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Looking Back at al-Andalus

The Poetics of Loss and Nostalgia in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Literature

By
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In memory of Magda M. al-Nowaihi

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by Abū l-Ṭāhir Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Tamīmī al-Saraqusṭī ibn al-Aštarkūwī (d. 538/1143) (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2002). Chapter one is a revised version of "Loss Written in Stone: Ibn Shuhayd's *Rithaʾ* for Cordoba, and its Place in the Arabic Elegiac Tradition" which appeared in *Transforming Loss into Beauty: Essays on Arabic Literature and Culture in Memory of Magda Al-Nowaihi*, eds. Marlé Hammond and Dana Sajdi (Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2008). Chapter two is a revised version of a previously published article entitled "Tears Shed Over the Poetic Past: The Prosification of *Rithāʾ al-Mudun* in al-Saraqusṭī's *Maqāma Qayrawāniyya*," published in the *Journal of Arabic Literature* 36:1 (2005), 1–27.

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Alexander E. Elinson
New York, NY
August, 2008

INTRODUCTION

THE POETICS OF LOSS AND NOSTALGIA IN MUSLIM SPAIN

On January 2, 1492 C.E., Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand took control of Granada's Alhambra fortress, thus marking an end to Muslim rule in the Iberian Peninsula—a rule that had begun some eight hundred years before when a military force from North Africa had landed on the Iberian shore in 711. As the story goes, when the deposed ruler of Granada, Muhammad XII (known as Boabdil) left the city with his entourage, he took a final look back at the Alhambra, and wept. This, the famous Moor's last sigh (*el último suspiro del Moro*) has come to symbolize the loss not only of this arguably very formidable and beautiful palace complex and its lovely Granada setting, but of all of Muslim Spain (al-Andalus)—a land and culture that had taken on an almost mythical status in the eyes of Andalusīs and foreigners alike well before it was finally lost to the Christians in 1492.

At the peak of its power in the tenth and eleventh centuries, al-Andalus was an important military, political, and intellectual center in the Mediterranean world. During the period of the Umayyad Caliphate in Cordoba (929–1031), and also in the period that followed the break-up of that Caliphate into independent city-states (taifas, Ar. *ṭawāʾif*, 1011–1091), the sciences, arts, and literature were supported by rulers who possessed the material wealth and desire to patronize scholarly endeavors in ways that rivaled and even exceeded those of the ʿAbbasid Caliphs in Baghdad or the Fatimids of North Africa. Translation projects of Greek medical and philosophical texts were commissioned by wealthy patrons, as were panegyric poems, literary treatises, grammatical texts, religious scholarly apparatus, etc. As well, architectural masterpieces were erected, and agricultural and scientific advances assured the place of al-Andalus as one of the richest cultures in the Mediterranean basin.

On that January day in 1492, Boabdil wept for himself and his personal loss of power, prestige, and wealth to be sure, but he also wept in memory of a much grander lost time and place that would remain important for centuries to come; a place where Arab culture reigned supreme, and was embraced to varying degrees by Arabs and

non-Arabs alike. The story of the 'Moor's Last Sigh' may or may not be true. However, it has been recorded and repeated so many times, that it is accepted as either truth or legend, and the story cannot help but tinge every look up and back at the glorious Alhambra with a sense of loss and nostalgia.[1]

Whether it is viewed as a lost paradise of cultural splendor, a symbol of displacement and exile, a site of religious tolerance, or a past to be embraced and learned from, al-Andalus has proven to be a highly evocative site of nostalgic expression. Numerous contemporary writers, poets and filmmakers including Radwa Ashour,[2] Tariq Ali,[3] Mahmoud Darwish,[4] Nizar Qabbani,[5] A. B. Yehoshuah,[6] and Youssef Chahine[7] have used al-Andalus as a backdrop for works that are nostalgic and proud, looking back to a previous time during which Arab culture reigned supreme, and using al-Andalus as a way to depict and discuss contemporary events.[8] These texts are grounded in memories and symbolic imageries that are subjective and selective, and one could

[1] María Rosa Menocal has written about the layers of nostalgic symbolism present in the Alhambra complex in numerous places including "Visions of al-Andalus," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*, eds. María Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, and Michael Sells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1–24 and *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2002).

[2] Raḍwā ʿĀshūr, *Thulāthiyya Gharnāṭa* (Beirut: al-Muʾassasa al-ʿarabiyya li-l-dirāsāt wa-l-nashr, 1998). William Granara has translated the first novel of this trilogy as *Granada* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003). He also provides an interesting analysis of this and two other novels, and their use of the theme of 'al-Andalus' in contemporary Arabic fiction in "Nostalgia, Arab Nationalism, and the Andalusian *Chronotope* in the Evolution of the Modern Arabic Novel," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 36:1 (2005), 57–73.

[3] Tariq Ali, *Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1992).

[4] Maḥmūd Darwīsh, *Aḥada ʿashara kawkaban* (Beirut: Dār al-jadīd, 1992).

[5] See Pedro Martínez Montávez, "Al-Andalus y Nizar Kabbani: La Tragedia," *'Ilu: Revista de Ciencias de las Religiones* 1 (1998), 9–24.

[6] A. B. Yehoshua, *A Journey to the End of the Millenium—A Novel of the Middle Ages*, trans. Nicholas de Lange (New York: Doubleday, 1999).

[7] Youssef Chahine, *al-Maṣīr* [Destiny] (MISR International Films: Pyramide distribution; New York: [Distributed by] Leisure Time Features, 1997).

[8] For a comprehensive study on the presence of al-Andalus in contemporary Arabic literature, see Pedro Martínez Montávez, *Al-Andalus, España, en la literatura árabe contemporánea: La casa del pasado* (Madrid: MAPFRE, 1992). Jonathan Shannon looks at how al-Andalus is used as an important marker of cultural identity in contemporary Syria and Morocco. See "Performing al-Andalus, Remembering al-Andalus: Mediterranean Soundings from Mashriq to Maghrib," *Journal of American Folklore* 120: 477 (Summer 2007), 308–344.

argue that al-Andalus is a fiction constructed in the present in order to satisfy contemporary needs and to feed modern imaginations. Just as Maurice Halbwachs convincingly argued that the biblical holy land and the topography of Jesus' life was actually defined centuries after his death in the Middle Ages according to the religious and literary imaginations of Christian pilgrims,[9] the same could be said of an Andalus similarly defined through contemporary conventional literary expression and symbolism.

With over five centuries having passed since 1492, it is not surprising that memories of a distant past have given way to nostalgic myth-making in the present. However, I argue that it is not the mere passing of time that creates and emphasizes these fond memories of al-Andalus. Rather, that nostalgia is built into the language and iconography used to express it. Even five hundred years ago, as Boabdil walked away from Granada as its last Muslim ruler, he was looking back to an idealized golden age that had occurred some four hundred years before his time, and subsequent re-tellings of *that* story had already turned it into legend. No matter where one stands and looks back to the past, multiple, layered nostalgias are at work. Standing in the twenty-first century and imagining the Muslim ruler as he walked away from Granada in 1492, one wonders what *he* was imagining, and what *those* imaginings were based on? Al-Andalus has been the object of nostalgic longing for quite some time, in fact even while it still existed. Treatments of the past, or that evoke the past, whether in poetry or prose, attempt to recall a golden age and to secure or immortalize it, and throughout the Andalusī period, poems and treatises were written that recalled and eulogized different apogees of Arabic and/or Judeo-Arabic culture. These works were written using clearly defined conventional language, and were affected by what a writer chose to include or elide, and how he chose to express it.

A nostalgic look back to the past, and to the eastern roots of Arab culture in al-Andalus can be seen as early as the eighth century with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I (d. 788), a member of the Umayyad clan that ruled the Islamic world from 661–750 from the city of Damascus. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān escaped death at the hands of the ʿAbbasids when they assumed the Caliphate in the year 750. Following these events, ʿAbd

[9] Maurice Halbwachs, *La Topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre Sainte* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971), 90–99.

al-Raḥmān made his way across North Africa and upon his arrival in al-Andalus in 755, proceeded to lay the groundwork for an Andalusī culture that constantly looked back in time, and eastward, to define itself. He built an estate and called it al-Ruṣāfa after the Umayyad estate of the same name northeast of Damascus. When he built the great mosque of Cordoba, he had the prayer niche pointing south, the direction of Mecca were he standing in Damascus, not southeast as it should have been from Cordoba. These acts of looking back, of putting down roots in al-Andalus that stretched all the way back to his native Syria are best encapsulated in ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's famous poem of the palm tree:

> A palm tree appeared to us in the middle of Rusafa.
> In the west (*al-gharb*) it is far from the land of palms.
>
> So I said: "You are just like me in exile (*al-tagharrub*), far away,
> and in long separation from my people.
>
> You have grown up in a land in which you are a stranger,
> and I am like you, isolated and far from home.
>
> The morning cloud waters you with rain
> that pours forth, the heavens pouring down torrents from the clouds."[10]
> [1]

Essentially living in both the past and the present, and the east and the west, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān represents an early manifestation of Andalusī longing that will be developed by later Andalusī writers who are similarly of a culture that is rooted in the west, yet always expressing both connection to and alienation from the east, from the past, and even from itself.

