

THE CONSTABULUS MANUSCRIPT IN DURHAM CATHEDRAL LIBRARY: A FORGOTTEN TREASURE?

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Many translators worked in 12th century Spain, but one of the most famous appeared to use two names, which led to endless arguments still raging 900 years later. He translated from Arabic into Latin without an intermediary, a rarity in his time. He began translating under a different name, which he changed later in his career to Johannes Hispalensis.¹ Copies of his work still exist and are well catalogued.² However, in Durham there lies an unknown copy of one of his translations, which helps to answer some of the mysteries surrounding him.

Durham Cathedral Priory was founded in 1083 and its oldest catalogue is the *Vetus Catalogus Librorum*,³ which records gifts donated to the Priory prior to 1160.⁴ In 1727, the librarian, Thomas Rud, finished another catalogue, which was not published until 1825.⁵ An addition to Rud's Catalogue was published in 1838.⁶

In his Catalogue, Rud described the books and quoted from the first few lines of every item or copy of manuscript contained in each, with page references and cross-referencing to other mentions of the same manuscripts if these existed. As a result of his mammoth task the unknown copy of the manuscript eventually came to light.⁷

The manuscript in question is a Latin translation of the *De differentia spiritus et animae*. Wilcox, who studied the transmission and influence of Quṣṭa ibn Lūqā's work, tells us that Costa ben Luca

¹ John of Seville.

² Robinson, *Johannes Hispalensis and the Manuscript Tradition*, 118-269.

³ M. S. B. IV. 24.

⁴ Piper, "The Libraries of the Monks of Durham", 213.

⁵ *Codicum manuscriptorum: Ecclesiae Cathedralis Dunelmensis Catalogus Classicus*.

⁶ Surtees Soc., *Catalogi Veteres Librorum*, i, ii, iii, 33, 110.

⁷ See Robinson, *Johannes Hispalensis and the Manuscript Tradition*, 51.

(Quṣṭā ibn Lūqā) wrote the medical-philosophical tract around 870 A.D because he wanted to bring together the most important ideas of the ancient Greek philosophers and the physician Galen on the soul and the spirit.⁸ Johannes Hispalensis and Hermann of Carinthia both translated the work into Latin but Johannes Hispalensis's Latin version became better known than Costa Ben Luca's original Arabic version. Only about six copies survive of the other, shorter version by Hermann of Carinthia. After Hispalensis's translation into Latin c. 1130,⁹ the work became well known to Western thinkers, who classified it in, or copied it among, medical, philosophical, 'medical-philosophical', and theological works.¹⁰

In Rud's descriptions a mention is made to the manuscript where another copy of the *De differentia spiritus et animae* is held. The manuscript, B. IV. 20, which appears to have a predominantly ecclesiastical theme, is dated by experts as having been written, or rather, copied out in the late twelfth/early thirteenth century.¹¹ Whilst cataloguing the books, Rud found an intriguing copy of the *De differentia spiritus et animae* and was confused by the inclusion of this translation in the book. As a consequence he wrote the following:¹²

*Constabulus on the difference*¹³ *of the spirit and the soul*

*This is said in the beginning, "In the name of God and his help, (here) begins the book on the difference of the Spirit and the Soul which Constabulus Luce published for his friend, the secretary*¹⁴ *of a certain king: and which Johannes Hispaniensis translated out of Arabic into Latin for Raymond Collectarius the Archbishop".*

*Everything here is obscure to me: "who this author is, who his friend is, who are Johannes Hispaniensis, and Raymond the Archbishop; and where that Archbishopric Collectarius is; nor did I discover anything about those matters. Nor is it any more clear whether Constabulus is the name of a man or of an office."*¹⁵ *Likewise whether*

⁸ Wilcox, *The transmission and influence*, 1.

⁹ See Robinson, *Johannes Hispalensis and the Manuscript Tradition*, 80 where the translation is dated 1120-1121 as the result of research.

¹⁰ Wilcox, *The transmission and influence*, 91, 112 and 113.

¹¹ Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A list of surviving books*, p. 68.

¹² *Codicum manuscriptorum*, 198.

¹³ More correctly – differentiation.

¹⁴ Writer – here translated as secretary.

¹⁵ i.e. post/job.

