Journal of Medieval and Islamic History

An Annual Peer-Reviewed Journal interested in Medieval, Byzantine, and Islamic History

Issued by Seminar of Medieval and Islamic History
History Dept., Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University

(JMIH)

Vol. XII (2018-2019)

ISSN: 2090-2883
Journal of Medieval and Islamic History

جمال التاريخ الإسلامي والوسطي

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Journal of Medieval and Islamic History (in Arabic جملة التاريخ الإسلامي والوسطي) is an annual peer-reviewed journal issued by Seminar of Medieval and Islamic History, History Dept., Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University. It is founded in 2000 AD by Prof. Rafaat Abdul-Hamid, Prof. Ahmed Abdel-Raziq, and Prof. Tarek M. Muhammad. It is a scholarly print and open access on-line international journal, which aims to publish peer-reviewed original research-oriented papers and book reviews in the fields of Medieval History, Medieval Slavonic History, Crusades, Byzantine History, Byzantine Egypt, Islamic History, and the relations between East and West. Journal of Medieval and Islamic History encourages and provides a medium for the publication of all original research contributions of significant value in all aspects of Medieval History and Civilization are welcome. It aims to publish research that contributes to the enlargement of historical knowledge or the advancement of scholarly interpretations.

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Publisher

Seminar of Medieval and Islamic History, History Dept., Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University, Egypt.

[III]
Distributor: Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, 94 Abbas Al-Akkad St., Madinet Nassr. Tel. ٤٨٩٢٥٧٢٢٢٠٢٠ – Fax. ٥٣٧٢٥٧٢٢٠٢٠ website: http://darelfikrelarabi.com

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This section should summarize the content of the paper and should detail the problems, experimental approach, major findings, and conclusion in one paragraph. Avoid abbreviation, diagram, and references in the abstract. It should be single-spaced and try to keep the abstract below 150 words and should not exceed 250 words for full papers. Please make sure that the margins and layout explained below are followed as this will help us to maintain uniformity in the final print version of the journal. Both form and content of the paper have to be as per these guidelines else your paper will not be published even though its content has been accepted.

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Provide about 4-6 keywords that can identify the most important subjects covered by the paper. They must be placed at the end of the abstract.

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[XI]
Text continues directly after the subheading in the same line. The beginning of this paragraph shows a sub-subheading.

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The manuscript should end with Arabic and an English abstract summarizing the content of the paper.
Acknowledgment

The editorial board of the Journal of Medieval and Islamic History extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to the distinguished Professors who have graciously reviewed the researches contained in this issue, wishing them continued success.

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Early Aspects of the "Arabic-Latin Translation Movement" in Medieval Spain: The Letters of Gerbert (d. 1003) as Evidence

Samer S. H. Qandil
Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University, Egypt

The translation movement intimately tied to the great movement of the 12th century, but some researchers devoted much attention to the period before. In his article of 1951, Robert Lopez declared "Still another Renaissance", and he paid attention to the 10th century as an age of renaissance1. In the second half of the tenth century AD, a new phase of relations launched between the Islamic world and Europe. The Iberian Peninsula (Andalusia) was an essential bridge to exchange ideas and cultures through the Mediterranean. In this century, the Arabic sciences were translated and transferred to the Latin culture, especially in the field of mathematics and astronomy. The letters of Gerbert of Aurillac, Pope Sylvester II, stand as witness of cultural transformation in that period. The French Benedictine monk visited al-Andalus between 967 and 970 A.D., where he studied mathematics, astronomy. In the history of science, he is known as the first transfer and user of Arabic numbers in the framework of Latin culture. However, this issue has been much debated among scholars and historians. This article, thus, is an attempt to shed light on the process of the transmission of Arabic sciences into the medieval West. In this paper as well, we are traced first the origins and early history of this tradition, and subsequently some remarks on its survival after the tenth century are offered. The starting point for our discussion is of course the information to be found in the scientific works of Gerbert. The conclusion of the present work presents the views of contemporary historians regarding the impact of diplomatic relations between the Islamic world and the West on cultural exchange during the tenth century.