It is not just the real exile of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān that provides the inspiration and language for himself as well as for the articulation of later exiles, displacements, and losses. The Arabic literary language has its

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[10] Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *Kitāb al-bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, volume 2 (of 2), eds. G. S. Colin and Lévi-Provençal (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1948–1951), 60. My translation. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted. References in square brackets refer to Arabic and Hebrew texts in the Appendix. The tree as a symbol for longing and alienation finds expression far from al-Andalus in nineteenth century Germany in Heinrich Heine's poem: A spruce is standing/lonely in the North on a barren height./He drowses; ice and snowflakes/wrap him in a blanket of white./He dreams about a palm tree/in a distant, eastern land,/that languishes lonely and silent/ upon the scorching sand." Quoted in Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 14; Heinrich Heine, *Selected Works*. trans. and ed. Helen Mustard. Poetry translated by Max Knight (New York: Vintage, 1973), 423.

roots in the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* (ode), which reflected a localized Arabian reality and aesthetic. This poetry's setting in the desert, along with its common opening section evoking the beloved's memory over the lost campsite (the *nasīb*) allowed the poet to combine highly descriptive realistic passages with metaphorical expressions of loss, nostalgia, longing, and desolation.[11] In fact, as Jaroslav Stetkevych argues in *The Zephyrs of Najd*, the *nasīb* remained an enduring, malleable, and highly evocative site for nostalgic yearning in the Arabic *qaṣīda* into the contemporary period.[12] The *qaṣīda* gave way to a myriad of other genres in Arabic and Arabic-style literatures soon after the rise and spread of Islam in the seventh century, but that primeval loss would be felt for centuries to come and in a variety of settings far removed from the Arabian desert. This nostalgia, even as articulated in the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*, was not concerned solely with the past. As Fāṭima Ṭaḥṭaḥ points out, "what distinguishes the lyricism of the nostalgic *qasīda*…is the unique co-existence of the past and the present at the same time, or the combination of the two timeframes together to become yet another timeframe."[13] And so when the poet remembers and longs nostalgically for the past, he speaks of both past and present. Thus,

> [m]emory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting…Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present.[14]

In al-Andalus, poetic expressions of the past consist of a complex mixture of the immediate Andalusī past and a look toward the more distant Arab past—and in Jewish literature, the Jewish past as well—remembered, conceived of, and written about in the writer's present. The conventional language of the nostalgic *qaṣīda* further blurs the line between past and present, and imagined and real loss. In addition

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[11] For a discussion of nostalgia in pre- and early-Islamic poetry, see Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Ḥuwwar, *al-Ḥanīn ilā al-waṭan fī-l-adab al-ʿarabī ḥattā nihāyat al-ʿaṣr al-umawī* (Cairo: Dār nahḍat Miṣr li-l-ṭabʿ wa-l-nashr, 1973).

[12] Jaroslav Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd: The Poetics of Nostalgia in the Classical Arabic Nasīb* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[13] Fāṭima Ṭaḥṭaḥ, *al-Ghurba wa-l-ḥanīn fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī* (Rabat: Manshūrāt kulliyyat al-ādāb, 1991), 25. For a brief but concise overview of the development of the theme of nostalgia in Andalusī poetry, see Teresa Garulo, "La Nostalgia de al-Andalus: Génesis de un Tema Literario," *Qurtuba* 3 (1998), 47–63.

[14] Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*," *Representations* Volume 26 (Spring 1989), 8.

to the seemingly perpetual nostalgia for the past in much Andalusī literature, there is often a look back to the east, the intellectual, religious, and cultural source for al-Andalus. Facing external (Christian) and internal (sectarian religious, cultural, and political) threats for much of its history, Andalusīs girded themselves against these challenges with remembrances of past greatness. As they looked eastward and back, they realized that "[t]he greater the origins, the more they magnified [their] greatness. Through the past [they] venerated above all [them]selves."[15]

Of the many remembered sites in al-Andalus, perhaps no other symbolizes both greatness and loss as much as the palace-city of Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ just outside Cordoba. Construction of the city was begun in the year 936 by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III, who had declared himself *amīr al-muʾminīn* (Commander of the Faithful) just seven years before in 929, thus establishing the Caliphate of Cordoba as a rival to the ʿAbbasid Caliphate in Baghdad and the Fatimid Caliphate in North Africa. By the time it was completed decades later, it was a self-sufficient Caliphal city that served as a symbol of Andalusī Umayyad strength and prosperity. It was just as powerful a symbol in its destruction less than a century later in the year 1010 during the Berber uprising that eventually led to the dissolution of the Umayyad Caliphate as a whole. The ruined palace-city came to stand for a past stability (and fragility), and a lost power and grandeur that could never be recovered. As D. Fairchild Ruggles points out, "[t]he memory of Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ . . . endured long after the buildings had disappeared and was an important legacy to western Islamic architecture," to the point where it "came to symbolize the sad new character of the Islamic political situation on the Iberian Peninsula."[16] Many would stand over the ruins of Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ and, in the manner of the pre-Islamic poets, shed tears over the ruins, as al-Sumaysir (eleventh century) does here:

> I stopped at al-Zahrāʾ weeping; considering it,
> I lament its broken fragments.
>
> And I said: "O Zahrāʾ, no, come back."
> And she answered: "Can someone return from the dead?"

[15] Ibid., 16.

[16] D. Fairchild Ruggles, *Gardens, Landscape, and Vision in the Palaces of Islamic Spain* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 135.

I did not cease crying, crying there,
But, oh, how the tears were of no use, none at all.

They were like the traces of tears shed by professional
mourners of the dead.[17] [2]

The destruction of Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ, and along with it the Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba, really marked the beginning of the end for a certain definition of Arab al-Andalus, a definition that had its roots in the perception of a 'pure' Arab past. While it is true that many eleventh century city-states (*ṭawāʾif*) were either Arab or claimed to be Arab, others were ruled by Berbers, and this, along with the Berber role in the downfall of the Caliphate, exposed cultural tensions in this period, and in subsequent periods when the Almoravid and Almohad empires ruled over al-Andalus.[18] It was in this context that al-Sumaysir, quoted above, is said to have composed an invective (*hijāʾ*) poem aimed at the Berber origins of al-Muʿtaṣim, the ruler of Almeria, and for whom al-Sumaysir worked, in which he says:

I saw Adam in my sleep and I said to him:
"Father of all men, people claim

that the Berbers are descended from you."
So he said: "If what they say is true, then Eve is divorced!"[19] [3]

Al-Sumaysir argued himself out of trouble with his patron by claiming that these lines were only attributed to him in order to cause problems for him with al-Muʿtaṣim, in revenge for insults he had leveled at ʿAbdullah ibn Bulughīn of Granada. Whatever the case may be, the very fact that the Berber origins of the ruler were open to ridicule illustrates the tensions that existed, and the Berbers and/or North Africa would

[17] ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Zayyāt, *Rithāʾ al-mudun fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī* (Benghazi: Manshūrāt jāmiʿat Qaryūns, 1990), 665.

[18] David Wasserstein differentiates between Berbers who came to al-Andalus with the first conquerors and settlers, "neo-Berbers" who were imported as military troops by al-Manṣūr in the tenth century, and the later Almoravid and Almohad dynasties based in North Africa. See *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings: Politics and Society in Islamic Spain 1002–1086* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985). The first Berbers were more acculturated than the "neo-Berbers" who were more isolated from society due to their primarily military status. The ruling classes during the later Almoravid and Almohad periods associated themselves strongly with their homeland in North Africa, and much less so with al-Andalus.

[19] Iḥsān ʿAbbās, *Tārīkh al-adab al-andalusī: ʿaṣr al-ṭawāʾif wa-l-murābiṭīn* (Amman: Dār al-shurūq, 1997), 114.

continue to serve as oppositional prisms through which Andalusīs define themselves and assert their own superiority, as will be seen.

