

# THE LITERATURE OF AL-ANDALUS

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# CONTENTS

	<i>List of illustrations</i>	viii
	<i>Note on transliteration</i>	ix
1	Visions of al-Andalus <i>by</i> MARÍA ROSA MENOCAL, <i>Yale University</i>	1
	<i>Madīnat al-Zahrā' and the Umayyad palace</i> <i>by</i> D. F. RUGGLES, <i>Cornell University</i>	25
PART I THE SHAPES OF CULTURE		
2	Language <i>by</i> CONSUELO LÓPEZ-MORILLAS, <i>Indiana University</i>	33
3	Music <i>by</i> DWIGHT REYNOLDS, <i>University of California at Santa Barbara</i>	60
4	Spaces <i>by</i> JERRILYNN D. DODDS, <i>School of Architecture, City College, City University of New York</i>	83
5	Knowledge <i>by</i> PETER HEATH, <i>American University of Beirut</i>	96
6	Love <i>by</i> MICHAEL SELLS, <i>Haverford College</i>	126
	<i>The Great Mosque of Córdoba</i> <i>by</i> D. F. RUGGLES, <i>Cornell University</i>	159
PART II THE SHAPES OF LITERATURE		
7	The muwashshah <i>by</i> TOVA ROSEN, <i>Tel Aviv University</i>	165

- 8 The maqama 190  
*by* RINA DRORY, *Tel Aviv University*
- 9 The qasida 211  
*by* BEATRICE GRUENDLER, *Yale University*
- The Aljafería in Saragossa and Taifa spaces* 233  
*by* CYNTHIA ROBINSON, *Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton*

## PART III ANDALUSIANS

- 10 Ibn Ḥazm 237  
*by* ERIC ORMSBY, *McGill University*
- 11 Moses Ibn Ezra 252  
*by* RAYMOND P. SCHEINDLIN, *Jewish Theological Seminary of America*
- 12 Judah Halevi 265  
*by* ROSS BRANN, *Cornell University*
- 13 Petrus Alfonsi 282  
*by* LOURDES MARÍA ALVÁREZ, *Bard College*
- 14 Ibn Quzmān 292  
*by* AMILA BUTUROVIC, *York University*
- 15 Ibn Zaydūn 306  
*by* DEVIN J. STEWART, *Emory University*
- 16 Ibn Ṭufayl 318  
*by* LENN GOODMAN, *Vanderbilt University*
- 17 Ibn ‘Arabī 331  
*by* ALEXANDER KNYSH, *University of Michigan*
- 18 Ramon Llull 345  
*by* GREGORY B. STONE, *Louisiana State University*
- 19 Ibn al-Khaṭīb 358  
*by* ALEXANDER KNYSH, *University of Michigan*
- The dual heritage in Sicilian monuments* 373  
*by* D. F. RUGGLES, *Cornell University*

## PART IV TO SICILY

- 20 Poetries of the Norman courts 377  
*by* KARLA MALLETT, *Stanford University*

LIST OF CONTENTS

vii

- 21 Ibn Ḥamdīs and the poetry of nostalgia 388  
*by WILLIAM GRANARA, Harvard University*
- 22 Michael Scot and the translators 404  
*by THOMAS E. BURMAN, University of Tennessee*
- Mudejar Teruel and Spanish identity* 413  
*by D. F. RUGGLES, Cornell University*

PART V MARRIAGES AND EXILES

- 23 The Mozarabs 417  
*by H. D. MILLER, Yale University, and HANNA E. KASSIS, University of British Columbia*
- 24 The Arabized Jews 435  
*by ROSS BRANN, Cornell University*
- 25 The Sephardim 455  
*by SAMUEL G. ARMISTEAD, University of California at Davis*
- 26 The Moriscos 472  
*by LUCE LÓPEZ-BARALT, University of Puerto Rico*

PART VI TO AL-ANDALUS, WOULD SHE RETURN THE GREETING

- The Nūniyya (poem in N) of Ibn Zaydūn* 491
- Index* 497

## ILLUSTRATIONS

1	Madīnat al-Zahrā', view into the Salón Rico. Courtesy of Jerrilynn D. Dodds.	26
2	San Miguel de Escalada, interior. Courtesy of Jerrilynn D. Dodds.	84
3	The Great Mosque of Córdoba, prayer hall. Courtesy of Jerrilynn D. Dodds.	85
4	Illustration from the Morgan Beatus. Courtesy of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. MS m. 644, f 202v.	87
5	Santiago de Compostela with temporary facade. Courtesy of Jerrilynn D. Dodds.	90
6	The Great Mosque of Córdoba, <i>maqṣūra</i> of al-Ḥakam II. Courtesy of Jerrilynn D. Dodds.	160
7	Aljafería, Saragossa, intersecting arches in courtyard. Courtesy of Cynthia Robinson.	232
8	Monreale Cathedral, exterior of apse. Courtesy of D. F. Ruggles.	372
9	Santa María Mediavilla. Courtesy of D. F. Ruggles.	412
10	Tower of San Martín. Courtesy of D. F. Ruggles.	414

## CHAPTER 1

### VISIONS OF AL-ANDALUS

*María Rosa Menocal*

#### GRANADA

Come, spend a night in the country with me,  
my friend (you whom the stars above  
would gladly call their friend),  
for winter's finally over. Listen  
to the chatter of the doves and swallows!  
We'll lounge beneath the pomegranates,  
palm trees, apple trees,  
under every lovely, leafy thing,  
and walk among the vines,  
enjoy the splendid faces we will see,  
in a lofty palace built of noble stones.

Resting solidly on thick foundations,  
its walls like towers fortified,  
set upon a flat place, plains all around it  
splendid to look at from within its courts.  
Chambers constructed, adorned with carvings,  
open-work and closed-work,  
paving of alabaster, paving of marble,  
gates so many that I can't even count them!  
Chamber doors paneled with ivory like palace doors,  
reddened with panels of cedar, like the Temple.  
Wide windows over them,  
and within those windows, the sun and moon and stars!

It has a dome, too, like Solomon's palanquin,  
suspended like a jewel-room,  
turning, changing,  
pearl-colored; crystal and marble  
in day-time; but in the evening seeming  
just like the night sky, all set with stars.  
It cheers the heart of the poor and the weary;  
perishing, bitter men forget their want.  
I saw it once and I forgot my troubles,  
my heart took comfort from distress,

my body seemed to fly for joy,  
as if on wings of eagles.

There was a basin brimming, like Solomon's basin,  
but not on the backs of bulls like his –  
lions stood around its edge  
with wells in their innards, and mouths gushing water;  
they made you think of whelps that roar for prey;  
for they had wells inside them, wells that emitted  
water in streams through their mouths like rivers.

Then there were canals with does planted by them,  
does that were hollow, pouring water,  
sprinkling the plants planted in the garden-beds,  
casting pure water upon them,  
watering the myrtle-garden,  
treetops fresh and sprinkling,  
and everything was fragrant as spices,  
everything as if it were perfumed with myrrh.  
Birds were singing in the boughs,  
peering through the palm-fronds,  
and there were fresh and lovely blossoms –  
rose, narcissus, saffron –  
each one boasting that he was the best,  
(though we thought every one was beautiful).  
The narcissuses said, "We are so white  
we rule the sun and moon and stars!"  
The doves complained at such talk and said,  
"No, we are the princesses here!  
Just see our neck-rings,  
with which we charm the hearts of men,  
dearer far than pearls."  
The bucks rose up against the girls  
and darkened their splendor with their own,  
boasting that they were the best of all,  
because they are like young rams.  
But when the sun rose over them,  
I cried out, "Halt! Do not cross the boundaries!"

