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INTRODUCTION*

European Visions of the Qur'an in the Middle Ages

Florence Ninitte  and Irene Reginato 

NANTES UNIVERSITÉ

From its first translation into Latin in 1143 up to its first vernacular (Italian) translation in 1547, the sacred book of Islam elicited passionate and contrasting reactions in Europe, ranging from vehement attacks concerning its content or composition to an acknowledgement of the aesthetics of its stylistic features and the quality of its message. Moreover, since the publication of Thomas Burman's pioneering study, *Reading the Qur'ān in Latin Christendom*,¹ the question of the Western perception of the holy book of Islam has become even more complex – and nuanced – than previously imagined. *Reading the Qur'ān* has brought to light a plurality of attitudes on the part of the West towards the Qur'an that many of the studies that have emerged in its wake continue to confirm.

The conviction that the Qur'an has played an important role in medieval and early modern European culture was the inspiring principle of the European research project *EuQu – The European Qur'ān: Islamic Scripture in European Culture and Religion 1150–1850* (European Research Council [ERC], Synergy Grant agreement [SyG] n° 810141). Established in 2019, this ambitious project seeks to study how the Qur'an was interpreted, adapted, and used in Christian European contexts over the course of the Middle Ages and early modern period. Relying on a multidisciplinary team of researchers, the objective of the *EuQu project* is thus to write the first history of the 'European Qur'an' – or, rather, of the 'European Qur'an(s)' – through academic research and publications, but also by means of public engagement² that aim to throw new light on the multiple ways of copying, reading, translating, interpreting, and

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exploiting the Qur'an in European culture from its first Latin translation in 1143 to the middle of the nineteenth century.³

It is within this context that the workshop 'European Visions of the Qur'ān in the Middle Ages' that led to the genesis of this special issue was conceived. The aim of the workshop, which was held on 20–21 May 2021, was to investigate the different perspectives from which the Qur'an was addressed in medieval times by a wide range of actors that encompassed translators, polemicists, and commentators who had access – directly or indirectly – to the Qur'an, or parts of it, and to identify the various attitudes they adopted: the mechanisms of reading they elaborated; the texts through which they became acquainted with it; the hermeneutic filters they applied; and, finally, the ideas and perceptions they developed. The contributions, from scholars working in different fields and from different backgrounds, went far beyond the original scope we had planned for the workshop, leading us to propose this special issue, so that the richness of the research presented could be fully expressed in longer and more complex essays. The *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* immediately came to mind as an ideal venue, in continuity with a previous issue edited by Jan Loop which first presented the premises of the *EuQu* project in 2018.⁴

This special issue gathers eight essays that are varied in their approaches and themes, but which nevertheless share many points of contact that are proving to be fundamental in the attempt to define some key aspects of the medieval reception of the Qur'an in Europe. A first key aspect is the importance of 'intermediary texts' in almost any medieval approach to the Qur'an. By 'intermediary texts' is intended all those writings through which, in an indirect manner, the West came into contact with the contents – if not with the actual text – of the Qur'an. It is, of course, a label derived from our modern critical view: medieval authors did not perceive those writings as 'intermediary', but rather as sources of knowledge equivalent, even from a theological point of view, to the Qur'an itself.

These intermediary texts are represented, first of all, by the Latin translations of the Qur'an by Robert of Ketton (1143) and Mark of Toledo (1210). As is well known, the former was produced to be included in the *Corpus Islamolatinum*, a collection of translations and writings on Islam conceived by Abbot Peter the Venerable of Cluny as a powerful cultural weapon to be used against the 'Saracens' in the wake of the Second Crusade. As for the latter, this was produced during the Spanish Crusade against the Almohad caliphate, at the behest of the Archbishop of Toledo, Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada. The two translators take essentially different approaches to transferring the text into Latin.⁵ Focusing primarily on their different lexical choices, Olivier Hanne's article demonstrates the different attitudes adopted by Robert and Mark towards the Arabic terms used by the Qur'an to refer to itself: *kitāb*, *Qur'ān*, *dhikr*, *ḥikma*, etc. The author points out, on the one hand, the translator's shared

definition of the Qur'an as a 'book' and, on the other hand, their difficulties and choices in rendering the terms and concepts from which the doctrine of inimitability will arise. This issue crystallises around the term *tanzīl*, which both translators are reluctant to translate literally.

