

QUEEN ORABLE OF ORANGE

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According to the chansons of geste of the wilhelmingian cycle, the second wife of Saint William “the Great” ≈ Wilhelmvs “Magnvs” ≈ Guillem “el Gran” ≈ Guilhelm “el Grand” ≈ Guillaume “le Grand” ≈ Wilhelm “der Grosse” ≈ Wilchelm, Anax of Catalania /0755-0822/, Apostle of God ≈ Isaac ≈ יִשָּׂק ≈ Jišaq II, Patriarch of the Holy Grail /0793-0817/ ≈ Wilchelm I, Rex of Catalania /0793-0817/, Dux of Helvetia /0793-0808/, Dux of Septimania /0780-0817/, Dux of Aquitaine /0781-0817/, Dux of Spain /0801-0817/, Archon of Toulouse /0790-0817/, Archon of Lodeve /0873-0817/, Archon of Narbonne /0793-0817/, Archon of Carcassone /0778-0795/, Archon of Razes /0778-0795/, Archon of Nimes /0793-0817/, Archon of Orange /0793-0817/, Archon of Ribagorce /0806-0817/, Archon of Pallars /0806-0817/, was the Saracen princess *Orable*, who took the name *Guiburc* when she was baptized in order to marry Saint William. She was daughter to the Saracen monarch *Abderhaman, Rex of Cordova* (lat. provenç. *Deramed, Rei of Cordua* ≈ lat. frank. *Deramé, Roi of Cordoue*)¹, that is to say, Lord Abu’l Modhaffer Abu Suleiman Abd er-Rahman ibn Mu`waia, Anax of Ismaelia-Omaja /...-0788/ ≈ Abd er-Rahman I, Caliph of Cordova /0756-0788/.

According to the legends, Lady Orable was sister-german to the Saracen prince *Rainouart*, who was born in Cordova, also son to Lord Abd er-Rahman I, Caliph of Cordova /0756-0788/. Lord Rainouart ≈ Raginchard was baptized in order to marry the Frankish princess *Aélis*, supposedly daughter to Lord Louis “the Pius” of France ≈ Louis “le Débonaire” of France ≈ Ludwig “dem Frommen” ≈ Chlotwig, Anax of Gautia-Sicambria-France-Cologne /0778-0840/ ≈ Chlotwig IV, Rex of France /0814-0840/ ≈ Chlotwig I, Rex of Aquitaine /0781-0814/, Emperor of the West /0816-0840/, and to the Catalan princess *Blanchefleur* (sister-german to Saint William). At first glance, this seems to be nonsense, as Lord Louis “the Pius” did not marry any sister-german to Saint William, but the princess *Blanchefleur* could be Lady Judith ≈ יהודית ≈ Jehudit, Anakes of Catalania-Altdorf /0805-0843/, who was a *dynastic sister* to Saint William. Nevertheless, we know of only one daughter to Lord Ludwig “the Pius” and Lady Judith: Lady Gisèle ≈ Gisla, Anakes of Gautia-Sicambria-France-Cologne /0820-0874/, wife to Lord Everard ≈ Eberhart ≈ Eberchard, Anax of Catalania-Artois-Therouane-Ostrevant-Amiens /0800-0866/ ≈ Eberchard I, Dux of Friulia /0846-0866/. Lord Rainouart is the hero of *Moniage Rainouart*, written at the close of the 12th century or the beginning of the 13th century, who is also mentioned frequently in other chansons of geste. According to *Moniage Rainouart*, he conquered (sic) *Aljeste (Algiers)*, and later became a monk at the abbey of Saint Julian, in Briude (Auvergne), now Brioude (Haute-Loire), where he died.

The chansons of geste also mention a nephew to Lady Orable: the Saracen prince *Guischard*, born in the Caliphate of Cordova, who “abjured God” when he was dying in battle².

Lady Orable’s first husband was the Saracen prince *Theudbald, Rex of Orange* (lat. provenç. *Tidbald, Rei d’Aurenja* ≈ lat. frank. *Tiébaud, Roi d’Orange*), who had captured her before marrying her. According to the legends, Lady *Orable*, who fell in love with Saint William at first sight, betrayed her family and Faith to deliver Orange (lat. *Aravsio* → lat. provenç. *Aurenja* → lat. frank. *Orange*) to the Christians. This is the most solid tradition. Nonetheless, according to *La Prise d’Orange*, Lady Orable was blond (“Orable au cler vis”), and this could point to Frankish or Gothic blood, although it proves nothing, since it could easily be a mere rhetorical convention of the poem, and, besides, although rare, it is possible that she have been an Arab and blond, particularly as her mother’s origin is unknown. However, the mention of her capture by Lord Tidbald suggests more emphatically that Lady Orable may have been a Christian who was seized during one of the Muslim leader’s military expeditions, and thereafter forced to worship under the Islamic rite throughout her marital bondage.

