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Introduction

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The miniature *Humāy and Humāyūn in a garden* was painted in the bright colours of the world when it was younger. It was produced in Herat around 833/1430 by an anonymous artist, and it is most likely that it was originally bound in an anthology of verse and pictures. The depiction of a night scene was rare in Islamic art. It is curious to note that artists in western Europe were similarly experimenting with night scenes some decades later. In the frescoes in San Francesco of Arezzo, painted in the 1450s, Piero della Francesca showed Constantine asleep in his tent at night and, later in the same century, a French illuminated manuscript of *Le livre du cueur d'amours espris* featured three even more remarkable nocturnes. However, whereas the Western artists concerned themselves with the realistic registration of the fall of candlelight and shadow, as well as the muting of colours and the disappearance of detail in nocturnal obscurity, the Persian miniaturist presents us with a night scene in which we (and apparently the figures in the miniature) have perfect night vision. Instead of trying to reproduce the real world, the artist was using conventionalised images of people, plants, trees, lamps and architecture in order to fill the picture plane in a decorative and, indeed, ravishing way.

Although a painting of this kind is therefore not a window on the world in the ordinary sense, nevertheless study of such a work tells us a great deal about the culture that produced it. The painting, which celebrates an aristocratic way of life and sensibility, was aimed at an aristocratic clientele. (Hardly anything that can be called popular art survives from this period.) There had long been an Arab literary and visual cult of the garden in the Islamic world. Medieval visitors to the Alhambra in Granada were at least as impressed by the gardens as they were by the palace; and *rawḍiyyāt*, or poetry devoted to gardens, was a recognised genre of Arabic poetry. If anything, the cult of the garden intensified in the Turco-Persian culture of the late medieval and early modern period. Persian painters depicted the garden as an earthly paradise and the privileged dwelling place of princes. Depictions of battles and

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enthronements were certainly not unknown, but artists usually preferred to celebrate the world of an idle and tranquil aristocracy among whom a code of decorum concealed any passions that may have been felt. Poetry competed with the Qurʾān as a guide to conduct. The culture of the aristocracies of ninth/fifteenth-century Herat, Samarqand, Istanbul, Cairo and Granada was highly literary, and the arts of the book were correspondingly highly valued. The range of calligraphies displayed in *Humāy and Humāyūn* would have been as impressive to the cognoscenti as the representation of the figures in the garden. As for the style of the painting, it is unmistakably Persian and, as such, has evolved from the earlier (Byzantine influenced) Arab tradition of the art of the book. Nevertheless, there are also a number of stylistic features that derive from Chinese art. No history of the culture of this period can afford to neglect the massive influence of China on the visual arts, economy and technology of the Islamic world. Finally, the anthology form, for which this sort of painting was produced, was a leading feature of Islamic culture. Some of the greatest figures in the literary world, such as Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī or Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, were famous not for what they composed themselves but for their diligent compilations of other men's flowers. Such anthologies had the effect of canonising and prolonging the cultural conventions and sensibilities of past centuries.

Although *Humāy and Humāyūn in a garden* is unmistakably a work of Islamic art, it is extremely difficult to articulate why it is classified as such. The subject matter is not obviously religious (though the poem by Khwājū al-Kirmānī that it illustrated was an allegory of the soul's quest for God disguised as a princely romance).[1] Moreover, the depiction of human figures might be deemed to be in violation of the Qurʾān's ban on the fashioning of images. It is also difficult to identify what, if anything, it has in common with the literary and plastic creations of the Islamic world in the first century of its existence (the frescoes found in Umayyad desert palaces, for example). 'Islamic art' is a term of convenience, although a potentially misleading one. 'Islamic art' or 'Islamic literature' or 'Islamic science' and, above all, 'Islamic civilisation' could even be held to be merely labels for all the stuff produced in the areas dominated by Muslim rulers or populations. However, there is more to it than that, for

1 On this painting and its literary subject matter, see Teresa Fitzherbert, 'Khwāju Kirmānī (689–753/1290–1352): An eminence grise of fourteenth century Persian painting', *Iran*, 29 (1991); Thomas W. Lenz and Glen D. Lowry (eds.), *Timur and the princely vision: Persian art and culture in the fifteenth century* (Washington, 1989), pp. 117, 236; Eleanor Sims, Boris Marshak and Ernst Grube, *Peerless images: Persian painting and its sources* (New Haven and London, 2002), pp. 82–3.