This book focuses on the imaginative reconstruction of the lost place of al-Andalus that navigates between traditional generic literary formulations and actual losses. In looking back to the past, Andalusī writers, living either in al-Andalus or nearby expressed a nostalgic yearning for a lost time and place that is itself defined through remembering and writing. In essence, it is the sum total of these remembrances and reactions to loss that approaches some sort of comprehensive view of al-Andalus. The remembrances are personal, but they reflect communal memories and sensibilities, as "what happens to the individual may not be purely individual, for it may be bound up with larger social, political, and cultural processes that often go unperceived."[20] Thus the writers that I discuss here speak as individuals, but often for their larger communities. It must be borne in mind, though, that arriving at a complete picture of al-Andalus through these texts is elusive, for

> we may say that most groups…engrave their form in some way upon the soil and retrieve their collective remembrances within the spatial framework thus defined. In other words, there are as many ways of representing space as there are groups.[21]

Therefore, this book will not attempt a definition of al-Andalus as a whole, for this view is in many ways still being formed, and will never really be complete. Rather, it examines a selection of 'pieces' of al-Andalus, and the ways in which Andalusī writers—some unwittingly and others quite deliberately—created and defined an Andalus according to their own choice of literary genre and the conventions associated with that genre. Additionally, these definitions were shaped by language, religious affiliation, historical and social context, and personal experience. In this way, I show that the literature that aimed to recall and give expression to al-Andalus, even that which claims to speak directly to the local Andalusī experience, is part of a larger literary tradition, and that the Andalus that it expressed was a series of symbolic literary

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[20] Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 171. Quoted in Ross Brann, *Power in the Portrayal: Representations of Jews and Muslims in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Islamic Spain* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 8.

[21] Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. Francis J. Ditter, Jr. and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), 156.

objects more than a geographic and political entity fixed in a single time and place.

The chapters that follow illustrate that al-Andalus was actually many places connected in large part by memories of the past, especially in the wake of various *nakabāt* (disasters) or *nihāyāt* (ends) in Andalusī history. The resultant view of al-Andalus is admittedly idealized, both as a result of its formation through nostalgic discourse, which will be examined in detail, and also because of the literary quality of the texts. However, it can be argued that the literary text is a suitable way to depict and understand the past, as long as those texts are read with a full understanding of the conventions and contexts involved. It is, after all, the literary character Sansón Carrasco, who assures Don Quixote that

> it is one thing to write as a poet, and another as a historian. The poet can tell or sing of things, not as they were, but as they ought to have been; the historian must relate them not as they should have been, but as they were, without adding to or subtracting from the truth.[22]

For its part, historical writing is not simply the objective retelling of events "as they were," since the historian must decide what to include and what to omit based on a number of factors, and even he adds or subtracts from the so-called truth in the choices made. Keeping this in mind, the idealized view of the past that results from looking back nostalgically and expressing it produces a view of al-Andalus that emerges from these multiple ideals, none of which is any less 'real' than any other. Through close readings of a variety of texts, I show how different authors evoke the memory of their lost Andalus and how these expressions are affected by genre, language, and historical and personal contexts. While each is a testament to the richness and complexity of Andalusī literatures and cultures, taken together they tell of a lost place that survives in the Arabic and Hebrew poetry and prose of al-Andalus.

Each chapter takes up a specific genre or theme, and closely analyzes one or more examples of that genre or theme in order to illustrate the context and conventions with which the writers worked. In Chapter One, I examine the *rithāʾ al-mudun* (city elegy), which has its roots in the Islamic east, but with the numerous losses experienced in al-Andalus

[22] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote of La Mancha*, trans. Walter Starkie (New York: New American Library, 1964), 547.

beginning in the eleventh century and continuing at an increasing pace until the final fall of Granada in 1492, it became a popular genre for Andalusī poets. Combining elements of the pre-Islamic *nasīb* and the traditional elegy for a person (*rithāʾ*), urbanized poets mourned the loss of cities in highly conventional verse. The chapter traces the development of the *rithāʾ al-mudun*, focusing on specific techniques utilized by poets that enhance the emotional and ritual effect of the poems. The chapter concludes with an analysis of Ibn Shuhayd's (d. 1035) elegy for the city of Cordoba which was besieged and subsequently sacked in 1013 during the Berber *fitna*.

In Chapter Two, I turn to the *maqāma* (rhymed prose fictional narrative), beginning with a discussion of the history and context of the genre in the east, and moving to its Andalusī manifestation. The focus of the chapter is al-Saraqusṭī's Qayrawan *Maqāma* which is a prose version of the city elegy genre discussed in Chapter One. Al-Saraqusṭī (d. 1143) mourns the North African city of Qayrawan, destroyed by Bedouin Arabs in 1057, as a way of indirectly weeping over the rapidly collecting ruins of al-Andalus, and in an attempt to reconcile the idealized past with his unstable present. Although al-Saraqusṭī uses literary themes and imagery common in the *rithāʾ al-mudun*, the elegy here has been translated from poetry to prose. I examine the reasons for this, and the implications of translating from one literary form to another. By viewing the *maqāma* in its literary-historical context, I examine the tensions that existed between the poetic heritage of the past, and the rhymed prose reaction to that past in the Almoravid period in which al-Saraqusṭī lived and wrote.

In Chapter Three, I return to the poetic form, looking at the Hebrew *qaṣīda* which references a combination of al-Andalus, Sefarad,[23] and the historical Jewish exile (Heb. *galut*). I begin with a brief overview of the Jewish adoption of Arabic poetics and literary conventions in the east and in Muslim Spain and highlight the ways in which different linguistic, historical, and literary discourses intersect in the Hebrew *qaṣīda*. The chapter culminates with a discussion of Moses Ibn Ezra's (d. after 1138) use of the abandoned campsite motif. Through an analysis

[23] A somewhat flexible term used to refer first to the Jewish communities in al-Andalus, then to those in the Christian kingdoms of Iberia, and then later still, to the Jewish memory of a certain cultural milieu in the Iberian Peninsula. See Jonathan P. Decter, *Iberian Jewish Literature: Between al-Andalus and Christian Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 5–6.

of two of his *qaṣīda*s, I examine the interplay of Hebrew and Arabic poetics, and the ways in which they are in dialogue with, and contrast to one another. These poems, written during Ibn Ezra's exile in the Christian north of Spain, rely on a combination of real personal loss, and archetypal poetic and historical symbols, tropes, and images. As with the writers in the previous chapters, Ibn Ezra's loss is articulated both in personal and more widely understood conventional terms, and the place that he mourns is one defined by his complex Judeo-Arabic literary heritage.

Chapter Four spans the time period covered in this book (eleventh-fourteenth centuries) and discusses the *risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* (treatise on the superiority of al-Andalus) and related themes. By analyzing a number of examples of this theme, this chapter provides an examination of Andalusī attitudes toward the eastern Islamic world (*al-mashriq*) and North Africa (*al-maghrib*). After an overview of the roots of different forms of *faḍl* literatures, I look at: Ibn Ḥazm's (d. 1064) and al-Shaqundī's (d. 1231 or 1232) *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* (Treatise on the Superiority of al-Andalus), Moses Ibn Ezra's (d. after 1138) chapter entitled *Shufūf jāliyat al-Andalus fī shaʾn al-shiʿr wa-l-khuṭab wa-l-nathr* (The Translucence of al-Andalus' Jewish Community in Matters of Poetry, Rhetoric and Prose) from his Judeo-Arabic treatise on Hebrew poetics (*Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*—The Book of Conversation and Discussion), and Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb's (d. 1374) *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* (Boasting Match Between Malaga and Salé) and *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār fī dhikr al-maʿāhid wa-l-diyār* (The Measure of Superiority in Mentioning Homes and Abodes). The analyses of these works focus on the ways each writer attempts to define al-Andalus by relating it to the east and to North Africa, and how political, literary, and personal contexts affect their different representations of Andalusī identity.

Central to the works treated in this book is a strong assertion or implication of 'Arab-ness' and cultural superiority over other peoples, most notably the Berbers of North Africa. Although very real threats from Christian states eventually led to Christian encroachments and eventual victories over Muslim-ruled al-Andalus, this book focuses on Andalusī cultural identity defined largely from *within* the Islamic realm. The texts analyzed here were written during critical moments or crises of 'Arab' culture in al-Andalus, specifically in response to threats from the south in al-Maghrib, and subsequent Berber assumption of control over the Iberian Peninsula. Ibn Shuhayd's elegy for the city

of Cordoba and Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* were composed following the Berber *fitna* of 1013 that destroyed the central authority of the Umayyad Caliphate. Al-Saraqusṭī wrote his rhymed prose narratives in the wake of the Berber Almoravid assumption of power over al-Andalus in 1091, when serious questions were arising concerning Muslim legitimacy and control in the Iberian Peninsula, as well as the role of the Arabic litterateur as court functionary. Living during the same period, Moses Ibn Ezra was similarly affected as an advocate and skilled practitioner of Arabic and Arabic-style literary culture, and as a Jewish writer whose community in Granada was scattered when the Almoravids entered al-Andalus. Al-Shaqundī composed his treatise in the waning years of Almohad[24] control over al-Andalus in an attempt to preserve the Arabic golden age of yesteryear. Finally, Ibn al-Khaṭīb lived and wrote his works related to the geography of al-Andalus and al-Maghrib from Marinid North Africa, where he spent a number of years in comfortable exile during the twilight of the Andalusī period when only the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada (1232–1492) remained, and al-Andalus was quickly becoming little more than a memory. To these litterateurs schooled in Arabic letters and steeped in Arabic literary culture, each of these periods represented threats to their livelihoods and their identities. Their writing defined al-Andalus as part of an idealized past rooted in the east, and often in contrast to, or at least cognizant of the Berber North Africa that lay directly across the straits from al-Andalus and which served as a constant reminder that the golden age of Arabic letters in al-Andalus was under threat. Their present demanded memories and depictions of an Andalusī past that was strong, vibrant, and Arab.

