

# A Companion to Medieval Toledo

*Reconsidering the Canons*

*Edited by*

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## The Toledan Translation Movement and Dominicus Gundissalinus: Some Remarks on His Activity and Presence in Castile

*Nicola Polloni*

The origins of the Toledan translation movement can be traced back to the translation activities developed in Southern Italy and Northern Spain since the end of the 11th century. In Italy, the translations were realized from Greek into Latin; whereas in Catalonia and the Ebro valley, translators as Plato of Tivoli, Robert of Ketton, and Hermann of Carinthia translated Arabic writings. Following different linguistic tracks, these first translations shared a common interest on scientific works, and particularly astronomy. The activity of these first translators was also directly connected to the main scientific *milieux* of the time, namely Salerno and Chartres, where the translated texts were read and used.<sup>1</sup>

By this point of view, Toledo does not appear to be a primary destination for those in search of scientific texts to translate. Despite the importance of the Toledan “school of Sa’id Andalusī,” whose members would be among the authors translated into Latin (starting with al-Zarqālī), in the first phase of the translation movement only one translator is found in Toledo, Johannes Hispalensis atque Limiensis. In just a few decades, though, this scenario abruptly changed. In approximately thirty years, indeed, almost one hundred philosophical and scientific texts were translated from Arabic into Latin in Toledo, which soon became the main center of translating activity in Europe. The town attracted a wide number of translators and scholars, and the new works therein produced would be disseminated throughout the rising European universities.

To understand the social context in which the translation movement found a positive development, it is very useful to recall some important events that took place in the Iberian Peninsula between the 11th and the 12th centuries.

As it is well known, the taking of Toledo by the Christians in 1085 constituted a political shock for the Iberian Arabic kingdoms, and led Mu’tamid of

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1 See Kristeller, “The School of Salerno,” 138–192. About the influences of the translated texts on William of Conches see Caiazzo, “The Four Elements in the Work of William of Conches,” pp. 3–66.

Seville to call the Almoravid King Yusuf Ibn Tashfin for help. The response to this call was the invasion of the peninsula by the Almoravids, who defeated the troops of Alfonso VI and besieged Toledo in 1109–10. This first invasion put an end to the instability of the *reinos de taifa*. But after a few decades of political precariousness, the Almoravid regime gave way to a new political order, established by the Almohad “revolution.”<sup>2</sup> In 1147, the religious movement of the *al-muwahhidun*, led by al-Mumim, conquered the Almoravid capital, Marrakesh, beginning the invasion of the Iberian Peninsula: the effect of the aggressive military approach and the radical theological positions of the Almohads was a wide movement of people migrating from al-Andalus toward the Christian kingdoms of the North.

From this perspective, Toledo was in a peculiar position. Not far from the border with al-Andalus, Toledo was, indeed, a wealthy town with an ethnically mixed population of *mozárabes*, Castilian migrants, Jews, and Arabs who had not fled after 1085.<sup>3</sup> By this standard, Toledo was the center of the Kingdom of Castile, and it may be well defined as the Castilian economic, religious, and cultural capital. It is toward this town that the migratory fluxes from al-Andalus were directed, a fact which is corroborated by the 12th century documentary witnesses. These documents, as pointed out by Ladero Quesada, show a peak of documents written in Arabic in the second half of the century, after having reached an equilibrium between Latin and Arabic writings around 1150.<sup>4</sup> This process is a clear result of the compass of Arabic-speaking populations—Jews and Muslims, with their skills, cultures, and books—migrating to Toledo in consequence to the Almohad invasion.

The new availability of skills and books is one of the main factors that made possible the development of a translation movement in Toledo, together with the displacement of the vast library of the Banu Huds from Zaragoza to the Castilian capital in 1140–41: a prominent library fund that made available to the translators many scientific and philosophical Arabic writings, as underlined by Charles Burnett.<sup>5</sup> Thus, one can recognize in the Andalusian migration one of the most important factors for the establishment of a translation activity in Toledo, since it provided a wide availability of books and learned people.

2 For an overall perspective on the Almohadi invasion of Iberia, see Huici Miranda, *Historia política del imperio almohade*, Tetuán; and Fromherz, *The Almohads*.