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'Islamic civilisation' is a shorthand term for quite a different set of realities. Ludwig Wittgenstein, when he came in *Philosophical investigations* to confront the problem of how to define 'game', denied that there was any single feature that games had in common. Instead 'we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail'. Wittgenstein went on to characterise these similarities as 'family resemblances' and to argue that 'games' formed a 'family'.[2] In much the same way, there has not been one Islamic civilisation, but many different Islamic civilisations at various times and in various places. These Islamic civilisations have various features in common and constitute a 'family'. Some of the things many of these civilisations shared derived from the religion that they had in common, but this was not always the case. Thus, although the employment of slaves in the army and the higher ranks of the administration was a fairly pervasive feature of Islamic societies, there is nothing strictly Islamic about it; the employment of such slaves (*mamlūk*s or *ghulām*s) does not derive from any injunctions in the Qurʾān. Similarly, although the *qaṣīda* form of verse is common to all the Islamic literatures, there is nothing specifically religious about it – and the same point can be made about the proliferation of the arabesque and *muqarnas* in the artistic vocabulary of the Islamic lands from Andalusia to Sumatra. Much of what we recognise as forming part of Islamic culture derived from local cultures and past non-Islamic histories, rather than being something that was imposed by Arab Muslim conquerors.

Some sources of belief and behaviour in the Muslim world

To return to Herat, in the ninth/fifteenth century this city was one of the leading centres of a high culture that was Sunnī Muslim and Persianate in most of its leading features. It is important to bear in mind that prior to the sixteenth century Iran was overwhelmingly Sunnī Muslim, while Shīʿism was largely restricted to certain remote regions of Lebanon, eastern Turkey and Yemen. While Turks and Circassians tended to predominate in the political and military elites of the Islamic heartlands, the style of their culture was Persian (notwithstanding the saying, popular in the Arab world, 'He who learns Persian loses half his religion'). Several of the Ottoman sultans wrote poetry in Persian. The Mamlūk sultan of Egypt and Syria, Qānṣawh al-Ghawrī knew Persian, and he commissioned a translation of Firdawsī's *Shāhnāma* into Turkish so that those of his *amīr*s who only knew Turkish could see what

2 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical investigations* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 31–4.

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they were missing.[3] In Herat the poet and minister of state ʿAlī Shīr Nawāʾī more or less single-handedly set about creating a Chaghatay Turkish literature that was based on Persian models. In the visual arts what has come to be known as the International Tīmūrid style (which was characterised above all by floral chinoiserie motifs) prevailed in Ottoman Turkey, Mughal India and the territories in between. Merinid Morocco and Naṣrid Andalusia were relatively untouched by this Persianate culture. Even so, it has been suggested that certain features of the palaces of the Alhambra – their polychrome, *muqarnas* and *chahārbāgh*-type gardens – derive ultimately from Persian prototypes.

In the ninth/fifteenth century Islamic science had reached an unprecedented level of sophistication. (Muslim innovations in mathematics, astronomy and the other exact sciences did not come to an end in the sixth/twelfth century when Europeans stopped translating Arabic treatises on the subject.) Many of the most important advances, for example work on geometric solutions for quadratic equations by ʿUmar al-Khayyām (d. 526/1131) and on plane and spherical trigonometry by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1273f.), were made in the eastern Islamic lands. Astronomy enjoyed a cult status under the Tīmūrids (as it had earlier under the Ilkhānids of Iran and the Rasūlid sultans of Yemen). Ulugh Beg, the Tīmūrid ruler of Transoxania and Khurāsān in the years 850–3/1447–9, presided over a team of astronomers and mathematicians of whom the most prominent was al-Kāshī (d. 832/1429), who worked on decimal fractions and the approximation of pi, among much else. It would take European mathematicians another two centuries to arrive at the discoveries that had already been made by Ulugh Beg's team in Samarqand.