Gerbert of Aurillac (d. 1003) was one of the most famous intellectual characters of the tenth century and, as Pope Sylvester II, presided over the turn of the first to the second millennium C.E. He is known as the most educated man of his time, the first French pope, and a

1 - The classical work of Haskins "The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century" devoted much attention to that later period. The interactions and Acculturation before the 12th century have not received much attention. However, a few decades earlier this issue become subject to academic scrutiny. For more details and discussions among the scholars about this issue see; E. T., Mommsen, "Petarch's Conception of the' Dark Ages", Speculum 17 (1942), pp. 226-242; Knowles, D., The Evolution of Medieval Thought, London, 1998, pp. 72-84; Robert Lopez," Still Another Renaissance?", American Historical Review 57 (1951), pp. 1-21.
politician who played a significant role in the rise of the Capetian Dynasty in “France”. As a statesman, he exerted decisive influence over the young Emperor Otto III. His character and works have been extensively studied from a variety of perspectives. Gerbert’s remarkable work as a teacher, who significantly broadened the intellectual horizon of several students and made outstanding findings by the use of various teaching methods and devices, ranks him among the greatest and most influential figures of the high Middle Ages. He devoted much attention to the classical heritage, as clear in his many quotes of Roman authors, including Cicero, Terentius, Pliny, Seneca etc. He expresses his attitude toward classical works and philosophies, stating, “in our opinion, nothing in man’s life deserves reverence other than the wisdom of these great men whose wisdom is unfolded in the numerous volumes of their works”.2

He was born somewhere in the region of Auvergne, in Central France around the year 945. Since neither his place of birth nor his parents were known3, it seems likely that he was of low birth (humil genere). Around 963, he entered the monastery of St. Gerald at Aurillac4. There, he studied Latin Grammar (gramatica edoctus est) under a teacher named Raymond. It seems that Gerbert proved to be an apt student, and his abbot wanted him to study the quadrivium: arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. In 967, Count Borrell of Barcelona visited the monastery, and the abbot asked the count to take Gerbert along to Spain with him to study mathematics there.5

He was a Benedictine monk who participated energetically in the Reform Movement. He later became the archbishop of Reims (991–997) and Ravenna (998–999) and finally the Bishop of Rome (999–1003). Gerbert’s influence rests on the fact that he taught a number of illustrious scholars, and even kings and emperors. In the cathedral school of Rheims, Gerbert taught many students who became remarkable scholars and churchmen. These include the historian Richer, Constantine of Fleury (985–1014), the French King Robert II the Pious (r. 987/996–1031), and Fulbert of Chartres (d. 1028) who contributed to a revival of the cathedral school of

2 - Letter 175.
3 - There is an account mentions unknown father of Gerbert named him Agilbert; “patre Agilberto natione Aquitaniorum”, see; Liber Pontificalis, tome 2, p. 263.
5 - Richer, Ibid
Many people of Gerbert’s time could not explain why a person of such humble birth had been able to gain such a high degree of knowledge and abilities and to hold important public and political positions. It was assumed that he was either a magician or had made a pact with the devil. In this way, the legend of Gerbert took its earliest form.

Gerbert’s works include several writings. One of them is about theological issues entitled “De Corpore et Sangune Domini”. He produced a work in logic named “De Rationali et Ratione uti”. In addition, he produced a number of treatises on specific topics of the quadrivium, including “Liber Abaci” and “De Geometria” in mathematics. Also attributed to him is a work in astronomy entitled “Liber astrolabi”. Last but not least, Gerbert also wrote many letters. All the original letters he wrote before he became pope were lost. But he regularly began to keep copies of his letters after he became abbot of St. Columban of Bobbio in 982. The existing collections of Gerbert’s letters were copied by his students and can be divided into two groups: the first one is based on copies which he kept in one or more registers. This group is known through two different sets of manuscripts. The other group consists of miscellaneous letters that were either found in different manuscripts or included in the works of certain church councils.

Emperor Otto II (972-983) designated Gerbert as abbot of Bobbio in northwest Italy in 982. In Bobbio, Gerbert suffered from the repeated attacks on the abbey and its land possessions by local nobles.

