

The Mystics of al-Andalus

The twelfth century CE was a watershed moment for mysticism in the Muslim West. In al-Andalus, the pioneers of this mystical tradition, the Mu‘tabirūn or “Contemplators,” championed a symbiotic reading of Muslim scriptural sources alongside Neoplatonized cosmological doctrines. Ibn Barrajān of Seville was most responsible for shaping this new intellectual approach to the Qur’ān and Hadith in the Muslim West, and is the focus of Yousef Casewit’s book. Ibn Barrajān’s extensive commentaries on the divine names and the Qur’ān stress the significance of God’s signs in nature, the Arabic Bible as a means of interpreting Muslim scripture, and the mystical “crossing” (*i’tibār*) from the visible to the unseen. With an examination of the understudied writings of both Ibn Barrajān and his contemporaries, Ibn al-‘Arīf and Ibn Qasī, as well as the wider socio-political and scholarly context of al-Andalus, this book will appeal to researchers of the medieval Islamic world and the history of Sufism in the Muslim West.

Yousef Casewit is Assistant Professor of Qur’anic Studies at the University of Chicago. He was formerly a Humanities Research Fellow at New York University, Abu Dhabi. He is the co-editor (with Gerhard Böwering) of *A Qur’ān Commentary by Ibn Barrajān of Seville* (2016).

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The Mystics of al-Andalus

*Ibn Barrajan and Islamic Thought
in the Twelfth Century*

YOUSEF CASEWIT
The University of Chicago



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*To my dear wife, Maliha Chishti,
the love and joy of my life,
who surpasses me in character and scholarship.*

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	page xii
<i>Notes on the Text</i>	xv
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xvi
Introduction	1
Ibn Barraĵān at the Forefront of the Mu‘tabirūn Tradition	5
Literature Review	8
Overview of Chapters	9
The Historical Context: The Rise and Demise of the al-Murābiṭūn Dynasty	14
1 The Beginnings of a Mystical Discourse in al-Andalus <i>Ibn Masarra, Mālikism, and the Politics of an Epistemological Debate</i>	22
Introduction	22
I Renunciation	25
The Early Umayyad Period	25
Retreaters from the Political Sphere	27
The Late Emirate and Early Caliphate Period	28
The Renunciant Tradition in Seville	30
II Ibn Masarra: The First Andalusī Mu‘tabir	33
III Politicized Epistemological Debates	39
Polemics Over the “Acquisition of Prophecy” and “Miracles of Saints”	39
Was There an Uṣūl Controversy in al-Andalus?	42
The Al-Murābiṭūn State-Jurist Entente	46
The <i>Iḥyā’</i> Controversy	50

viii Contents

2	The Rise of the Andalusī Mu‘tabirūn <i>The Influence of Ghazālī, Markers of the Mu‘tabirūn Tradition, and the Onset of Institutional Sufism</i>	57
	Introduction	57
	I Ghazālī’s Intellectual Influence During the Formative Period of Andalusī Mysticism	59
	Ibn Barrajan	59
	Ibn al-‘Arīf	61
	Ibn Qasī	64
	II Were Ibn Barrajan, Ibn al-‘Arīf, and Ibn Qasī “Sufis”?	67
	Was Renunciation a Precursor of Sufism?	74
	III The Onset of Institutional Sufism in the Maghrib and al-Andalus	84
	Ibn Tūmart	84
	Abū Madyan: “The Junayd of the West”	86
	Tādilī’s Sufi Hagiography: <i>al-Tashawwuf</i>	88
3	The Life of a Contemplative <i>Ibn Barrajan’s Educational Formation, Spiritual Practices, Political Views, and Decease</i>	91
	Introduction	91
	I Early Years, Educational Training	92
	His <i>Nisba</i> , <i>Kunya</i> , <i>Ism</i> , <i>Laqab</i>	92
	His Brother and “Grandson”	96
	Educational Formation	98
	The religious sciences and the “sciences of the ancients” (<i>‘ulūm al-awā’il</i>)	98
	His attitude toward jurisprudence (<i>fiqh</i>) and legal theory (<i>uṣūl al-fiqh</i>)	104
	II His Students and Disciples	107
	III Eschewing the Sultan (<i>inqibāḍ ‘an al-sultān</i>), Political Views, and Decease	111
	Practice of <i>Inqibāḍ</i>	111
	Methodical Practice of <i>I’tibār</i>	114
	Practice of <i>Dhikr</i>	115
	Political Views	117
	The Imāmate	117
	Jihād	119
	End-times	121
	Summoning of Ibn al-‘Arīf, Mayūrqi, and Ibn Barrajan to Marrakesh	122
	Ibn al-‘Arīf’s Death	124