Despite the efflorescence of a courtly Persianate culture, older Arabic genres and conventions fed into that culture. The Arabic verse form the *qaṣīda* or ode, which had been first developed in pre-Islamic Arabia, was taken up by Persian poets (and eventually also by poets writing in Hebrew, Turkish, Urdu, Swahili and other languages). The ideal types of the *nadīm* (the cultured cup-companion) and the *ẓarīf* (the refined dandy), though first codified in the ʿAbbāsid period, still provided models of conduct for courtiers and literati throughout the Islamic world. Arabic also remained the chief medium of scholarship, and religious topics in particular were studied and debated in Arabic. Arabic encyclopaedias and other compendia provided the Islamic world with an enormous common pool of knowledge. In 833/1429

3 Esin Atil, *Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks* (Washington, 1981), pp. 264–5; Esin Atil, 'Mamluk painting in the late fifteenth century', *Muqarnas*, 2 (1984); Doris Behrens-Abouseif, 'Sultan al-Ghawrī and the arts', *Mamluk Studies Review*, 6 (2002), p. 77.

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Shāh Rukh, the Tīmūrid ruler of Khurāsān, sent an embassy to Egypt to request that the Mamlūk sultan Barsbāy send him a copy of the commentary on al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* (a collection of sayings of the Prophet) by the renowned Egyptian scholar Ibn Ḥajar, as well as the *Kitāb al-sulūk*, a chronicle by the hardly less famous historian al-Maqrīzī. The fame (or in some cases notoriety) of Muslim scholars could span continents. In the eighth/fourteenth and ninth/fifteenth centuries the suspect orthodoxy of the seventh/thirteenth-century Andalusian Sufi Ibn al-ʿArabī (who was accused of monism among other things) was debated not just in Andalusia and North Africa, but also in Egypt, Yemen and Khurāsān, and later also in eleventh/seventeenth-century Java.[4] (Sufi adherents of the doctrines of Ibn al-ʿArabī had a leading role as missionaries in South-East Asia.) The cohesion of the Muslim communities was strengthened by the common practice of pious scholars of travelling in order to listen to and memorise *ḥadīth*s (orally transmitted reports of the sayings of the Prophet and his Companions) from as wide a range of authorities as possible. Sufis also travelled widely, and travel features prominently in the formative part of the careers of such prominent Sufis as al-Ḥallāj, al-Ghazālī and Ibn al-ʿArabī. The shared code of law (the *sharīʿa*) and curriculum of higher education throughout the Muslim world made it relatively easy for scholars, statesmen and others to find employment in lands distant from their place of birth. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn ʿArabshāh were among the many famous Muslims who did so. The case of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa is particularly striking. In the early eighth/fourteenth century he travelled everywhere in the Muslim world from Mali to the Maldives and, wherever he went, he encountered urban institutions that he was already familiar with from his youth in Tangiers, including the mosque, the *ḥammām*, the *madrasa* (teaching college) and the *sūq* (market). Moreover, his path criss-crossed with those of other roaming Muslim traders, scholars and job-seekers.

Besides the scholars and the Sufis, many ordinary Muslims went on the *ḥajj* (and in Spain and North Africa in particular the practice gave rise to the literary genre of the *riḥla*, a narrative of the pilgrimage). The *ḥajj* and the consequent mingling of peoples from all over the world at Mecca and Medina facilitated the exchange of ideas and information. Most Muslims went on the *ḥajj* in order to fulfil a religious duty, but a few seem to have done so in order to find brides, and many others made use of the commercial opportunities afforded by their pilgrimage. The economic prosperity of Damascus, in particular, was

4 Alexander D. Knysh, *Ibn ʿArabī in the later Islamic tradition: The making of a polemical image in medieval Islam* (Albany, 1999).

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dependent on the success of the *ḥajj*. The coming together and dispersal of Muslims on the *ḥajj* had the effect of spreading information about religious and cultural developments throughout the Islamic world. Moreover, Islam was the language of trade throughout the greater part of the known world. This was particularly the case in the Indian Ocean and across the landmass of Asia. Because of this, many Chinese, who wished to establish themselves in international commerce, found it advantageous to convert to Islam. The family of styles and techniques that has come to be known as 'Islamic art' owed much of its continuing evolution to the transmission, via international commerce, of designs on textiles and ceramics made for long-distance export.