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2. The legend of Gerbert started in the eleventh century with Cardinal Benno (d. 1098), Cardinal of the antipope Guibert during the debate between Pope Gregory VII and the emperor Henry IV. Cardinal Benno added to Ademar’s statement “where he studied science and magic”. He was convinced that Gregory had studied under the supervision of some illustrious masters who had educated him the "doctrine of Demons". Those teachers were Benedict IX and Lawrence of Amalfi one or both of whom was a pupil of Gerbert. Benno mentions also that Gerbert asked the Demon about the date of his death and the demon answered," you shall not die till you have celebrated Mass in Jerusalem". From this time on, Gerbert had a title of "Pope Magician", see; Ordericus Vitalis, Ecclesiastical History of England and Normandy, trans. Thomas Forester, (London, 1854), I. p. 145; William of Malmesbury, The Kings before the Norman Conquest, pp. 150-152; Flusche, A. M., The Life and Legend of Gerbert of Aurillac: The Organ Builder Who Became Pope Silvester II, New York, 2005, p. 82 ff; Darras, J. E, Histoire générale de l’église: depuis la création jusqu’à nos jours, Paris, 1891, tom. XX, p. 331.
3. E. Darby asserts that this work is originally a Latin translation of Arabic work in Astrolabe which was inserted in the works of Gerbert, but he was not the author. Darby, J., "A Note on Early Treatise on the Astrolabe", the Geographical Journal 85 (1935), p. 179.
5. Letters 8, 12, 18, 19.
death on December 7, 983 made matters worse. Therefore, the French abbot fled to the imperial palace at Pavia. Early in 984, Gerbert returned to Rheims to practice his job as secretary of archbishop Adalbero of Rheims (969–989). He, when he was involved in politics, and for reducing the disastrous impact of politics on him, used to return to study and indulge in knowledge to find consolation and solace. At this time, Gerbert wrote many letters, some of them explained his intellectual interests. He had always been thirsty for knowledge and filled his repertoire with the treasures of Bobbio's manuscripts. From the library of the monastery of Bobbio he discovered and obtained the works of Boethius in astrology and geometry: *De Astrologia* and *De Geometria*. It should be borne in mind that, from the beginning, the importance of Bobbio, as an educational monastery center, was one of the main reasons for Gerbert to accept this impossible mission at Bobbio.

The letters reflect his interests as a scholar, teacher, politician and churchman, and more importantly, it stands as a testimony to the first steps of the translation movement from Arabic into Latin in northern Spain in the last quarter of the 10th century.

The first evidence is a letter written to Guarin, abbot of St. Michel de Cuxá who was a close friend of the Catalan counts, especially Miró Bonifill, bishop of Gerona from whom Gerbert requested the same arithmetical work in his letter II. Gerbert declared many times that he put his trust and kept in touch with the Spanish princes and churchmen, particularly those of Catalonia. This was due to his stay for three years in Spain. Impatient at the delay he soon afterwards wrote to another of his Spanish friends, Bonifil, requesting from him a copy of the same book.

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4. Letter 51.
6. Lattin, *The Letters*, not. 6, p. 64. The statement came as follow: "Abbot Guarin left with you a book entitled *De multiplicatione et divisione numerorum* (multiplication and division of numbers) written by Joseph the Spaniard, and we both would like a copy of it...". Letter 25.
7. "Joseph the Wise edited certain sentences *De multiplicatione et divisione numerorum* (multiplication and division of numbers), and my father Adalbero, archbishop of Rheims, wishes to have these through your efforts". Letter 33.
The third letter was written to Lobet of Barcelona (d. 997), a nickname of Seniofred (Shnīr)\(^1\) the prominent and wealthy archdeacon of the cathedral of Barcelona. In this letter Gerbert requested a book *De Astrologia* translated by the recipient, "Although I have no claim on you, still your renown and your courtesy lead me to trust in you, in fact to presume on you. And, so, I am asking you to send me the book *De Astrologia*, translated by you, and if you desire anything from me in return, ask for it unhesitatingly".\(^2\) This statement may refer to an Arabic translation done by Lobet for a book dealing with astrology. It can be also noted as significant testimony for a presumed Latin-Arabic translation movement started at Catalonia at that time. Therefore, some scholars rely on this translation movement as a starting point to identify Arabic writings influences on Gerbert's works, especially the majority of those texts translated into Latin were on mathematic and astronomy.\(^3\)

Richer de St. Rémy, a historian and devoted pupil of Gerbert, indicated that his teacher travelled with Count Borrell of Urgel, the ruler of more than half of Old Catalonia (966–993), to be under supervision of Bishop Hatto of Vic to study mathematics. Richer added: "whether in Spain there were men proficient in arts".\(^4\) This statement implies that Catalonian monasteries had outstanding teachers in liberal arts and otherwise had mathematical works that did not exist in Gaul at that time. This motivated Abbot Gerald of Aurillac, according to Richer, to ask Borrell to take Gerbert with him in his return.\(^5\) However, two modern scholars, Karl Gümpel and Marco Zuccato, studied the archives of the libraries of the monastery of Vic and the monastery of Ripoll (Santa Maria de Rippol), and they draw the following conclusions. First, the library of the Cathedral of Vic did not have classical works related to Seven Liberal Arts (Trivium and Quadrivium), the library mainly included books needed for ecclesiastical offices.\(^6\) Gümpel

