head, a horse’s neck, and feathers.⁶⁰

The intention of this diabolic heresy, Peter continues, is to present Christ as a holy man, loved by God, a great prophet—but wholly human and in no way son of God. “Indeed [this heresy], long ago conceived by the plotting of the devil, first spread by Arius, then promoted by this Satan, namely Muhammad, will be completed by Antichrist, in complete accordance with the intentions of the devil” (*Summa*, §13). Peter sees three great adversaries whom the devil uses to lead Christians astray: Arius, Muhammad, and Antichrist. Each manages to trick his followers into denying Christ’s divinity. It is for this reason, Peter tells us, that he composed his *Summa* and that he had the entire Toledan corpus translated: “I translated from Arabic into Latin the whole of this sect, along with the execrable life of its evil inventor, and exposed it to the scrutiny of our people, so that it be known what a filthy and frivolous heresy it is” (*Summa*, §18).

While Peter uses the works of earlier anti-Islamic polemicists, he clearly felt they were inadequate. He sets aside much of their material, apparently deeming it useless: for example the names of Muhammad’s associates or the polemical descriptions of ‘Alī’s teachings and the birth of Shi’ism (Peter did not know enough about Islam to appreciate the importance of the latter). On the other hand, Peter finds that these earlier polemics lack a proper taxonomy of error, a sense of Islam’s place in the divine plan. The devil inspired heresiarchs to lead the faithful into error; only through careful comparison with the teachings of other heresiarchs and the perusal of antiheretical works of the church fathers could this new and dangerous heresy be combated.

Peter is aware that his *Summa* is merely an introduction to the “Saracen heresy” for the Christian reader, not a refutation of it. The man he deemed most appropriate to refute Islam was Bernard of Clairvaux, to whom he sent a letter along with the Latin translation of the *Risâlat al-Kindî* in 1144. He tells Bernard that he is aware that the *Risâla* has not proved useful

to the Saracens in their own language and will not become more useful to them by virtue of being translated into Latin. “Yet perhaps it will be useful to some Latins, to whom it will teach things of which they were ignorant and will show what a damnable heresy it is. It will show them that they must defend themselves against it and attack it, should they ever come across it.”⁶¹ This characterization of the defensive purpose of the translation of the *Risâlat al-Kindî* indeed could characterize the whole of the *Collectio toletana*, including Peter’s own *Summa*. As an offensive tract against Islam, a real rational refutation of the Saracen heresy, the *Risâlat al-Kindî* apparently would not do; who better to compose such a refutation than Bernard: theologian, fighter of heresies, and preacher of crusade?

Bernard, however, failed to respond to the summons, and Peter himself undertook the task of refuting Islam, writing his *Contra sectam siue haeresim Saracenorum* (Against the sect or heresy of the Saracens) probably in 1155–56. The work as it survives is composed of a long prologue and two books; it may be that Peter wrote more that was subsequently lost or that he left it incomplete at his death on Christmas day, 1156. Both the structure and the strategy of the *Contra sectam siue haeresim Saracenorum* are quite different from those of the *Summa*. In the *Summa* he lambasted Muhammad from a Christian perspective; in the *Contra sectam* (after a prologue in which he justifies his polemics to Christian readers) he (in book 1) enjoins his Muslim readers to listen impartially to his arguments and tries to convince them that according to the Koran they should accept Christian scripture. In book 2 he tries to prove that Muhammad is not a prophet, by contrasting his life with those of Old Testament prophets.

In the long prologue to the *Contra sectam*, Peter justifies his enterprise by placing himself in the company of the church fathers who refuted earlier heretical doctrines, following the rule that “every error should be refuted.”⁶² He lists the names of ancient heresiarchs, “names monstrous to Christians,” and then those of the holy men who rebutted their heresies. The need to refute Muhammad’s sect is particularly urgent; its acolytes are the “worst adversaries” of the church (§1), for they dominate Asia and Africa and are present even in Europe (in Spain).