Muslims were the heirs to a set of overlapping and competing legendary, semi-legendary and historical versions of the past. Firdawsī's Persian verse epic the *Shāhnāma* (written in the early fifth/eleventh century) combined the legends of pre-Islamic Iran to produce a celebration of Iranian identity. His saga also offered reflections on the rights and duties of princes, as well as models for princes, most notably a (fancifully Iranicised) Emperor Alexander. Fantasies about Alexander and his tutor Aristotle also figured largely in the Arabic literary version of Classical Antiquity in which the Greek sages appeared in Muslim garb. The legacy of Pythagoras, Aristotle, Plato and later authors of romances was evident in such things as the vast body of alchemical and related literature conventionally ascribed to the ninth-century alchemist Jābir ibn Ḥayyān, as well the *Rasāʾil*, a tenth-century encyclopaedia put together by the Brethren of Purity in Baṣra. Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037) and Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198) provided what were largely rational commentaries and elaborations on the philosophy of Aristotle, but the genuine legacy of Aristotle competed with that of the much more popular bogus Aristotle, who was supposed to have written the *Sirr al-asrār* (Secret of secrets), a rather chaotic compendium in the mirrors-for-princes genre, with a great deal of additional material of an occult or folkloristic nature. A rather different aspect of the Greek legacy was also evident in the popular Arabic genre of stories of lovers parted and reunited which followed the conventions of late Hellenistic romances. Islamic art and architecture, like Byzantine architecture, was heir to the visual culture of the Hellenistic world. The quintessentially Islamic arabesque evolved from the earlier Greek deployment of vine-leaf motifs in decoration. The arabesque, together with the Corinthian capitals of the columns in the Umayyad palace of Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ outside Cordoba and the classical images on twelfth-century Artuqid coinage all attested in their different ways to the continued vitality of the visual legacy of Classical Antiquity.

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The poetry of the *jāhilī* or pre-Islamic poets in the Arabian Peninsula and stories about the context of the composition of that poetry constituted a third sort of quasi-legendary prehistory with which the cultured Muslim was supposed to be familiar. Arab *jāhilī* values, such as *ṣabr* (patience) and *muruwwa* (manliness), continued to be adopted and espoused by much later sultans and warlords, including the famous Saladin. The extraordinarily high status of poetry, the backward-looking nature of most of that poetry and the esteem in which the poetic genres of *fakhr* (boasting) and *hijāʾ* (satire) were held were all part of the *jāhilī* heritage that survived under Islam. Yet a fourth type of past was anonymously manufactured in later centuries in the form of the Turkish and Arab popular epic, celebrating the exploits of historical or legendary figures, including ʿAntar, Sayyid Baṭṭāl and the Mamlūk sultan al-Ẓāhir Baybars among many others. (It is worth noting that popular epics tended to place as much stress on the value of cunning as on military prowess and derring-do.)[5] Again, from the seventh/thirteenth century onwards, after the Mongols had established an empire that stretched from China to the Euphrates, the traditional practices of Chinggis Khān and his Mongols constituted yet another code of conduct (one can think of it as the Chinggisid *sunna*) for many in Iran, Khurāsān and elsewhere who nevertheless chose to describe themselves as Muslims.[6]

Ideals of Islam and their implementation

All these various 'histories' offered potential role models and ideals of life. However, by far the most important ideal of life was that provided by the Prophet Muḥammad and members of his immediate family. The life story of the Prophet and accounts of the preaching of Islam and early Islamic conquests constituted the core history that gave the Islamic community its identity, and this history was transmitted and authenticated by the religious scholars, the *ʿulamāʾ*.

The semi-legendary and secular versions of the Muslim world's pre-history and history had to be reconciled with or refuted by the orthodox version of

5 On these epics and the role of the cunning man in them see in particular Malcolm Lyons, *The Arabian epic: Heroic and oral story-telling*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1995).

6 David O. Morgan, 'The great *Yāsa* of Chingiz Khān and Mongol law in the Ilkhanate', *BSOAS*, 49 (1986); Robert Irwin, 'What the partridge told the eagle: A neglected Arabic source on Chengīz Khan and the early history of the Mongols', in Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (eds.), *The Mongol empire and its legacy* (Leiden, 1999); R. D. McChesney, *Central Asia: Foundations of change*, Leon B. Poullada Memorial Lecture Series (Princeton, 1996), pp. 122–3, 127–41.