The geography (literally, 'writing the earth') of al-Andalus is not easy to define. Boundaries drawn according to literary, historical, religious, linguistic, and personal criteria rarely fall along the same, neatly drawn lines, and by looking back to the past and using different literary forms that themselves rely on nostalgic language, writers remembered and defined an Andalus that will last as long as these works are read. By using and manipulating highly conventional literary discourses, these texts move between remembrances and realities to express idealized memorials and depictions of al-Andalus. In many ways, they are similar to the memorial book, a literary genre meant to

[24] Another North African Berber dynasty, 1145–1269.

"memorialize a village, a district, a region, or a country that no longer exists."[25] Like the memorial book, these texts are testimonies to the greatness of al-Andalus at a certain time, and they strive to preserve that time, and place, in state.

When the Andalusī writer composed works about al-Andalus, he was engaging in remembrances of a place that in real, political terms had begun to disappear in the early-eleventh century when the Umayyad Caliphate was destroyed as a result of the Berber *fitna*, evoking ruins of the present and of the past. These ruins were as old as the Arabic literary tradition itself. Through the writing of these texts, and through reading them, al-Andalus as a repository of past glories and present yearnings is preserved.

[25] Susan Slyomovics, *The Object of Memory: Arab and Jew Narrate the Palestinian Village* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 1.

CHAPTER ONE

WRITTEN IN STONE: THE ANDALUSĪ *RITHĀʾ AL-MUDUN* IN THE ARABIC ELEGIAC TRADITION

Introduction

Andalusī poets perfected the art of describing urban settings with the purpose of recalling that which was either lost or was on the verge of being lost, and immortalizing them in poetry. With the numerous defeats experienced in al-Andalus beginning in the eleventh century and continuing at an increasing pace until the final fall of Granada in 1492, the *rithāʾ al-mudun* (city elegy) became a common genre for the Andalusī poet. Following the fall of different cities, poets paid homage to homes, plazas, palaces, and entire cities by composing elegies for these places. Collectively, this body of poetry comprised a literary geography of al-Andalus, paradoxically rooted in loss.

By looking at the ways in which poets remembered and expressed al-Andalus, we see that loss is an important component in the definition of place. In fact, the connection between loss, memory, discourse, and location is best encapsulated in the term *topos*, which

> refers both to a place in discourse and a place in the world. The idea of topography—in both senses of the word—is connected to the ancient Greek art of memory. The art of memory was invented after a catastrophe and began with the collapse of a house. According to legend, the poet Simonides of Ceos attended a rich banquet…Simonides briefly left the banquet…Meanwhile the roof collapsed, crushing the house and all of the guests beneath the ruins, disfiguring them beyond recognition. Simonides remembered the places where the guests had been seated, and thus with his help the relatives of the guests could identify their dead…Simonides discovered the techniques of memory used by ancient orators, connecting places in the familiar environment (physical *topoi*) to stories and parts of discourse (rhetorical *topoi*).[1]

[1] Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, 77. See Cicero, *De Oratore*, Book II: 351–360, ed. and trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942).

Bachelard emphasizes the importance of the relationship between place and memory by asserting that physical space is necessary for memory to function, for without it, memory has no depth or duration.

> [S]pace is everything… We are unable to relive duration that has been destroyed. We can only think of it, in the line of an abstract time that is deprived of all thickness. The finest specimens of fossilized duration concretized as a result of long sojourn, are to be found in and through space. The unconscious abides. Memories are motionless, and the more securely they are fixed in space, the sounder they are.[2]

It is this intersection of space, loss, and memory that is of interest in the *rithāʾ al-mudun*. By looking at the way in which poets utilized a poetics of loss and nostalgia, I examine the *rithāʾ al-mudun* in the context of the Arabic poetic tradition, as well as within the more specific context of al-Andalus' changing borders which began to recede in the eleventh century. The Andalus that emerges from these poems is an idealized one that depends on memory, and is defined as a series of imaginary reconstructions. As writers work within a clearly defined tradition, each remembered and recreated Andalus is both a unique location defined by individual memory, as well as a space shared by the larger community who understands and appreciates the conventions used to define it. This tension between individual and communal memory in discourse is necessary because

> everyone has a capacity for memory that is unlike that of anyone else, given the variety of temperaments and life circumstances. But individual memory is nevertheless a part or an aspect of group memory… One cannot in fact think about the events of one's past without discoursing upon them. But to discourse upon something means to connect within a single system of ideas or opinions as well as those of our circle.[3]

The city elegy is curiously poised between the reality of a tangible loss acutely felt by the individual, and a highly conventional language that is used to understand and express it. Thus, the object of the *rithāʾ al-mudun* is a place that is both solid as stone, and as flexible and subjective as individualistic poetic expression.

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[2] Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 9.

[3] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 53.

In this chapter, I examine certain conventional techniques of the *rithāʾ al-mudun* that combine elements of the *rithāʾ* for a person (repetition, water imagery, hyperbole), as well as elements of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* (such as weeping at the abandoned campsite and place naming). I conclude with a close reading of Ibn Shuhayd's (d. 1035) elegy for the city of Cordoba, reduced to ruins in 1013 as a result of the Berber *fitna*. By looking at one of the first elegies composed for an Andalusī city, I show that the building blocks of a nostalgic discourse were already in place in the poetic language at this time, and that the Cordoba that the poet remembers is built upon the ruins of previous losses, and will survive as long as the Arabic poetic discourse used to define it is appreciated and understood.

Shifting Spaces

In the opening lines of Imruʾ al-Qays' famous *muʿallaqa*, the poet stands with his memories in a spot that is fragile and impermanent in the desert sands, yet at the same time, curiously fixed, grounded firmly against the blowing winds of time by its poetic weight.

> Halt, my two friends, and we will weep over the memories of a beloved
> And a campsite that was at the sand dune's rim, between al-Dakhūl and Ḥawmal.
>
> And Tūḍiḥ and al-Miqrāt, whose traces have not been effaced
> by the weaving of the north and south winds.[4] [4]

Whether this place is real or determinable is of little importance. Even in this early pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*, rather than presenting a description or demarcation of an actual location, the poet uses the emotionally evocative *nasīb*, and the metaphor of place, to express the universally familiar and ineffaceable feelings of desolation, loss, and nostalgia.

The conventional use of the abandoned campsite theme, and the constant evocation of desert place names, locations, and descriptions, confirms the importance of these places—whether real or imaginary—to the poet and to the audience. The symbolic nature of these toponyms

[4] al-Tibrīzī, *al-Qaṣāʾid al-ʿashr*, ed. Fakhr al-Dīn Qabāwa (Beirut: Dār al-āfāq al-jadīda, 1980), 20.

cannot be underestimated, nor can their power to express the nostalgic tone that is embedded in Arabic poetry. These places

> may have existed—indeed, many may still be geographically identifiable—but poetically this is no longer important. We do not even know whether the place-names in the most ancient Arabic odes were ever more than evocative moorings for those entirely ethereal effusions of loss and yearning which form the mood of the *nasīb*. With some certainty, albeit poetic certainty, we may thus assume that, at least within the *nasīb* proper, references to places are for the most part of an indirect, symbolic nature, and that particularly in post-Jāhiliyah poetry their metaphorization and symbolic saturation become fully consummated.[5]

In contrast to this view, Yumna al-ʿĪd argues that in pre- and early-Islamic Arabic poetry there is an emphasis on the congruity between signifier and signified which requires the use of a poetic language that remains as close as possible to literal meaning. According to al-ʿĪd this poetry is largely concerned with inherited ideals of valor, steadfastness, bravery, and loyalty, and thus descriptions of physical places are of little real concern to the pre-Islamic poets. As a result,

> the aesthetic relation with space and place manifested in the use of poetic imagery was overlooked. It was seen as an extraneous relation void of the intimate and personal associations it actually embodied, and the emotional connotations woven into it. The place was considered a mere decorative frame…Thus the significance of yearning which actually characterized the poetry of the *jāhiliyyah* was not a topic for aesthetic evaluation. *Al-Wuqūf ʿalā al-aṭlāl* or the lamenting of the loss of forsaken grounds was no more than an introduction to other ends and goals.[6]

Al-ʿĪd sees Arabic poetry's interest in space and location as developing later, and she goes on to explain that, for example, in the poetry of Abū Nuwās that mocks those who continued to stand weeping at the ruined campsite, there is a "conflict between two forms."[7] These two forms are a poetics based on an ideal, and one "based on actual

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[5] J. Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd*, 107.