*Luce is to be understood as relating to the author's friend, who is called Lucas; or whether it is to be understood as relating to some city, whose secretary this Constabulus was, or whether he was a Constabularius.*¹⁶

This alone I discover in Gesner: "Constabenluce, or Constabulus, is mentioned in the summary of Albertus Magnus; likewise, in the book of Minerals, there is mentioned Constabenluce, Book on Natural Ligatures. Is it the case that Constabulus Luce through the error of a scribe is entered instead of Constabenluce? Or on the contrary that Constabenluce is entered mistakenly for Constabulus Luce?

However, he was an Arabic writer (if there is any faith to be had in this heading): although Constabulus is a Latin word.

Spanhemius in his Sacred Geography, praises a coin on which Tarraco, a colony of the Romans in Spain, is called the Conqueror of the Collectanei: which name does not differ much from Collectarei. But I find no mention of these people either among the Geographers, or among the Antiquarians. Those who have the opportunity (which I do not have now) may consult the list of old Bishoprics and the Spanish Library of Nicholas Antonius.

The treatise begins thus, "Interrogasti me (honoret te Deus) de Differentia inter Spiritum et Animam".

*The writing is the same as the preceding treatise to which it is immediately appended. It has only two folia. There occurs twice afterwards, a treatise with the same name without the name of the author.*¹⁷

¹⁶ Some kind of office?

¹⁷ *Constabulus de Differentia Spiritus et Anime*

Ita vocatur in initio: "In nomine Domini et ejus auxilij, incipit Liber Differentie Spiritus et Anime quem Constabulus Luce amico suo, scriptori cujusdam Regis edidit: et Johannes Hispaniensis ex Arabico in Latinum Remundo Collectario Archiepiscopo transtulit." Omnia hic mihi obscura sunt: "Quis hic Auctor fuerit; quis Amicus ejus: quinam Johannes Hispaniensis, et Remundus Archiepiscopus; et ubi Archiepiscopatus ille Collectarius: nec de iis quicquam invenio." Nec magis clarum utrum Constabulus hominis nomen sit an Officij: item utrum Luce intelligendum sit de auctoris Amico, qui Lucas appellatus sit: an de Urbe aliquâ, cujus Scriptor hic Constabulus, sive Constabularius fuerit. Hoc solum invenio apud Gesnerum: "Constabenluce, sive, Constabulus, citatur in summa Alberti Magni: item, in libro de Mineralibus, citatur Constabenluce liber de Physicis ligaturis." Num Constabulus Luce errore Scribae positum est pro Constabenluce? Vel contra, Constabenluce pro Constabulus Luce? Fuit autem (si titulo habenda est fides) Scriptor Arabicus; licet Constabulus vox Latina videatur. Spanhemius, in Geographiâ sacrâ, laudat nummum in quo Tarraco, Romanorum in Hispania Colonia, vocatur Collectaneorum victrix: quod nomen a Collectareis non multum discrepat. Sed hujus populi mentionem nec apud Geographos, nec apud Antiquarios invenio. Consu-

Rud obviously could not understand the rendering of the translator's name, Hispaniensis, nor could he place "Constabulus Luce". On following up his reference to Nicolás Antonius's book, the *Bibliotheca Hispanica* revealed a list of medieval Spanish authors. Although there was a reference to Ioannes Hispalensis and a list of works translated by him there was no mention of 'Iohannes Hispaniensis'.¹⁸ The *Bibliotheca Hispana Vetus* was written in 1684, but Rud did not have a copy of it to hand when he was cataloguing the manuscripts in Durham and therefore could not check for reference to the name 'Hispaniensis'. Rud was also confused by "Constabulus Luce" and suggested that perhaps it was a scribe's error for Constaben Luce. Furthermore, the reference in B. IV. 20 to "Remundo Collectario" completely bewildered him. He referred the reader to a connection to a coin from Tarraco, a Roman colony in Spain, because a name appearing on it is similar to "Collectario".