Peter then gives a rhetorical objection to this line of argument: one could say that the Saracens were pagans (*ethnici* or *pagani*) rather than heretics. For did not John define the “many Antichrists” (which, for Peter, means heresiarchs) as those who “went out from us, but they were not of us” (1 John 2:19), in other words as those who had been part of the church

and had broken away from it? Peter notes that, like heretics, the followers of Muhammad adopt parts of the Christian faith and reject other parts, while they also follow some rites that seem to Peter “pagan.” Like certain heretics, Peter says, Muhammad “wrote in his impious Koran” that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, lived without sin, and performed miracles; like the Manicheans, the Saracens deny his death. Like the pagans, on the other hand, they reject baptism, the mass, and the other sacraments. Heretics or pagans, “choose whichever you like” (*Contra sectam*, §14). He asserts that pagans should also be opposed by written polemic; here, too, he lists the names of illustrious church fathers who attacked paganism in their writings. Peter himself generally prefers to consider the “Mahometan error” as a heresy.

Peter then responds to one final rhetorical objection to his tract: why compose for Muhammad’s followers a treatise in Latin, a language they do not understand? Here Peter has two justifications. First of all, he hopes that someone may undertake to translate his tract into Arabic; after all, the Fathers frequently translated works useful to the church from Hebrew to Greek, Greek to Latin, Latin to Greek, and so on. Second, Peter says that his tract may prove useful to Christian readers, even if it stays untranslated (which it did). If there are any Christians who have the slightest tendency to respect or admire Islam, Peter hopes his work will quickly dissuade them. “Perhaps this tract will cure the hidden cogitations of some of our people, thoughts by which they could be led into evil if they think that there is some piety in those impious people and think that some truth is to be found with the ministers of lies” (*Contra sectam*, §20). Who are these Latin Christians who in their “hidden cogitations” might think the Saracens were pious? Peter does not say, but certainly the most likely candidates were the translators and students of Arabic science and philosophy. One such scholar, Adelard of Bath, proclaimed “I learnt from my masters, the Arabs, to follow the light of reason, while you are led by the bridle of authority; for what other word than ‘bridle’ can I use to describe authority?”⁶³ Might such preference for “Arabic reason” over “Latin authority” lead such Christian scholars into doubt, even apostasy? In this light his polemics look more like a defense of Christianity than an offensive missionary effort.

While the prologue to the *Contra sectam* is a defense of his tract to possible Christian detractors, the text itself is addressed to “the Arabs, sons of Ishmael, who serve the law of him who is called Muhammad” (*Contra sectam*, §23). He tells his readers that it is love that bids him write to them, love that Christian law enjoins on him. “I love you; loving you, I write to

you; writing, I invite you to salvation” (*Contra sectam*, §26). Peter realizes, he says, that the first reaction of his Arab readers will be that they would never abandon the law given them by their prophet. He also is aware that the Koran enjoins death on those who dispute the Muslim law.⁶⁴ This, he says, astounds him, because his Arab readers are “not only rational by nature, but logical in temperament and training” they are, moreover “learned in worldly knowledge” (*Contra sectam*, §30). The injunction against debating religion flies in the face of the Arabs’ propensity for learning: no rational man should accept something as true without first verifying its truth for himself.

These Arab philosophers use their reason to comprehend nature; do they not know that this nature, the highest object of the search for truth, asks Peter, the uncreated creator, the ultimate substance or essence, is God?⁶⁵ Should they not use their reason to investigate the truth concerning God? The law prohibiting religious dispute is an “infernal counsel,” a law fit for irrational sheep, not rational men. Instead of reaching for your swords or stones when a Christian comes to preach the gospel, Peter says, follow rather the example of Christians who dispute with Jews, listening patiently to their arguments and responding wisely. (Peter fails to follow his own advice in his vitriolic *Against the Inveterate Stubbornness of the Jews*.) Or follow the example of King Ethelbert of Kent, who received Christian missionaries with honor and heard them out.

Peter has emphasized the rationality and learning of his Muslim audience; this is all the more striking when contrasted with his descriptions of the enemies in his *Against the Inveterate Stubbornness of the Jews*, whom he brands as beasts without reason, since they stubbornly refuse to accept the rational truth of Christianity.⁶⁶ There he contents himself with lambasting irrational Jewish beliefs for a Christian audience, showing no hope of converting Jews. Here, on the contrary, he pleads with his learned Muslim readers to hear him out, invoking the pagan king Ethelbert. Muslims, it seems, should be predisposed to recognize Christian reason; in order to prevent this, Muhammad had forbidden them under pain of death from debating matters of the faith.