3 See González Palencia, *Los mozárabes de Toledo en los siglos XII y XIII*; and Olstein, *La era mozárabe*.

4 See Ladero Quesada, *La formación medieval de España*, pp. 257–264.

5 Burnett, “The Coherence of the Arabic-Latin Translation Programme in Toledo in the 12th Century.”

A second and fundamental factor can be detected in the Toledan clergy, regarding which the council of Coyanza should be recalled. One of the most striking consequences of the so-called Gregorian reform had been the arising of cathedral, and soon after, urban schools throughout Europe, between the eleventh and the twelfth centuries.<sup>6</sup> The council of Coyanza, held in 1055, received and enacted these requirements: in a relatively short time, cathedral schools were established to train the clergy in the Iberian Peninsula, also in Toledo.<sup>7</sup> At the very same time, the presence in that town of many *mozárabes*, whom were following a different liturgy from the Roman Catholic rite, constituted a thorny problem for the Church, which started a policy of progressive “romanization” of the Toledan (and Castilian) population beginning in 1085. As a consequence, the Toledan archbishopric (as well as a conspicuous part of the chapter) for almost a century was held by members of the French clergy, starting with Bernard of La Sauvetat, the first archbishop after the taking of Toledo.<sup>8</sup>

It is apparent that the conspicuous presence of French clerks in the Castilian capital, and the establishment of the Toledan cathedral school, has been crucial regarding the availability of cultural resources (Latin books and learned people), and a direct link to the main “markets” toward which the translations could be directed (the schools in France and Italy).

The first translator operating in Toledo, Johannes Hispalensis, worked under the patronage of the Toledan archbishop Raymond of Salvetat (1124–52)—incorrectly supposed to be Gundissalinus’s patron as well by many scholars of the 19th and 20th century.<sup>9</sup> Notwithstanding the relevance of Raymond for sponsoring the first Toledan translator, one can properly talk of a translation movement in Toledo only under the archbishopric of John of Castelmoron (1152–66) who established a patronage that would be confirmed by the subsequent archbishops, and especially Cerebruno of Poitiers (1167–80).<sup>10</sup>

This cultural patronage appears as a necessary but insufficient condition for the implementation of the translation movement. Patronage was surely made

6 See Fliche, *La réforme grégorienne et la reconquête chrétienne*.

7 On the Council of Coyanza, see García Gallo, *El Concilio de Coyanza*.

8 See Rivera, *La Iglesia de Toledo en el siglo XII (1086–1208)*.

9 Regarding the interesting figure of Don Raimundo, see Rivera, *Los arzobispos de Toledo en la baja Edad Media (s. XII–XV)*, pp. 17–20. See also the recent studies by Burnett and Robinson: Burnett, “John of Seville and John of Spain; Burnett, “Magister Iohannes Hispalensis et Limiensis’ and Quista ibn Luqa’s ‘De differentia spiritus et animae’: A Portuguese Contribution to the Arts Curriculum?”; Robinson, “The History and Myths Surrounding Johannes Hispalensis”; and Robinson, “The Heritage of Medieval Errors in the Latin Manuscripts of Johannes Hispalensis.”

10 See Rivera, *Los arzobispos de Toledo en la baja Edad Media (s. XII–XV)*, pp. 21–30.

possible by the vast economic assets of the Toledan chapter: the metropolitan see hosting the Primate of Spain, the Toledan archdiocese was extended to a wide part of the kingdom and received the ninth part of the overall episcopal tithes, as well as the tenth part of the crown land taxation and other important endowments.<sup>11</sup> As Francisco Fernández Conde pointed out, this huge amount of financial resources was the most important mean of funding the Toledan translations, and this fact is corroborated by the presence in the cathedral chapter of both the most important translators of the time—Gerard of Cremona and Dominicus Gundissalinus—from which these translators received prebends and *raciones*.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the importance of the cathedral school should be stressed, too. Indeed, Gerard of Cremona appears in the capitulary archives with the title of *magister*, and this title makes (almost) patent that Gerard taught at the cathedral school.<sup>13</sup>

At the very same time, though, while patronage can explain how the Christian translators were paid for their work, it does not clarify the modalities through which non-Christian translators were remunerated. Indeed, the translations were collaborative and bi-phasic: the first collaborator translated *verbatim* the Arabic text into Iberian vernacular, while the second collaborator wrote down the vernacular in Latin.<sup>14</sup> In some cases, as with Gerard's collaborator, Galippus, the first translator was a *mozárabe*, and it could be supposed that these people were integrated in some way into the chapter patronage—even though there is no documental trace of it. In other cases, and exemplarily with Gundissalinus's collaborator, Abraham ibn Daud, the team was formed by

11 Fernández Conde, *La religiosidad medieval en España*; and F.J. Pérez Rodríguez, *La Iglesia de Santiago de Compostela en la Edad Media*, p. 37.

