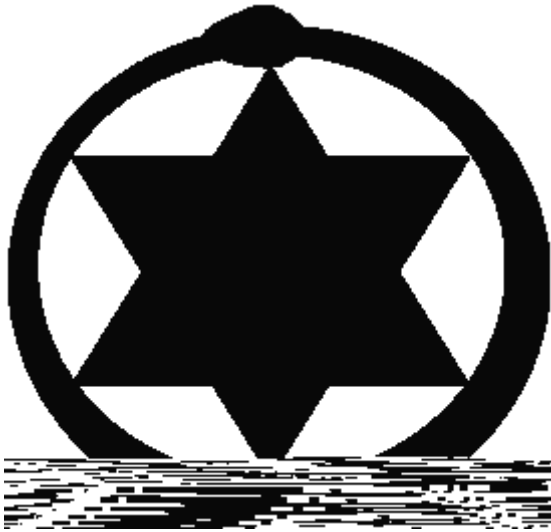


# The Rhodes Historical Review



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# The Rhodes Historical Review

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## CONTENTS

- The Dynamics of Opportunism and Religion in the  
World of El Cid  
Andrew Bell.....3
- The Bombs in Vietnam Explode at Home : Intersections  
of the Vietnam War and the American Civil Rights  
Movement  
Kimberly Harn.....21
- Colonial Narratives: Visions of Pre-Islamic Algeria in the  
*Revue Africaine*, 1870-1896  
Daniel Williford.....45



# The Dynamics of Opportunism and Religion in the World of El Cid

**Andrew Bell**

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The conquest of Toledo in 1085 by the armies of King Alfonso VI of Castile (1040–1109) has long been recognized as an important event in the Christian Reconquest of Muslim Spain. Following the death of Almanzor (938–1002) and the eventual collapse of the Cordoban Caliphate in 1031, the unity of Muslim Spain became fragmented by the rise of independent rival states (known as Taifa kingdoms). The fragmentation of Muslim Spain enabled the Christians armies in the North to advance, producing a dramatic shift in Christian-Muslim relations [that] encouraged the process of Christian reconquest.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the instability of these Taifa kingdoms, the Christian kingdoms of Spain began to exploit their Muslim neighbors by exacting tribute. During much of this period of constantly shifting alliances, Christians and Muslims appeared more concerned with surviving and earning profit than waging war upon kingdoms of the opposing faith. With the fall of Toledo, however, this Christian-Muslim relationship shifted once again. The conquest of Toledo by the armies of King Alfonso precipitated the arrival of the religiously orthodox

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<sup>1</sup> Simon Barton, Spain in the Eleventh Century, in *The New Cambridge Medieval History: IV c.1024-1198 Part II*, ed. D. E. Luscombe and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 182.

Almoravids from North Africa in 1086 and divided Christian and Muslim kingdoms along more purely religious lines. This paper examines three important accounts relating to the life of Rodrigo Diaz (El Cid)—the *Historia Silense*, the *Historia Roderici*, and the *Chronica Aderfonsi Imperatoris*—and suggests that while the majority of the eleventh century may be characterized by political opportunism and ambition, Alfonso's conquest of Toledo helped to polarize the political landscape of medieval Spain and gave rise to the roots of Spanish Crusader ideology.

The *Historia Silense* is a chronicle written by an author who identifies himself only as a monk of the *domus seminis* ("house of the seed"), a location that has traditionally been associated with the Benedictine monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos in Castile. Although this work primarily recounts the reign of Ferdinand I (1037-1065) of Castile, it also contains discussions about the fall of the Visigoths and the Caliphate of Cordoba. Most importantly, the manuscript discusses the reign of Almanzor during the Cordoban Caliphate. In its description of Almanzor (or al-Mansur, as it is also spelled) and his dreadful defeats of the Christians, the *Historia Silense* emphasizes the overwhelming strength of the Caliphate of Cordoba and implies that its subsequent disintegration into smaller more fragile kingdoms is what enabled Spanish Christendom to rise to prominence.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, the *Historia Silense* discusses Almanzor's continuous military assaults on the majority of eleventh-century Spanish Christendom, including the kingdoms of Pamplona and Leon.<sup>3</sup> The document portrays invasions into the northern kingdoms as highly destructive, claiming that Almanzor laid waste cities and castles, depopulated all the land until he reached the coastal regions of

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<sup>2</sup> *Historia Silense*, in *The World of El Cid: Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest*, trans. Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 38-39.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

western Spain and destroyed the city of Galicia where St. James is buried.<sup>4</sup> The *Historia Silense* explains that Almanzor and his armies enjoyed such license...to assault the frontiers of Christians for twelve successive years and that he profaned whatever was sacred with his audacity; and at the end he made the whole kingdom submit to him and pay tribute.<sup>5</sup> The account suggests that Almanzor's forays into the north were largely unopposed; it also lays bare the inherent feebleness and gross vulnerability of the Christian kingdoms. After the death of Almanzor, the *Historia Silense* focuses on the actions of King Alfonso V and reveals that he was a very vigorous enemy of the Moors and pursues them with vigorous hatred.<sup>6</sup> Thus, since the Christian kingdoms only managed to raise significant resistance in the years after Almanzor's death, the *Historia Silense* implicitly alludes to the importance to the Christians of the fall of the Caliphate of Cordoba. It suggests that the fragmentation of the previously cohesive Moorish state into Taifa (meaning party' or faction') kingdoms is what enabled the Christians to oppose their historic enemy.