Having crossed this first theoretical hurdle to gain a hearing from his rational, philosophical Muslim readership, his first and fundamental argument in favor of Christianity is not rationalistic or scientific but scriptural. While earlier polemics (including both the *Risâlat al-Kindî* and Petrus Alfonsi’s *Dialogi*) often tried to prove the Trinity using various triads of philosophical concepts, Peter makes no such attempt.⁶⁷ Such argumenta-

tion is foreign to him; since exegetical argumentation is his forte, his most pressing need is to establish the validity of the Bible to his Muslim audience so he can then comfortably deploy the scriptural weapons he manipulates so well.

In order to prove the validity of the Jewish and Christian scriptures, Peter starts from the normal Christian viewpoint that Koranic stories of, say, Abraham or Noah are corrupted versions of their biblical counterparts; the marginal annotations in Robert of Ketton's translation of the Koran reflected this notion. Peter says he was amazed to find that Muhammad, in the Koran, had mixed elements from Christian and Jewish scriptures and moreover had praised those scriptures. Assuming, rather than arguing for, the primacy of Judeo-Christian scripture, he affirms that if these scriptures are divine, they should be accepted wholly, not in part; if they are not divine, they should be rejected wholly, not in part (*Contra sectam*, §57).

He knows what the Muslim objection to this argument will be: the charge that the God-given scriptures of Jews and Christians have been corrupted and that only the Koran represents the uncorrupted word of God. Here he refers to Muslim stories—gleaned from a marginal annotation to the Koran⁶⁸—according to which the Jews lost the Torah on their way back to Israel after the Babylonian captivity. Here Peter is quite capable of ridiculing this story using his scriptural arsenal. In particular, he employs the logical arguments gleaned from the *Risâlat al-Kindî* showing how difficult it would be for Jews and Christians, dispersed over half the world, to connive together to corrupt the Torah.⁶⁹ He argues similarly against charges that Christians have corrupted the Gospel. He then concludes book 1 with the assertion that he has proved that the Bible is divine, that it is superior to the Koran, and that its authority should be accepted by all Muslims (*Contra sectam*, §88).

In book 2, Peter attempts to prove that Muhammad is not a prophet, for a prophet by definition foresees the future, whereas Muhammad did not. Here Peter is unaware that the Muslim concept of *rasûl* is quite different from the Christian notion of *propheta*: the latter by definition predicts future events, while in Islam a *rasûl* is a messenger of God, bringing the message that man must submit to God's will. In showing that Muhammad does not correspond to Peter's notion of prophethood, he is scoring a point that would carry little weight with a Muslim audience.⁷⁰ Peter uses material from the *Risâlat al-Kindî*, reshaping it to fit into his more coherent, theologically based structure. Peter narrates only the details of Muhammad's

life that are necessary to show that he is not a prophet: in particular his inability to foresee his military defeats and his failure to produce miracles.⁷¹

Peter asserts that the last of the prophets was John the Baptist. Yet Paul foretold of the errors of false prophets: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine . . . and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”⁷² Just so, says Peter, were the Saracens converted to the fables of Muhammad and Jews to the fables of the Talmud. He describes the prophecies and virtuous lives of various of the Hebrew prophets and challenges his readers to produce anything analogous in order to prove that Muhammad is a prophet. This brings him back to his initial argument on the Koran; the Saracens should accept Christian scripture, reject Muhammad, and convert to Christianity (*Contra sectam*, §147–54).

Whether Peter considered his polemical work complete or whether he intended to write further, his polemical strategy, while indebted to that of his Arab and Spanish predecessors, is clearly distinct from it.⁷³ While effusively expressing his admiration and respect for philosophy and *ratio*, Peter is certainly not adept in the scientific-rational forms of argumentation common in the *Risâlat al-Kindî*, Petrus Alfonsi’s *Dialogi*, and other such works. He is much more at home when he can marshal his formidable knowledge of scripture to refute Saracen errors.