12 Fernández Conde, *La religiosidad medieval en España*, p. 266.

13 Burnett, "Communities of Learning in the Twelfth-Century Toledo," pp. 9–18. This fact, though, does not seem sufficient to confirm the existence of a "school of translators" in Toledo, as supposed by Amable Jourdain and Valentin Rose, but can possibly partially explain the visionary account by Daniel of Morley of his journey to Toledo, as well as the legends about a school of necromancy active in the Castilian capital. On Daniel of Morley's account (Daniel of Morley, *Philosophia*), and the existence of a school of translators in Toledo, see Jourdain, *Recherches critiques sur l'âge et l'origine des traductions latines d'Aristote* pp. 107–119; Rose, "Ptolemaeus und die Schule von Toledo," 327–349; and the fundamental remarks on the hypothesis of a "School of Toledo" by Burnett in Burnett, "The Institutional Context of Arabic-Latin Translations of the Middle Ages."

14 See D'Alverny, "Translations and Translators"; D'Alverny, "Les traductions à deux interprètes, d'arabe en langue vernaculaire et de langue vernaculaire en latin"; Burnett, "Literal Translation and Intelligent Adaptation amongst the Arabic-Latin Translators of the First Half of the 12th Century"; and Burnett, "Translating from Arabic into Latin in the Middle Ages."

Christian and Jewish people, and the “patronage hypothesis” is insufficient to justify, at least at present, the modalities of this kind of collaboration.

Around the middle of the 12th century all the fundamental factors necessary for the beginning of a series of translations from Arabic into Latin are attested in Toledo. In the first place, the migratory fluxes from al-Andalus and the displacement of the Banu Hund’s library provided Arabic texts and linguistic expertise to realize the translations. The presence in Toledo of a learned Arabic-speaking population—exactly the kind of social class fleeing from the Almohad repression—had a crucial value in this regard, and it must be considered as a fundamental factor for understanding the rise of the translation movement. In the second place, the presence of a wealthy cathedral chapter, directly linked to France, provided some important financial means to guarantee the translating effort and a fundamental bond to the market outlet of these translations.

At least by 1157, Gerard of Cremona was in Toledo aiming at translating Ptolemy’s *Almagest*.<sup>15</sup> Between 1157 and 1187, the Italian translator completed around eighty translations, working with his collaborator Galippus. These translations cover many topics and authors, even if Gerard’s main interest seems to have been astronomy and practical science.<sup>16</sup> Thanks to Gerard’s activity, by the end of the 12th century the Latin thinkers could finally have at their disposal the metaphysical and physical works of Aristotle.

If the Toledan translation movement were a natural phenomenon, its examination through the Aristotelian four causes would clarify what are the most obscure points in our present knowledge of that translating activity, especially regarding the “efficient” (economic retribution) and “final” (destination and market of the translated texts) causes. This heuristic exercise, indeed, might be very helpful.

The *material cause* is clear. The availability of Arabic writings in Toledo is patent. The transfer of the Banu Hud library to Toledo provided a vast amount of texts, and it is very likely that the scientific writings realized by the “circle of Sa’id Andalusí” were preserved. Moreover, the migration flow from al-Andalus also contributed to this text availability; while Latin texts (useful to clarify the Arabic writings to translate) were potentially available through the Toledan French clergy, and the cathedral school.

The *formal cause* appears to be clear, too. Learned people fleeing from Almohad al-Andalus, such as Abraham ibn Daud, converged in Toledo,

15 See Hernández, *Los cartularios de Toledo. Catálogo documental*, p. 117, n. 119; and Burnett, “The Coherence of the Arabic-Latin Translation Programme,” 275.

16 See Burnett, “The Coherence of the Arabic-Latin Translation Programme,” 276–81.

providing skills and knowledge to the rising translating activity. At the very same time, the large number of *mozárabes*, who were fluent in Arabic, surely contributed to translating activity, as witnessed by Galippus's collaboration with Gerard. Finally, in some cases the teams' Latinists moved to Toledo to translate new texts (Gerard), or with further aims, as we are going to see regarding Gundissalinus.