The author of the *Historia Silense* concisely illustrates the willingness of the Taifa kingdoms to form partnerships with Christians in the wake of the Caliphate's collapse, depicting a new Muslim-Christian dynamic. After the death of Almanzor and the ineffectual reign of Hisham III (1027-31), the centralized government of al-Andalus dissolved into a number of independent principalities known to historians as Taifa kingdoms.<sup>7</sup> During this *fitna* (time of trouble or time of civil wars), numerous warring generals and politicians seized power and endeavored to create

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>7</sup> Simon Barton, Spain in the Eleventh Century, in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, 156.

their own principalities from the corpse of the fallen Umayyad dynasty, fracturing al-Andalus into over twenty Taifa kingdoms.<sup>9</sup> While the rulers of these new minor kingdoms were of dissimilar backgrounds, they all apparently possessed a keen awareness of the opportunities for self-advancement that the demise of the centre presented.<sup>9</sup> This clearly forced the Taifa kingdoms into conflict with one another for control over limited resources. Since the acquisition of resources inherently renders others unable to use them, continuous attempts to incorporate new territory made each Taifa kingdom the enemy of its neighbor.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, the armies of the Taifa kingdoms appear very small and seem largely comprised of mercenary forces, limiting the military viability of these nations. Thus, likely recognizing the precariousness of their own military weakness and the need to assimilate new territory, the rulers of the Taifa kingdoms continuously sought to ally themselves with their Christian neighbors, pote5(n)20()-1129



lacked the means to achieve their objectives unassisted, exposing the vulnerability of the Taifa kingdoms and the necessity of their reliance on the Christian kingdoms.

Through the portrayal of Fernando I (c. 1015-1065), the *Historia Silense* enables one to infer the motivations behind the Christian north's willingness to aid the Taifa Kingdoms and the dynamics of this interfaith relationship. Essentially, the *Historia Silense* informs the reader that the Muslim King of Toledo wished to earn the protection of King Fernando I and made his way very humbly to [Fernando I's] presence and steadfastly besought his Excellency to accept gifts and said that both [Fernando] and his kingdom were commended to Fernando's lordship.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the *Historia Silense* claims that, in response, King Fernando, though he thought that the barbarian king spoke insincerely, and though he himself was entertaining designs of a far different nature, nevertheless for the time being accepted the treasure.<sup>14</sup> Based on this excerpt, the payment of *parias* (monetary tribute) evidently provided the Christian kings with the incentive to protect Taifa kingdoms.<sup>15</sup> In addition, since the Taifa King of Toledo (and by extension other Taifa kings) clearly must rely on the military

draining their assets and failing to truly cure the ailments of their state.

While the *Historia Silense* does discuss the fragility of the Taifa kingdoms and Fernando I's conquest of Muslim lands, the document largely represents the Taifa period as an era that may be characterized by opportunity rather than religious zeal. From the Moorish perspective, the era was dominated by rivalries and mergers.<sup>17</sup> Taifa kings fought with their neighbors for power and prestige. In these squabbles, Muslims apparently viewed Christians as both an enemy to be assuaged with money and as a purchasable asset to employ against their enemies.<sup>18</sup> Clearly, if it furthered their goals, then Muslims were willing to work with Christians. Supporting the *Historia Silense*'s portrayal, the Taifa kingdoms of Saragossa and Toledo both allied themselves with Christian forces and fought over the city of Guadalajara.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the *Historia Silense*, through the exploits of Fernando I, illustrates the willingness of Christian Kings to exploit the weakness of the Taifa kingdoms. Fundamentally, in the *Historia Silense*, Fernando I displays a desire to mercifully spare Taifa kingdoms in exchange for tribute that is likely representative of the majority of the Christian kings, claiming that Fernando I gave to the supplications of the king of the Moors and received gifts for his generosity.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, by accepting tribute from Taifa states, the Christian Kings dramatically weakened them allowing Christians to enjoy the ability to simultaneously gain annual financial support and increase their holdings through the conquest

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 604.

<sup>18</sup> Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher, *The World of El Cid: Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 54-58.

<sup>19</sup> D. E. Luscombe, and Jonathan Simon Christopher Smith, *The New Cambridge Medieval History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 605.

<sup>20</sup> *Historia Silense*, 56.

of these destabilized Taifa states, like Coimbra.

the interests of King Alfonso, the Cid and his forces joined the king of Seville in the defense of his nation, resulting in combat between two

himself thereby, which implies that greater success on the battlefield likely equated to more privileges and increased monetary benefits.<sup>33</sup> The potential for monetary gain and increased fiscal security are what helped motivate a warrior to remain loyal to a lord. The *Historia Roderici* illustrates this by asserting that the Cid chose to serve numerous other masters after the death of [King Sancho], including King Alfonso VI of Castile (the suspected murderer of King Sancho).<sup>34</sup> As the Cid transitioned between lords, he did not discriminate based on religious faith, pledging his allegiance to both Christians and Muslims.<sup>35</sup> Further demonstrating the opportunism of the age, the Cid and his mercenary army, following his second exile from Castile, captured the Taifa Kingdom of Valencia.<sup>36</sup> The conquest of Valencia, in this ultimate display of ambition, effectively transformed the Cid from mercenary vassal into an independent ruler of a principality.<sup>37</sup> Nor was Rodrigo Diaz unique.<sup>38</sup> In the *Historia Roderici*, many warriors crossed cultural and religious boundaries; the Cid was simply one of the most successful.