[6] Yumna al-ʿĪd, "The Aesthetics of Space and the Longing for the Lost City," trans. from Arabic by Samira Aghacy, in *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature: Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach, Proceedings of the International Symposium in Beirut, June 25th–June 30th, 1996*, eds. Angelika Neuwirth, Birgit Embaló, Sebastian Günther, Maher Jarrar (Beirut: In Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 1999), 72.

[7] Ibid., 73.

location not disconnected from social temporality."[8] The lifestyle and poetry of Abū Nuwās challenged the pre-Islamic ideal that Andras Hamori refers to as the 'Poet as Hero'.[9] Out of this challenge came a shift in the aesthetics of space.

> For the poet, this conflict touches upon an existential question, the relation between life and death, a life that fades away in a stable and fixed time/space situation, and a life that is born in an historical intangibility, generating an aesthetics whose poetic association remains with locality and space.[10]

With the move to the city, poets continue to use the ancient Arabic poetic language in their new urban setting in order to express similar emotions of loss and a yearning for the past. However, it is not the 'reality' of a location that is important, but rather, the effect of its mention. It matters little whether or not a poet in ninth century Baghdad or twelfth century Seville has ever really stood at the ruins of an abandoned campsite. These desert locations and signposts serve the poet and the audience who understand, or at least appreciate, their symbolic resonance through a familiarity with the poetic language and tradition. The urban poet draws on this tradition and adds new locations to it that, in turn, acquire their own symbolic resonance.

It is not until the ʿAbbasid period, specifically the founding of Baghdad as the imperial capital in 762, that we see a strong attachment to a manmade place, and the rise of the *rithāʾ al-mudun* genre that will eventually mourn its loss. Baghdad quickly became a place known for its splendor, wealth, and culture, and the city provided poets with an entirely different landscape, culture, and aesthetic to use as a poetic pallet than did the desert. Poets used this new place and the symbols associated with it to express loss, nostalgia, sadness, and bliss, just as they did in the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*. The new places were mixed with the old, and an evocative and symbolic space was developed that, by using old poetic language and imagery along with new intellectual developments, expressed the new urban setting.

The urbanization of Arab culture also marked a shift in how Muslim society was to be organized. Although relationships based on kinship,

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Andras Hamori, *On the Art of Medieval Arabic Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 3.

[10] al-ʿĪd, "The Aesthetics of Space," 73.

tribe, and lineage would continue to be important, the rise of the city assured that they were no longer the only binding factors. It is now the city that will act as a unifying force, for

> [u]rban identity appeals to common memory and a common past but is rooted in a man-made place, not in the soil: in urban coexistence at once alienating and exhilarating, not in the exclusivity of blood.[11]

The city became home to people of different social and economic classes, religions, and origins. The new urban residents were bound neither by blood nor by tribal bonds, but rather, by place. This place served as a well of shared histories, images, associations, and memories. These cities were composed of structures that were built by and for its citizens—without whom the city would be completely meaningless—and it is in the *rithāʾ al-mudun* that the focus on people, place, and memory is made clear.

One of the earliest elegies is for the city of Baghdad, composed following the civil war of succession between Hārūn al-Rashīd's sons al-Amīn and al-Maʾmūn (809–813). The poet, Abū Yaʿqūb Isḥāq al-Khuraymī (d. 829), standing amongst the ruins of the city, takes the audience back to a time before its destruction. In the first two verses a clear contrast is made between Baghdad's current debased state and that of (virginal) perfection before the war. The poet immediately enters into an enumeration of Baghdad's lost charms. The hyperbolic idealization of the city falls into line well with the highly stylized and idealized descriptions Arabic poetry gives to the beloved or the positive attributes of a deceased person, and the effect is similar. What is created is an image of an ideal. In the case of a beloved, he or she could be real, or the description could be of the more general concept of beauty. In the case of a eulogized person, words of praise are based in reality, but it is the idealization of their attributes, and thus an idealization of the deceased, that is immortalized in the elegy. The same effects are at work in the *rithāʾ al-mudun*. In this elegy for the city of Baghdad composed soon after its destruction, the poet has created an ideal city that will live on in verse:

> They said, when Time had not yet had a chance to play with Baghdad,
> when her ill luck had not yet caused her to topple,
>
> When she was like a bride, whose inner secrets
> were alluring to the young man, as was her outward appearance:

[11] Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, 76.

"An immortal garden (*jannatu khuldin*).[12] An abode of bliss."
Before, few distressing calamities befell it.[13] [5]

By giving voice to others ("they said") the poet makes it clear that the grief is not his alone, but his community's as well. Also, in deferring the speech to others instead of speaking for himself, al-Khuraymī removes himself, at least temporarily, in order to sharpen the focus upon the destroyed city of Baghdad, whose name appears in the very first verse.

The use of repetition, leads the audience down a path of blissful revelry, remembering all that was beautiful in Baghdad. Its charms are enumerated, but instead of a description of a deceased person as in the *rithāʾ*, the poet describes a place. It is important to note, moreover, that everything described in this scene is manmade, including the gardens and agricultural fields. Nature has been tamed and incorporated into the new urban reality that was Baghdad, and were it not for that troublesome past tense verb in the first verse ("they said/*qālū*"), one could almost have been convinced that man had managed to completely control nature, and the cycle of life and death:

O, have you seen the flowering gardens
whose brilliance is pleasing to all who gaze upon them?

And have you seen the palaces rising up,
their chambers hiding women like statues?

And have you seen the villages whose lands
were planted with all sorts of greenery?

Surrounded by vineyards and date palms and
sweet basil that rise up loftily? [6]

However, nature is not so easily tamed, and just as we are being swept away in this Edenic scene of the past created by human hands, we are abruptly brought back to the harsh present, a scene of destruction and desolation where nature is already beginning to reclaim the landscape that once belonged to it:

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[12] 'Immortal garden' (*jannat al-khuld*) was the name of a palace in Baghdad at the time, and the poet uses this toponym both to locate the poem, and to initiate the 'expulsion-from-paradise' theme that will be seen in abundance in the later Andalusī period.

[13] al-Khuraymī, *Dīwān al-Khuraymī*, eds. ʿAlī Jawād al-Ṭāhir and Muḥammad Jabbār al-Muʿaybid (Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-jadīd, 1971), 27. Michael Fishbein has translated this poem in al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī, Volume 31: The War between Brothers*, trans. Michael Fishbein (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 139.

It has become emptied of humankind.
Its stones have been made to bleed.

A desolate waste where dogs howl.
A traveler would not recognize the traces left behind. [7]

As the pre-Islamic poet made reference to places that may have been used more for their emotional effect than for their adherence to reality, al-Khuraymī creates a poetic map for his audience, naming Baghdad's palaces, gardens, and parks, all laid waste in the battle. There is little question that these places existed, but they still carry the elegiac tone of the Bedouin *nasīb*, as we are led from one stopping point (*maqām*) to the next. It is also interesting to consider this place naming in the context of what Mary Carruthers calls the "architectural mnemonic,"[14] a technique used to aid in the memorization of ideas (*memoria rerum*) or words (*memoria verborum*).[15] This system is based on the idea that we remember best with the help of visual images and thus, by memorizing and associating words and ideas with specific locations or objects within an imagined scene or landscape, texts can be much more easily memorized and recalled. Thus, in order to memorize a text, one takes an imaginary walk through a well-known location and forms a mental picture of both the place and the images associated with it. Unlike the classical architectural mnemonic that makes use of mental images for the purpose of memorizing a text (important in largely oral cultures), al-Khuraymī's poem could be working in both directions—from image to poem, and from poem to image. The poet walks the audience through the streets of Baghdad from one place to the next, allowing for a full visualization of them, and providing them with vivid images with which to memorize the poem—both resulting in a memorialization of the city. It is important to stress here that by al-Khuraymī's time, Islamic society (at least learned society) had moved from being an oral culture to a literate one. Thus, I am not suggesting that al-Khuraymī's imaginary walk through Baghdad should necessarily be understood solely as a means for memorizing the poem. However, the mnemonic potential is not obsolete by any means. The section ends with the poet erasing, yet evoking those same locations, utilizing the

[14] Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 73. See also Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966).