Contents	ix
Abū Bakr b. al-Mayūrqi's Death	124
Ibn Barrajan's Death	125
4 The Works of Ibn Barrajan	128
<i>Chronological Sequence, Manuscript Tradition, Central Themes</i>	
Introduction	128
I <i>Al-Irshād ilā subul al-rashād</i>	129
Contextualizing the <i>Irshād</i>	131
Excerpt of the <i>Irshād</i> from Zarkashī	132
II <i>Sharḥ asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā</i>	136
Ibn Barrajan's Interpretive Approach to the Divine Names	141
Organizational Structure of the <i>Sharḥ</i>	144
1 Lexical analysis (<i>takhrīj lughawī</i>)	144
2 Contemplative crossing (<i>i'tibār</i>)	144
3 Devotional practice of servanthood (<i>ta'abbud</i>)	147
Letter Speculations in the <i>Sharḥ</i>	148
Ibn Barrajan's <i>Sharḥ</i> versus Ghazālī's <i>Maqṣad</i>	150
Unidentified Sources of the <i>Sharḥ</i>	154
Citations and References in the <i>Sharḥ</i>	155
III <i>Tanbīh al-afhām ilā tadabbūr al-kitāb al-ḥakīm wa-ta'arruf al-āyāt wa-l-naba' al-'azīm</i>	157
Stylistic and Organizational Features of the <i>Tanbīh</i>	159
IV <i>Īdāḥ al-ḥikma bi-ahkām al-'ibra</i>	163
Introduction, Style, Structure, and Composition of the <i>Īdāḥ</i>	165
Central Themes of the <i>Īdāḥ</i>	166
Citations in the <i>Tanbīh</i> and <i>Īdāḥ</i>	167
V <i>'Ayn al-yaqīn</i>	170
5 The Divine Descent	171
<i>Bridging the Chasm between God and Creation</i>	
Introduction	171
I The Doctrine of the Universal Servant (<i>al-'abd al-kullī</i>)	172
The Universal Servant Versus the Particular Servant (<i>al-'abd al-juz'ī</i>)	176
The Principle of Correspondence Between the Human Being, Creation, and Revelation	177
II The Reality Upon Which Creation Is Created (ḤMBK)	181
ḤMBK Heralds the Clear Reality (<i>al-Ḥaqq al-Mubīn</i>)	188
III Ontology: One <i>Wujūd</i> , Two Worlds, Multiple Levels	190
Between <i>Tanzīh</i> of the Ash'arīs and <i>Tashbīh</i> of the Anthropomorphists	190
Scriptural Proof-Texts for Ibn Barrajan's Ontology	193

x	Contents	
	The Hidden Object (<i>al-khab'</i>)	193
	The Two Breaths (<i>nafasayn/faybayn</i>)	195
	A Philosophical Explanation: Imaginal Existence (<i>al-wujūd al-mithālī</i>)	195
	The Parable of the Mustard Seed	197
IV	Reading the Signs of God	199
	The Exclusive Signs of God (<i>āyāt khāṣṣa</i>): Sun and Moon	202
	Water: The Active Principle of Existence	203
	Secondary Signs of God	204
6	The Hermeneutics of Certainty	206
	<i>Harmony, Hierarchy, and Hegemony of the Qur'ān</i>	
	Introduction	206
	I Harmony: The Qur'ān as a Perfect and Unequivocal Text	209
	Harmoniousness and Coherence of the Qur'ān (<i>naẓm</i>)	209
	Thematic harmony	212
	Themes of the Sūras	215
	Explicative harmony	216
	Symmetrical harmony	217
	The Theory of Abrogation (<i>naskh</i>)	217
	II Hierarchy: From the Celestial Tablet to the Written Page	221
	Hierarchical Levels of the Qur'ān	221
	The “Supreme Qur'ān” Versus the “Exalted Qur'ān” “Compact” (<i>muḥkamāt</i>) Versus “Consimilar” (<i>mutashābihāt</i>) Verses	223
	The “Disconnected Letters” (<i>al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'a</i>)	226
	The Primacy of Sūras 1 (al-Fātiḥa) & 2 (al-Baqara)	230
	Protological and Eschatological Modes of Interpretation (<i>ta'wīl</i>)	234
	236	
	III Hegemony: The Epistemological Primacy of the Qur'ān	238
	The Qur'ān Is Its Own Interpreter	238
	Variant Readings (<i>qirā'āt</i>) and the Seven Lectiones (<i>ahruf</i>)	240
	The Use of Weak Ḥadīths to Explain the Qur'ān	241
7	A Muslim Scholar of the Bible	245
	<i>Biblical Proof-Texts for Qur'ānic Teachings in the Exegetical Works of Ibn Barraġān</i>	
	Introduction	245
	Ibn Barraġān and the Arabic Bible	248
	Ibn Barraġān's Access to the Books of the Bible	250
	The Epistemological Hegemony of the Qur'ān	255
	The Supersession of Pre-Islamic Religions (<i>naskh</i>)	257