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1. This Arabic name mentioned in Arabic sources.
adds, “If there were books in the Quadrivium, they could have been kept by Hatto himself elsewhere.”¹ Second, regarding the library of Santa Maria de Ripoll, its archives contained works of many classical authors. However, Zuccato doubts that these lists were recorded in the tenth century; they are, apparently, belonging to the lists of the eleventh century. Moreover, as noted by Zuccato “none of the astronomical texts included in the tenth-century manuscripts can explain Gerbert’s astronomical teaching or his mastery of the mathematical sciences”;² One the other hand, another vision is embraced by some French scholars³, who assert that Gerbert had been studied mathematical and classical astronomy deeply under Hatto’s tutorship. Pierre Riché indicates, in Gerbert's case that: “We can say that the Monastery of Rippol and other centers were able to offer the possibility of scientific studies”⁴.

By the mid tenth century onwards, diplomatic relations between Umayyad Caliphate of Córdoba and its Christian neighbors of Europe emerged with a new period of political and cultural exchange. Emperor Otto I sent John of Gorze to the palace of Umayyad Córdoba in 953, and he remained for three years in Spain. In a correspondence, 'Abd al-Rahman III al-Nasir sent the Mozarabic messenger and scholar Recemundo to the German king in return.⁵ The relationship with Catalonia had increasingly taken on a marked cultural dimension. According to al-Masʿūdī, Gotmar (عمران)⁶ had presented in 940 to al-Hakam II, son of Caliph 'Abd al-Rahman III a copy of The Chronicle of the Frankish Kings during his embassy to Córdoba.⁷ It is possible to propose that Gotmar carried Arabic works in mathematics and astronomy with him on his way back to Catalonia. Of course, these scientific relations between the bishops of

¹ Gümpel, Gerbert, p. 84.
² Zuccato, Gerbert, pp. 748-750.
⁴ Riché, Gerbert, pp. 25-26.
Catalonia and al-Hakam II had been deep when the latter took over the Caliphate in Andalusia. It's probably, as stated by Karl Gümpel and Marco Zuccato, that Hatto and Miró Bonifill were members of the delegation which accompanied him. This delegation founded a period of good cultural relationships between Catalonia and al-Andalus, not surprisingly that we notice many other delegations from Catalonia to Córdoba. According to Ibn Ḥayyān, in (360-364 AH / 970-974 AD) delegates were sent by Count Borrell (بُرِيلا) to the Caliph of Al-Andalus, and in (360 AH / July 971 AD) Miró Bonifill بَون ﻓِﻠِي head another embassy to Córdoba carrying a letter from the Count, to “confirm the peace and recognition of submission”. Apparently, Contrary to the commonly held view, Catalonia was very close to becoming an Andalusī client state. Zuccato uses this account in order to, first, identify the real character of “Joseph Sapiens” as to be Abū Yusuf Hasday ben Ishaq ben Shaprut, head of the Jewish community in al-Andalus, by making connections and finding similarities between him and the biblical prophet Joseph. Second, to emphasize the great role of the Jewish nasi (Iben Shapruit), as a mediator and translator of astronomical works of the North African astronomer Dunash Bn Tamim Al-qarawi.

According to Zuccato and Flavio Nuvolone, there is no account in the Latin sources before Richer's one to the "horizon armilla"; a circle drawn by the sun movement from the east to the west, in the Latin astronomical manuscripts before Gerbert. Zuccato adds; “this is the first Latin description of a demonstrational spherical instrument that is equipped with a "horizon armilla". Nuvolone points out that Gerbert's theory of the movement of stars and the method of assigning the North and the South Star, Polaris stems from Islamic astronomy.