The *efficient cause* is much more difficult to assess. On the one hand, it is apparent that the Toledan chapter contributed to the remuneration of the Latinists, who were members of the chapter itself. On the other hand, the way non-Christian translators were paid is completely unclear—an obscurity which is to be linked to the final “cause.”

The *final cause* is almost completely unknown. The supply of translated texts must be related to some kind of demand, and their spreading throughout Europe, in a relatively short time, makes this point quite clear. The translated writings appear to have circulated primarily in France (Paris, in particular), and direct links between Toledo and France can be established by the presence in town of many French clergymen. Nonetheless, these remarks are weakened by the consideration that traces of the diffusion of the Toledan translations in France can be explained by the relevance Paris would have had since the beginning of the 13th century. In other words, since Paris became the most important scientific center in Europe, it is obvious that the newly translated texts were to be acquired. The relatively short time between the Toledan activity and the rising of the Parisian university makes it very difficult to assess whether the translations were realized *for* the Parisian demand of texts, or the texts were acquired by the Parisian masters in a second period, with no explicit relation to the means of their realization. Indeed, there are no documental traces at all regarding this thorny, but pivotal point. It is very likely that the translations were commissioned, since there are historical precedents, such as Peter the Venerable's request to Hermann of Carinthia and Robert of Ketton to realize a translation of Islamic writings (among which, the *Quran*) for apologetic purposes. Moreover, the commissioning of translations would also cast some light on the modalities of retribution of non-Christian translators, even though, as we shall see, Abraham ibn Daud's appeal to the archbishop of Toledo to start the translation of Avicenna's *Liber sufficientiae* seems to entail a kind of remuneration: indeed, why did Ibn Daud ask so? For the mere sake of Latin knowledge? That seems rather unrealistic.

Possibly, more light can be cast on these problematic issues by the examination of Dominicus Gundissalinus's biography. On the one hand, Gundissalinus's case can be very helpful to clarify the modalities through which the translation

movement began in Toledo. On the other, though, it might also thicken the clouds of our understanding of this process.

Dominicus Gundissalinus is in Toledo since 1162. Quite certainly, Gundissalinus was born in the Iberian Peninsula, since the name “Gundissalinus” or “Gundisalvi” is the patronymic standing for “son of Gundisalvus,” a typical Castilian name. His birth should be placed between 1115 and 1125, following a series of remarks on the rather scarce documental data at disposal. In the first place, Gundissalinus’s philosophical reflection appears to be quite close to that of the Chartrean masters, in particular to William of Conches’s and Thierry of Chartres’s speculation.<sup>17</sup> Gundissalinus’s knowledge of their writings and doctrines has led many scholars to suppose a direct link between the Toledan philosopher and Chartres, and possibly also his personal presence in Chartres.<sup>18</sup> If this were the case, considering that Gundissalinus is surely attested in Segovia since 1148, it should have been in Chartres sometime between 1135 and 1148.

The archive of Segovia’s cathedral states his presence in that town on May 6, 1148. The document states registers “Dominicus archidiaconus Collarensis,” i.e., archdeacon of Cuéllar, a village close to Segovia.<sup>19</sup> The identification of the “Dominicus” archdeacon of Cuéllar with Gundissalinus is

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- 17 See Southern, “Humanism and the School of Chartres”; N. Häring, “Chartres and Paris Revisited”; and Dronke, “New Approaches to the School of Chartres.”
- 18 Regarding Gundissalinus’ connections to Chartres, see D’Alverny, “Les traductions à deux interprètes, d’arabe en langue vernaculaire et de langue vernaculaire en latin,” p. 197. The hypothesis of a direct and personal connection between Gundissalinus and William of Conches has been proposed and analysed by Alexander Fidora, see. Fidora, “Le débat sur la création: Guillaume de Conches, maître de Dominique Gundisalvi?.” At the same time, many studies have focused on the relation between Gundissalinus and Thierry of Chartres: see Häring, “Thierry of Chartres and Dominicus Gundissalinus”; Fredborg, “The Dependence of Petrus Helias’ Summa super Priscianum on William of Conches’ Glosae super Priscianum”; Fredborg, “Petrus Helias on Rhetoric”; Fredborg, *The Latin Rhetorical Commentaries by Thierry of Chartres*, pp. 14–20; Hunt, “The Introduction to the Artes in the Twelfth Century”; and Burnett, “A New Source for Dominicus Gundissalinus’s Account of the Science of the Stars?.” See also Polloni, “Elementi per una biografia di Dominicus Gundisalvi”; and Polloni, “Thierry of Chartres and Gundissalinus on Spiritual Substance.”
- 19 See Villar García, *Documentación medieval de la Catedral de Segovia (1115–1300)*, n. 41, p. 91; and n. 42, p. 93. Unfortunately, the documental archive of Cuéllar (Cf. B. Velasco Bayón, *Collección documental de Cuéllar (943–1492)*) has no traces of Gundissalinus’s presence in that village. Nevertheless, one should not diminish the importance of Cuéllar during the Middle Ages, a relevant center in the Duero valley. See Velasco Bayón, *Historia de Cuéllar*, pp. 149–50.