The solution would appear to revolve around Johannes Hispalensis. He worked predominantly on translations of Arabic mathematical treatises around the second quarter of the century but early in his career he translated three medical tracts, whilst working from Limia.¹⁹ The *De differentia spiritus et animae* is one of these. Over the years his true identity has provoked a number of arguments and discussions amongst scholars and academics.²⁰ Part of the mystery that surrounds him stems from a confusion of the correct rendering of his name. He has been identified with the surnames Hispaniensis, Hispanensis and Hispalensis atque Limiensis.²¹ Apart from discussions over his identity, even more arguments rage over his

lant, quibus copia est, (quae mihi nunc non suppetit) Veterum Episcopatum Notitiam, et Nicholai Antonij Bibliothecam Hispanicam. Tractatus sic incipit: "Interrogasti me (honoret te Deus) de Differentia inter Spiritum et Animam" – Scriptura eadem est cum praecedente tractatu, cui immediate subjungitur. Habet tantum 2 folia. Occurrit bis postea, tractatus eodem titulo, sine Auctoris nomine, C. III. Cod. 17. Tract. 12 et C.IV. Cod. 18. Tract. 7. My thanks go to Prof. David Braund, Classics Department, Exeter University, for help in translating the above.

¹⁸ Antonius, *Bibliotheca Hispana Vetus*, 370.

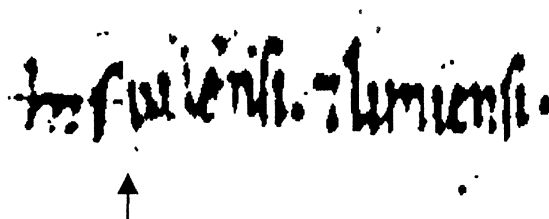
¹⁹ Robinson, "The History and Myths Surrounding Johannes Hispalensis", 85-87.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 443-470.

²¹ Thorndike, "John of Seville", 22; D'Alverny, "Translations and Translators", 445; Vernet, *La Cultura Hispanoárabe en Oriente y Occidente*, 115. See also Robinson, *Johannes Hispalensis and the Manuscript Tradition*, in particular the conclusion, 105-112.

translations. Alonso Alonso feels that the *De differentia spiritus et animae* was translated by a Johannes Hispanus who worked with Dominicus Gundissalinus²² whereas others disagree.²³

The earliest copy in existence of the *De differentia spiritus et animae* is held in Edinburgh.²⁴ Its provenance declares that it was originally donated to Durham Cathedral by Master Herbert the Doctor. The copy has no incipit, but the author is identified at the end of the translation as *Johannes Hispalensis atque Limiensi*. The name of the translator is written on two lines, the first three letters being at the end of the penultimate line, and the remainder at the beginning of the last line. Joined together they provide the name “hispalensi” (Reproduced below). After the name, the word ‘et’ or ‘atque’ has been abbreviated to ‘7’, and is followed by the word ‘limiensi’.



Note: the downward stroke of the letter ‘p’ is missing here but is clearly visible in the original²⁵.

The Edinburgh manuscript has some variants that are unique, or in some cases, carried by only a few other manuscripts of a later date. However, most of the extant manuscripts of the *De differentia spiritus et animae* conform more closely to another manuscript of about the same date, held in Brussels Royal Library. The original version of the *De differentia spiritus et animae*, of which the Edinburgh version is a

²² Dominicus Gundisalvi; Domingo Gundisalvo; Dominicus Gundisalvus; Dominicus Gondisalvi; Domingo González. Alonso Alonso, “Traducciones del Árabe al Latín por Juan Hispano (Ibn Dawud)”, 129-151.

²³ Wilcox, *The transmission and influence*, 118; Burnett, “Magister Iohannes Hispalensis et Limiensis”, 221-267; Robinson, *Johannes Hispalensis and the Manuscript Tradition*, 80.

²⁴ National Library of Scotland, Adv. 18.6.11.

²⁵ All signatures reproduced here with the kind permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland.

copy, was subjected to a minor revision at a very early date, and this revision remained the standard in the manuscript tradition. Some copies of this later version give the translator's name solely as Johannes Hispalensis, or a variation of this name, and bear an incipit addressed to Raymond.²⁶ The latter became archbishop of Toledo in 1125 and died in 1152.²⁷

Wilcox edited a text based on the versions in Edinburgh and Avranches. The manuscript at Avranches has the addition of "in dei nomine et eius auxilio", which corresponds very nearly to the wording in the first line of the Constabulus version in Durham. The incipit of the manuscript in Brussels reads:

*Incipit liber differentie inter animam et spiritum quem Consta ben Luce cuidam amico suo scriptori cuiusdam regis edidit et Iohannes Hispalensis ex Arabico in Latinum Raimundo Toletano archiepiscopo transtulit.*²⁸

Other manuscripts bear slightly differently worded dedications to Raymond. The manuscript edited by Barach has this quotation as the opening words:²⁹

De differentia animae et spiritus liber quem filius Lucae medici, nomine costa-ben-lucæ, cuidam amico suo, scriptori cujusdam regis, edidit, Iohannes Hispalensis ex arabico in Latinum Raimundo Toletano Archiepiscopo transtulit.