Before the conquest of Toledo, the ease with which individuals were able to cross physical frontiers in the *Historia Roderici* indicates that cultural boundaries in the eleventh



discovers a distinct absence of religiously-based hatred or any religiously motivated animosity toward Muslims. For example, while the *Historia Roderici* does occasionally insult Muslims by referring to them as barbarians, this affront to their character neither possesses vitriol nor serves as a commentary on their faith.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, when the Cid faced the forces of Muhammad, the nephew of King Yusuf, he informed his troops to not quail before the enemy numbers [because] today the Lord Jesus Christ will deliver them into [their] hands.<sup>45</sup> Clearly, although the Christian faith is an indisputable element of the *Historia Roderici*, it does not, however, overtly influence the document or its commentary.

The respect and admiration that the Cid receives from Moors in the *Historia Roderici* reinforces the absence of any clear-cut religious polarization. After bsence Muslimsr7cu10512000484024255

that is in stark opposition to both the crusader ideology and movement of the later centuries. In essence, by gaining entrance into a Muslim kingdom, the Cid's entrance into a Muslim Taifa kingdom, as a Christian warrior, implicitly proves that the secular boundaries of the eleventh century were not defined by faith. In addition, the Cid clearly accomplished more than simply gaining admittance into a Muslim country. He seems to have risen to prominence in the court of al-Mu'tamir and obtained the acceptance of the Muslim citizenry. Thus Rodrigo Diaz, as Christian in eleventh-century medieval Spain, appears to have earned the love and loyalty of a Muslim community primarily through vigilance and dedication to his knightly vows. If this



which further expanded his territory.<sup>52</sup> Shamed by this Christian presence within the Toledan borders and suffering under increased

The arrival of Yusuf ibn Tashufin and his army of Almoravids in the late eleventh century forced the Taifa kingdoms to coalesce along religious lines. Acknowledging the rising Christian threat and fearing for their own security as independent states, the Taifa kingdoms, in desperation, begrudgingly accepted Almoravid aid beginning in the 1080s.<sup>58</sup> While some of the Taifa kingdoms had previously requested the assistance of the Almoravids, the conquest of Toledo by Christian forces is what finally galvanized Yusuf and the Almoravids into action. In June of 1086, Yusuf and his army crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and moved inland. The entrance of the Almoravids into medieval Spain represented a real threat to the Christian states. Primarily, the Almoravids aspired to live a life of religious purity and were

Castile, forcing the Christians of Spain to regard them as a greater danger than any Taifa kingdom.<sup>62</sup> The Almoravids, however, believed the Christians suitably cowed and chose not to press their military advantage, retreating to their native Morocco.<sup>63</sup> In response, the Christian kings of Spain strengthened their alliances in the face of this Muslim menace and thus, the weakened Taifa kings pleaded with Yusuf and the Almoravids to return. Upon his return, Yusuf attempted to conquer Toledo and Aledo, but his assaults failed. Greatly displeased by the lack of support from the Taifa kings and the continuous squabbling that prevented them from presenting any sort of a united front against the Christian north, Yusuf of the Almoravids resolved to make himself master of al-Andalus and, by 1094, all of the western Taifa kingdoms were assimilated into the Almoravid empire. Fundamentally, this unification of Muslim Spain, by its very nature, compelled the Christian kingdoms to more firmly ally themselves with other Christians in this fluctuating political landscape.

The *Chronica Aderfonsi Imperatoris* ( Chronicle of Emperor Alfonso ) is another early twelfth-century Christian account that implies that, after unifying al-Andalus, the Almoravids vicious war against the perceived enemies of Islam encouraged Christians to view all Muslims as their enemy. In 1086, the Almoravids attempted to conquer numerous territories, specifically Toledo. Eventually, recapturing Toledo became the Almoravid's primary focus and was subjected to numerous siege attempts, forcing Alfonso VI to keep a large portion of his forces at Toledo. Although Alfonso VI worked tirelessly to inhibit the advance of the Almoravids, he was largely unsuccessful, resulting in the deaths of many Christians. Growing desperate, Alfonso endeavored to ally himself with Barcelona, Aragon, and the city-states of Genoa and Pisa in order to recover Valencia and distract

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>63</sup> Simon Barton, *Spain in the Eleventh Century*, 182.

the Almoravid juggernaut.<sup>64</sup> The Almoravids had inflicted such horrible casualties upon the Leonese-Castilian army that, in 1100-1101, Pope Paschal II had to send letters warning would-be Spanish crusaders to the Holy Land not to abandon the peninsula.<sup>65</sup> These losses left a long lasting impression upon the people of Christian Spain. Thus, through the description of Alfonso VII (1105–1157), grandson of Alfonso VI, the *Chronica Aderfonsi Imperatoris* depicts a deepfelt sense of revenge.<sup>66</sup> According to the *Chronica*, after consolidating his realm, Alfonso VII announced that he would invade the land of the Saracens in order to conquer them and avenge himself upon King Tashufin (emir of the Almoravids from 1143-1145), seeking redress for invading the land of Toledo, killing many leaders of Christians, razing the castle of Aceca to the ground and putting all the Christians they had found to the sword.<sup>67</sup> Thus, Alfonso VII campaigned against the Muslims, raiding to the left and right and burning it as he went