corroborated by the manuscript tradition of many of his works, which ascribes the paternity of these writings to Dominicus “archidiaconus Toleti” or, in the longer and more detailed qualification, “archidiaconus Segobiensis apud Toletum.”<sup>20</sup>

At least between 1144 and 1145 Segovia hosted an important translator, Robert of Chester, ‘whom’ translated ‘there’ the *Liber de compositione alchemiae*—the very first alchemical writing to be translated into Latin—and al-Khwarizmi’s *al-Jabr*.<sup>21</sup> Robert presumably remained in Segovia until 1146–1147, since in 1147 he is attested in England, where he wrote a treatise on the astrolabe, and soon after, in 1150, adapted the astronomic tables to the latitude of London.<sup>22</sup> Robert’s presence in Segovia is meaningful, since it attests a translating activity in that town before the arrival of Gerard in Toledo and the beginning of the Toledan translation movement. Can we suppose that Gundissalinus went to Segovia to carry out the work begun by Robert? This does not seem to be the case. In fact, at the time Gundissalinus was a well-trained person who had just finished his studies possibly in Chartres, not a translator, not yet. But this does not entail that a certain, incipient translating activity had surely begun in Segovia during those years, with or without the collaboration of Gundissalinus.

Moreover, it is worth noticing that in 1149, i.e., one year after Gundissalinus’s arrival in town, John of Castelmoron became bishop of Segovia, an office he would hold for three years, until his election to archbishop of Toledo, in 1152 as John 11.<sup>23</sup> It is under his archbishopric that the translation movement began, with Gerard of Cremona’s activity which started sometime before 1157.

Gundissalinus moved to Toledo in 1161 or 1162.<sup>24</sup> His relocation is to be linked to another inaugural figure of the translation movement, Abraham

20 See, for example, ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 6443, f. 44r; ms. Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 4428, f. 78r; ms. Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottob. lat. 2186, f. 1r; and ms. Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, 504, f. 169v, reading “archidiaconus Toleti.” Regarding the reading “archidiaconus Segobiensis apud Toletum,” see for example ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 6552, f. 55r.

21 See Burnett, *Robert of Ketton*; Hughues, *Robert of Chester’s Latin Translation of Al-Khwarizmi’s Al-Jabr*, p. 124; and Lemay, “L’authenticité de la préface de Robert de Chester à sa traduction du Morienus (1144).”

22 Rucquoi, “Littérature scientifique aux frontières du Moyen Âge hispanique.”

23 See Rivera Recio, *La Iglesia de Toledo en el siglo XII (1086–1208)*, p. 280, n. 75.

24 See Villar García, *Documentación medieval de la Catedral de Segovia (1115–1300)*, n. 61, p. 109: “Ego Dominicus Colar dictus archidiaconus.”