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Islamic history, and the ideals of life of pious Muslims. The orthodox version was based on the Qurʾān, *ḥadīth* and the *sīra* (biography of the Prophet). Islam's history and the religious sciences, orally transmitted from generation to generation, played the leading role in sustaining Islamic norms. Such Islamic norms constituted the *sunna*, both law and code of conduct, as established by precedent. However, it should be remembered that substantial Shīʿite communities did not accept this *sunna*. The Shīʿa tended to transmit different traditions, many of which referred back to the chain of imams, who were members of the Prophet's family by descent from Muḥammad and ʿAlī, the Prophet's cousin. Moreover, Shīʿa tended to place greater stress on the power to interpret those traditions by *mujtahid*s, scholarly religious authorities who were deemed to be able to exercise independent judgement in these matters. Shīʿa also tended to place less emphasis on consensus than the Sunnīs did, and esoteric texts and secret doctrines loomed larger in their heritage. All the same, despite the Sunnī stress on the transmission of traditions in providing a basis for both a Muslim society and a virtuous life at the individual level, the Sunnī tradition was something that had to be elaborated, rather than merely inherited. Its evolution, like that of Shīʿism, was shaped to a large degree by the demands and expectations of the peoples that the Muslims conquered. Religious codes were slowly elaborated to answer any of the questions that might be raised about conduct or belief and, to some extent, rival Sunnī and Shīʿite communities established their identities by defining their beliefs and practices in opposition to one another. Moreover, within Sunnism itself, as the leading *madhhab*s (law schools) developed in rivalry to one another, a similar process of self-definition occurred.[7]

The Ḥanbalī *madhhab*, which tended to take particularly rigorous positions on points of Islamic law and conduct, played a leading role in defeating a school of thought known as Muʿtazilism. Muʿtazilism, in a narrow sense, refers to the doctrine that the Qurʾān was created, as opposed to coexisting eternally in time with God. In practice, the term referred to a wider body of vaguely secularist and rationalist opinion. The ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Maʾmūn (r. 198–218/813–33) adopted the createdness of the Qurʾān as official doctrine, and he persecuted Ḥanbalī opponents of the Muʿtazila. He also presided over a translation and scientific research programme centred on his library

7 On the formation of a Sunnī identity see, among much else, Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's caliph: Religious authority in the first centuries of Islam* (Cambridge, 1986); Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The view from the edge* (New York, 1994); Christopher Melchert, *The formation of the Sunni schools of law, 9th–10th centuries CE* (Leiden, 1997).

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in Baghdad known as the Bayt al-Ḥikma (House of Wisdom).[8] By the 240s/850s Muʿtazilism was no longer in favour at court and the Muʿtazila were suffering persecution. The Bayt al-Ḥikma declined into obscurity around the same time. However, the full fruits of the early ninth-century intellectual debate and translation activity (much of it from Greek) only became fully apparent in the tenth and eleventh centuries, by which time the ʿAbbāsid caliphate was not much more than a political fiction.

The period from approximately 340/950 to 440/1050 was arguably the golden age of Islamic Arab intellectual culture (as well as of Persians writing in Arabic). The thinkers and writers of first rank who flourished in this period included the historian and belletrist al-Masʿūdī (*c.* 283–345/*c.* 896–956), the poet al-Mutanabbī (*c.* 303–54/*c.* 915–65), the philosopher Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037), the scientist Ibn al-Haytham (d. *c.* 431/1039), the scientist, historian and geographer al-Bīrūnī (362–*c.* 442/973–*c.* 1050), the jurist and political thinker al-Māwardī (364–450/974–1058), the poet al-Maʿarrī (363–449/973–1058) and the belletrist and heresiographer Ibn Ḥazm (384–456/994–1064). It was also during this period that the somewhat mysterious Brethren of Purity (Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ) compiled their encyclopedia of all the sciences. Furthermore, the beginnings of high Islamic culture in the Persian language can be dated to this period, with the composition of the *Shāhnāma* by Firdawsī (d. *c.* 411/1020). The explosion of knowledge and debate in this period owed something to the increased use of paper. This had a role in sustaining not just literature, but also commerce, technology and art. During this period philosophy, as well as many forms of freethinking and outright defences of hedonism, flourished. Esoteric ideas added to the ferment, and the fourth/eleventh century has been characterised as that of a *revolution manquée* when Ismāʿīlīs seemed to be in a position to take over the heartlands of Islam, though in the event they were unable to convert their hopes into reality.[9] In the long run, the entry of Turkish tribesmen in large numbers into the heartlands and the enlistment of those Turks in the Sunnī cause, as well as the Sunnī institution of the *madrasa*, played crucial roles in reversing the tide of Shīʿite fortunes.