The language of the *Chronica Aderfonsi Imperatoris* illustrates the entrenchment of the beginnings of the crusader ideology in early twelfth century Christian Spain. Unmistakably, *Chronica* possesses a conspicuously religious quality. As the author describes the numerous battles and struggles between Muslims and Christians, he appears to have intentionally imbedded many biblical allusions into the text, including, II Maccabees, II Samuel, and others.<sup>71</sup> Accompanying these biblical references, the figures of God and Jesus Christ are a highly pervasive element of the *Chronica Aderfonsi Imperatoris*, describing the sins of the Muslims and God's watch over the blessed Christians. In the *Chronica* Christians firmly believe that God seeth all and Christian kings are depicted choosing to carry relics of Jesus Christ into battle with them, like the King of Aragon's cross made of salvation-giving wood.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, the document describes Moors as an evil pestilence, apparently believing that their life was wicked and, thus they were defeated and they did not recognize the lord and rightly perished.<sup>73</sup> On account of their supposed godlessness, the *Chronica* asserts that the Moors are rightly doomed.<sup>74</sup> These passages indicate that Christians of the early twelfth century fought with Muslims not only over the possession of territory, but also over religious claims. By presenting the wars between nations as a Muslim-Christian conflict rather than as a clash of individual kingdoms, it appears that religion has greatly influenced the nature of these previously territorial confrontations, galvanizing crusader ideology for future combats.

As the twelfth century progressed, warfare against the Muslims was presented as a distinctly important and kingly

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 182-183.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 183,186.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.,





**“The Bombs in Vietnam Explode at Home”<sup>1</sup>: Intersections of the Vietnam War and the American Civil Rights Movement**

**Kimberly Harn**

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In



of the Vietnam conflict's divisive and often traumatic impact on the nation's social fabric. The views of civil rights activists on

scholar refers to as the salience of race in U.S. foreign *and* domestic relationships.<sup>5</sup> King was not alone; more polarizing figures such as Malcolm X, Muhammad Ali, and even moderates such as Ralph Bunche, a black American foreign service veteran, began to ask hard questions about the role of race in Vietnam. In his final public speech in September of 1969 Bunche asked, "Would the United States be engaged in that war if the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation front were white?"<sup>6</sup> Even for figures closely associated with the establishment like Bunche, by the late 1960s the Vietnam War prompted widespread critical evaluations of the role of race and racism in domestic and foreign policy.

Assessing the responses of the many critics of King's *A Time to Break the Silence*, biographer Taylor Branch explains that American public discourse broadly denied King the standing to be heard on Vietnam at all.<sup>7</sup> In part, the wide-spread condemnation of King's anti-war stance has contributed to the interpretation (in both contemporary accounts and historical scholarship) that opposition to Vietnam contributed to factionalism and the decline of the civil rights movement. Did the linking of race, foreign policy, and domestic policy by King and other activists represent a radical break with the civil rights movement's



American race reform) was the sincere belief in the benevolent potential of American foreign policy. By the end of the Vietnam War, a sense that the immorality of the United States overseas had become an inevitable consequence of the immorality of the United States at home, had become African-American race reformers' dominant interpretation.<sup>12</sup>

Rosenberg predicates his argument almost exclusively on the basis of discourse produced by the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). While his argument valuably situates the nexus of race relations, domestic, and foreign relations as a historical entity, it is equally important to confront the limitations of Rosenberg's claims. In the anti-war responses of some civil rights activists, Vietnam represented only further proof of their long-held imperialist critiques, while for others opposition to Vietnam reflected a more recently developed response to the systemized nature of anti-black racism arising from direct participation in the civil rights movement. For this former group, which included activists often considered politically radical, such as the Nation of Islam's Malcolm X or Paul Robeson, the Vietnam War did not alter but merely confirmed their worldviews.

Before engaging with King and SNCC's anti-war position in greater depth, it is necessary to briefly examine Paul Robeson and Malcolm X's views of the Vietnam War in order to better situate the former two within the spectrum of responses to the Vietnam conflict. More than ten years before the massive troop escalations of 1965 and King's first public statement in opposition to the war, Paul Robeson had publically criticized American involvement in Vietnam. A civil rights activist, singer, actor, athlete, and political radical, Paul Robeson was a dynamic and internationally known figure in early to mid-twentieth century America. As the battle raged between Vietnamese nationalists and

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 228.



War geopolitics similarly shaped Robeson's formulation of African-American identity as a marginalized group. He refers to the fact that we negroes have a special reason for understanding what going is on over there.<sup>15</sup> Forming the basis of this sense of solidarity with other oppressed, non-white people was an understanding that Black Americans were in a colonial relationship with the white majority. Articulating a sense of international solidarity with non-white people, Robeson expressed a theme that would be echoed in other civil rights activists' opposition to the war—that the situation of racial oppression allowed Black Americans to understand Vietnam from a particular critical perspective. In sum, Robeson's imperialist critique of Vietnam and his identification of Black Americans with other non-white, oppressed peoples constitute two of the fundamental ideological

undermined the alleged justifications for the war. Even the government architects of the conflict feel embarrassed by Vietnam.<sup>17</sup> Referring to these politicians and policy-makers, Malcolm remarks that they are trapped, they can't get out; they are held hostage to the Cold War logic, which in spite of the impossibility of victory, makes withdrawal an unacceptable defeat at the hands of international communism.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, 380057>217







addressed and was interested in his beloved nation and its moral health.<sup>27</sup> The speech presented three initial concerns with the war compelling King to break his silence, which directly emerged from the types of day-to-day conflicts he encountered as a prominent civil rights leader. The first was the devastating effect of the war on domestic social policy; Johnson's expansive social project, the War on Poverty, was broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political plaything of society gone mad on war.<sup>28</sup> One of the fruits of the civil rights struggle for legal reform, the War on Poverty and other progressive domestic policies were sacrificed as funds were diverted toward military escalation in Vietnam. Secondly, King cited the cruel irony that Black soldiers fight alongside white soldiers for a nation that has been unable to seat them together in the same schools.<sup>29</sup> African-American soldiers, over represented in both the ranks and casualties of Vietnam, fought for the defense of ideals that went unrealized in United States. King's third initial concern recognized the emergence of Black Power discourse, largely in poor, urban black ghettos by mid-decade. Attempting to justify non-violent methods to these desperate,

condemn young, marginalized black men as violent without recognizing that they are the product of a nation that had not only violently excluded its black citizens since its inception but







