



The Christian Culture of  
Islamic Spain  
Origins, Survival and Recovery

Roger Collins



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By Roger Collins

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**An enquiry into the survival, disappearance and recovery of knowledge of Christian culture in medieval Spain in areas under Islamic rule from the sixteenth century onwards**

Why did Christianity, which was entrenched in the Iberian Peninsula as the religion of the majority of the population at the time of the Arab conquest of 711, fail to survive under Islamic rule, while other Christian communities of similar antiquity still exist today in most parts of the Near East? It has been argued that the hold of Christianity was weaker than claimed, not only in Spain but also in North Africa, where its history follows a similar path, leading to complete disappearance in the twelfth century. *The Christian Culture of Islamic Spain* will suggest, from the textual and archaeological evidence, that the Christianity of the Iberian Peninsula at the time of the conquest was indeed deeply rooted, and also distinctive in its character and practices. Its hold remained strong in both town and country, despite claims to the contrary, for several centuries more, and the Christians may still have constituted the largest religious grouping of the population of al-Andalus (Muslim-ruled Spain) at least as late as the eleventh century. What happened next, and how knowledge of their distinctive culture was revived are covered as well.

#### Readership

Historians of medieval Spain, general readers

#### Contents

Introduction: The Arab Conquest of Spain; 1. The Legacy of Visigothic Christianity; 2. The Aftermath of Conquest; 3. Diverging Paths; 4. The Voluntary Martyrs; 5. Rural Christianity and Revolt; 6. Migrants on the Frontiers; 7. Conversion and Conflict; 8. The Mozarabs of Toledo; 9. A Subject of Study; 10. Reinterpreting the Andalusian Christian Past; Bibliography

#### About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Roger Collins is a historian of medieval Spain, the Papacy and Eurasia in the First Millennium CE.

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