This difference is clearly seen in the organization of the *Contra sectam*. The *Risâlat al-Kindî* opens with a defense of the Trinity based on a triad of divine attributes, an argument that apparently failed to impress Peter, since he does not reproduce it. Petrus Alfonsi opens his attack on Islam by lambasting Muhammad; since his anti-Islamic chapter is part of a debate between a Christian and a Jew, this is an understandable ploy to discredit Islam in the eyes of his Jewish interlocutor (indeed, this is the same strategy Peter adapts in his *Summa*). Peter realized that to open the *Contra sectam* by directly attacking Muhammad would only provoke the hostility of his Muslim audience. Instead, Peter uses a few well-chosen Koranic citations to try to prove that Muslims should accept Christian scriptures; once he has done that, he can return to the exegetically based polemical method that he had employed in the *Contra Petrobrusianos* and the *Aduersus Iudaeorum inveteratam duritiem*.

In this enterprise Peter saw himself as continuing the tradition of the church fathers, of scripturally based explication and refutation of heresy, just as he saw his *De miraculis* as a continuation of the traditions embodied

in the writings of Gregory the Great.⁷⁴ His dissatisfaction with the earlier works of polemic that he used seems to stem from the fact that they do not resemble the works of the Fathers with which Peter was so familiar. This, perhaps, explained why these had failed to convert the Muslims: they were not proper theological tracts.

If Peter thought his polemics would be more likely to convert Muslims, he was of course badly mistaken. Peter had only a superficial bookish knowledge of Islam, nothing to compare with the more direct knowledge of Petrus Alfonsi or (especially) of the author of the *Risâlat al-Kindî*. Yet in both his works, Peter attempted to offer a defensive campaign against diabolical error: such polemics could quash the doubts of Catholic readers. For Peter, Cluny was God's citadel constantly besieged by demons. As Cluny's spiritual head, Peter was particularly well placed to repulse demonic incursions: through pastoral care of his monks, through doctrinal works such as his *De miraculis*, and through his trilogy of theological polemics against Jews, heretics, and Saracens. The three groups were increasingly linked in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and were often seen to represent a common danger. As Dominique Iogna-Prat has shown, all three rejected the spiritual economy that Cluny embodied, where Christians through sacrifice could transform themselves and prepare themselves for the next life. This sacrifice centered around the Eucharist, reenactment of Christ's ultimate sacrifice for humanity, which was to be performed by priests who had sacrificed their sexual life in order to devote themselves to God; Christian laymen could offer up their lands to God, turning them over to monasteries like Cluny whose monks would pray to shorten their benefactors' purgatory punishments. The whole was meant to be harmoniously ordered, with the Pope at its head. Muslim, Jews, and heretics were united in their rejection of this system, clinging instead to this world in an irrational obsession with all that was physical and carnal. If these enemies could not be brought into the fold through Peter's apologetics, at least their satanically inspired errors could be dispelled from the minds of Christians, in order that the system might continue to transform humble sinners into God's elect.

Peter of Cluny's anti-Muslim polemics were to have few readers during the Middle Ages: his *Contra sectam siue haeresim Saracenorum* survives in only one manuscript. Robert's translation of the Koran survives in eighteen manuscripts, most of them from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries.⁷⁵ The scribes of these manuscripts recognized the importance of the

Latin Koran and of other texts in the *Collectio toletana* (including Peter's *Summa*). Yet seventy years after the composition of the *Collectio toletana*, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, archbishop of Toledo, was apparently unaware of Robert's translation of the Koran: he induces Mark of Toledo to produce another translation (see chapter 7).

The "Heresy of Muhammad" among the Spiritual Threats to Latin Christendom

The Mozarabs, like their Eastern Christian counterparts, deployed the image of Muslim heresy as a defensive weapon. By portraying Islam as a deviant and debauched version of Christian Truth, they sought to defend their place in the *dâr al-Islâm*. *Reconquista* and jihad changed the confessional map of Spain, and Mozarab polemics grew more daring and more outspoken. Petrus Alfonsi brought this Mozarabic tradition north across the Pyrenees. Peter of Cluny adapted the Mozarabic defensive strategy to the spiritual needs of twelfth-century northern Europe: showing little interest in refuting Muslim doctrine or in defending Christian doctrine, he reasserted the primacy of Christian scripture over the Koran and affirmed that Muhammad was a false prophet. Other twelfth-century writers portrayed heretics in the same light. Landulf Senior, for example, writing in about 1110 (at the same time as Guibert de Nogent and Petrus Alfonsi), brands the Milanese Patarenes as "false Christs" and "false prophets" (*pseudochristi* and *pseudoprophetae*).⁷⁶