Charles Burnett found another version of this translation.³⁰ It begins:

*Incipit liber differentie inter animam et spiritum. Constabe Luce cuidam amico suo scriptori cuiusdam regis eddit (sic) et Ioh(anne)s isplñsis (sic) episcopus ex Arabico in Latinum Raimundo Toletano archiepiscopo transtulit.*³¹

²⁶ Wilcox, *The transmission and influence*, 120 and 125.

²⁷ González Palencia, *El Arzobispo don Raimundo de Toledo*, 48, 52, 53, 79.

²⁸ Wilcox, *The transmission and influence*, 136 and 225.

²⁹ Barach, ed., "Excerpta e libro alfredi anglici", 120.

³⁰ Burnett, "Magister Iohannes Hispalensis et Limiensis", 234.

³¹ Note – this version appears to have the addition of the word bishop (episcopus). See Robinson, *Johannes Hispalensis and the Manuscript Tradition*, 88 for an explanation of the inclusion of the word.

We are now in a position to see a possible explanation for the words that so confused Rud. The incipit in the Constabulus version is repeated below with the Brussels version printed beside it.

Constabulus version

In nomine Domini et ejus auxiliij,
Incipit Liber Differentie Spiritus
et Anime quem Constabulus
Luce amico suo, scriptori
cujusdam Regis edidit, et
Johannes Hispaniensis ex
Arabico in Latinum Remundo
Collectario Archiepiscopo
transtulit.

Brussels version

Incipit liber differentie inter animam
et spiritum quem Consta ben
Luce cuidam amico suo scriptori
cuiusdam regis edidit et
Iohannes Hispalensis ex
Arabico in Latinum Raimundo
Toletano archiepiscopo
transtulit.

An explanation concerning the place-name 'Collectario' emerges from this comparison. Rud's suggestions, c.1720, included an unknown archbishopric called 'Collectarius' and a vanquished race of people called the 'Collectanei' named on a Roman coin. However, we can now see that the unknown town was, in fact, Toledo where Raymond was Archbishop until his death in 1152. The confusion in the place-name could perhaps be explained as originating from a scribe's error.

The name of the translator, Johannes Hispaniensis, would also appear to be a copying error. Johannes Hispalensis atque Limiensis³² is the earliest recorded version of the translator's name in this translation of Costa ben Luca's work and when the later revision surfaced addressed to Raymond, the 'et limiensis' had been omitted. Perhaps as the Edinburgh manuscript is the earliest extant copy, it is safe to assume that very little change would have taken place from the original rendering of the surname. Therefore the Constabulus version in Durham Cathedral must also be a scribe's error and we should read 'Hispalensis' for 'Hispaniensis'.

The final word needing clarification is 'Constabulus', which also appears unusual at first sight. However, Wilcox tells us that rubrics attached to the beginning, or colophons at the end, of some of the oldest copies of this translation and many of the later ones, name the author as Costa ben Luca or, frequently, 'Constabulus' and its translator

³² John of Seville and Limia.

as Johannes Hispalensis.³³ It would appear therefore that the use of the word ‘Constabulus’, instead of Costa ben Luca, has occurred elsewhere and is not unique to the Durham copy of the manuscript.