Ibn Daud (“Avendauth”), who arrived in the Castilian town around 1161.<sup>25</sup> The Jewish philosopher is the author of the Latin translation of Avicenna’s prologue to the *Liber sufficientiae*, the very first translation into Latin of a work by Avicenna.<sup>26</sup> As pointed out by Amos Bertolacci, Ibn Daud’s dedicatory letter of the prologue is an appeal to archbishop John to sponsor the translation of the whole Avicennian corpus, probably with the purpose of mirroring the work already begun by Gerard.<sup>27</sup> Apparently, John’s positive response implied the necessary presence in Toledo of a Latinist to assist Ibn Daud during the translations: this Latinist was Dominicus Gundissalinus, who moved to Toledo in 1162, and there translated Avicenna’s *De Anima* with Ibn Daud before 1166.<sup>28</sup> The collaboration between Ibn Daud and Gundissalinus (and John of Spain, the third member of the team) would go well beyond the translation of Arabic writings, and they gave birth to a pivotal speculative milieu of critical elaboration of scientific and philosophical works, as shown by Charles Burnett’s and Gad Freudenthal’s studies.<sup>29</sup>

The reconstruction of Gundissalinus’s transfer to Toledo, while persuading, entails some relevant problems. It is a matter of fact that Gundissalinus was an eminent Latinist, who studied in Chartres and therefore had a very good philosophical background, extremely useful for the translation of Avicenna. Nevertheless, this does not seem to be a sufficient reason, since no philosophical skills were required to Gerard, who was already translating from Arabic. And surely the archbishop could have easily found a good Latinist in Toledo—one should remember that the most part of the Toledan chapter was made of French clergymen: any of them could perfectly fit the required profile.

25 See D’Alverny, “Avendauth?”; Weil, *Das Buch Emunah Ramah, oder Der erhabene Glaube, verfasst von Abraham ben David Halevi aus Toledo*; and Cohen, *A Critical Edition with a Translation and Notes of The Book of Tradition (Sefer ha-Qabbalah) by Abraham ibn Daud*.

26 Avicenna, *Prologus discipuli et capitula*, ivi 314.

27 See Bertolacci, “A Community of Translators: The Latin Medieval Versions of Avicenna’s Book of the Cure.” This practice is common among Jewish philosophers, see Freudenthal, “Abraham Ibn Ezra and Judah Ibn Tibbon as Cultural Intermediaries. Early Stages in the Introduction of Non-Rabbinic Learning into Provence in the Mid-12th Century.”

28 Cf. Hernández, *Los cartularios de Toledo*, p. 130, n. 134; the dedicatory of the translation to John II in Avicenna, *De anima seu sextus de naturalibus*, pp. 3, 1–4, 26; and Polloni, “Elementi per una biografia di Dominicus Gundisalvi.”

29 See Burnett, “John of Seville and John of Spain: a mise au point”; and Freudenthal, “Abraham Ibn Daud, Avendauth, Dominicus Gundissalinus and Practical Mathematics in Mid-12th Century Toledo.”

Thus, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the reason why John required Gundissalinus in Toledo was the latter's familiarity with the translating activity. If the archbishop wanted a collaborator to the biphasic translation of Avicenna, as requested by Ibn Daud, the most economic hypothesis is that John called Gundissalinus for the latter had already participated, to some extent, to Arabic-into-Latin translations while both were in Segovia.

This supposition, though, encounters many difficulties, and especially there are no attestations of a translating activity besides the data herein analyzed, and, at least at present, this makes it extremely hard to produce an overall, document-based hypothesis. At the same time, the possibility of a translating activity in Segovia, in which Gundissalinus could have collaborated before going to Toledo, is a fascinating research hypothesis that must be corroborated (or rejected) by a renewed analysis of the Segovian documental sources, and the manuscript tradition of Gundissalinus's translations.

Another problematic question arises from the consideration of Gundissalinus's arrival in Segovia. Presumably, Gundissalinus was still in France before that date, possibly in Chartres. 1148 is the date on which the Council of Reims was held. At that council, the trial for heresy against Gilbert of Poitiers took place, as well as a harsh controversy between William of Conches and William of Saint-Thierry, as pointed out by Paul Dutton.<sup>30</sup> Two of the most important Chartrean masters, Gilbert and William, were on trial, while the very same Chartrean speculative liberty appeared to be at stake. For this reason, wide participation by Chartrean scholars and masters in Reims should be correctly supposed.<sup>31</sup> The importance of the council is further corroborated by the attitude the Holy See had toward the celebration of the council. Rome, indeed, urged the European dioceses to strengthen their participation at the council, and eventually "in hac synodo, archiepiscopi, episcopi, et abbates, usque ad mille centum resedissee dicuntur."<sup>32</sup>

The urgency to have a wide participation at the Council of Reims is further attested by a letter the pope sent to Alfonso VII, king of Castile, asking him to encourage the Iberian clergy to vastly participate in the meeting.<sup>33</sup> The effects of this request are testified by the accounts of the council, which saw