(from Ibn Gabirol, "The Palace and the Garden,"  
trans. Raymond P. Scheindlin)

As you stand in the astonishing gardens of the Generalife, there seem to be an unlimited number of vistas before you. First there are the layered views that take in every fine detail of the gardens themselves: the terraces and the courtyards, water visible and audible everywhere. At many turns you come upon the panoramas that are the dramatic views from the palaces themselves: the snow-capped mountains, the vivid city below. And occasionally, in crucial places scattered throughout this complex, you necessarily look out at the out-



croppings of the great palaces, and understand immediately that while the Generalife may indeed have been the most splendid of summer retreats, the other great service it provided was to let you look at the Alhambra itself, from that vantage point half-hidden, on the other side of a ravine.

These inward and outward visions, all from this edenic promontory, capture all sorts of views of this pinnacle of the culture of al-Andalus. And just beyond the gardens what awaits the visitor is the Alhambra itself, that often breathtaking palatine city of the Nasrid kingdom of Granada, the locus, since Washington Irving, of the romantic Western vision of “Moorish Spain,” as well as a powerfully evocative emblem, among Muslims and Arabs, of a precious moment of cultural dominion, subsequently lost. The complexity of the problem of vision was understood in crystalline fashion by the builders of the Alhambra, who dotted palaces and gardens alike with “*miradores*,” as the carefully chosen and laid out lookout points are called, from the Spanish *mirar*, “to look.” And those half-views of the Alhambra from the retreat of the Generalife can certainly trigger a version of that emotionally charged reaction, that blend of exhilaration and sadness in the student of al-Andalus, the object of this volume.

The story of the Alhambra, told in the fullness of its complexity, is a maze of superimposed memories that is a fitting emblem for the powerfully paradoxical and often unexpected cultural history of al-Andalus as a whole. Little is known about the original fortifications on the hill, although references to a “Red Castle” appear from as early as the end of the ninth century. It is not until the middle of the eleventh century that significant palaces and gardens are first built on the citadel: the first building on the site was begun by Samuel Ibn Nagrila (Samuel the Nagid), the powerful Jewish vizier of Granada, whose family had fled from Córdoba to Granada at the time of the overthrow of the Umayyads, in 1013. The construction was subsequently continued and elaborated by the Nagid’s son, Joseph, and whereas the Nagid apparently rebuilt the fortifications of an original castle to protect the adjacent Jewish neighborhood, his son Joseph built on a more grandiose scale, perhaps working principally on elaborate gardens.<sup>1</sup> The layers of memory and exile are thick here, from the outset: the first real traces of the monument we see in Granada today were sketched out by members of an elite Jewish community in a common exile from the much-lamented Córdoba of the caliphate, and the sacked palaces of the Umayyads. And despite the fact that it is merely wishful thinking to see in Ibn Gabirol’s poem – quoted above – a historical description of the unique fountain in the Court of the Lions, the intimately shared aesthetics of Hebrew and Arabic poetry, not just in this poem but throughout Andalusian letters, reveals many shared visions, among them that of Solomon as quasi-magical prince par excellence.<sup>2</sup>

If these foundational details are largely not remembered it is because the attention of all guidebooks – and in this category one can certainly include most general historical presentations – is per force, and with very good reason, turned to the Granada of the Nasrids, which between 1273 and 1492 was the last Muslim city-state of the peninsula. As this last outpost of what had been a brilliant civilization, during those last 250 years of Islamic dominion, the independent kingdom of Granada achieved the cultural and artistic heights manifest in the unrivaled Alhambra. But there is also an ill-remembered epilogue that, like the prelude, that story of the Ibn Nagrila family's first cultivation of a palatine complex where the ruined Red Castle had been, is hard to explain smoothly. And yet, without this long postlude we might hardly be able to see this memory palace, let alone name it the pinnacle of Islamic culture in Spain: in 1492, immediately upon taking control of the city from the last of the Nasrids (poor Boabdil, whose infamous "last sigh" is remembered as a sign of his pathetic inability to hold on to this precious place), Ferdinand and Isabella proclaimed the Alhambra a *casa real*, or royal residence, which it in fact remained until 1868. And whether this act of appropriation was simply to flaunt this trophy of the Christian conquest over Islam (as is normally maintained) or for more complex reasons as well, the undeniable effect of the royal protection and patronage was to keep the Alhambra relatively well preserved over the centuries. Paradoxically, and despite the much reviled Renaissance palace of Charles V that sits uncomfortably at the entrance of the Alhambra complex (which itself may be a part of the paradox), its absorption into the royal treasuries of the Catholic monarchs played a crucial role in making it a better preserved medieval palace than any other in the Islamic world.

But what might be paradoxes and juxtapositions in other historical or cultural circumstances are very often the bread and butter of al-Andalus. Thus, both the beginning and the end of the story of this Red Castle are powerful attestations to the unusually strong and complex relationships among the religions of the children of Abraham in this land. The role played by the Jewish community in the early chapter of the Alhambra speaks eloquent volumes: the telling intimacy of the Jews of Granada sharing power as well as that yearning for a lost homeland, where the layer of Córdoba and a sacked Madīnat al-Zahrā' would have mingled with others. And at the end, we see that Catholic preservation of the Alhambra after the end of the Reconquest, and throughout the period of the Inquisition, while countless Arabic manuscripts were destroyed (most notoriously in Granada), and while the descendants of the Muslims who had built the Alhambra were being forcibly converted, persecuted, and eventually expelled. The adoption of the palaces and gardens, in such a context, is perhaps a more complex phenomenon than

is normally acknowledged: the reflection that the Islamic arts were immoderately admired, quite independently of religious and political ideologies, an attitude that will account for the wide range of surprising “mixed” forms so characteristic of al-Andalus, from the muwashshahs in literature to the Mudejar architecture of so much of post-Reconquest Toledo to the continued and continuous use of mosques as Catholic churches. I return shortly to all of these issues, and to the ways in which this volume is concerned with the details of these typically “mixed” Andalusí forms. But for the moment I want to reflect on the middle part of the story, the one that is most often told, for it is the one that has the most bearing on the picture we carry in our heads of al-Andalus.

The Alhambra is built with the wolves howling mightily at the door: In 1232, in the now obscure village of Arjona, one Ibn al-Aḥmar rebels against the Cordoban Ibn Hūd (a successor to the Almohads) and forms an alliance with Ferdinand III. Indeed, Ibn al-Aḥmar helps Ferdinand III take Córdoba itself, in 1236, in tacit exchange for being able to carve out his newly won territory. The foundation of Nasrid Granada – which Ibn al-Aḥmar enters the next year, in 1237 – as the last Muslim outpost of what had been al-Andalus for half a millennium, is thus rooted in what we might see as a typically unideological act of warfare, with a Muslim in military and political alliance with a Christian.<sup>3</sup> One of the many problems with the widely used word “Reconquest” is the suggestion that it means ideologically pure and politically uncompromising stances between Christian and Muslim in this land, and yet even at the most basic diplomatic and military levels, one sees, as late in the day as this, that political alliances in practice often overrode the supposed ideological dividing lines.