¹ The Romance title derived from the Latin noun *Rex* “royal sovereign” is usually translated “King” in English. However, *King* is *Kuningaz* “issue of the Royal Kin”, characteristically called “Prince of the Blood Royal” in modern times, but strictly *applicable only to all agnate members of the primeval Royal Kin*, a dignity never transmissible through a female. Thus, legal “princes” of a “royal family”, even the firstborn and heir to a legally legitimate *Rex*, are not *Kings*, nor is any *Rex* a *King*, unless they be members of the *primeval Royal Kin*. For this reason, *King* is not used here to translate Latin *Rex* (French *Roi*, Provençal *Rei*, Catalan *Rei*, Portuguese *Rei*, Spanish *Rex*, Italian *Re*). Also for linguistic reasons, the medieval title *Count* “sovereign prince (usually a Duke’s vassal)” is rendered *Archon*.

² In tune with the idiosyncrasy of *La Chançon of Williame*, we should not interpret that he actually denied *God*, but *Christian Faith* (reverting to Islam).

Historically, when Saint William abdicated to become a monk³, his second wife, Lady Widburg, became a nun at the Monastery of Châlons, where she was assassinated in /0834/.

The etymology of the name *Orable* is unknown to me. Some authors have denied its Arabic origin, pretending that it be derived from the Latin adjective *ORABILIS* “prayable”, meaning “lovable” or “benevolent”. Although it could be a Latin epithet adopted by the chansons of geste, the original Arabic name having been totally forgotten, it could also be a typically corrupted Romanization of a personal woman’s name in Arabic, such as *’Ablah*, which means “perfectly formed”, or another unknown to me⁴. To the best of my knowledge, this matter has not been analysed by any Arabic linguist.

Interestingly, the Arabic names of Lady Orable’s brother-german and nephew are not mentioned in the chansons of geste, but it is feasible that they were forgotten by the 10th century. What seems inadmissible, however, is that Lady Orable’s first husband —a *Saracen governor of Orange* who was not baptized— be always given the name *Tidbald*, a gautic anthroponym.

Is it possible, then, that Lady Orable’s *Saracenity* be a mere fantasy, or did the authors of the chansons of geste Romanize the onomastics absolutely, using only baptismal names, and actually inventing a new one for the husband who was never baptized? Conspicuously, Lord Sadun al-Ruajni, Wali of Barcelona /0796-0801/, was captured by the Franks when he tried to flee his domains to seek help in Cordova, and his successor, Lord Harun, last Wali of Barcelona /0801-0803/, had “Gothic” relatives who delivered him to Saint William. This historic process, so similar to the one narrated in *La Prise d’Orange*, manifests that Lady Orable’s first husband might have been the last Wali of Barcelona, instead of the last Wali of Orange. Furthermore, the chronology corroborates this deduction, for the marriage of Lady Orable Widburg to Saint William could not precede /0802/ by many years, since their eldest child was born between /0802/ and /0805/, and, thus, their wedding in /0803/ or /0804/, followed by the birth of the eldest child in /0804/ or /0805/, are perfectly within the euchronic timeframe, while a wedding immediately after the conquest of Orange in /0793/ would seem to be rather early, though not impossible. Moreover, if Lord Harun, had “Gothic” relatives because he was a Visigoth himself, he would have had a visigothic name, and, if he was, in fact, Lady Orable’s first husband, his name could have well been *Theodbald* ≈ *Tièbaut* ≈ *Tidbald* ≈ *Theudbald*.

Perhaps Lady Widburg was a Christian princess, captured by the Wali of Barcelona, forced to observe Muslim practices at the court of her Saracen husband, and subsequently restored to Christianity. In such case, the Wali of Barcelona might have been a son to Lord Abd er-Rhaman I, Caliph of Cordova. On the other hand, if Lady Orable Guiburg and Lord Rainuort were Lord Abd er-Rhaman’s children, Lady Orable’s first husband may well have been a noble Visigoth named *Theodbald*, who converted to Islam under the name of *Harun*. In either case, the evidence points favourably to Lord Harun, Wali of Barcelona /0801-0803/, as first husband to Lady Orable Widburg.