30 Dutton, *The Mystery of the Missing Heresy Trial of William of Conches*.

31 See Polloni, *Glimpses of the Invisible*, forthcoming.

32 Labbé – Cossart, *Sacrosancta Concilia ad regiam editionem exacta*, vol. XII, p. 1662, B.

33 "Illos autem episcopos en sola ex Gallia eo profectos arbitrare. Nam et Hispanos interfuisset intelligimus ex eiusdem Pontificis epistolis ad Alfonso Hispaniae regem, et Bernardus Tarraconensem, superius descriptis." See Labbé – Cossart, *Sacrosancta Concilia*, p. 1662.

the presence of many representatives of the Iberian Church, among which were bishops and archbishops.<sup>34</sup>

Probably—as one should expect from his election to bishop of Segovia, the year after—John of Castelmoron also participated. Unfortunately, this fascinating figure is surrounded by an almost complete lack of documental sources. As it has been mentioned before, John became bishop of Segovia in 1149—his oath is preserved in the Toledan capitulary archive—but before that date, and until his election as archbishop, all data about him is a matter of speculation.<sup>35</sup> He later became archbishop of Toledo under the name John II, and was supposedly the main sponsor of the first translations realized by Gundissalinus and Ibn Daud.<sup>36</sup> For the outstanding career he would have, it is very plausible to suppose that John participated in the Council of Reims, together with many other clergymen from the Iberian Peninsula.

If this were true, in 1148 we can situate in Reims, with a certain degree of probability, both John of Castelmoron and the Chartrean masters with their pupils, among whom, possibly, even Gundissalinus, who went to Segovia that very same year. Would it be possible to suppose a causal link between these two events? There are no certainties about this eventuality, but the coincidence between the dates is fascinating.

34 “Episcopos Hispaniarum Concilio Remensi interfuisse, docet Sandovalius in Alphonso VII aitque hunc Hispaniarum Imperatorem Concilium Palentinum cum Episcopis et Proceribus suis celebrasse era MCLXXXVI anno scilicet Christi praesenti, et imprimis lectum fuisse Eugenii III Papae Edictum: quo praecipiebatur, ut se se in Gallias ad celebrandum Concilium Generale Remis, indictum, et examinandas ibidem quatuor theses exoticas Gilberti Porretani Episcopi, conferrent, prolato ed iis iudicio, ut vel per se ipso, vel interventum gravium et doctorum hominum illud postea Remis operirent. Adhaec in Epistula LXXIV ad Alphonsum Hispaniarum Regem scripta, sub datum in territorio Lingonensi V. Kal. Maii, se die XXVII mensis Aprilis, ait Eugenius: *Quia Episcopos et Abbates regni tui ad vocationem nostram, tamquam devotus et humilis filius, Remensi interesse Concilio voluisti; benevolentiae tuae gratias exhibentes, precum tuarum consideratione devicti, eos qui venerunt a suspensionis sententia relaxamus. Quare plures Hispaniarum Episcopi et Abbates ad Concilium Remense venerunt. De praesentia Episcoporum Hispaniae in Concilio Remensi legendum Baronius num. xxxi.*” See Labbé – Cossart, *Sacrosancta Concilia*, p. 1674.

35 John’s oath is the following: “Ego Iohannes, sancte secobiensis aecclesie nunc ordinandus episcopus, subiectionem et reverentiam et obedientiam a sanctis patribus constitutam secundum constituta canonum aecclesie toletane rectoribusque eius in presentia domni Raimundi, toletani archiepiscopi, perpetuo me exhibiturum promitto et super sanctum altare propria manu firmo.” See Rivera, *La Iglesia de Toledo en el siglo XII*, p. 280, n. 75.

36 The scarce information in our possess has been collected by Rivera, *Los arzobispos de Toledo en la baja Edad Media*, pp. 21–26.

All the same, even admitting a first meeting of John and Gundissalinus in Reims, this hypothesis does not explain by itself the reasons why Gundissalinus went to Segovia and became archdeacon of Cuéllar. What interests could Gundissalinus have had in that town? One explanation could be the supposition of a preliminary translating activity already in place in Segovia, from where Robert of Chester recently moved away. It is not unreasonable to suppose that Gundissalinus could have been willing to participate in this Segovian translation activities, aiming at finding new philosophical texts, in a similar fashion to Gerard's transfer to Toledo with the purpose of translating Ptolemy's *Almagest*.