Nevertheless, and despite some easy suggestions in these kinds of breaches of ideological frontiers, this was unambiguously the beginning of the end, after all, and even then it was visibly so. This was the beginning of what was to be an Iliad-like 250-year-long siege against the kingdom of Granada. Deep inside their rugged mountain stronghold, the Banū Naṣr, those descendants of Ibn al-Aḥmar whom history calls the Nasrids, turned ever more inward and became progressively more Arabized. They existed culturally in a state of siege, isolated from the other cultures of al-Andalus in ways previously unimagined – it is, for example, the only significant moment in the history of al-Andalus during which an Islamic state exists without noteworthy *dhimmī* communities: scattered pockets of Jews and no Christians. And it is in this corner, and in a state of perpetual defensiveness that was palpably different from the cultural and political universe that had existed before the middle of the thirteenth century, that they build a fitting nearly sepulchral monument for themselves: the Alhambra celebrates what they seem to have always

known they would lose since, as in the Trojan wars, the Achaeans may have rested or been distracted from time to time, but the lone, encircled city could only survive if the enemy decamped altogether, and permanently.

So it is that when you stand at those precisely built miradores, all of those lookout balconies and belvederes in the Alhambra, and especially so those in the gardens of the Generalife, you are struck by the terrible realization that, at that moment so blithely described by so many as the “heights” of Islamic culture in what was already more than halfway to being Spain, those who looked outward, which is mostly to the north, could see clearly the inevitability of loss. If glory lies behind you, there in the palaces half-hidden in the pine trees on the other side of the ravine, ahead of you, to the north, on the other side of the mountains, lies disaster. There was no good way out: Granada was, from beginning to end, a besieged vassal state. It is true, of course, that the Alhambra was built during the 150 or so years following the entry of Ibn al-Aḥmar into the city, years during which the Castilians, in effect, were still struggling to get their own house in order and the Granadan vassal state might be left essentially alone or might be a pawn in the extraordinarily complex and often brutal struggles that continued among the Christian states. But even then the wolves were always at the door.

In 1369, while Muḥammad V was hurriedly adding the finishing touches to the splendid Court of the Lions and the rest of the parts of the Alhambra that are most of what we marvel at today, Peter the Cruel of Castile was murdered by his half-brother Henry. It was Peter, an important patron of all sorts of Mudejar architecture throughout his kingdom, who had cultivated complex alliances with Granada and thus made available, inadvertently no doubt, the relative peace and financial well-being necessary to finish the building of the Alhambra. But the Grenadine death rattle began shortly after Peter’s murder – an internecine and “interconfessional” act, as were so many of the most crucial violent moments of medieval Spain, including, of course, the sack of Madīnat al-Zahrā’ by Berbers that provides the first building block of memory for the Alhambra. It is not clear, in the end, whether it was because the end had begun that the monument itself could no longer be worked on, or whether it was because the living tomb was finally perfected that the true end could finally proceed.

It was, in any case, precisely at this moment, when the perfection of the palaces coincides with the harshest political revelations of the end at hand, that the soon-to-be-great historian Ibn Khaldūn passed through Granada – indeed, he was centrally involved in a diplomatic mission between Muḥammad V of Granada and Peter the Cruel himself.<sup>4</sup> It would be easy to speculate that it is there, in that extraordinary moment of Islamic history, when a visibly terminal political decline provoked unprecedented clarity of

artistic vision, that the historian developed some part of his sense of the moral imperative to explain decline – that same sort of moral imperative that would be so echoed by Gibbon when he came upon the ruins of Rome. But of course unlike the ruined Rome of Gibbon, the plaster on the unparalleled walls and ceilings of the Alhambra was barely dry. So it is that while it is far more commonly ruins that evoke the poignancies of human loss, and stir those who contemplate them to tears or to the writing of the histories of what was lost, or both, the remarkably pristine Alhambra may be one of the only monuments built *avant la lettre* to monumentalize the inevitability of loss, and thus to nostalgia itself. From those miradores at the Alhambra we should be able to look out and see everything that the Nasrids saw, and feel their obligation to remember an al-Andalus already gone.

Cultivating the memory of al-Andalus from a wide variety of miradores, and for a wide variety of viewers, is the principal purpose of this volume, and it is undertaken with a distinct consciousness that al-Andalus itself has always been a powerful token of nostalgia.<sup>5</sup> This is done in an academic and intellectual context that is not exactly a vacuum, but that affords surprisingly few sight lines for viewing al-Andalus. And this despite the recent heightening of consciousness about its existence brought about by a disparate range of circumstances: the explosion of international tourism, and its spread to modern Spain in the post-Franquist era, that has made of places such as the Alhambra and the Great Mosque of Córdoba regular stops; the publication of nonacademic books that evoke it (Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh*); and a variety of cultural and political circumstances that on occasion suggest there is a historical parallel for the existence of communities of Muslims in late twentieth-century Europe and America.

One of the causes for the relative scarcity of good miradores is almost certainly also one of the causes of its particularly poignant nostalgic power, for everyone from the seventeenth-century Arab historian al-Maqqarī to the nineteenth-century American Washington Irving: the cultural displacement, that special configuration of “European” and “Middle Eastern” elements it represents and evokes. If within an “orientalist” tradition this has meant the implicit conjuring of an exoticized version of the Arab within Europe itself, for Arabs, and for non-Arab Muslims, it has also represented that moment of cultural superiority over Europe, and the nostalgia that the loss of that necessarily represents, for poets and historians alike. And for Jews it is both more complex and more explicitly powerful a touchstone: Sefarad, the Hebrew name for al-Andalus, is the ultimate symbol of a certain exalted level of social well-being and cultural achievement. In all of these cases, of course, specific views are more nuanced and the values and judgments that accompany them vary widely, even wildly. (There is a particularly virulent strain of Spanish

historiography that has viewed the Andalusian chapter as the cause of subsequent Spanish social ills, and much of the xenophobia of this view survives in Spanish culture to this day.) But in revealing the existence of this fundamental tripartite divvying up, these rival claims to some sort of heritage, we can immediately perceive the most fundamental problem of “vision”: al-Andalus, by and large, has been divided along the single-language lines, derivative of national canons, that are in fact inimical to the Middle Ages in general and extravagantly noxious to al-Andalus.

If other volumes in this Cambridge series have been intended and written overwhelmingly for a public of fellow Arabists, this volume explicitly is not. This is not another reference volume for those who can already read the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, nor is it another mirador that can look into the Alhambra only if the viewer can already decipher the writing on its walls, all the intricate court poetry as well as the verses from scripture, tokens of the limpid purity of this embattled Arabism, carved in heartbreakingly beautiful plaster. It is a joy, as well as a special sorrow, to stand in those courts and be able to read and recite. But to believe it is merely about that is to participate, at this historical remove, in the encircling and isolation of that place. Instead, we also embrace the fundamentally mixed linguistic and cultural makeup of so much of al-Andalus that preceded the Nasrids and that they are, there and then, memorializing. And we also believe it crucial to recognize the special historical circumstances that make al-Andalus central in the course of medieval history far beyond the confines of traditional Middle Eastern studies.

Clearly, fundamental scholarly material on Andalusī literary culture should be available to a range of readers that includes but ranges far beyond fellow Arabists, and indeed, our most idealistic goal is perhaps to make those now disparate academic communities less so. But even if we fall far short of that, we have tried to make this volume a useful and enjoyable resource for colleagues in widely disparate fields: from the French medievalist whose interest has been aroused by notices of Hispano-Arabic culture having some interaction with Provençal to the specialist in Hebrew poetry who may want to understand the Jewish Golden Age in its fullest context, from graduate students in European medieval studies who will not necessarily learn Arabic but will need to understand something of this central culture to the Ottomanist interested in the makeup and history of so many refugees in the sixteenth century. And a great deal in between.