Historian Benjamin Harrison dismisses SNCC's turn towards the militant rhetoric of Black Power as a result of youthful naiveté and the lack of long-term commitment.<sup>43</sup> This is a profound misrepresentation of SNCC's path toward Black Power, which was fundamentally rooted in the experience of grassroots organization. As SNCC leader James Foreman explained, the community organizing experience transformed members into full time-revolutionaries.<sup>44</sup> Black Power disavowed the strategy of reform and non-violent resistance, articulated black racial consciousness, and rejected the integrationist and non-violent methods typically associated with the Civil Rights movement. Undoubtedly Black Power represented a significant shift for SNCC, but it was compatible with the organization's historical development. As SNCC member Jean Wiley recalled: In the Southern context in those rural counties, it [Black Power] made absolute sense to go for a power base. It was really what we were trying to do anyways, we just didn't call it that.<sup>45</sup> It follows that Black Power was to a considerable degree both congruent with, and a product of, its longstanding commitment to working with local people.<sup>46</sup> Like Peniel Joseph, historian Hasan Kwame Jeffries aims to re-think and re-interpret Black Power: Jeffries emphasizes the continuity between SNCC's Black Power and its earlier incarnations. Disillusionment stemming from the Freedom Summer and the rejection of the National Democratic Freedom Party largely contributed to the rise of Black Power. Inspiration from leading Black nationalists, such as Malcolm X, was another factor in this shift. However, in

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<sup>43</sup> Harrison, 263.

<sup>44</sup> As quoted in Hall, *The NAACP and the Challenges of 1960s Radicalism*, 79.

<sup>45</sup> Jean Wiley, interview, October 26, 2001, *Civil Rights Movement Veterans*, <http://www.crmvet.org/nars/wiley1.htm#jwbp> (accessed online November 22, 2010).

<sup>46</sup> Simon Hall, *The NAACP and the Challenges of 1960s Radicalism*, 78.

Jeffries' reading, SNCC's 1965-1966 Lowndes County, Alabama experiment organizing independent black political parties in this rural county outside of Selma, AL was the primary impulse shaping SNCC's Black Power ideology. When understood from a bottom-up, community organizing perspective, SNCC's BlackMSa



Beyond draft resistance, the document places the government's failure to pursue racial justice in the United States in the context of a global disregard for nonwhite people. The United

organization against the war, the 1966 document indicates that SNCC's opposition to the war was very much molded by their organizing work in the American South as victims of violence and confinement executed by U.S government officials.<sup>52</sup> That is not to deny the sincere concern for the suffering of the Vietnamese which motivated SNCC and anti-war protestors in general. Nevertheless, the dominant impulse that informed this critique was not the influence of radical political ideologies or even a profound knowledge of the conflict in Vietnam, but rather as SNCC leader Bob Moses aptly summarizes: our criticism of Vietnam policy does not come from what we know of Vietnam, but from what we know of America.<sup>53</sup>

By the summer of 1967, SNCC had more fully developed the global framework of their Vietnam opposition. Like Malcolm X and Robeson, SNCC's Black Power ideology was deeply inspired and informed by the anti-colonial, liberation struggles occurring across Africa during the mid-twentieth century as reflected in the position paper *The Indivisible Struggle Against Racism, Apartheid and Colonialism* presented by SNCC at the *International Seminar on Apartheid Racial Discrimination and Colonialism in Southern Africa* in Lusaka, Zambia in the summer of 1967. Although the document focuses on the specific racial justice issues relevant to the Southern African context, the inclusion of Vietnam in this discourse indicates the importance of the conflict in SNCC's global-vision. Compared with the 1966 statement, the paper's most notable innovation is the adoption of the language of human rights. On its opening page, the document states that SNCC has never visualiz96 197.8 Tm[00B3240036>3003100

human rights.<sup>54</sup> The interest in human rights emerged from SNCC's identification based on the global solidarity of oppressed, non-white people and from an understanding of racial oppression as indivisible. SNCC thus emphatically did *not* see racism in the U.S.A. as a domestic issue.<sup>55</sup> In this way, the abandonment of poverty programs in American ghettos implicates the war in Vietnam in the same way that the conflict militates against any possible constructive action by the U.S.A in other areas of Latin America, Asia, and Africa.<sup>56</sup>

Even as SNCC discourse on Vietnam adopted the language of human rights, it began to utilize a more aggressive, militant tone. Quoted in the appendix of position paper is SNCC leader Rap Brown's response to the aggression of the Klu Klux Klan against African-American residents in Prattville, Alabama in June, 1967:

We extend a call for black brothers now serving in Vietnam to come home to the defense of their mothers and families. This is their fight....It appears that Alabama has been chosen as the starting battleground for America's race war. This is both fitting and appropriate. For next to America's Vietnam action, Alabama polls the highest death toll of black men.<sup>57</sup>

Vietnam is an extension of the warzone at home. While the Black Power framework undoubtedly contributed to this more extreme

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<sup>54</sup> SNCC, *The Indivisible Struggle Against Racism, Apartheid and Colonialism*, (presented International Seminar on Apartheid Racial Discrimination and Colonialism in Southern Africa, Lusaka, Zambia, July and August 1967) *Civil Rights Movement Veterans*,

assessment of the situation at home, violence in Prattville, Alabama or in Vietnam was by no means a new phenomenon but rather reflected the long history of violence employed against black Americans at home and non-white people abroad. In SNCC's opposition to Vietnam, the linking of domestic and foreign spheres was not radical but only a reflection of reality.