Islam was not, for these authors, a separate religion, distinct from other spiritual rivals: it was merely one variety of heretical error. This is true for Peter of Cluny and even truer for Christian theologians who knew less about Islam than did Peter. Alan of Lille, for example, composed in about 1200 his *De fide catholica*, a four-part polemical tract directed against Cathars, Waldensians, Jews and "pagans" (*pagani*)—by which he refers to the "disciples of Mahomet." The first part, against the Cathars, is the longest: each successive section is shorter. This is a good indication of the spiritual threat that each posed, for Alan, to the Christian commonwealth: Islam is spiritual enemy number four. Alan's chapters on Islam are curious. He indeed shows a good knowledge of certain details of Muslim doctrine: Muslim belief on paradise, on Christology, Muslim marriage laws, and so on. Yet he seems to have read neither Robert of Ketton's Koran, nor

Petrus Alfonsi, nor any of the other authors I have discussed. Alan was in Catalan Montpellier and may have received this accurate (though random) information either from a Muslim or from someone who had direct contact with Muslims. Yet Alan has no coherent idea as to what Islam is; he attributes to his Muslim adversaries arguments based on the Old Testament.

At the outset of his *Contra paganos*, Alan asserts that Muhammad, inspired by the devil, established a new cult based on carnal pleasure:

The monstrous life, more monstrous sect, and most monstrous death of Machomet is clearly found in his biography. Inspired by a malign spirit, he invented an abominable sect consonant with carnal delights, not dissonant with delights of carnal men. For this reason, many carnal men are seduced by his sect, thrown into the abyss through various errors, miserably they have perished and continue to perish. These men are in the common vernacular called pagans or Saracens.⁷⁷

Alan has clearly culled his ideas from a hostile Christian biography of Muhammad; he later asserts that his corpse was devoured by dogs.⁷⁸ He gleaned from this reading the notion that Islam is a depraved cult based on carnal pleasure. This is the gist of most of Alan's anti-Islamic arguments: he lambasts the Muslims for asserting that God impregnated the Virgin through a material breath (*flatus materialis*).⁷⁹ They hope for carnal pleasures in heaven, interpreting literally the biblical promises of a land of milk and honey.⁸⁰ They practice ablutions thinking that water—rather than contrition and confession—can wash away sin.⁸¹ They justify their polygamy by citing the example of the Old Testament patriarchs, when in fact they merely want to satisfy their lust.⁸² The Saracens, along with the Jews, misinterpret Old Testament prohibitions against idolatry and polygamy, erroneously accusing Christians of idolatrous worship of images of the saints.⁸³ They follow a miscellaneous mixture of Jewish and Christian law, not led by reason (*ratione ducti*) but dragged by their own desire (*propria voluntate tracti*). Islam, for Alan, is a heretical blend of Christian and Jewish beliefs, rife with contradictions, that can be refuted through reason and authority. It is a carnal cult for a carnal people: its physical rites contrast with the spiritual sacraments of Christianity; its polygamy and celestial fornication, with the purity of the Christian priesthood. Alan seems to be unaware of the existence of the Koran; indeed he continually puts into the mouths of his Saracen adversaries citations from the Old Testament, with which they are supposed to defend their heretical doctrines.

IF TWELFTH CENTURY Latin Europe “discovered” Islam, it viewed it through its own (rather thick) lenses. Certainly, twelfth-century European Christians took Islam more seriously than they did the religious beliefs of the non-Christians such as the Wends or Lithuanians. Islam was worth studying and attacking for two reasons. First, it seemed to be another heresy of Eastern origin, like those plaguing twelfth-century Europe; as such it was less important than the Manichean error of Catharism, which indeed received more attention than Islam. The second reason for the growth of a polemical interest in Islam is the profound cultural and intellectual influence the Muslim world was exercising on Latin Europe in the twelfth century: notably through trade and through the translations of scientific and philosophical works from Arabic to Latin. Confronted with a thriving, prosperous, intellectually sophisticated Muslim world, the Christian polemicist needed to convince his readers that the “heresy of Muhammad” was a debased parody of the true religion.