Fellow Arabists will indeed find here essays on individuals and topics about which they may already know something or even a great deal (Ibn Ḥazm, the maqama, the Great Mosque of Córdoba) but many more on topics (Petrus Alfonsi, the Mozarabs, Judeo-Arabic) that are distinctly Andalusī – and yet

traditionally fall outside most Arabists' purview. Indeed, a number of our fellow Arabists will no doubt protest that the object of our attention, or at least some of the objects of our attention, pace the title of the series, are not really "Arabic" literature at all, but something else altogether. But, that, indeed, is the vital question here: just what is "Arabic" in that extended, influential and much lamented historical moment? And isn't a great deal of what is lamented, what provokes the extraordinary and almost universal nostalgia for an Andalus that from the start was partially imaginary, rooted in its being a summary of the varieties of exile that explicitly leaves "nations" by the wayside? And is the literary culture and history of al-Andalus, even if we were to leave aside the question of its enduring nostalgia, really usefully understood in the single-language terms of modern national paradigms?

These are some of the arguments in progress that are the backbone of this volume, and they will arise again and again, implicitly and explicitly. They cry out for further attention here – but not exactly here. These are matters probably better understood if we leave our mirador overlooking Granada, here where we listen to the waters of the melted snows of the Sierra Nevada – and take them up again in a different rocky citadel, in that city that (among other things) was once the benefactor to Europe of all that was Arabic.

#### TOLEDO

"One day I was in the Alcaná at Toledo, when a lad came to sell some parchments and old papers to a silk merchant . . . and [I] saw in it characters which I recognized as Arabic. But though I could recognize them I could not read them, and I looked around to see if there was not some Morisco about, to read them to me . . . I pressed him to read the beginning, and when he did so, making an extempore translation from Arabic to Castilian, he said that the heading was: History of Don Quixote de la Mancha, written by Cide Hamete Benengeli, Arabic historian . . . I then went off with the Morisco into the cloister of the cathedral, and asked him to translate for me into Castilian everything in those books that dealt with Don Quixote . . . I took him to my house, and there in little more than six weeks he translated it all just as it is set down here."

(from Miguel de Cervantes, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha*, pt. 1, chap. 9,  
trans. as *Don Quixote* by J. M. Cohen)

There are a handful of remaining instances of Arabic writing to be seen today in Toledo, and like the tattered manuscript that Cervantes's narrator finds in the old Jewish quarters of the city, they tell us a great deal about the complexities of "Arabic" here. One of the earliest is in the church that sits at the highest point of the citadel city of Toledo. When you enter San Román, which in recent years has been designated the Museum of Visigothic Culture,

you are certainly bound to believe that this, like a number of other churches in Spain, was once a mosque, one of those mosques that in turn may itself have once been a Visigothic church and then readapted for Christian worship a second time, after the Reconquest. (And indeed, not far from San Román, at one of the city's gates, there is just such a place: the small "Cristo de la Luz" was, until the end of the twelfth century, the mosque of Bāb al-Mardūm, built on the ruins of a Visigothic church.) The interior of San Román is redolent of all the architectural features that those of us who are not experts would assume are, indeed, the traces of a mosque: the distinctive horseshoe arches, for example, and even, most eye-catching of all, fine Arabic script around all the window niches. But on closer inspection it turns out the Arabic writing is fake – and that this building was not only never a mosque but was built as the Church to commemorate the *defeat* of the Muslims in 1085.<sup>6</sup> It is, of course, quite remarkable that this Catholic church should be adorned in the unambiguous style of the culture whose defeat it is meant to memorialize, and that it highlights that simulacrum of Arabic writing, as if in uncanny anticipation of the sixteenth-century "secret language" that is the "Aljamiado" of the Moriscos evoked in Cervantes's Toledan scene. But no less remarkable is the fact that the most spectacular of the four surviving synagogues of Spain is decorated with something in and of itself the real thing but in a context that is, to say the least, unexpected: the Toledan synagogue now called El Tránsito, built in 1360 in resplendent echoes of the Alhambra, just then being finished, includes real Arabic, along with Hebrew, integrated into the complex stucco ornamentation. And not just any Arabic, nor even some bits of the considerable body of Jewish writing done in Arabic in al-Andalus, but lines from the Qur'an itself.

Within an academic universe that would want to define Arabic in certain ways neither of these examples really counts, of course, although for different reasons – and they are in any case manifestly not the same Arabic as the abundant inscriptions in the Alhambra proper, which include, famously, a classical *qasida* by Ibn Zamrak, as well as the obsessively repeated "wa-lā ghālib illā-allāh" (There is no conqueror but God). And yet, a clean and neat definition of Arabic here would, ironically, severely diminish our appreciation of the extraordinary cultural dominance of what some have suggested might be better called "Arabicate" – a term that is technically appropriate but has, in fact, never acquired widespread acceptance, perhaps because of how inelegant it sounds. To define Arabic *strictu sensu* to mean only that which is Islamic (which is a not uncommon way of defining "Arabic" in the Spanish context) or, as many Arabists might, as what was redacted according to normative models of "classicism," that is, as contemporary grammarians or other arbiters of high culture did – or for that matter as the religious-cultural purists



such as the Almohads often did – is to end up occluding the suppleness of Andalusī-Arabī culture. And by “suppleness” here we mean an openness and flexibility that permeates all aspects of its relationship with “other” cultures: itself hungrily adoptive and adaptive, it also ends up wearing its own style, even at its most dominant and arrogant, in a way that is attractive, and thus influential, even in circumstances where one might imagine ideology to hold sway. It is that suppleness that did indeed lead to things such as the simulated Arabic around the windows of San Román, and the Qur’anic verses on the walls of that most lavish synagogue of Christian Spain – and to Cervantes’s conceit about the found manuscript that is the true story of the Quixote. These are all things that once al-Andalus was gone became and remained largely unintelligible – as Cervantes said, I could recognize them but could not read them – at least in part because we have defined the languages and literatures we study aligning them along either modern national lines or religious lines, neither of which can end up accounting for so much of what is characteristically Andalusian.

In this volume we have explicitly rejected the sort of orthodox definition of “Arabic” that would leave a reader – whether he is an Arabist specializing in Baghdadi poetry or a Latin Americanist interested in the cultural admixtures in which Spanish has been involved – still unenlightened, at the end of the day, on the question of the various “Arabic” inscriptions he will find on a visit to Toledo. The reader of this volume will come away with an appreciation of a range of Andalusī qualities, and of the remarkable combination of unrivaled ascendance and elasticity of Arabic at that time and place. A crucial part of this history is that of the Jewish communities of al-Andalus whose absorption of Arabic culture was so intimate that it fundamentally redefined their own relationship to Hebrew – which is in the end what makes intelligible the use of the Qur’anic inscriptions on the walls of the synagogue built by Samuel Halevi Abulafia in Toledo – remarkable also because it takes place not in a city in al-Andalus proper, but about three hundred years after that city was no longer ruled by Muslims – and was in fact the capital of what history records as the enemy, Castile. Three hundred years begins to suggest the variety of ways in which cultural styles – in literature, mostly, but also in closely related areas such as music and architecture – flourished in modes that did not align themselves properly along political or religious frontiers. This Arabic was so expansive and inclusionary, often balancing carefully its relationship with the East – so utterly successful in its cultural imperialism, we are tempted to say – that it fully accounts for the phenomenon of a church built in that special imitation Arabic style (which we call Mudejar) to commemorate a crucial victory in what will be later called the Reconquest of Spain.