In addition to Qur'an translations, medieval readers also came to know the Qur'an through a rather limited number of fundamental texts that combined reliable information, Qur'anic quotations and, most of all, polemical arguments presented in a 'ready to use' form. These texts proved essential in terms of spreading knowledge, but also prejudices and polemical tools, thanks to their huge success and their continuous reuse and incorporation into both medieval bestsellers and lesser-known works. Eloquent examples of this are offered by the seven works contained in the previously mentioned *Corpus Islamolatinum*, whose importance to our special issue, as well as to the medieval reception of Islam, is worth a brief digression.

In its most ancient form (embodied by the twelfth-century manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal 1162, for which see D'Alverny, 'Deux traductions'), the *Corpus Islamolatinum* consists of seven texts: (1) Peter the Venerable's *Summa Totius Haeresis ac Diabolice Secte Sarracenorum*; (2) Peter the Venerable's letter to Bernard of Clairvaux, which was an invitation (that remained unanswered) to write a refutation of Islam on the basis of the *Corpus*; (3) Robert of Ketton's *Chronica Mendosa et Ridicula Sarracenorum*, a Latin translation of an Arabic chronicle that related the history of the world from its creation to the rule of the second Umayyad caliph Yazīd I (d. 61/683), which also contains a biography of Muḥammad; (4)–(5) two translations by Hermann of Carinthia: the *Liber de Generatione Mahumet*, in which Muḥammad is described as the recipient of prophetic light, and prodigious episodes from his childhood are recounted; and the *De Doctrina Mahumeti*, which relates a dialogue between the Jew Abdias (°Abd Allāh b. Salām) and Muḥammad in which, by answering the various questions and riddles of the former, the latter reveals himself to be an authentic prophet; (6) Ketton's Latin rendition of the Qur'an, entitled *Alchoran siue lex Sarracenorum*; (7) a translation of an Arab-Christian apologetic work known as the *Apology of al-Kindī (Epistula Sarraceni et Rescriptum Christiani; henceforth ESRC)*, translated by Peter of Toledo and the Abbot's secretary, Peter of Poitiers. This contains the letter of a Muslim called al-Hāshimī, who invites his Christian friend to convert to Islam; the Christian correspondent, named al-Kindī, replies point by point to the statements of his interlocutor.⁶ Incredibly rich in valuable information about Islam, faithful Qur'anic quotations, and effective polemical arguments, this text was among the most exploited sources on Islam from the tenth to the fifteenth century.⁷ Many later works relied on it, such as Petrus Alfonsi's *Dialogi contra Iudaeos*, Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum Historiale*, James of Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*, but also, on the vernacular side, the *Trésor des Simples* (or *Débat du Chrétien et du Sarrasin*), a long fifteenth century treatise by the Burgundian bishop Jean Germain.⁸

The essays collected in this issue also highlight the remarkable influence exerted by another fundamental intermediary text: Riccoldo da Monte Croce's *Contra Legem Sarracenorum* (henceforth *CLS*; c. 1300). Similarly to the *ESRC*, the overall success of Riccoldo's writings – both the *CLS* and his *Liber Peregrinationis* – largely depends on his own exploitation of first-hand information and valuable sources on Islam filtered through an argumentative and polemical frame which proved accessible and effective to Western readers interested in religious polemics. However, even if they draw on extant sources, Riccoldo's works are not translations of existing texts detailing previous Eastern religious debates, like the *ESRC*, but original texts expressing a viewpoint which was, albeit exceptional and extremely learned, totally internal to medieval Western culture.⁹

While stressing the erudite nature of Riccoldo's *CLS*, which combines direct and indirect reference to Islamic scripture with Christian *auctoritates*, in his article Jacob Langeloh studies its use in two lesser-known texts: Petrus de Pennis's *Tractatus contra Alchoranum* (1370–1440) and the anonymous *Epitome Bellorum Sacrorum*. Langeloh analyses the similarities and differences in their reception of Riccoldo's text, seeking to explain and account for these in light of their historical and cultural context. While Petrus de Pennis combines the *CLS* with the *Legenda Aurea*, rearranging Riccoldo's text into a more assertive and impersonal account (a 'doctrinalisation of Riccoldo's work', p. 202), the *Epitome* transforms it into a stringent synthesis adapted to a Christian audience and a more purely educational intent.