The translations that took place in Southern Italy and the Iberian Peninsula during the 12th century are a perspicuous example of the cross-cultural exchanges of knowledge that characterized the Late Middle Ages. It is not a casualty that the translations were realized in these two geographical regions: the series of conquests and invasions of those areas is structurally accompanied by a various and progressive interchange of customs and cultures, skills and knowledge, books and traditions.

The Italian and Castilian translation movements were linked together by many implicit factors, beginning with their common effort to update the Western Latin scientific and philosophical debate appealing to the knowledge of "the Greeks" and "the Arabs." While in Southern Italy the translation movement began at the end of the 11th century, Toledo arose as the most important translating center only in the second half of the 12th century, and only for a few decades. With the figure of Michael Scot, who left Toledo for Palermo, the two capitals of this process were finally joined: the 13th century would see a dissemination of translators and translations throughout Europe, and Toledo will be but one of the centers where they were realized.

From this perspective, it should be underlined that the 12th century Toledan translation movement has been an extremely peculiar phenomenon for the number of translations realized and the concentration of translators in one place. Its relative exceptionality was caused by many factors, both social and cultural, that made possible the establishment of a well-organized system of translations and at least two working teams. At the same time, assuming the rise of the Toledan movement as a mechanist maturation of its inner conditions would be an imprudent error. Those conditions, indeed, were shared other places, and their roots are grounded on many minor translating efforts of the first half of the 12th century, as it possibly was the case for Segovia.

Gundissalinus's last attestation in the Toledan chapter is dated 1178, but the philosopher stayed in town at least until 1181, as it is documented by a certificate of sale of land owned by him.<sup>37</sup> After 1181, Gundissalinus probably moved back to Segovia, where he is attested in 1190 by the capitulary archives of Segovia and Burgos.<sup>38</sup> This is the last source witnessing Gundissalinus alive: since 1194 Cuéllar has a new archdeacon, John, whose existence is witnessed by a letter and further attested by the Toledan capitulary archive in 1198.<sup>39</sup>

Dominicus Gundissalinus is an exemplar case of the web of geographical and cultural connections upon which the Toledan movement was based. He appears to have studied in France, spent thirteen years in Segovia, and then became one of the most eminent figures of the translation movement. Very similar considerations apply to Gerard of Cremona, and to Ibn Daud and Michael Scot as well. All these translators, as well as their probable patrons such as John of Castelmoron, were the main protagonists of a dynamic event whose consequences would crucially change European culture from the thirteenth century onwards.

Examination of the available data on Gundissalinus's activity and biography, though, displays how many obscure points still stand concerning the details of the rising and development of the translating activity in Toledo. Beside opening new possible lines of research, the formulation of secondary hypothesis, as those exposed in this paper, makes clear the unfortunate lack of data and knowledge on the events which led to the crucial phenomenon of the Toledan translation movement.

37 See Hernández, *Los cartularios de Toledo. Catálogo documental*, p. 185, n. 185; and Alonso Alonso, "Notas sobre los traductores toledanos Domingo Gundisalvo y Juan Hispano"; and González Palencia, *Los mozárabes de Toledo en los siglos XII y XIII*.

38 See Villar García, *Documentación medieval de la Catedral de Segovia (1115-1300)*, n. 81, p. 135; Mansilla, "La documentación pontificia del archivo de la catedral de Burgos," pp. 141-162 and 427-438; and Mansilla, *Catálogo documental del archivo catedral de Burgos (804-1416)*, n. 40, p. 279.

39 See Rivera Recio, "Nuevos datos sobre los traductores Gundisalvo y Juan Hispano"; and Hernández, *Los cartularios de Toledo*, p. 242, n. 263: "Ego J(ohannes) Toletane ecclesie decanus Colarensis archidiaconus testis". The new archdeacon of Cuéllar has been identified with Gundissalinus's collaborator, John of Spain, by Charles Burnett and Francisco Rivera. See Ch. Burnett, "Magister Iohannes Hispanus: Towards the Identity of a Toledan Translator"; Ch. Burnett, "John of Seville and John of Spain: a mise au point"; and Rivera Recio, "Nuevos datos sobre los traductores Gundisalvo y Juan Hispano."

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