Using the word “Spain” here reminds us that Arabic is only one of many

terms defined with difficulty, and indeed much of the nomenclature we must employ, and that all of our authors have had to employ throughout this volume, is imprecise or controversial, or simply reveals the vexed nature of identities here. How to refer to the geographical area itself? Hispania (the name inherited from antiquity) meant, for Christians, all the peninsula, and included the Muslim-occupied lands; while for the Arab historians its equivalent, *Ishbaniya*, was usually applied only to Christian Spain. Al-Andalus, for the Arabs, similarly could encompass either the whole peninsula or only the portion under Muslim rule. The common phrase “Arab” (or “Islamic”) Spain seems to many undesirable, with its suggestion that there was a permanent, European “Spain” that has existed from Roman to modern times and that, incidentally, for some centuries, was ruled by Arabs. This Eurocentric view might be countered with equal validity by an Eastern one: al-Andalus was as embedded in the Arab/Islamic world as a country like Tunisia is today, but happened to separate from it earlier, and this view has obviously been the backdrop for the sort of poetry represented by the famous *Sīniyya* (Poem in S) of the Egyptian poet Aḥmad Shawqī.

But the name of the place itself is but the beginning of the terminological and nomenclature problems. To look closely and grapple with these difficulties of naming is instructive, however, precisely because we can see complexities that all too often are occluded by the facile or relatively unnuanced understanding of certain terms. Thus, for example, a term such as “Moor” or “Moorish” has acquired (among other things) a racial veneer that is quite misleading, and that in fact can easily play into a racist vision of interconfessional relations in al-Andalus, where it is imagined (for example) that the Muslims of premodern Spain were a racially distinct people. And yet it could also continue to be used as the word that authentically represents the original term to designate those Berber settlers from Mauritania, the Roman name for what we now call Morocco. The Spanish equivalent, *moro*, can also play this ambiguous or paradoxical role: used to designate, sometimes pejoratively, and almost always with appropriate vagueness, that “other” that was not Christian and was not Jewish, it clearly includes other aspects of identity – language and culture, for example – suggesting that there was more at stake than just religion.<sup>7</sup>

This is of course true, and it is precisely that messy admixture of ethnicities and linguistic communities and cultural traditions and even religion that we mean to cover here with the term “Arabic.” After all, in al-Andalus we see a full range of communities and individuals, and not only Muslims, whose language is Arabic. And whether it is merely the maternal tongue or it is accompanied by a full command of all its literature (from philosophy to poetry and back) is of course more likely to be a function of class and education than it is

of religion, let alone ethnic group. From the Mozarabs, those Arabized Christians who had to have their Bibles translated into Arabic, to the Jews of Granada, who helped establish the site of the Alhambra as a place for memorializing Syrian Umayyad culture in an exile at least twice removed, to the variety of post-Reconquest upper-crust Christians for whom it was as necessary a part of their cultural baggage to be able to read philosophy, these are all members of a community of Arabic language and culture first in al-Andalus and then in what will become Spain.

The anchors of that community are, unambiguously, the Muslims who maintained a complex and usually vital relationship with the East, and with the Arabo-Islamic culture of the heartland, taking and contributing, respecting and surpassing. The extraordinary vitality of that culture, in fact, in some measure explains its widespread prestige as a language and its texts – whether those texts are written or architectural or musical – and thus helps account for the whole range of converts that came to make up the Muslim community of al-Andalus. This community, among whom many would proudly and exaggeratedly or even falsely claim noble Arabian ancestry, included everything from the first-generation children of Berber settlers and Romanized or Visigothic women to descendants of Jewish and Christian converts to newly arrived Syrians in exile – to a half dozen other permutations. And that is while we are still talking about Muslims proper, before we get to the complex societies of observant Christians and Jews who are a part of the Arabicate community without being Muslims.

The editors of this volume believe that the brilliance of that civilization, not to speak of its enduring legacy – this a term much bandied about in discussions of al-Andalus – are far better understood when the larger and much messier understanding of Arabic is used, rather than the neater and narrower one that prevails in so many discussions and, indeed, in the canonical curricula. But it is also the case that within that traditionally defined framework of Arabic studies al-Andalus has, until recently, been a very poor cousin, despite the special nostalgic place it enjoys. In the curriculum of Middle Eastern Studies it has never been a fundamental requirement, to say the least, and one could read through any number of literary histories and easily get the sense that it is as if it were written from the Abbasid perspective after 750 – as if those renegade Umayyads had simply gone off and done their rebellious thing way out in the Wild West and only when what they wrote looks pretty much just like what was written in Baghdad is it part of the real Arabic universe.<sup>8</sup>

Of course, other fellow Arabists will argue, correctly, that the case of al-Andalus is far from unique and that in fact the sort of cultural adaptations and fluidity that have just been described are, or were, virtually universally true in the creation and expansion of all instances of Arabo-Islamic culture,

from that in the Arabian peninsula itself to what one can still see in Iran or Pakistan. But it strikes us that this is an argument to be used to favor the writing of more literary histories that would emphasize this cultural fluidity, rather than, as is normally the case, the essential and classical Arabicness of Arabic literature. The premises of this volume are not necessarily arguments for the uniqueness, in this regard, of Arabicate culture in that place we now call Spain – although one has to wonder if that is not at times the veiled, or unarticulated, argument that explains why al-Andalus is an extraordinarily important locus of nostalgia for a certain Arabic past, and has always been, at least since the days of al-Maqqarī, the extraordinary seventeenth-century historian. More simply, we argue merely that something like *convivencia* was self-evidently the cultural case in al-Andalus, and that a literary history of that place can be neat in its dividing lines only at very high costs.

*Convivencia* is of course one of those much contested and vexed terms that does have to do with al-Andalus and Spain in particular, and like its equally vexed counterpart, *reconquista*, perhaps it is only problematic if we insist on some sort of uniformity and neatness, if we persist, despite our own likely observations of human nature, in expecting consistencies and purities of any sort. This is where the wonderful examples of Toledo's varieties of Arabic writing can illuminate the necessary contradictions involved: the creation, the very cause for the creation, of a church like San Román proves that from certain perspectives – the military, the religious-ideological – a Reconquest did indeed exist and in the end prevail. At the same time, the very style, the very aesthetics of the Church, proves *prima facie* the vitality of Castro's much debated *convivencia* – which literally means nothing more than “living together” but which of course has come to imply a certain level of cultural commingling that most people assume must be based on a certain level of religious tolerance.

But the Church of San Román is decorated with horseshoe arches and with the suggestion of Arabic writing around all the windows precisely because *convivencia* and *reconquista* could and did exist side by side, at the same time, in the same place. The conceptual error that has plagued all sides of the study of what some call medieval Spain, and others al-Andalus, and yet others Sefarad (and sometimes these are identical and sometimes they overlap in part and sometimes they are at opposite ends), is the assumption that these phenomena, reconquest and *convivencia*, are thoroughgoing and thus mutually exclusive – that, to put it directly to the example, those whose commitment to the military and religious victory of Christian state over Muslim state in Toledo would not be building a monument to that victory that said loudly and clearly that the culture of the vanquished was superior to, or perhaps indistinguishable from, their own. And yet that is exactly what happened.

San Román is far from a unique case: one need only wander the streets of Toledo with eyes open to the necessary contradictions to see the other examples in this city that will in fact cultivate Arabic far more after the Reconquest than before, and where the large and important Arabized Christian population, the Mozarabs, will feel more culturally persecuted in the aftermath of the accession to power of their coreligionists than they did under the rule of their coculturalists. All categories here are nothing more than arguments in progress, and this volume is dedicated to deepening the arguments rather than to eliminating them. It is thus that the reader will find here, alongside Andalusians with unimpeachable “classical” credentials – Ibn Ḥazm and Ibn Zaydūn and Ibn al-Khaṭīb – portraits of complex individuals such as Ramon Llull and Petrus Alfonsi, in their own ways not unlike the horseshoe arches of San Román.