A further proof of Riccoldo's influence comes from Eugenio Burgio and Samuela Simion's article. The authors dwell on a little-known text, the *Itinerario al Santo Sepolcro* by the Italian *podestà* (jurist) Antonio da Crema. Highly indebted to the *CLS*, the *Itinerario* draws from it a list of 'thirty errors of the Qur'an', thus representing the first known Italian translation of a fragment of Riccoldo's treatise (especially chapters I and IX). Furthermore, the list is preceded by a biography of Muḥammad which contains two scarcely known episodes which have no correspondence in Riccoldo, and whose circulation is not yet well defined. The authors explain that Antonio followed the preaching of the Augustinian Mariano da Genazzano (1412–1498), and suggest that his *Itinerario* did not directly follow Riccoldo's text, but rather a Latin intermediary text in which the *CLS* had already been reduced into a sort of handbook or *cento* circulating in the Holy Land among Mendicant friars. These remarks are valuable, since they lead us to consider the importance of orality, and also of compilations and *florilegia*, in the reception of Riccoldo and other intermediary texts about Islam in the Middle Ages.

It was perhaps through these channels that the redactor of the *Codice Cassinese* borrowed the Islamic *professio fidei*, as noted by Vera Ribaudó in her article on the presence of the Qur'an in the commentaries of Dante's *Comedy*. Ribaudó also reminds us that only focusing on the direct filiation of a text can sometimes be of less use than

investigating the multiple forms of reception of widespread ideas. In the complex case of possible Islamic sources in Dante's *Comedy*, she suggests that the intertextual influence 'should be discarded in favour of an interdiscursive influence' (p. 93), and undertakes to reconstruct the image of the Qur'an and Muḥammad in the commentaries of Dante's *Comedy*, which had generally access to the *ESRC* through the *Speculum Historiale* and the *Legenda Aurea*.

Derivative texts should therefore be granted as much attention as original ones, since their unique mixing of inherited motifs and newly conceived ones can be extremely relevant, not just to throw light on new particular reception contexts, but even to offer a better understanding of European encounter(s) with the Qur'an. In fact, through his analysis of Petrus de Pennis' *Tractatus contra Alchoranum* and the *Epitome Bellorum Sacrorum*, Langeloh identifies two main stages in the Western reception of the Qur'an: an initial one (coinciding with the missionary activity of mendicant orders) that was mainly directed 'towards the outside' (that is, aimed at converting infidels) and a later one (1350–1420), which was marked by intra-Christian controversies and was mainly directed 'towards the inside' (p. 203).

A similar line of research is proposed by Tristan Vigliano, in his study of the role of intermediary texts such as the *Liber Scalae Mahumeti* and the *Liber Denudationis* (or *Contrarietas Alfolica*), in terms of the European importation and use of the Arabic motifs of Muḥammad's night journey (*isrā'*) and ascent (*mi'rāj*). Vigliano isolates the different conceptual mechanisms that underlie the exploitation of such motifs according to different cultural contexts, thus demonstrating that a variety of different narratives can be generated from the same central motif.

In all its multiple receptions, the Qur'an was hardly ever read in a neutral way in the context of medieval Europe. Instead, it was most often approached through a number of hermeneutic and epistemological 'filters' of different natures. Thinking again about the first two Latin *alcorani*, Olivier Hanne corroborates Burman's observations while offering further evidence that Robert of Ketton attempted to convey his Latin Qur'an with the same stylistic elegance he found in Classical works, while Mark of Toledo chose a more literalist approach for his Latin rendition.¹⁰ Hanne shows how the translational filters applied by Robert and Mark deeply influenced their respective renderings of Qur'anic self-referentiality, but also the image of the Qur'an that they would offer to their future readership.

The articles collected in this special issue offer further meaningful examples of hermeneutic filters through which the Qur'an was perceived. The first of these relates to the conventions and features of literary genres, especially travel and pilgrimage accounts. In addition to the Italian *Itinerario al Santo Sepolcro* by Antonio da Crema mentioned above, Burgio and Simion also analyse the Latin *Itinerarium Terrae Sanctae* by Anselmo and Giovanni Adorno, two Genoese brothers who were