The NAACP's response to Vietnam serves as an instructive counterpoint to King and SNCC's opposition to the conflict. As perhaps the most prominent American civil rights organization, the NAACP has been harshly criticized for its failure to adopt an official anti-war position until 1969. The national-level NAACP's hesitance to criticize American involvement in Vietnam is commonly attributed to the organization's closeness to the president, patriotism, and anti-communism. As important a factor was the nature of the NAACP's organizing experience.<sup>58</sup> Although the assertion that NAACP's failure to formulate a clear Vietnam policy constituted tacit support for the war is a matter of debate, the group's conservatism on Vietnam is frequently linked to the close relationship between NAACP President Roy Wilkins and President Lyndon Johnson.<sup>59</sup> A seasoned veteran of civil rights, Wilkins 10( ) TJETBT1 hit

Recent scholarship has attempted to nuance the NAACP's relationship with the Vietnam War to a great degree, drawing distinctions between national and local branches of the NAACP. For many civil rights organizations including SNCC, the SCLC, and the NAACP, individual opposition to the conflict preceded official organizational anti-war positions.

assassinated in 1965. By 1966, SNCC, as one history of the organization bluntly explains, had ceased, in any programmatic sense, to exist.<sup>64</sup> King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee, one year to the day of his Riverside speech. Anti-war opposition, in contrast, had a very different fate. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, American public opinion increasingly began to turn against the war. Although individuals in moderate organizations expressed dissent with Vietnam much earlier, by 1969 and the early 1970s conventional civil rights organizations would begin to *officially* endorse positions much akin to King's Riverside speech. In October, 1969, the NAACP cautiously supported the anti-war movement's Vietnam Moratorium Committee (VMC); but as with most moderate American opponents of the war, it did not actively participate in the anti-war movement's mass protests.<sup>65</sup> In light of these developments, a direct correlation between growing opposition to Vietnam and factional decline is probable. However, reducing the link between Vietnam and factionalism in the civil rights movement to a causal relationship amounts to a vast oversimplification. King and SNCC's decline in the late 1960s did not directly result from opposition to the war; rather the intersections of these two events were far more complex.

A September 19, 1969 *Time* article entitled "Black Power in Viet Nam" concluded with the menacing warning that Viet Nam may prove a training ground for the black urban commando of the future.<sup>66</sup> Employing evocative and racially-coded imagery of young, violent black soldiers training in the jungles of the Third

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<sup>64</sup> Wesley C. Hogan, *Many Hearts, One Mind* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 4.

<sup>65</sup> Simon Hall, "The Response of the Moderate Wing of the Civil Rights Movement to the War in Vietnam," 700-701.

<sup>66</sup> "Black Power in Viet Nam," *Time Magazine*, September, 19, 1969, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,901445,00.html> (accessed online November 29, 2010).

World, the *Time* article feeds directly on the pervasive fears that armed black nationalists inspired among white moderates. However, as the anti-war positions of King and SNCC substantiate, the presence of violence within the Black Power movement was not, as *Time* darkly insinuates, an import from the war in Vietnam. Although Black Nationalism drew inspiration from the armed liberation struggles occurring across the Third World, its refusal to pursue racial justice through the prescribed moderate strategies and its willingness to use violence in self-defense reflected a home-grown reality: the extent to which violence and the threat of violence underpinned white supremacy across the United States.

Entrenched in the struggle for racial justice, civil rights activists directly confronted systematized racial oppression in America—an encounter which would mold, to a large degree, their worldview. Thus, for Martin Luther King Jr. and SNCC, as their visions of racial justice collided with the limits of moderate and legalistic approaches, the civil rights movement became the training ground for opposition to the war. These voices of discontent with American policy in Vietnam during the mid to late 1960s constitute only a segment of the web of intersections between the Vietnam conflict and civil rights. Nevertheless, they represent a point of access which illustrates that during Vietnam and other moments in the American history, race reform, domestic policy and foreign policy intersected in ways that do not neatly conform to the master narratives of the American nation.

# **Colonial Narratives: Visions of Pre-Islamic Algeria in the *Revue Africaine*, 1870-1896**

**Daniel Williford**

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Founded in 1856, the *Revue Africaine* was an academic journal sponsored by the Société Historique Algérienne and dedicated to the production and dissemination of historical knowledge relating to North Africa. In its early years, the journal



The larger political context of this period from 1870 to 1896 included Algeria's transition to civilian rule, the demographic and territorial expansion of the settler community, and the 1871 insurrection in Kabylia.<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of civilian rule in 1870, contributors to the *Revue* had already begun to produce articles that manipulated France's Roman connection to reflect the goals of Algeria's rapidly expanding *pied-noir* community.<sup>2</sup> During this period, as Patricia Lorcin has observed, the paternalism of the occupying military force was replaced by settler politics with economic interests...as its fulcrum.<sup>3</sup> Land grabs and the displacement of local populations by settlers, which intensified in the aftermath of the revolt in Kabylia, produced a community-wide need for historical justification. At the same time, the new civilian administration set out to reduce the administrative boundaries which separated colony from metropole, working to transform Algeria into an integral part of France.<sup>4</sup>