This is the universe, not the nation, of Arabic in al-Andalus. And it is a universe so powerful that even after it is officially gone, banished, it manages to speak from time to time, and we have felt that this volume should also make some attempt to hear those voices that are among the most difficult to hear and yet speak so eloquently to the tenacity of that cultural memory. Like the raggedy manuscript that Cervantes’s narrator finds in the Alcaná, about to be sold to the silk merchant, these are sometimes only the sad tatters of what had once been the most valued manuscripts in the civilized world. Cervantes’s novel, it must be understood, was published in 1605, a century after the surrender of Granada and the beginnings of the forcible conversions that would make “Moriscos” out of the Muslims who chose to stay – and just a few years before the forcible expulsions of the Moriscos in 1609. What had once been the revered language of knowledge and the marker of the very best stylistic achievements in all the arts – in a universe in which taste and knowledge could and often were assiduously cultivated independently of religious belief or political circumstances – was now incomprehensible even to the Moriscos themselves. Despite their persecution, these forcibly converted Muslims kept writing in the Arabic script, but now as the vehicle for their native language, a form of Romance. They kept the alphabet, but Arabic itself they barely knew. Like the Sephardim, the Jews expelled shortly after the surrender of Granada, the Moriscos are testimony to the extraordinary memory of al-Andalus – even for those who never knew it.

There is a long list of ironies in the fact that, for many well-read individuals, including many of our colleagues in the study of the literatures of the West, that pivotal scene in the *Quixote*, certainly among the most canonical and oft-read texts of European literature, provides the only experience of seeing – and thus “reading” – Arabic. One of the various poignancies of this scene is how powerfully it suggests the way in which the Arabic universe

of al-Andalus, once at the heart of many aspects of European culture in the Middle Ages, will be so driven from the consciousness of European history that only specialists will be able to read its texts and cultivate its memory. This volume contains few essays of the now traditional sort on the “legacy” or “influence” of al-Andalus on the rest of medieval Europe. Instead, we attempt to redress the problem by defining this Andalusī-Arabic universe in ways where Arabic is not easily separable from other strands of medieval culture, where it is often a part of a tight weave – as opposed to a proposed foreign “influence” – and by making the whole of the cloth expressly accessible to those who, like Cervantes’s narrator, might recognize the language but not be able to read it.

#### CÓRDOBA

Shrine of the lovers of art! Visible power of the Faith!  
 Sacred as Mecca you made, once, Andalusia’s soil.  
 If there is under these skies loveliness equal to yours,  
 Only in Muslim hearts, nowhere else can it be.  
 Ah, those proud cavaliers, champions Arabia sent forth  
 Pledged to the splendid Way, knights of the truth and the creed!  
 Through their empire a strange secret was understood:  
 Friends of mankind hold sway not to command but to serve.  
 Europe and Asia from them gathered instruction: the West  
 Lay in darkness, and their wisdom discovered the path . . .  
 Even to-day in its breeze fragrance of Yemen still floats,  
 Even to-day in its songs echoes live on of Hejaz.  
 (from Muḥammad Iqbal, “The Mosque of Córdoba,” trans. V. G. Kiernan)

By the banks of the Guadalquivir, that wide and muddy river, the young prince found refuge from the brutal and vengeful violence of the Abbasids that had ended the Umayyad caliphate of his ancestors. He was a grandson of Caliph Hishām, but also the son of a Berber woman, so when he fled Syria heading west, and to the far west, he was heading to his mother’s land. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān would be exiled here, forever, in this al-Andalus that was at that point hardly more than an extension of his mother’s lands, across the straits of Gibraltar, not so long before decisively crossed by the Ṭāriq who had given the mountainlike rock his name. And up the river a way, by the banks of the Guadalquivir, the half-Syrian, half-Berber Andalusian, and his sons, and his sons’ sons, would always still remember the river Euphrates, and would create a culture in exile that was always part heartbreaking yearning for Damascus, for that land of palm trees forever left behind.

But this culture was also always part rivalry with the Abbasid Baghdad that had destroyed their family – and from the outset, from the beginnings of his

building what would become the Great Mosque, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān appears to have understood that combining nostalgia with scrappiness could create something that was in part a memory, or the evocation of a memory, but also the dream of a distinctive and overwhelming future. And so it is that this most memorable mosque is in part the comforting allusion to the Umayyad mosques of Damascus and Jerusalem, and in part the very definition of this new time and place, a dream of a future time when it will be the marker of triumph in exile, which needs to become a place that rivals the home to which one cannot return. It is in these delicately balanced visions – of past and future, of East and West, of old power and new claims – of the exiled ‘Abd al-Raḥmān I and his successors that we can see the fundamental architecture of Andalusī culture: that fine Umayyad equilibrium between a powerful belief in the most traditional legitimacy, and those audacities of the self-made transplants that would allow them to build as if they were themselves the center of the universe.

And this is why, finally, there is no more distinctively Andalusī a sight than those unforgettable rows upon rows of superimposed horseshoe arches, with those never-boring alternating red brick and white stone voussoirs: part that almost overwhelming nostalgia that is present at the beginning, as well as at the end, and part the brilliant putting together in altogether more audacious ways the materials lying about in this new place. These conjunctions, along with its continuous expansions, which eventually made it the largest medieval mosque, so canonically defined the very essence of the mosque in the West that even today it is visited, and mostly seen and understood, as the Great Mosque, despite the vast Renaissance cathedral that has sat at its very center since the sixteenth century, and despite the barely noticed fact that it is still the working cathedral of the Catholic city of Córdoba, where masses are said daily.<sup>9</sup>

In the planning of this volume there was no greater challenge than finding some architectural structure for it that in some way echoed the complexity of this culture, that layered complexity that is nowhere better seen than in the monumental Great Mosque, where memory, invention, palimpsests, and borrowings all interlock. Even at the miniature and self-evidently minor level of a volume of literary history, it is no mean feat to face the challenges posed by depicting a part of the culture that has produced that particular kind of monument, to figure out how to balance tradition and authority, the measures of the sort of cultural continuities and values that make literary histories worth reading, with the sort of innovation that would in some measure reflect the heterodox definition of the field we have sketched out. The genre of literary history has, of course, no fixed forms but it certainly has canonical expectations and, far worse, formal limitations. It was clear early on that it was

easier to imagine the sort of substantive innovations already discussed – defining “Arabic” in expansive and untraditional ways, and writing for a public wider than our own specialist colleagues – than to define concretely the basic forms that such a literary history might take.

The many competing demands on a literary historian include (but are scarcely limited to) chronological narrative, individual authors, salient genres, and, in our own volume, considerations of other linguistic and cultural affiliations. In the end what was clearest was that no single taxonomy would do – and so, at the end of the day, we insist on varied shapes, differently angled perspectives, for each of the four major sections of the book. None of these points of departure has transcendent authority or primacy, although we would argue strenuously that some are, indeed, vital for the realization of any Andalusian portrait. And the whole is in part painstakingly engineered – and also partly serendipitous and dependent on everything from the well-understood limitations of time and space to the even more uncontrollable vagaries of who might be available to write on a given subject during a given year. Every path taken is, self-evidently, a path not taken, and it is perhaps especially the editors, intimately familiar with so many of the vast range of possible subjects and perspectives on so complex a subject, who fantasize about other possibilities. We fondly call these our “shadow volumes,” and to these I will return.