established in Flanders, where they were involved in commercial activities but also held political and diplomatic positions. Although they were certainly influenced by Burgundy's interest in the Crusade, their travel account was mainly conceived as a testimonial to their religious devotion ('volontà testimoniale di referto dell'atto devoto', p. 145), and this led them to discard standard medieval polemical tones and adopt instead a moderate and more objective attitude towards Islam. While Adorno's text never quotes the Qur'an directly, faithful Qur'anic quotations can be identified in another little-known travel account: the *Itinerarium* by Symon Semeonis, a Franciscan friar who travelled from Ireland to Jerusalem in 1323–1324. Here, the main filter consists in a contrast between the author's first-hand comments, drawn from his own personal experience or autonomous reflection, and the influence of deeply-rooted stereotypes and ideas about Islam. As a matter of fact, in his article about Semeonis, Agustín Justicia Lara notices that, when the Irish traveller temporarily departs from his valuable copy of Ketton's Latin Qur'an, he falls back on well-established *topoi* that reflect Christian polemical views of the Qur'an, heedless of the subsequent contradictions. This is revealing of the importance of conceptual frameworks when perceiving other religious systems: the traveller's eye can be blinded by his long-term preconceptions, which can even prevent him from grasping the most innovative aspects of the valuable sources he is drawing on, or from confronting his assumptions with the on-the-ground reality he witnesses.

A second interpretative filter eloquently highlighted by the articles in the present dossier stems from authors' 'literary attitude', that is either the influence exerted on them by their literary models or their aesthetic criteria. Burgio and Simion notice that Antonio da Crema's account is filtered through his erudite and literary tastes, and that he reverted to literature in order to fill in the gaps in his personal experience. In another case, a literature-inspired reading also sparked off stylistic criticism of the Qur'an: in her article, Sara Fani analyses a bifolium contained within codex Ricc. 217 (best known for the presence of the valuable Mozarabic glossary *Vocabulista in Arabico*) which is generally known as *Fragmentum Disputationis de Alcorani Eloquentia*. Through a detailed study of the codicological, linguistic, and contextual aspects of the volume's production and circulation, Fani proposes an innovative reading of the text in question. Taking her observation of the imprecision of the Qur'anic quotations contained in this text as her starting point, the author considers the *Fragmentum* as a text which is, despite its brevity, autonomous, and whose purpose was to refute, through the artificial creation of a 'Qur'an-like style', the Islamic idea that only God could have produced the precious eloquence of the Qur'anic text. In similar vein, in his chronological review of the evolution and use of the motifs of the *isrā'* and the *mi'raj*, Tristan Vigliano notices that, in contrast to its first appearances in works like the *Liber Denudationis* and the *Liber Scalae*, whose inclusion in the *Corpus Islamolatinum* (in one manuscript only in the case of the *Liber Scalae*) determined a purely polemical use of the two motifs

(specifically in the debates around the authenticity of Muḥammad's prophecy), later works from the sixteenth century onwards inaugurated a new and more 'literary' approach. The starting point for this coincides, according to Vigliano, with a work by Juan Andrés dating to 1515 (*Confusión o Confutación de la Secta Mahoméctica y del Alcorán*), which proposes a reading of the *isrā'* and the *mi'raj* that goes beyond the strictly polemical, to reveal an aesthetic pleasure in the narrative itself that, however, coexists with a view on topics related to Islam that remains negative: the night journey and the ascent, although considered to be pleasant stories, are nevertheless a sham.

A third, and very specific, filter is identified in Michelina di Cesare's article. Di Cesare focuses on the connections among the various texts that constitute the *Corpus Islamolatinum*, questioning the way they help to interpret the Qur'an. Taking further hypotheses that have already been put forward by James Kritzeck,¹¹ she provides new clues for understanding the collection of the *Corpus Islamolatinum*, showing that the surrounding context of the Latin translation of the Qur'an produces a sort of 'Judaising filter' through which the sacred book of Islam is read. To be more precise, this filter emerges from a remark made in the *ESRC*, which mentions the major intervention of three Jews in the editing process of the Qur'an. Through consideration of the other texts of the *Corpus*, Di Cesare brings out a network of correspondence with these Jewish figures that reveals an anti-Judaising perception underlying the objectives pursued by Peter the Venerable, whose vision has deep roots in Cluniac thought.¹² The presence of this allusion to a genetic relationship between Judaism and Islam can therefore be traced back to the first Cluniac (or Cluny-affiliated) works that mention Islam.