[15] According to Cicero's *De Oratore*, this technique was first discovered, or at least articulated by Simonides of Ceos (ca. 556 B.C.–468 B.C.). See above page 15.

repetitive *ubi sunt* motif, and underlining the power of Fate and the inability of anyone or anything to resist:

> At Zandaward and al-Yāsiriyya,
> and on the two river banks, where the ferries have stopped crossing,
>
> And at al-Ruḥā and Upper al-Khayzurāniyya,
> to its bridges that were lofty,
>
> And at the Palace of ʿAbduwayh, there is a warning and guidance
> for every soul whose inner thoughts are pure.
>
> Where are their guards, and where is their guardian?[16]
> Where is the one who received benefits, and where is the one who bestowed them?
>
> Where are their eunuchs and their attendants?
> Where are their inhabitants and the ones who built them?
>
> Where have the Slavic al-Jarādiyya guards gone,
> and the Abyssinians, with their pendulous lips? [8]

Al-Khuraymī concludes his poem with a pleading gesture to al-Maʾmūn to restore Baghdad to its former glory, and a more explicit cry for help directed at al-Maʾmūn's chief advisor, al-Faḍl b. Sahl (Dhū al-Riʾāsatayn). The poet asks al-Faḍl to seize control of the situation through mercy, justice, and guidance. He uses water imagery, but stresses moderation in order to avoid the destructive storm that destroyed Baghdad at the hands of the feuding brothers, al-Amīn and al-Maʾmūn:

> Do not immerse yourself in deep water
> from which not even the wise can emerge.
>
> You must remain in the shallow water; do not enter the
> flood when the waters are surging and tumultuous. [9]

In a final flourish, al-Khuraymī focuses attention upon himself as poet, and upon the work of art he has produced. Apparent is his desire and confidence that this poem will withstand the vicissitudes of Time and be remembered and recited forever, thus memorializing and giving eternal

[16] The possessive pronoun *-hā* is ambiguous here. It can either refer to the aforementioned gardens and palaces, in which case it is translated as 'their', or to Baghdad, translated as 'its'. Regardless, it is interesting to note that the rhyme syllable (*-hā*) throughout the poem generally refers to a Baghdad that has not been named since the first verse. The city is both absent and present in the possessive pronoun. This rhyme will also be used by Ibn Shuhayd in his *rithā* for Cordoba, treated below, with similar effect.

life to the city that was Baghdad, otherwise physically destroyed. The poem itself is a testament to man's ability to overcome nature and Fate, and the final result is a Baghdad removed from its physical location that lives only in the poet's work:

> Take something enticing like a piece of shining silver.
> This poem will not become lost in any country it goes.
>
> I do not recite it out of greed or vanity.
> Every soul has passions that command it.
>
> God has carried it forth, as advice
> and a warning; and its strands have been neatly woven.
>
> It has come to you to relate matters to you,
> as one might spread out the cloth of a merchant.
>
> I have given it to a trustworthy friend to carry it;
> one who, out of admiration for it, will recite it again and again. [10]

There are elegies composed for other eastern cities that use similar motifs, images, and rhetorical strategies. As a result of both internal (i.e. Muslim) struggles and external attacks (the Crusades, the Mongol invasions) cities were attacked, fell, and duly mourned.[17] As in al-Khuraymī's poem, other poets used descriptive elements of the *qaṣīda*, as well as strategies, images, and tropes that were used in the earliest *rithāʾ* poems, to create works that mediate between past and present. An importance is attached to manmade places, which is something that sets them apart from the Bedouin *qaṣīda* of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic period, but, although these places are more fixed and concrete, the poet continues to manipulate the language and tone of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* so as to infuse these newer urban spaces with a comparable symbolic resonance to that of the Arabian locations of the earlier poetry.

The Andalusī Rithāʾ al-Mudun

With the numerous losses experienced by the Andalusīs starting in 1013 with the fall of Cordoba and ending in 1492 with Granada's surrender

[17] For detailed discussions of the genre, see ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ḥusayn Muḥammad, *Rithāʾ al-mudun wa-l-mamālik al-zāʾila* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-jabalāwī, 1983); Ibrahim al-Sinjilawi, *The Lament for Fallen Cities: a study of the development of the elegiac genre in classical Arabic Poetry* (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1983); al-Zayyāt, *Rithāʾ al-mudun fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī*.

to the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella, there developed a rich and lachrymose tradition of *rithāʾ al-mudun* in the Islamic west. It is important to point out that the losses incurred in al-Andalus were not all the same. They did not result from the same causes, nor did the cities ultimately fall to the same foes. The past and the place that the poets mourned or longed for was shaped by the present, and by each poet's particular situation in that present. They expressed subjective visions of their lost cities, leaving literary documents that, when taken as a whole, drew a very diverse and complex map of al-Andalus.

The remainder of this chapter examines the *rithāʾ al-mudun* in al-Andalus and highlights certain poetic conventions, strategies, and motifs that served to mourn lost cities. I conclude with an analysis of Ibn Shuhayd's *rithāʾ* for the city of Cordoba in order to present an illustration of these strategies at work in an early example of the *rithāʾ al-mudun* in al-Andalus. Ibn Shuhayd defines the city by evoking a certain cultural milieu that was lost with its destruction. His Cordoba is based on a nostalgic ideal for some sort of mythical Arab past that consists of the deserts of Arabia, and the great architectural and cultural achievements of both the eastern and western Islamic world. His monument, composed following the city's destruction, is constructed of memories and is comprised of a conventional poetic language that serves to eulogize and memorialize Cordoba, the lost empire of the Umayyads, and the lost status of the Arab litterateur.

Repetition

Discussing the *rithāʾ* for a person, literary critic Ibn Rashīq (d. between 1064 and 1070) dedicates a chapter of his treatise, *al-ʿUmda* (The Pillar), to the rhetorical dimensions of repetition, stating that this device is well suited for expressing sorrow and grief. It is, he says, in the "*rithāʾ* where repetition is most common, being found where there is calamity and strongly felt pain."[18] By creating a sense of continuity, expectation, and stability through repetition, the poet is able to counter the extreme rupture that comes with death, and ultimately attempt to control it. The

[18] Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan Ibn Rashīq, *al-ʿUmda fī maḥāsin al-shiʿr wa-ādābihi wa-naqdihi*, Volume 2, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-saʿāda, 1964), 76.

repeated invocation of the deceased's name can serve both to preserve his or her memory, and to exorcise the grief that is felt at the loss. Also, the name acts to replace its bearer, as does the poem as a whole. It becomes a tangible object and allows the mourners to shift their attention from the deceased, who is gone, to the name, which can be summoned time and again. Thus the poet undertakes the "absorbing work of mourning"[19] which involves moving from a state in which the loss of the object is so overwhelming that the mourner is unable to fathom the reality of its loss, to one where finally, "reality gains the day."[20] As well as repeating the name, the elegist may repeat whole phrases and/or syntactic patterns. Taking on a chant-like quality, the poem moves from the realm of words heard aurally or read on a page, to an interactive experience not unlike the ritual movements associated with prayer, or the swaying and repetition of God's name in the context of a Sufi *dhikr*.[21] The use of repetition in the *rithāʾ al-mudun* fulfills similar functions. By repeating the name of the lost city or cities, and epithets for that city, the poet strives to keep the name, and thus the memory of the place, alive. With the 'real' place gone, all that remains is the poetic one. And it is reference to this poetic space that serves as the city limits within which descriptions of cultural, architectural, intellectual, political, and economic achievements are placed.

The anaphoric use of particles such as the vocative *yā* (O), the exclamatory or interrogative *kam* (many a/so many/how many?....), and/or time markers such as *ayyāma* (O, those were the days when....) creates a rhythm and a continuity that allow for a certain comfort and expectation that can act as a counterbalance to the unpredictability and severe rupture of a traumatic loss. As well, this expectation can serve to shorten the distance between the poet and audience; after a rhythm is established, the audience comes to anticipate what comes next. The line between poet and audience is blurred to the point where all the mourners are standing together, listening and reciting at the same time.

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[19] Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia (1917)," trans. Joan Riviere, in *General Psychological Theory: Papers of Metapsychology*, ed. Philip Rieff, Volume 6 in *The Collected Papers of Sigmund Freud* (New York: Collier Books, 1963), 167.

[20] Ibid., 166.