Various cybernetic publications make Lady Widburg daughter to *Count Lambert of Hornbach*, a grandson to *Saint Lievin of Treves*, whose genealogy is historical, although I have not been able to verify the existence of the purported *County of Hornbach*. Lord Lambert ≈ Landebert ≈ Landberht, Anax of Catalonia, was son to Lord Guy ≈ Guid ≈ Widon ≈ Witto ≈ Wido, Anax of Catalonia /0685-0722/, Abbot of Fontenelles /0704-0722/, and to Lady Rolande ≈ Hrotland ≈ Chlotland, Princess of Therouane-Hesbaye-Laon /0685-0704’/; paternal grandson to Saint Lievin ≈ Leutwin ≈ Liutwin, Anax of Catalonia /...-0722/, Arch-Bishop of Treves /0695-0713/, and to Lady Wiligarde ≈ Wilward, Princess of Therouane-Hesbaye, who were married in /0689/; maternal grandson to Lord Ervée ≈ Harivée ≈ Hariwig ≈ Cherwig, Prince of Therouane-Hesbaye /0660-0715’/ ≈ Cherwig I, Archon of Laon /...-0715’/. However, it is of no consequence to our subject whether the county of Hornbach existed or is a fabulous fabrication: the truth is that Lady Orable Widburg’s pretended filiation is false. Perhaps the said cybernetic pedigrees derive such a ludicrous filiation from three basic errors:

- 1st To imagine that Lady Orable Widburg was the mother of Lord Herbert ≈ Haribert ≈ Cherberht, Anax of Catalonia /0783-0834/ ≈ Nathan ≈ נתן ≈ Natan, Patriarch of the Holy Grail /0820-0834/ ≈ Cherberht I, Rex of Catalonia /0820-0834/, Archon of Vivarius. Lord Herbert Nathan was son to Saint William «the Great», and his first wife, Lady Cunegonde ≈ Chunigund ≈ Chunegund Balthing, Anakess of Gautia-Rasès /0760-0835/ ≈ Chunegund I, Archontess of Rasès /0769-0795/, Archontess of Carcassonne /0769-0795/, who died on 15 June /0835/.

³ Probably in /0817/, although 28 May /0812/ is usually given as the date of Saint William’s death. However, it seems that he did not abdicate until /0817/, in order to retire to Gellone, where he would have died on 28 May /0822/. The year DCCCXXII, that is, /0822/, might have been copied DCCCXVII, that is, /0817/, in an early manuscript that subsisted as reference for posterity.

⁴ Perhaps an assimilation of the gentile name of *Aurenja* to the personal name *’Ablah* (*l’auranjana Abla* → *aur’AbLa*).

- 2nd To imagine that Lady Waldrade \approx Waltrat \approx Waldrad Balthing, Anakes of Gautia-Rasès /...-0824/, who died after 15 February /0824/, was a sister-german of Lady Orable Widburg. Lady Waldrad was the wife of Lord Hadrian \approx Hadrianvs Udalrichinger, Anax of Longbardia-Vintzgau /0760-0824/, Archon of Orléans /...-0824/, and their son, Lord Eudes d'Orléans \approx Odo \approx Otto \approx Vuodo Avrelianensis \approx Aud, Anax of Longbardia-Vintzgau /0798-0834/ \approx Aud I, Archon of Orléans /0824-0834/, is well attested as *consobrinvs* of Lord Herbert Nathan. As the reason for this relationship was that their respective mothers were sisters-german, to mistakenly assume that Lady Orable Widburg was Lord Herbert Nathan's mother, misrepresents her as sister-german to Lady Waldrad. Actually, Lady Waldrad would have been sister-german to Lady Cunegonde, and would have no known consanguinity with Lady Orable.
- 3rd To imagine that Lady Waldrad, and, thus her wrongfully presumed sister-german Lady Orable Widburg, were daughters to Lord Lambert \approx Landebert \approx Landberht, Anax of Catalonia /...-0783/. This error is truly incomprehensible, and seems a product of the most brazen caprice (no possible reason for this confusion is known to me).

Although her filiation has not been confirmed beyond doubt, all the evidence that we have continues to favour Lady Orable's Saracenicity. To deny that she was an Arab princess, trustworthy documentation must be furnished. Perhaps an Arabic expert with access to documents from the Caliphate of Cordova may clarify these obscure matters of History.