Scholarship on the relationship between colonialism and the production of archaeological and historical knowledge about

refers to as the trivalent significance of Rome as a cultural idiom for French domination: justification, admiration, and emulation....<sup>5</sup> In her analysis, Lorcin highlights multiple phases in the construction of the Roman







The caverns of its coasts and its valleys hold the remnants of the man's first steps on the globe; dolmens tower over the summits of its hillsides; the ruins of Roman monuments stretch across its plains; the rubbish of Muslim constructions have succeeded the relics of Christian Africa....<sup>16</sup>

The link between geographical and historical space took on a special significance in the notion of the *translatio imperii*. This concept of the gradual movement of civilization and political power from East to West, which had its roots in the Middle Ages, found a clear expression in the construction of the Algerian historical narrative. In its most typical manifestation, the *translatio imperii* traced the transfer of cultural and political dominance from Greece, to Rome, to the Western European nations. A slightly altered version of the *translatio imperii* was echoed in the French vision of Algerian history. Civilization in the form of culture and technology was introduced and maintained in North Africa by the Phoenicians, the Romans, and the French respectively. According to this logic, the Arab conquest represented not only a lacuna and a period of stagnation or regression, but also the interruption of an identified historical process (the movement of cultural dynamism and political power from East to West), a sort of historical anomaly. For much archaeological and historical scholarship published in the *Revue Africaine*, the notion of the *translatio imperii* constituted part of the subtext against which the facts of Algerian history were judged and interpreted. By separately examining the profile of the journal as well as studies published on Roman and pre-Roman Algeria,

**Profile of the Journal: Intellectual Context and Membership**

1869 constituted a turning point in the particular history of the

traced back to the Roman Empire against those who emphasized the contributions of Germanic tribes who settled in Gaul.<sup>19</sup>

Romanist assertions concerning the Latin origins of French civilization laid the groundwork for the French/Roman connection that was to take on new symbolic importance in the works of archeologists like Berbrugger who studied the history of France's new North African empire.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, archaeological studies like those published in the *Revue* by Berbrugger and his successors, which emphasized Roman *grandeur* through descriptions of monumental ruins, reinforced the appeal of the Romanist interpretation for intellectuals writing about French national heritage.

The membership of the Société Historique over the last quarter of the nineteenth century illustrates a profound connection between knowledge and power in the colonial context. Supporters included colonial bureaucrats, wealthy *colons*, military men, and



*fondateur*) in the Société until his death in 1871.<sup>22</sup> Later governors-general, such as Jules Cambon would be listed as honorary chairmen (*presidents d honneur*), filling a primarily symbolic role and lending official legitimacy to the *Revue*.<sup>23</sup> The journal could also boast of an official subscription from the Bureau of Public Instruction, the Government General of Algeria, and the General Councils of Algiers and Oran. A relatively small group of historians and archaeologists were responsible for the major studies published on pre-Islamic Algeria. Among these, Émile Masqueray a historian, anthropologist, and linguist who analyzed Roman ruins in the Aurès Mountains before becoming the director of the École des Lettres in Algiers and Ernest Mercier, a military interpreter and twice-elected mayor of Constantine were representative of the general profile of academics involved with the *Revue*.<sup>24</sup> Their careers reflected both

### **Scholarship on Pre-Roman Algeria: Berber Origins and Phoenician/Carthaginian Influence**

Pre-Roman archaeological and historical studies published in the *Revue* nearly all agree on two main points: the Indo-European origins of Algeria's Berber inhabitants and the civilizing influence of Phoenician colonization in North Africa. Due in part to the development of the Kabyle Vulgate during this period, the favorable image of Algeria's Berbers in colonial discourse carried over into archaeological and historical studies of their ancient ancestors.<sup>25</sup> The relatively positive image of the Berbers as the original inhabitants of Algeria found in the *Revue*

Dryites.<sup>29</sup> Based on references in Ptolemy, Mac-Carthy puts forth the hypothesis that this tribe's name is a derivative of the term *druide*, thus linking them to a possible Celtic migration from the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, General Faibherbe identifies the Libyans [as] the most ancient inhabitants of the Atlantic region, [a] brown variety of the white European race and Berber [as] the language of the Libyans.<sup>31</sup> To support these theories on the origins of the Berbers, certain archaeologists went in search of physical proof of an ancient European presence in Algeria. Some believed to have found such evidence in the so-called Celtic sepulchers found throughout the colony. Oppetit, whose work was also published by the Société Historique de Constantine, analyzed these Celtic tombs as traces left by tribes from Northern Europe who arrived in Algeria around 1500 BCE and were later subsumed by invading oriental peoples to form the Berber race.

Canaan as supported by no certain proof.<sup>34</sup> Archaeologists exploited the presence of Celtic dolmens resembling those found throughout Western European, implicitly suggesting the shared origins of Algeria and metropolitan France.