Di Cesare's article leads us to a final feature of this special issue that is worthy of mention: its contribution in throwing new light on some crucial aspects of the *Corpus Islamolatinum* and, in particular, its origin and fate. Considering the evolution of Peter the Venerable's thinking, Di Cesare reconsiders his role in the genesis of the project and suggests that the Abbot might also not have been the actual designer behind the *Corpus* collection:¹³

It is possible that Peter gained a deeper understanding of the collection of texts translated from Arabic into Latin after Bernard of Clairvaux declined to write a refutation of Islam [...]. This would lead to the conclusion that the texts to be translated in order to contextualise the Qur'an in the *Corpus islamolatinum*, namely the *Fabulae Sarracenorum* and *Epistola Saraceni et Rescriptum Christiani*, were selected by a *concepteur* who developed the anti-Jewish arguments contained *in nuce* in the *Rescriptum*. If this hypothesis is right, this *concepteur* could not be Peter the Venerable but someone who had read the *Rescriptum* in advance.

The profoundly malleable character of the *Corpus* can also be seen in the other contributions, which show how easily works could be added to and deleted from it.¹⁴ These fluctuations contribute to a more precise consideration of the ways in which certain texts have been evaluated, thought through, and received. For example, Vigliano shows that the inclusion of the *Liber Scalae Mahometi* in a manuscript of the *Corpus Islamolatinum* illustrates a stage in the history of the reception of the text which, through indisputable material evidence, testifies to the authority that was assigned to this literary text.

The case of the *Itinerarium* of Symon Semeonis, which exploits Ketton's translation of the Qur'an, as well as the *Liber de Doctrina Mahumet*, to describe Islamic rites and laws is also significant.¹⁵ Focusing on the use of glosses in the *Itinerarium*, Justicia Lara shows that Semeonis uses both Ketton's translation and some 'reading aids', especially the apparatus of glosses that accompany some of Ketton's copies of the Qur'an, as well as the *De Doctrina Mahumeti*, shifting from the desire to produce a theological refutation to a more neutral use, which is mainly descriptive and integrated into the rhetorical codes of the *itinerarium* genre. Even if it remains difficult to identify the manuscript Semeonis used (the variants in his quotations do not correspond with any of the existing *codices*, even if they share primitive glosses with most of the more ancient and important manuscripts), Justicia Lara proves it belonged to family α in Martínez Gázquez and González Muñoz's edition of Ketton's *Alcoranus Latinus*,¹⁶ offering new elements with which to map the possible circulation of the manuscripts of the *Corpus*.

It is also clear that research on derivative texts can greatly profit from new discoveries about the manuscript and textual diffusion of the *Corpus Islamolatinum*. An understanding of how and where copies of the *Corpus* travelled, as well as the texts they contained (either in terms of the whole sylloge or part of it), can provide valuable help in reconstructing which sources were or were not available in certain contexts, historical periods and cultural milieux. In the same vein, this could help identify discrepancies between the primary objectives of the *Corpus*, as conceived by Peter the Venerable and its assembler, and the ways in which this collection was exploited by its subsequent users.

With their expertise in different disciplines, the contributions of the nine authors gathered here provide a plurality of answers to the questions asked in this issue. They offer a clearer picture of the different channels through which knowledge about the Qur'an was transmitted and filtered, highlighting the importance of intermediary texts, and the tight correlation between their different receptions and the cultural context and aims of each of the authors of the texts studied. They also throw light on the reasons for the success of certain texts at the expense of others, suggesting important questions that we can ask in order to improve and refine our understanding of the dissemination of

Qur'anic material in the West. For example, why would a reader with a copy of the *Corpus Islamolatinum* in his hands choose a text other than the Qur'an to engage with Islam? Why would he choose to focus on Riccoldo's works? Not only did the degree of importance attributed to each work differ from our modern criteria, but it varied greatly according to the personality, background and *causae scribendi* of each author and work.

Albeit fundamental, this is just one of the many possible textual interrogations and lines of research deployed by the essays collected in this special issue. Many of the ideas presented in it, as well as the authors and works mentioned, are currently the focus of monographic studies conducted by *EuQu* project researchers.¹⁷ The richness and variety of the ongoing results, but above all, the constant emergence of new lines of investigation, demonstrate the productivity of the research topic identified by the *EuQu* project, to whose academic depth – but also implicit cultural and social value – this dossier hopes to make a worthy contribution.

ORCID

Florence Ninitte  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4790-2688>

Irene Reginato  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6754-6708>

NOTES

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1 Burman, *Reading the Qur'an*.