But first to the volume actually in hand. The first section, “The Shapes of Culture,” approaches in a thematic way the sorts of materials that are, *grosso modo*, introductory and meant to give some global sense of salient cultural features. These are cross-sections of topics that are not necessarily canonical features of a literary history and yet they seem indispensable as foundational pieces of the puzzle, or at least of this puzzle. We wanted to engineer the section so that it would be informatively introductory to Andalusian culture, and to the rest of our volume, for both the Arabist and the non-Arabist. The distribution of these opening visions is necessarily quite varied: the “Love” and “Knowledge” sections may better serve the nonspecialist, providing some distinctive fundamentals of Arabic culture in general and its ties to Andalusian writing specifically, for those who approach al-Andalus from somewhere else in Europe. “Language” and “Spaces,” in contrast, will open up largely unknown vistas onto the details of Andalusian exceptionalism and thus be of at least equal interest to Arabists, whereas “Music” is relatively equal portions of both. But all the subjects here are foundational, and we see these components as the columns – as different from each other as the Roman spolia that are the building blocks of the earliest section of the Great Mosque – on which so much of the literature of the society leans (\*Language, \*Spaces) and which can also be seen as surrounding it, and thus casting varied light and shadows



on it, defining how it is heard and understood (\*Knowledge, \*Music, \*Love). (Use of an asterisk [\*] indicates a cross-reference to another essay in this volume.)

In "The Shapes of Literature" three genres receive pointed and detailed attention. A particular kind of challenge in organization and balance for a volume like this is posed by the primacy of poetry as the literary genre par excellence in Arabic. Poetry bears a kind of cultural centrality that makes it a part of the everyday texture of societies and histories in a way not necessarily immediately familiar to those nourished in other cultures, especially in the modern age, and that makes it altogether possible, and even reasonable, to imagine a volume such as this into which nothing other than poetry managed to find its way. Yet the very centrality of poetry guarantees that it is not isolated, and suggests that in writing its history it is important to buttress the ubiquity of poetry, and of certain poetic genres especially, with the reflections of poetry in other spheres. In this section, as a focused section that can give a detailed taste of specific and exemplary forms, we end up running the gamut from the quintessentially Andalusian (and exceptionally controversial) *muwashshah*, which was always of dubious canonical standing, to the unimpeachably classical *qasida*. The *maqama* shares elements of both kinds of status, as well as a complex intertwining with the Hebrew tradition.

But these and other kinds of poetry, as well as other kinds of writing, appear and reappear through the rather different prism of authorship in the "Andalusians" section. The vantage point provided by biography is distinctly contrapuntal to the more formal, generic vision of the previous section: the individual figures, the Andalusians, we have chosen are arranged in chronological order, and every effort has been made to locate them in their historical moment, as well as to display the characteristic way in which that individual contributes to the overall cultural texture of his moment. As in all other sections there is a conscious effort to balance the expected (Ibn Ḥazm) with the unexpected (Moses Ibn Ezra), but here more than anywhere else we faced the painful decision of setting aside some individuals of such overwhelming importance (Ibn Rushd) that they are exceptionally well known to all Arabists and who, unlike others we have included, have been written about extensively for the nonspecialist as well.

Our excursus "To Sicily" is itself structured as a miniature of the whole of the volume, with three essays each looking at Siculo-Arabic culture from a different formal vantage point. This small taste of this different European outpost of Arabicate culture reveals the ways in which al-Andalus is a powerful and shaping cultural icon within Europe and indeed throughout the western Mediterranean, even in the thirteenth century, when it was being cornered into the lone outpost of Granada. The starkly mixed iconography of

Sicilian culture also serves as an offshore prelude for the final section of this volume, "Marriages and Exiles."

Here the perspective provided on the Arabic culture of al-Andalus is the special and often bittersweet one of groups with ambiguous and yet substantial and influential relations with the dominant classical culture. These are not only different iterations of what was the extraordinarily ample Arabicate culture of the peninsula, but also varied tokens of memories that confirm and complement the "official" nostalgia of the classical histories from al-Maqqarī on. From the Mozarabs who resist Islam and yet embrace Arabic – and who in a city like Toledo would be the guarantors of both the most traditional Latin-Christian rite and Arabic as the visual and verbal language of high culture – to the Sephardim who will jealously guard crucial literary memories of the Spain of the three religions in an oral tradition still in direct contact with pre-1492 Spain, these are important witnesses to a remarkable chapter of Arabic cultural and literary history.

Many of the obvious and even not so obvious limitations of this book are in some measure authorized, or at least compensated for, by the existence of other books that cover that ground, and we gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to those different resources, both for what they have taught us and for serving as work to which our own readers should also turn. Each essay that follows is accompanied by its own bibliography of essential resources for that subject, of course, but beyond that several books require special notice. The first is certainly the encyclopedic *Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden, 1992), which defines its subject so indefatigably that the reader can turn to it for articles on dozens of subjects complementary to literary culture: a detailed political history, pieces on economic history, calligraphy, even culinary culture – and much, much else besides. Moreover, and most importantly, the volume is graced with several extensive essays on Arabic poetry, written by the editor and brilliant critic of Arabic poetry, Salma Jayyusi, and they provide a vision of al-Andalus and its poetry as essentially unaffected by the cohabitation with the other languages and cultures, no doubt a salutary counterpoint to our perspective.

In contrast, *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain* (New York, 1992), edited by Jerrilynn D. Dodds, although it has a different material focus (art and architecture), offers a reading of the complex relationships among the various cultures that is virtually identical to our own. This lavishly illustrated catalog of a major exhibit, shown both in Spain and in the United States, provides not only a range of direct visual reinforcement of points made less directly with reference to nonvisual texts in this volume but also a theoretical and historical vision of cultural interaction that is far less constrained than literary studies tend to be by the demarcations of national languages. Finally, even

though it deals only with the period from 1250 to 1500, L. P. Harvey's *Islamic Spain* (Chicago, 1990) is a model of a history that, via its focus on Muslims on either side of the political divide, captures a great deal of that complexity of a territory that was part geographic and part cultural.

These are, of course, books we don't need to wish we had created, but there are others we do wish we could have created as well – and in the perfect world our own volume would include its shadow, as well as itself. Some subjects and focuses are missing, for a range of different pragmatic reasons, even though they were originally planned: “The Shapes of Culture” section, for example, was to have had an essay on religion, which would have been an obvious way, although not the only available one, to focus explicitly on the cultural interaction we see in other spheres; in the end, its place was taken, in effect, by the final section, “Marriages and Exiles.” “Andalusians” was to have included a portrait of Alfonso the Wise, who presided over so much of the translation of Arabic, but instead we included a portrait of the peripatetic and influential translator Michael Scot in the section on Sicily, so we see translation through the prism of a translator and from a less Toledan perspective. These are but two of a number of cases where practical circumstances forced us to rethink essentially abstract plans – and in all of these cases although we regret what we lost (or what we never had) the alternatives have ended up being rich and now indispensable parts of the volume.