[21] Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetry of Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 163. For a discussion of repetition and other rhetorical strategies utilized in the English elegy, see Peter M. Sacks, *The English Elegy: Studies in the Genre from Spenser to Yeats* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

Alternatively, rather than bringing mourners and poet together, repetition can also be used in such a way as to close others out of a very personal loss. For example, in a poem written for his family home destroyed during the Berber *fitna* in Cordoba, Ibn Ḥazm addresses the home. The direct address and the use of the second person singular to refer to the lost dwelling create and underline the intimate relationship between poet and place:

> O abode, it was not our choice that you were deserted by us,
> for if we could have our way, you would be our burial place.
>
> .....
>
> O best of abodes, abandoned, lovely though you are,
> the morning clouds watered you; how splendid you were, how noble.
>
> O unveiled gardens, surrounded by
> beautiful garden courtyards that became dust after we left.
>
> O fate, deliver my greetings to its inhabitants
> even if they live in Marwīn, or have crossed the river.[22] [11]

Toward the end of the poem, the poet turns away from the house as intimate interlocutor. The vocative calls increase feverishly, and he directs his attention outward and all around him. At first, this appears to be a desperate attempt to reach out and find consolation in companionship and shared suffering, but in fact, the poet addresses his own emotions and thus remains standing alone. The grief he feels is a personal one, not to be shared with others:

> Ah, my sick body, and O excited heart,
> and O my bereaved soul, and O my burning liver.
>
> O boundless worry, and O exhausting grief.
> O anxious passion, and O unheard of separation.
>
> O Fate, do not be distant. O covenant, do not become void.
> O tears, do not harden. O illness, do not heal. [12]

In the following short example, the unknown poet of this *rithāʾ* for Toledo following its fall to the Christians in 1085 produces a multilayered repetition which, through its syntactic pattern and explicit

[22] Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl al-aʿlām*, 2nd edition, ed. E. Lévi Provençal (Beirut: Dār al-makshūf, 1956), 107–108. Also in al-Zayyāt, *Rithāʾ al-mudun fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī*, 658.

language, expresses the overwhelming and uncompromising power of Fate, and humankind's inability to counter it. A pattern is established in the first hemistich that is then explained, repetitively, in the second. It is as if the poet does not want the audience to miss the significance of the repetition, but knows that it will, for history repeats itself and lessons are rarely learned:

> What a pity, what a pity, what sadness!
> What is repeated, fate repeats again.[23] [13]

Another rich example comes in a short poem by Abū al-Muṭarrif b. ʿUmayra (1186–1259) in which the poet longs for his birthplace Shaqr (Júcar), located in eastern al-Andalus just south of Valencia. He combines *jināS* (paronomasia) with repetition in the first and last lines to draw attention to the place that is the focus of the poem. In the poem's very first word, remembrance is emphasized, and the poet repeats the root (*dh-k-r*) in the second line. Also, the sounds *qāf* and *rāʾ* are repeated throughout, evoking the city's name. A tension is thus created in that, although this short piece displays a density of rhetorical ornamentation (*badīʿ*) that draws a fair bit of attention to the poet and his skill, it is remembrance of the lost city that is central to the genre's goals. The poem is successful as a poetic display of the literary taste of the time that celebrates both the city and the literary prowess it fostered. The compactness of the poem combined with these displays of poetic skill results in a well-crafted literary monument to a place and time far from the poet:

> He remembered the east when it was distant,
> and [his heart] melted in sorrow for its lightning when it was flashing.
>
> .....
>
> How can he be so far from Shaqr, and its blue waters,
> where there live the blond and the blue-eyed.[24] [14]

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[23] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb min ghuṣn al-Andalus al-raṭīb*. Volume 4, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās. Beirut: Dār ṣādir, 1968, 484. Also in al-Zayyāt, *Rithāʾ al-mudun fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī*, 671.

[24] Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Mālik al-Marrākushī, *al-Dhayl wa-l-takmila*, Volume 1 Part 1, ed. Muḥammad Bin Sherīfa (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, n.d.), 17. Also in al-Zayyāt, *Rithāʾ al-mudun fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī*, 688; Muḥammad Bin Sherīfa, *Abū al-Muṭarrif Aḥmad b. ʿUmayra al-Makhzūmī: ḥayātuhu wa-āthāruhu* (Rabat: Manshūrāt al-markaz al-jāmiʿī li-l-baḥth al-ʿilmī, n.d.), 232.

Finally, in this example from a poem by Abū Mūsā Hārūn b. Hārūn mourning the loss of Seville which fell in 1248 to King Fernando III, the poet combines repetition of the vocative *yā* (O), and the particle *kam* (How many?). The result is that the audience is unable to turn away, resulting in an expression of unrelenting grief:

> O Seville, was it preordained for you when fate took aim
> and destruction did not observe a covenant of protection?
>
> .....
>
> O paradise, our sins tore us from your beautiful watercourses.
> Now we must suffer sorrow and regret.
>
> O you who ask me about the plight of the Muslims in it,
> Listen and you will hear something that will make you deaf.
>
> .....
>
> How many prisoners went off bound in strong shackles,
> complaining in disgrace of their broken feet?
>
> And how many nursing babies were snatched from their mothers,
> killed, weaned by the tumult?
>
> .....
>
> How many in Triana are there, in whose hearts sorrow has left mourning,
> sending out deep emotion every time they speak?
>
> O its beauty, everyone knows its beauty.
> None but grace in abundance went towards it.[25] [15]

Joining of East and West/The Desert and the City

For the Andalusī poet, the evocation of eastern place names—real or imagined—was common practice. Poets in the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods made use of toponyms for purposes beyond that of locating a poem's events. By using place names, the poets drew upon a poetic language and tradition rich in literary references and semantic potential. The Andalusī poets, like their eastern peers and predecessors, exploited the rich symbolism of natural locations such as the Najd highlands, the

[25] Ibn ʿIdhārī al-Marrākushī, *al-Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib*, Part 3, eds. Ambrose Huwais Mirenda and Muḥammad Ibn Tāwīt (Tetouan: Dār krīmādis li-l-ṭibāʿa, 1960), 382. Also in al-Zayyāt, *Rithāʾ al-mudun fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī*, 698.

Nile, Euphrates, and Tigris rivers, as well as contemporary manmade urban centers such as Mecca, Medina, Baghdad, and Damascus. These places are imbued with broadly understood and appreciated historical, cultural, and spiritual importance, and the mere mention of them conjures up a host of images and emotional responses that carry the audience far beyond the boundaries of the actual words.

Generally speaking, Bedouin style and imagery were quite popular among Andalusīs who emulated poets such as al-Mutanabbī (d. 965), al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 1015), and Mihyār al-Daylamī (d. 1036). These urbane eastern poets, like the Andalusīs who followed, did not claim that they were describing a desert reality based on firsthand experience. Rather, they worked within a poetic framework that utilized the traditional themes, images, and locations both out of nostalgia for the golden age of pre-Islamic poetry, and in order to respond to and engage in a dialogue with that tradition.[26] According to Magda al-Nowaihi, evocations of Bedouin imagery and motifs "were part of a poetic technique which developed out of admiration and nostalgia for older times and Arabian things."[27] However, this nostalgia did not strictly relegate poetry to the past, for the style that Andalusī poets so admired was "a combination of bedouin subjects, language and spirit with the *muḥdath* (modern) rhetorical style, and the general inclination of the *muḥdathūn* to search for new and innovative images and concepts."[28]

In the Andalusī *rithāʾ al-mudun*, poets made use of eastern place names, but added to their evocative potential by mentioning locations in al-Andalus as well. Using the rich symbolism of an eastern place such as Najd, Mecca, or Baghdad served to draw upon the audience's collective poetic and cultural sensibilities, and placed them in the elegiac world of the classical Arabic poetic language. Then, the poet could add local (Andalusī) place name references that, although not having the benefit of a long tradition in the poetic consciousness as did their eastern

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[26] For a discussion of Mihyār's use of desert imagery see Stefan Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic poetry: A structural analysis of selected texts (3rd century AH/9th century AD–5th century AH/11th century AD)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 58–59. For a discussion of how Ibn Khafāja utilized Bedouin motifs, see Magda al-Nowaihi, *The Poetry of Ibn Khafājah: A Literary Analysis* (Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1993), 4–5 and 11–13. Iḥsān ʿAbbās treats the Andalusian use of 'Arabian' themes in general in *Tārīkh al-adab al-Andalusī*, 108–117.

[27] al-Nowaihi, *The Poetry of Ibn Khafājah*, 13.

[28] Ibid., 5. For a more detailed discussion of these issues, see Aḥmad Haykal, *al-Adab al-Andalusī: min al-fatḥ ilā suqūṭ al-khilāfa* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Shabāb, 1962), 217–232.

counterparts, carried with them a local emotional importance that hit quite a bit closer to home. Eastern and Andalusī places are taken out of their respective locations (east and west) and each is infused with the other's historical, emotional, and symbolic importance. Thus, the eastern places are made local and familiar, and the Andalusī places are made distant and exotic. The result is a poetic palimpsest of west and east, urban and desert, present and past.

Ibn ʿUmayra's work displays a penchant for using Arabian or Bedouin themes that well serves his nostalgic tone. In a letter written to his friend Ibn al-Abbār (d. 1260) on the fall of Valencia, Ibn ʿUmayra includes a poem that implicitly mourns the loss of his homeland through the use of Arabian place and Bedouin references. He refers to archetypal locales that, according to Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, were popular stopping points (real and metaphoric) for pre-Islamic poets.[29]

> He weeps for a time spent in Mushaqqar and al-Liwā,
> but where is al-Liwā now? And where is Mushaqqar?[30] [16]

These names are not chosen for their symbolic and canonical weight only. Note that the name of Ibn ʿUmayra's birthplace, Shaqr, is contained in the Arabian place Mushaqqar through the shared root letters of their names (*sh-q-r*). In the context of the poem, they are one in the same place, both physically and temporally distant, but textually remembered. The poem is replete with symbols from the Bedouin *qaṣīda* and because he does not actually name Valencia or Shaqr, it sets and sustains the elegiac tone of the letter that contains it, rather than act as a direct *rithāʾ* for the lost city.