2 For an overview on the activities of the *EuQu* project see the website www.euqu.eu.

3 Tolan, 'Le Coran européen'.

4 Loop, 'Introduction'. <https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/jqs.2018.0348>.

5 Among the extensive bibliography on these two translations, see Burman, *Religious polemic* and, *Reading the Qur'an*; Cecini, *Alcoranus Latinus*; Martínez Gázquez, 'Trois traductions médiévales'; Grévin, 'Les traductions médiévales'; Petrus Pons, 'The Latin Qur'an'. For a more detailed analysis of the context of these translations, see also Scotto, 'Translation in Wartime'.

6 Most of these texts have been published as critical editions: 1) *Summa totius haeresis*: Petrus Venerabilis, *Schriften*; 2) Peter the Venerable's *Letters*: Constable, *The Letters*; 3) *De Doctrina Mahumeti*: Cecini, *Masā'il*; 4) *Alcoranus*: Martínez Gázquez and González Muñoz, *Alchoran*; 5) the *Epistula et Rescriptum*: González Muñoz, *Exposición*.

7 For the Latin *ESRC*, see Bottini, 'Risālat 'Abdallāh'; González Muñoz, *Exposición*, pp. xxi–lv; Khalil Samir, 'La version latine'; Tartar, *Dialogue*.

8 For an overall presentation of the *ESRC*, see the introduction and edition by González Muñoz, *Exposición*, pp. lxxviii–xciii. For specific case studies, see Burman, 'The Influence'; Lieberknecht, 'Zur Rezeption'; Mula, 'Muhammad and the Saints'; Puig, 'The Polemic'. For Petrus Alfonsi's *Dialogi*, the reference edition is *Petri Alfonsi dialogus*, ed. Cardelle de Hartmann, Senekovic, and Ziegler; for the importance and spread of this text, see Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi and his Medieval Readers*. For the *Legenda Aurea*, see the 2007 edition by Maggioni. For

Vincent de Beauvais's use of the *ERSC*, see Ninitte, 'Defining the Perception' and 'Les métamorphoses'; for Jean Germain, see Burkart, *Kreuzzug als Selbstbeschreibung*; Vigliano, 'Jean Germain, un débat inutile' and 'Jean Germain penseur'; Wrisley, 'Jean Germain's *Debat du Crestien et du Sarrasin*'; Reginato, 'An Indirect Usage' and 'Il *Trésor des simples* di Jean Germain'.

9 On Riccoldo and Islam, see Scotto, 'Riccoldo da Monte di Croce and the Origins of the Qur'an', 'Riccoldo da Monte di Croce Deliberating on God's Judgements', 'A Spiritual Reaction to Islamic Prosperity', and Lappin, 'Riccoldo's View of the Qur'an'. It is worth mentioning that, like the *ESRC* in Jean Germain's French *Trésor des Simples*, Riccoldo's *Liber Peregrinationis* also enjoyed a French translation, authored by the Benedictine friar Jean le Long d'Ypres (d. 1383), who included it within a collection of travel narratives (also containing works by Hayton, William of Bodensele and Odoric of Pordenone). The text is edited in Robecchi, *Riccolde de Monte di Croce, 'Liber peregrinationis'*; see also Id., 'Nuove proposte', and 'Riccoldo after Riccoldo'.

10 Burman, *Reading*, pp. 12–87, 122–148.

11 He argued that the *Corpus* was formed around the *Risāla*: Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable*, pp. 34–36.

12 For Peter the Venerable's attitude towards Judaism and Islam in the light of his soteriological conceptions, see Scotto, 'I Invite You to Salvation'.

13 P. 29.

14 See the different descriptions of the manuscripts in the critical editions of each text of the *Corpus*: González Muñoz, *Exposición*; Cecini, *Masā'il*; Martínez Gázquez and González Muñoz, *Alchoran*.

15 The topic has been previously discussed in another contribution. See Justicia Lara, 'Context and Use'.

16 The family α is composed of fourteen manuscripts, dating from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. All of them share several disjunctive variants with respect to the Arsenal manuscript and manuscripts of family β , which are in some cases copy mistakes but above all deliberate innovations intended to improve and clarify the text. This group of manuscripts could therefore be thought of as the result of an older and revised version of A^1 , which is itself the revision of the archetypal version of the Arsenal manuscript. See the introduction in Martínez Gázquez and González Muñoz (eds), *Alchoran sive lex Saracenorum*.

17 For an overview on the research in progress see the website www.euqu.eu.

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