Wilcox tells us that the *De differentia spiritus et animae* was included in the *Aristoteles Latinus* and that those manuscripts mentioned within its contents account for most of the extant manuscripts of the *De differentia spiritus et animae*.³⁴ A search through the *Aristoteles Latinus*³⁵ reveals no mention of the Constabulus copy discovered in Durham, although a great deal of copies of Costa ben Luca’s work are listed throughout the three volumes.³⁶

There would appear to be two copies of the *De differentia spiritus et animae* in Italy which bear the word Constabulus or something similar. In the section referring to the National Library, Naples, is the following:

*Item 24: De differentia, tra. Hispalensis ff. 172v-175r (in Dei nomine et eius auxilio incipit differentia inter animam et spiritum quem Constabulus Luce cuidam amico scriptori cuiusdam regis edidit et Johannes Hispalensis ex arabico in Latinum Raimundo Toletano archiepiscopo transtulit).*³⁷

Although the copy in Naples has the word “Constabulus”, it does not contain the other variations found in the Durham copy. Another reference to “Constabulus” can be found in Steinschneider in the section which deals particularly with Costa ben Luca’s *De differentia spiritus et animae*. He mentions that “even Constabulus comes into it”. However, he makes no mention of how many times this occurs, or where the manuscripts are.³⁸ Thorndike mentions a manuscript bearing the word “Constabulus”. He tells us that one version reads, “*In dei nomine et eius auxilio incipit liber differentie inter animam et spiritum quem filius Luce medici nomine Constabulus cuidam amico suo scriptori cuiusdam regis edidit, Iohannes Yspalensis ex arabico*

³³ *The transmission and influence*, 113-114.

³⁴ Wilcox, *The transmission and influence*, 130, note 6.

³⁵ Lacombe and Birkenmajer, eds.

³⁶ Minio-Paluello, *Aristoteles Latinus*, 182. See also *Aristoteles Latinus*, Item 1313, 908.

³⁷ *Aristoteles Latinus*, No. 1478, 1009. See also ff. 278v-283v (Constabe [sic] Luce).

³⁸ Steinschneider, *Die Europäischen*, 43-44.

in Latinum Remundo Tolletano archiepiscopo transtulit".³⁹ Alonso also mentions "Constabulus", whilst quoting from *Aristoteles Latinus*.⁴⁰ According to Wilcox there are other occurrences or corruptions of the word in various manuscripts.⁴¹ The Amplonian Library in Erfurt⁴² has a manuscript bearing the words 'Constabulis luce'. Another 13th century manuscript at Stiftsbibliothek in Kremsmünster⁴³ has 'Constabulus Luce'. The Chapter Library at Worcester has a copy, which contains the latter and is also dated 13th century.⁴⁴ Other mentions include 'constaboluca' or 'constabolute',⁴⁵ 'constabulus' (no 'luce')⁴⁶ and notes in margins, which contain the word 'constabulis', or 'constabuli'.⁴⁷

About half of the manuscripts that identify Costa ben Luca as the author of the *De differentia spiritus et animae* have a form of the name 'Constabulus'. There are only between fifteen and twenty extant copies of the manuscript bearing the dedication to Raymond, archbishop of Toledo, and the word 'Constabulus' only occurs in this.

The Constabulus manuscript found in Durham Cathedral is a very early copy of this translation and appears to have lain dormant for 800 years. It is in the main tradition, with the characteristic attributions at the beginning, the longer prologue and the ending 'futuro'.⁴⁸ This ending was considered typical of the anonymous version until Wilcox's work in this field. Most of the manuscripts with the attribution to Costa ben Luca and Raymond do not have the signature, "In nomine deus et eius auxilio", but of those which do, only one other, Sloane 2454, ff. 82r-84v (13th century) has the signature in the form that the Durham manuscript has it.⁴⁹ However, the Sloane manuscript

³⁹ Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Latin MS, 6296. See "John of Seville", 37.

⁴⁰ "Traducciones del Árabe al latín por Juan Hispano (Ibn Dawud)", 135.

⁴¹ My thanks and appreciation go to Judith Wilcox for this information, and used here with her kind permission. To be published in *Qusta ibn Luqa (Costa ben Luka) in the Western Tradition*, edited by Charles Burnett, Warburg Institute, forthcoming.

⁴² F. 335, ff. 69v-73v. 13th century.

⁴³ 123, ff. 92r-96r.

⁴⁴ Q. 81, ff. 108r-110v.

⁴⁵ Paris, National Library latin 6325, ff. 167v-171r, 13th century.

⁴⁶ University Library, Graz, 1285, ff. 26v-32r, 14th century.

⁴⁷ Herzog August Bibliothek Cod-Guelf Helmst, Wolfenbüttel, 1105, ff. 359v-365r, 13th century.

⁴⁸ My thanks again go to Judith Wilcox for her help in providing this and some of the following information. See also *The transmission and influence*, 279-299.