In Cairo the Fāṭimid caliph al-Ḥākim (r. 386–411/996–1021), the head of the Shīʿite Ismāʿīlī regime, had founded the Dār al-ʿIlm (House of Knowledge).

8 L. E. Goodman, 'The translation of Greek materials into Arabic', in M. J. L. Young, J. D. Latham and R. B. Serjeant (eds.), *The Cambridge history of Arabic literature*, vol. III: *Religion, learning and science in the ʿAbbasid period* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 477–97; Dmitri Gutas, *Greek thought, Arabic culture: The Graeco-Arabic translation movement in Baghdad and early ʿAbbasid society (2nd–4th/8th–10th centuries)* (London, 1998).

9 Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in history*, 3rd edn (London, 1956), p. 139.

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According to the fifteenth-century Egyptian historian al-Maqrīzī 'people from all walks of life visited the House; some came to read books, others to copy them, and yet others to study'. However, the House of Knowledge was not a centre for the disinterested dissemination of knowledge; it also served as a centre for Ismāʿīlī indoctrination and propaganda. This was an age when institutions of higher education were set up in order to serve competing religious ideologies. The *madrasa*, or teaching college, which specialised in teaching the Sunnī religious sciences, originated in third/tenth-century Khurāsān. The institution of the *madrasa* had the effect of consolidating the position of the four chief *madhhab*s, or schools of Sunnī religious law (Shāfiʿī, Ḥanbalī, Ḥanafī and Mālikī). The institution also facilitated the channelling of patronage from the politicians and wealthy merchants to religious scholars. As the institution of the *madrasa* spread westwards, it was used in sixth/twelfth-century Syria by the Zangid princes to combat Shīʿism. Later, after Saladin overthrew the Fāṭimid caliphate in Egypt and established his own rule, the foundation of *madrasa*s in Egypt played a crucial role in the Sunnī intellectual recolonisation of Egypt. Thereafter political Shīʿism was on the defensive in Egypt, Syria, Iran and elsewhere, and would remain so until the triumph of the Shīʿite Ṣafavid movement in Iran at the end of the ninth/fifteenth century.

The Umayyad caliphate of Cordoba, which had been fighting a losing struggle against the Christian *reconquista*, was overthrown by rebel soldiers in 1031. Though its demise and the departure of past magnificence were repetitiously mourned in verse and prose, the breakup of the caliphate preceded the culturally fertile rivalries of the *ṭāʾifa* ('party') dynasties, which divided up what was left of the territory of Muslim Spain. Just as Umayyad Cordoba had sought to recreate in the west the lost glories of Umayyad Damascus, so the *ṭāʾifa* kings, through literary and artistic patronage, sought to recreate the lost glories of the Cordoban caliphate (and later, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada would have similarly nostalgic aspirations). In Syria and Egypt under the Ayyūbids and Mamlūks, the period from the end of the twelfth century to the opening of the sixteenth proved to be a golden age for Sunnī *ʿulamāʾ* culture. Much of that culture took the form of vast encyclopaedias, literary anthologies and histories that were largely compiled from the works of earlier chroniclers. From the mid-thirteenth century onwards cultural life in these lands was enriched by the presence of refugees who had fled west to escape the Mongol occupation of Iran and Iraq. Ibn Taymiyya, the rigorist Ḥanbalī jurist and polemicist, and Ibn Dāniyāl, the author of pornographic scripts for shadow plays, provide contrasting examples of such refugees. More generally, as Ibn Khaldūn,

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