Contemporary Algeria served as a constant point of reference for studies which dealt with the origins of North Africa's earliest inhabitants. Inscriptions found on funeral monuments throughout the Algerian countryside written in a script that has today been labeled Libyco-Berber<sup>35</sup> were another source of interest and debate for the *Revue's* contributors, particularly General Faibherbe. His work on Libyco-Berber script (which he refers to as Numidic script) connected this writing system to that currently used by Algeria's Touregs.<sup>36</sup> The primary point of contention was whether the indigenous population of North Africa, called either Libyans or Numidians, had developed this system as well as their impressive capacity for monument building independently or due to influence from Phoenician or Roman civilization. Faidherbe, for example, believed that these inscriptions, because of their style and quality, could not have dated from before the Roman period.<sup>37</sup> The implication, however, was that Algeria's original inhabitants had been particularly receptive to civilizing influences, a view also reflected in Gauvault Saint-Lager's portrayal of one Berber tribe in the *Aïn-Toukria region as having maintained some of its Roman customs adopted during Antiquity until the present.*<sup>38</sup> Scholars also used archaeological analyses of Libyan inscriptions to assert the European heritage of Berber people. For example, Rinn's study of

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<sup>34</sup> Ernest Mercier, *Ethnographie de l'Afrique Septentrionale : Notes sur l'origine du Peuple Berbère*, *Revue Africaine* 90 (November 1871) : 428.

<sup>35</sup> For insights on Libyco-Berber script see Werner Pichler, *Die Libyco-Berberische Schrift*, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 18 (1886) : 1-10.



this period as the beginning of civilization in North Africa. Colonel Flatters, for example, characterized Phoenician settlements in Algeria as prosperous outposts of a *mère-patrie*,<sup>42</sup> a term notably reminiscent of the language of French colonization. This advanced presence from the East supposedly gave birth, from a distance, to the first seeds of classical civilization for many barbarian peoples.<sup>43</sup> Even areas not directly touched by Phoenician/Carthaginian occupation were described as benefiting from the nearby presence of civilization. Frédéric Lacroix identified Carthaginian advances, particularly in the realm of agricultural technology, as among the first examples of the use of a rationalist approach in North Africa.<sup>44</sup> According to Lacroix, the original inhabitants of Algeria existed in a state of pure savagery before undergoing the influence of Punic civilization.<sup>45</sup> In the *Revue, Wilec* Phoenicians themselves were linked to the }TJETBT/F1 1









has pointed out that civilization versus barbarity was an attractive concept to the European population,<sup>57</sup> due in part to the fact that it represented a subtle reworking of the *mission civilisatrice*. Drawing analogies between outposts of Roman settlement and *pied-noirs* farmers in rural Algeria, the *Revue s* contributors depicted both groups as defending civilization and spreading it to the local population by a gradual process of transmission (i.e. association), rather than a concerted effort at assimilation. Scholars thus characterized Roman settlers as having a clear role to play both in relation to the local population and to the greater empire. De Verneuil and Bugnot state that, The Latins who were transported there [to Algeria] had to, through their relationship with the *indigènes*, prepare them, little by little, through their contact, to later accept their definitive union with the Empire.<sup>58</sup> Lacroix in particular emphasizes the importance of so-called border colonies as foyers of civilization.<sup>59</sup> In his view, these border colonies were mainly composed of Roman veterans from the African campaigns who turned to cultivating the newly conquered territory. Such a depiction echoed the early stages of French colonization in Algeria, when Resident General Bugeaud's administration, believing that military discipline was a necessity in adapting to the harsh conditions of colonization, encouraged large numbers of veteran colonial soldiers to settle permanently.<sup>60</sup> In each of these instances, the reimagining of Rome's colonial presence in North Africa to reflect developments in the nature of

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<sup>57</sup> Patricia Lorcin, *Imperial Identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice and Race in Colonial Algeria*, 181.

<sup>58</sup> B. De Verneuil and J. Bugnot, *Esquisses Historiques sur la Mauritanie Césarienne et Iol-Caesarea*, *La Revue Africaine* 79 (January 1870): 51.

<sup>59</sup> Frédéric Lacroix, "Afrique Ancienne: Situation Agricole de l'Afrique avant les Phéniciens," *La Revue Africaine* 79 (January 1870): 23.

<sup>60</sup> Michael Heffernan, French Colonial Migration, in *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration*, ed. Robin Cohen (New York, Cambridge University Press), 36.









situation in Algeria, thus becoming participants in the creation of this reality. Their narrative of Algerian history owed its efficacy to an emphasis on the march of civilization, the constant progression from Berber, to Phoenician, to Roman times, interrupted by the Arab conquest but reestablished by France. According to such a vision, Algeria's Arabs were an historical anomaly, while the French became the restorers of a civilization whose permanence was embodied by the monumental ruins present throughout the country. In the context of increasing land acquisition by European settlers at the expense of the local population, this particular narrative served to justify the territorial claims of the  *pied-noir* community. At the same time, scholars adopted an approach to writing North African history, which drew analogies between the historical experiences of France and Algeria, placing them in the same historical space and affirming the feasibility of integrating the colony into the administrative body of the metropole.

While not the focus of this study, it is significant that the construction of a historical narrative in academic studies published in the *Revue* resonated in other branches of colonial discourse in Algeria. In his study of Bône's  *pied*

Empire reflected colonial ambitions in Algeria specifically, it is essential to note that this connection also expressed France's larger imperial ambitions in and beyond the Mediterranean. As Paul Silverstein has point out, the French colonial state could claim itself as the rightful guardian of the true Latin Mediterranean

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**The Dynamics of Opportunism and Religion in the World of El Cid**

Andrew Bell

The eleventh century in Spain is an important transitional period in the history and historiography of the Christian Reconquest of Muslim Spain. This paper examines three different Christian accounts