⁴⁹ In nomine Domini et eius auxilio. [Rud himself changed the words to 'ejus auxiliij'.]

does not have the Constabulus form. The term 'Collectario' is unique, and obviously a scribe's error. One further unique variant is the addition of the word 'gravat' after 'Et quia quem angustia temporis'.

The Durham manuscript also contains an interesting reference to Empedocles. In some Latin manuscripts, Costa ben Luca names his sources as Plato's *Timaeus* and the *Phaedo*, Aristotle's *De anima*, three works by Galen, and works by Theophrastus and Empedocles.⁵⁰ In the edition edited by Wilcox⁵¹ the words "et ecce scribo tibi quedam collectiva que excerpti de libro platonis qui vocatur tymeus et ex libris aristotelis philosophi et theofra(s)ti ac benededis⁵² in animam" appear. In the Durham manuscript the word 'benededis' has been written as 'benededuus', which is a very unusual rendering. As a result of this manuscript's early dating, it must surely retain many unique features and closely resemble Johannes Hispalensis's original translation addressed to Raymond. Furthermore, because the incipit contains not only the word 'Constabulus' but other unusual errors as well, it stands apart from the other copies.

As the *De differentia spiritus et animae* exists in an original rendering and a revised copy, each bearing two distinct signatures, it links Johannes Hispalensis with Johannes Hispalensis 'atque Limiensis'. The later removal of the second identifying place name in Hispalensis's work created a plethora of arguments relating to Hispalensis's identity and some scholars still believe there were two separate translators, whereas others disagree.⁵³ As the Constabulus manuscript has so many scribal errors, it helps to settle the controversy surrounding the translator and is, therefore, a forgotten treasure.

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⁵⁰ Wilcox, *The transmission and influence*, 42. See also 49-52 for a discussion of the sources of Costa ben Luca's work.

⁵¹ Pages 143 onwards.

⁵² A note on this word from Wilcox informs us that it is rendered from the Arabic 'Bendaklis' and is translated as Empedocles in her English translation. See *The transmission and influence*, 209 onwards.

⁵³ Robinson, *Johannes Hispalensis and the Manuscript Tradition*, 11.

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ABSTRACT

Johannes Hispalensis (John of Seville), working from Limia in Portugal and then Toledo in twelfth century Spain, translated mostly mathematical treatises from Arabic into Latin. His early work began in Limia with three medical translations c. 1118. One, the *De differentia spiritus et animae* originally bore the signature 'Johannes Hispalensis et Limiensis'. Not all scholars agree that this translator was Johannes Hispalensis. However, evidence supporting the theory that there was only one translator is provided by the *De differentia*, which resurfaced years later in a revised version dedicated to Raymond, Archbishop of To-

ledo from 1125 to 1152. It bore the shortened name: Johannes Hispalensis. An unknown copy of this revised version has been discovered in Durham Cathedral where it has lain dormant for 800 years. It contains a plethora of scribal mistakes, helping to prove that many of the inconsistencies between different copies of the same Latin manuscripts are due to human error rather than multiple identities working on the same translation.

RESUMEN

Johannes Hispalensis (Juan de Sevilla), que trabajó en Limia (Portugal) y más tarde en Toledo, en la España del siglo XII, tradujo sobre todo tratados matemáticos del árabe al latín. Sus primeras obras comenzaron en Limia con tres traducciones sobre medicina alrededor del año 1118. Una de ellas, *De differentia spiritus et animae*, llevó originalmente la firma 'Johannes Hispalensis et Limiensis'. No todos los especialistas en esta época están de acuerdo en que este traductor fuera Johannes Hispalensis. Sin embargo, la obra *De differentia* aporta pruebas que apoyan la teoría de que hubo un único traductor. Dicha obra reapareció unos años más tarde en una versión revisada y dedicada a Raimundo, el Arzobispo de Toledo, entre 1125 y 1152. Llevaba el nombre abreviado: Johannes Hispalensis. Una copia desconocida de esta versión revisada fue hallada en la catedral de Durham, donde ha permanecido olvidada durante 800 años. Contiene toda una plétora de errores debidos a los escribas, lo cual ayuda a demostrar que muchas de las contradicciones entre distintas copias de los mismos manuscritos en latín se deben a errores humanos y no al hecho de que hubiera varios traductores trabajando en la misma traducción.