There are also possible vantage points we might well have chosen but did not simply because every type of mirador cannot (and perhaps should not) be accommodated in any finite volume, any more than in any given building. Whole categories – historical writing, literary criticism, and philosophical traditions – potentially legitimate and revealing places from which to contemplate aspects of poetry in al-Andalus – are now only glancingly glimpsed instead. One might even, for example, have provided a series of other medieval perspectives of al-Andalus from a wide arc that would take a reader from Baghdad when the early Abbasids first contemplated the Umayyad emirate of Córdoba, on to Paris when Ibn Rushd's work is banned, and then back east to Alexandria and Cairo when Judah Halevi arrives performing the chic Andalusian muwashshahs. Or there would be the range of perspectives given by looking at some of the special historians whose work was dedicated to cultivating the memory of al-Andalus, from al-Maqqarī to Washington Irving. Or using the cities of al-Andalus, perhaps arranged in chronological order or even (in the tradition of some Arabic historiography) in backward chronological order. Or . . . Self-evidently, these are the trade-offs that lie at the heart of this kind of book-building project: whether, for example, the sort of philosophy and literary criticism written by Ibn ʿArabī or by Ibn Ḥazm is going to end up being revealed via the portraits of those individuals, or instead as part

of an essay or a group of essays on philosophy and literary criticism or instead, yet again, inside a detailed portrait of Murcia in the thirteenth century or Córdoba in the years after the collapse of the caliphate. We detail all of these omissions and fantasies – and this is certainly not a full inventory, even by our own reckoning – not out of anything like regret or apology for the volume at hand but, on the contrary, to suggest the untapped richness of a subject that, like all other great subjects in literature and history, can only begin to be appreciated after reading extensive and varied, even contradictory, accounts. The more one reads and sees and hears the more one is intrigued and even mystified by this extraordinary moment in the cultural and literary history of the Arabic-speaking people.

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Among the clichés of book acknowledgments it may be that the most over-used is the one that begins “This book could not have been written without . . .” But in this case the quite literal truth is that without the ongoing editorial participation of Kim Mrazek Hastings nothing resembling this book would exist. The editors are deeply indebted for her unmatched organizational and editorial skills, and perhaps even more for the pleasure and comfort of her company during most of the years devoted to this project.

#### NOTES

The author gratefully acknowledges the many discussions, and especially the occasional vigorous disagreements, on these subjects with three precious interlocutors: Jerrilynn D. Dodds, Dimitri Gutas, and F. E. Peters. And despite the single authorship of this essay, its every premise, and indeed its very existence, are the products of the exceptional and always happy collaboration with fellow editors Raymond P. Scheindlin and Michael Sells.

- 1 The recent translation of Samuel the Nagid's poetry by Peter Cole (Princeton, 1996) has brought some degree of mainstream attention to the extraordinary life and times and work of many Jews living in Islamic Spain. On the Nagid's family and Jewish involvement in the early stages of building the Alhambra, see the relevant essays in Jerrilynn D. Dodds, ed., *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain* (New York, 1992).

- 2 The historical relationship of the Ibn Gabirol poem to the (disappeared) eleventh-century palace, and especially the historicity of the description of the fountain famously proposed by Frederick Bargebuhr in *The Alhambra: A Cycle of Studies on the Eleventh Century in Moorish Spain* (Berlin, 1968) is refuted by Raymond P. Scheindlin in "El poema de Ibn Gabirol y la fuente del Patio de los Leones," *Cuadernos de la Alhambra* 29–30 (1993–94): 185–89. For a detailed literary discussion of the poem itself, see also his "Poet and Patron: Ibn Gabirol's Palace Poem," *Prooftexts* 16 (1996): 31–47. The relationship of a variety of lyrical writings to the palaces themselves is brilliantly (and accessibly, for the nonspecialist) laid out by Oleg Grabar in *The Alhambra*, 2nd edn. (Sebastopol, Calif., 1992). See especially from page 99 on for the questions related to the Fountain of the Lions and the shared Jewish–Muslim image of Solomon as a near-magical king.
- 3 This, after all, was the land of the Cid, a historical figure reasonably well-documented by both Arab and Christian sources, who in the context of nineteenth-century Spanish nationalist ideology becomes one of the foundational figures of emergent modern Spain, in the popular imagination because of his efforts in the Reconquest. And yet, in both historical documentation as well as in the surviving epic poem celebrating his life and deeds, there is no attempt to hide the fact that he is a crucial ally to Andalusian Muslims against the Almoravid Berbers, that he is eventually ruler of a Muslim Valencia, and that his name is an Arabic honorific. See Richard Fletcher, *The Quest for El Cid* (New York, 1990), for a delightful and multidimensional narration of the complex history of the Cid and his times, a portrait that succeeds better than many broader histories in conveying the tangle of political and cultural filiations.
- 4 The introduction by N. J. Dawood to the Franz Rosenthal translation of the *Muqadima* (Princeton, 1967) provides a brief but useful recounting of Ibn Khaldūn's trip to Granada in 1364: "In 1364 Ibn Khaldūn was put in charge of a mission sent to Pedro the Cruel, King of Castilla, with the object of ratifying a peace treaty between Castilla and the Arabs. He thus had an opportunity to visit Sevilla, the city of his ancestors. Pedro honored him highly and offered to take him into his service and to restore to him his family's former property, but Ibn Khaldūn declined" (viii).
- 5 The omnipresent nostalgia provoked by al-Andalus is wonderfully summarized by Robert Irwin in his review essay of *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (*Times Literary Supplement*, 13 August 1993).
- 6 These details of the history of San Román are virtually impossible for any layman to ascertain, despite the monument's relative prominence; they are occluded in all guidebooks and general introductions to the monuments of the city, as well as in the official Toledan literature about the decommissioned church. I am indebted to my ever-generous teacher in these matters, Jerrilynn Dodds, for telling me the history of San Román and pointing me in the right direction in many related matters.
- 7 Among others, see the complementary discussion of these issues in the introductory remarks (9–10 esp.) by Richard Fletcher, in his *Moorish Spain* (Berkeley, 1992), a term he uses interchangeably with Muslim Spain and Islamic Spain,

rightly pointing out the pitfalls of believing any term is precise or could possibly be used uniformly. A comparison to the titles and nomenclature of two other basic books of this same vintage proves the point: Hugh Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal* (New York, 1996), and L. P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250–1500* (Chicago, 1990). (I have also profited from the delightful discussion of the history of the “Moor” terminology by Ross Brann, in “Andalusian Moorings,” forthcoming in *Diaspora*.) Finally, of course, the often thorny terminological and “identity” issues as they affect the question of “Arab” and “Arabic” and “Islamic” are far from limited to the Andalusian sphere. See Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture* (Routledge, 1998), for a series of detailed discussions of the problem as it crystallizes in Abbasid Baghdad and through the translation movement, and especially the trenchant statements on page 191.

- 8 The relatively scant notice paid to al-Andalus in Albert Hourani’s outstanding *History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, 1991) is telling and reflects the inherent difficulties of assimilating the Andalusian chapter into the larger narrative of the Arab peoples, as per Hourani’s almost Churchillian title. Salma Khadra Jayyusi, the editor of the vast *Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden, 1992), devotes her several lengthy essays on Andalusī poetry in the volume to substantiating the clearly circular premise that the real canonical poetry was utterly unaffected by any aspect of its multicultural environment – and that the poetry that shows innovations and variations vis-à-vis the Eastern forms is not “formal” enough to be considered canonical (317–26). More problematic yet is her quick review, in these same pages, of the body of scholarship by Andalusianists on the subject, a discussion prefaced by her unfortunate and yet telling dubbing of this group as “non-Arab literary historians.”
- 9 The remarkably layered history of the Great Mosque is told in illuminating detail and from a variety of perspectives in Jerrilynn D. Dodds, “The Great Mosque of Córdoba,” *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain*, ed. Dodds, 11–25; and in Robert Hillenbrand, “‘The Ornament of the World’: Medieval Córdoba as a Cultural Center,” *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. Jayyusi, 112–35.