It is in this context that the virulent attacks against Muhammad must be placed. Guibert de Nogent, admitting that he could only repeat what the “vulgus” said about Muhammad rather than produce a proper theological refutation of his doctrine, presented Muhammad as a clever scoundrel, a heresiarch whose life was a mocking mirror image of that of a true Christian saint, specifically in order to justify the crusaders’ aggression against Muslims. Three other authors, Adelphus, Embrico, and Gautier, produced similar pictures of Muhammad. Twelfth-century authors in Spain continued the traditions of Arab Christian apologetics; Petrus Alfonsi’s and Peter of Cluny’s translations made these traditions available to the Latin world. Authors such as Peter of Cluny and were better informed about Islam than Guibert had been. Yet their portrayal of Islam reflects their preoccupations with heresies closer to home. The result is in no way a “dialogue” with Islam, nor even an informed monologue. Despite Peter of Cluny’s pretension of addressing Muslim readers in hopes of converting them, he (like Alan of Lille) in fact attempted to defend Christianity against yet another oriental Christological heresy that had spread its tentacles westward. For all concerned, the culprit responsible for this heresy is Muhammad; the central task of the polemicist is the ridicule and denigration of the prophet of Islam.

Christian writers on Muhammad are not unique in using such tactics to denigrate a rival religion. Jesus receives similar treatment in the *Toledoth Yeshu*. Herodotus, in his *Histories*, describes the rites that the Getae (from

Thrace) devoted to their god Salmoxis. According to Herodotus, the Greeks who live on the Black Sea recounted that Salmoxis had been a slave of the Greek philosopher Pythagoras on the island of Samos; he escaped from his master and returned home to Thrace, “where he found people in great poverty and ignorance.” He taught them that they would never die, but “would live in perpetual enjoyment of every blessing.” In order to convince them of this, he built a secret underground chamber, where he went into hiding. The Getae thought him dead and mourned him greatly; when he reappeared three years later, he was able to convince them of their immortality and trick them into following a strange and irrational cult.⁸⁴ These descriptions offer some interesting parallels with medieval Christian portrayals of Islam. The Arabs (like the Getae) are described as poor and ignorant, in contrast with the more sophisticated Christians (or Greeks). The founder of the new religion (Muhammad or Salmoxis) is ignorant and servile, yet manages to learn the rudiments of religion from his master (Sergius/Bahira or Pythagoras). This knowledge, deformed, becomes the basis of a new and irrational cult devoted to an everlasting life of sensual pleasures, and Muhammad/Salmoxis resorts to crude tricks to dupe his ignorant followers into following him. In both cases, the reader is reassured of the superiority of his own, “normal,” religious beliefs, while the rites and beliefs of the other are both explained and held up for ridicule.

Many later medieval writers reiterated the twelfth-century view of Islam as heresy. Some tried to refute Islam in theological treatises or missionary manuals. Others reproduced the hostile biography of Muhammad, having him produce bogus miracles, be devoured by pigs, and so on.⁸⁵ Gerald of Wales included in his *De principis instructione* (On the instruction of princes) a minibiography of Muhammad in which he combined elements from Hugh of Fleury’s *Ecclesiastical History* (an account itself derived from Anastasius’s translation of Theophanes’s *Chronographica*) with the legend of his being devoured by pigs. Gerald specifically compares Muhammad’s death with that of Arius, the moral being apparently that vile heresiarchs have ignoble deaths. The diversity of heresy shows the devil’s ingenuity, for Gerald: he tricks the lustful inhabitants of hot climates by tempting them with Saracen polygamy, while he appeals to the avarice of chilly northern Europeans by promising them they won’t have to pay any tithes if they follow the Patavene heretics.⁸⁶ In 1258 Alexandre du Pont composed a French verse *Roman de Mahomet* based on Gautier de Compiègne’s *Otia*.⁸⁷ From the twelfth century onward, Muhammad the heresiarch inhabited the European imagination alongside Muhammad the golden idol: an equally

powerful (if equally inaccurate) intellectual weapon with which to inculcate contempt, inspire hatred, justify conquest. In the thirteenth century, as conquest of formerly Muslim lands accelerated in Spain and as Christian princes from Lisbon to Acre affirmed their right to rule over Muslim subjects, this view of Saracen heresy became an important part of Latin Europe's ideology of power.