Contents	xi
Interpretive Solutions to Interscriptural Incongruities	259
1 Historical Contextualization	259
2 Allegorical Interpretation (<i>ta'wīl</i>)	260
Does the Bible Challenge the Qur'ān?	261
Two Extremes: Ibn Ḥazm's Versus Ibn Barrajān's Biblical Engagement	262
8 The Human Ascent	266
<i>I'tibār, Cycles of Time, and Future Predictions</i>	
Introduction	266
I <i>I'tibār</i> : Acquiring Empirical Knowledge of the Self	269
Negotiating the Boundaries of the Unseen	275
His Assessment of Ibn Masarra's <i>i'tibār</i>	277
His View of the <i>Falāsifa</i>	278
An Egalitarian Spirituality?	278
II The Descent of the Divine Command	280
The Structure of the Cosmos	280
The Descent of the Divine Command	282
The Cycles of Determination	283
The Cyclical Concept of Time (<i>dawā'ir al-zamān</i>)	286
The Symbolic Significance of Number 6	288
The Cycle of 1,000 Lunar Months	293
III Future Predictions	294
The Jerusalem Prediction	299
Translation of the Jerusalem Prediction	302
Conclusion	307
Why Did Ibn Barrajān Choose the Divine Names Tradition and Qur'ānic Exegesis to Express His Teachings?	308
Rethinking Exegesis Versus Eisegesis	308
His Main Sources	310
A Final Thought on the “Ghazālī of al-Andalus”	313
<i>Bibliography</i>	315
<i>Index of Names</i>	346
<i>Index of Terms</i>	349

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xiii

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Notes on the Text

The Arabic transliteration system employed throughout this book follows a slightly modified version of the system recommended by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Proper nouns as well as technical Arabic words that are now common in English, such as Qur'ān, ḥadīth, jihād are fully transliterated. I rely on a slight modification of the transliteration system used by *Encyclopaedia Iranica* for the rare transliterations of Persian words.

Both *hijrī* and Common Era dates are provided in the form *hijrī*/CE. Thus, Ibn Barrajān died in 536/1141. References in the footnotes are short, and consist usually of the author's surname and a shortened title of his/her work. A handful of works are referred to by other abbreviations which are listed in the next section. Encyclopedia articles are cited in the footnotes as: *Abridged Name of Encyclopaedia*, "Title of Article," (Author). For example: EI³, "Abū Madyan," (D. Gril). Manuscripts (sing. MS, pl. MSS) are cited as *Abridged Title of Manuscript*, Place, MS Library Collection and Number (Number of Folios; *hijrī* date of copying). For example: *Sharḥ*, Istanbul, MS Topkapı Ahmet III 1495 (257 ff.; 595 h).

Translations of the Qur'ān rely considerably upon S. H. Nasr's *The Study Quran* (New York, 2015) and A. J. Arberry's *The Koran Interpreted*, 2 vols. (London, 1955). Formulaic invocations of blessings upon the Prophet Muḥammad and/or his family and Companions are often omitted from the English translations for the sake of brevity.

Abbreviations

- EI*² *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd Edition, eds. H. Ar. R. Gibb et al., 13 vols., Leiden, 1960–2009.
- EI*³ *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three*, eds. K. Fleet et al., Leiden, 2007–. Leiden, 1960–2009.
- EIr* *Encyclopædia Iranica*, ed. E. Yarshater, 15 vols., New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 1985 – present.
- EQ* *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, ed. J. D. McAuliffe, 6 vols. Leiden, 2001–2006.
- GAL* *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, Carl Brockelmann, Leiden: Brill, 1996.
- GAS* *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, Fuat Sezgin, 13 vols., Leiden: Brill, 1967–2000.