1. Gümpel, Gerbert, p. 84; Zuccato, Gerbert, p. 752.
4. He argues that the similarities between Abu Yusuf Hasddy ben Ishaq ben Shaprut and the prophet are striking: First, they were both Jews who achieved a primary political role (in Egypt and al-Andalus). Second, they both became head advisers and right-hand men of kings (Pharaoh and the caliph). Third, they were both renowned for their wisdom and knowledge. Zuccato, Gerbert, p. 754.
5. A Jewish physician, astronomer and mathematician who lived in Qairawan in the third quarter of the tenth century / 4th AH. He served the Fatimid caliphs during their stay in Morocco. Zuccato, Gerbert, p. 755.
One the other hand, there is evidence in different contemporary sources suggesting that Gerbert himself visited Córdoba; Adémar de Chabannes (d. 1030) asserts that Gerbert visited Córdoba seeking for wisdom, "for the sake of wisdom traversing first in France, then Córdoba".\(^1\) Then William of Malmesbury, the English historian of the 12th century, narrated a long legendary story about the trip of Gerbert to Spain.\(^2\) It is possible, however, to suggest that these active relations between Catalonia and Umayyad caliphate of Córdoba may have encouraged Gerbert to visit the capital of al-Andalus which had had a great reputation for its streams of seven liberal arts.\(^3\) Umayyad Córdoba capital of Muslim Spain was noted as one of the most interesting cities in science in the world at that time. Furthermore, the Umayyad ruler al-Hakam II was recognized as scientist (Ālim اَلْعُلِّم) and great collector of books; his library, according to Islamic sources, was one of world's richest libraries with many books in different fields of knowledge.\(^4\) In the same context, mathematical science emerged in Andalusia at that time and we can notice many famous mathematicians, including Yahya ibn Yahya, known as Ibn al-Sumayna (d. 315 AH / 927 AD), who was a master of arithmetic and stars, as well as Mohammed bin Ismail known as the wise (Hakīm الحكيم) d. 330 AH / 943 AD).\(^5\) The scientific movement in Andalusia, during al-Hakam reign, reached its peak stages of prosperity in the mathematical and astronomical sciences, and gained more enthusiasm with the participation of the Caliph himself.\(^6\)

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2. William wrote his work at the begining of the twelfth century, one hundred years after Gerbert's death. It is possible that he acquired his information from some now lost German sources, but we have no evidence for this. William himself says that he took his information from the folktales that were widely spread in his time. William of Malmesbury, *The Kings before the Norman Conquest*, trans. Joseph Stephenson, London, 1989, pp. 150-152.
3. This description was given by Hrothswitha of Gandersheim (935-1001) in a poem dedicated to Pelagius the Cordobain martyr. The poem entitled "The Sufferings of Pelagius the Most Precious Martyr, who in our Times, at Cordova, was Crowned with Martyrdom". See; Hrotsvithae Operae, in *Scriptores Rerum Germanicorum*, ed. Paulus de Winterfeld, Berlin, 1902, p. 52.
This evidence could support the assumption of Arabic writings influence on Gerbert's works. Oscar Darlington argues that; Gerbert might easily have visited Cordova, since diplomatic relations between Cordova and Christian European rulers were robust. He adds: “Obviously Gerbert's mathematical knowledge was of a different order from anything known at the time in Christendom”.

Menso Folkerts studies names and forms of numbers in Gerbert’s "abacus" Liber Abaci, and ended in his analysis that the method of indication of the numbers in the abacus, which had been prepared by Gerbert and reported by Richer, in correspondence with the manuscript named Vigilanus, the oldest manuscript containing Hindi-Arabic numbers, which has been copied in the monastery of Albelda in Austria in the year 976 AD. This manuscript originated in northern Spain, and Gerbert may have been accessed during his visit to Spain. The true situation is probably that Gerbert decided to use Western forms of the Arabic numerals, as we see them in the Vigila manuscript, to mark the counters of a particular kind of abacus, which was attributed to him. Folkerts adds that the method of Roman numerals using the Greek characters to indicate the value of the number, have been replaced by Gerbert’s signs method as described in the manuscripts of the 11th century, which show the impact of the Hindu-Arabic numerals system.

4. That century witnessed the spread of a large number of arithmetic manuscripts, about thirty-five manuscripts, two of them; Bernelinus, and the second known as Geometria II were written in the tenth century in Lorraine and later attributed to Boethius. Folkerts, "The Names and Forms of Numerals", pp. 246, 248.
According to Richer, Gerbert’s abacus was different from the old Roman abacus; the old Roman method was confused, while Gerbert’s method is clear and more practical. This method described by Richer is familiar to the Andalusian "dust method", using wooden board and metal pen. Furthermore, the names for the Hindu-Arabic numerals used in the tracts on the Gerbert’s abacus originated from Germanic languages: 1) Igin, (2) Andras, (3) Ormis, (6) Caletis, (7) Zenis, (9) Celentis, and the rest of them: (4) Arbas, (8) Quimas, (5) Temenias originated from Semitic languages, more decisively from Arabic. But, the wide use of those numbers in arithmetic education was not common until Adelard of Bath (1080 - 1152 AD), learned about the work of Gerbert during his visit to France. Finally, calculations using Arabic numerals in the West was established after the Latin translation of al-Khwarizmi works was accomplished by Robert of Chester, and Gerard de Cremona in the twelfth century, and Leonardo da Pisa in the thirteenth century.