In another short poem, Ibn ʿUmayra pays homage to the rich highlands of Najd before feeling justified to weep over his own city. Jaroslav Stetkevych has this to say about the poem:

> Thus Ibn ʿUmayrah al-Makhzūmī, a seventh/thirteenth-century poet from al-Andalus, will talk of his sorrow over the loss of Valencia by first invoking ancient Bedouin passions of the heart (vv. 1–2) and that heart's yearning for its autochthonous place of repose, the distant Najd of Arabia (v. 3). Only then may he give himself the poetic license to elicit the concrete place-name of Valencia (v. 7), for such a Valencia will

[29] See Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān* (Beirut: Dār ṣādir, 1984).

[30] al-Zayyāt, *Rithāʾ al-mudun fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī*, 678. See also al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 4, 493.

now be endowed with the poetically validated, elegiac quality of a "lost paradise" (v. 10).[31]

While it is not completely surprising that the poet refers metaphorically to his lost city as a 'paradise', and the uprooting of himself and his fellow Valencians as an 'expulsion' of epic proportions, the expression does resonate at multiple levels. The immediate reference is to Valencia, but the Qurʾānic usage is also recognizable.[32] Additionally, *jannat al-khuld* was the epithet given to Baghdad by al-Khuraymī in one of the earliest *rithāʾ al-mudun* discussed above, itself an allusion to the name of a Baghdad palace. Ibn ʿUmayra's Valencia lies somewhere between east and west, and heaven and earth.

O heart, you who proclaim this ardent passion,
Must love's intemperance be so manifest?

But can a lovelorn one hope to forget
Love's agony of thirst, rejection's awesome jolt?

He yearns for Najd, but all in vain!
The adverse turns of time have doomed him never to return.

O mountain of water-sated verdure, like none I knew,
How time's ill turns of fortune slighted your spring.

And O you people that I love—but events now exact
That I stand alone, apart from those who merit love—

Will pleasure one day be bared of desire,
When to us it bodes denial at all times?

After the woe that befell Valencia,
Will beacons in the heart still shine with secret candescence?

People hope for shields against afflictions
That transfix them with their pliant spears.

Yet would that I knew, will she once more rise,
Will her star return as it once was?

Or did the sons sin their fathers' sins
And bring upon themselves expulsion from Paradise (*jannati l-khuldi*)?[33]
[17]

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[31] J. Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd*, 106.

[32] "Say: 'Is that better or the eternal garden (*jannat al-khuld*) that was promised to the righteous?'"—*al-Furqān*, 25:15.

[33] J. Stetkevych's translation. For the Arabic see Ibn Saʿīd al-Andalusī, *Ikhtiṣār al-qidḥ al-muʿallā (ikhtaṣarahu Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Khalīl)*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī (Cairo: al-Hayʾa

Taking a short trip across the straits to North Africa, we find Mālik b. al-Muraḥḥal (born 1207 in Ceuta, died 1299 in Fez)[34] calling on his compatriots to take up arms and join the struggle to restore Islam to its former glory in the Iberian Peninsula. Because his goal is for Muslims to band together against the Christian enemy, Ibn al-Muraḥḥal does his best to foster unity and bring the edges of the Muslim world together. He speaks to his North African brethren, and pointing toward the Andalusī shore, reminds them that,

> It is nothing but a piece of your own land.
> Its people are from you, and you are from them.[35] [18]

After rhetorically bridging this relatively short distance between the shores of North Africa and al-Andalus, the poet goes on to join west to east. Western Islam as symbolized by Cordoba and its great mosque is placed on the same symbolic level as the holy sites of Mecca, and Seville's cultural achievements are like those of Baghdad. The Islamic world—its north, south, east and west—is brought together, at least within the boundaries of this poem:

> Cordoba, it is she for whom Mecca weeps
> sadly, as well as al-Ṣafā and Zamzam.
>
> And Seville—Baghdad's sister—
> its days were nothing but desires and dreams. [19]

Sometimes, poetic references to eastern places are less explicit than the ones cited above. Instead of naming well-known cities or places, poets make veiled references to eastern locations that rely on an audience's familiarity with the poetic tradition. Elías Terés examines several instances of the pairing of the words *jisr* (a bridge usually made of wood) and *ruṣāfa* (a bridge usually made of arched stone) in the works of Andalusī poets.[36] In a nostalgic piece rich with Bedouin imagery al-Ruṣāfī (d. 1177) says of his birthplace, Valencia:

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al-ʿāmma li-shuʾūn al-maṭābiʿ al-amīriyya, 1959), 48; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 1, 305; al-Zayyāt, *Rithāʾ al-mudun fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī*, 682.

[34] ʿAbdullāh Gannūn, *al-Nubūgh al-Maghribī fī-l-adab al-ʿarabī*, Volume 1, 3rd Edition (Beirut: Maktabat al-madrasa wa-dār al-kitāb al-Lubnānī li-l-ṭibāʿa wa-l-nashr, 1975), 237.

[35] Muḥammad Bin Tāwīt, *al-Wāfī fī-l-adab al-ʿarabī fī-l-Maghrib al-aqṣā*, Volume 1, 2nd Edition (Casablanca: Dār al-thaqāfa li-l-nashr wa-l-tawzīʿ, 1998), 343.

[36] Elías Terés, "Textos Poeticos sobre Valencia," *Al-Andalus* 30 (1965), 291–307.

Stop there without command, my two friends; feel thirst,
and order the rain to pour down.

On the Bridge of Maʿān and Ruṣāfa,[37] it is sure
that the rain will water Ruṣāfa and the bridge.[38] [20]

Ibn al-Abbār, who wrote extensively on the fall of Valencia, mixes this phrase with Qurʾānic allusions to paradise in the following example:

I am sleepless thinking about
a life passed between Ruṣāfa and the bridge

And paradise on earth, without equal in beauty
under which rivers run in all directions.[39] [21]

In a rhymed prose epistle, he also writes: "Where are Valencia and its houses, and the rustling of its leaves and its cooing doves? Where are the adornments of Ruṣāfa and its bridge?"[40] Terés cites other such mention of the *ruṣāfa* and *jisr*, and shows that, in fact, it is an allusion to a line first attributed to ʿAlī b. al-Jahm who wrote in the ninth century about Baghdad's *ruṣāfa* and *jisr*:

Wild cows' eyes between *al-ruṣāfa* and *al-jisr*,
rekindled my passion from where I know, and where I do not.[41] [22]

Like the references to Arabian locations cited above, which are either real or mythical, but whose literary importance is indisputable, these poets, with their subtle nod towards Baghdad at the height of its glory, link their stylized memories and expressions of Valencia to the ʿAbbasid imperial city. It is both a nod of deference to the old world capital, and

[37] Here, *Ruṣāfa* is the name of a garden and suburb of Valencia.

[38] Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ghālib al-Ruṣāfī, *Dīwān al-Ruṣāfī al-Balansī*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1960), 69.

[39] Terés, "Textos Poeticos sobre Valencia," 295. For the Arabic text see Ibn Saʿīd, *al-Mughrib fī ḥulā al-Maghrib*, Volume 2, ed. Shawqī Ḍayf (Cairo: Dār al-maʿārif bi-Miṣr, 1955–64), 311.

[40] Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Ḥimyarī, *Kitāb al-rawḍ al-miʿṭār fī khabar al-aqṭār*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān, 1975), 100.

[41] Ibn al-Jahm, *Dīwān ʿAlī b. al-Jahm*, ed. Khalīl Mardam (Beirut: Dār ṣādir, 1996), 135. This verse survives into the 20th century in Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb's poem '*al-Mabghā*' (The Whorehouse) where the line signifies something quite different. Al-Sayyāb says: "Baghdad is a nightmare (a disgusting carnage/Swallowed by the sleeper/Whose hours are days, whose days are years, with the year a yoke:/The year is a wound smoldering in the soul)./The wild cow's eyes between Ruṣāfa and the bridge/ Are bullet holes that embellish [like the dots of letters] the flat white surface of the full moon.…" quoted in Terri DeYoung, *Placing the Poet: Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb and Postcolonial Iraq* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), vii.

a claim of comparability between it and the recently lost Valencia. It is worth noting that Jaroslav Stetkevych traces the reference back one step further. Through an etymological examination of the words *ruṣāfa* and *jisr* that takes us back to the desert of the pre-Islamic Bedouin *nasīb*, Stetkevych concludes that

> [w]hat we thus obtain in the two *nasīb* lines by ʿAlī Ibn al-Jahm is not so much a landscape or a topography of caliphal Baghdad as a complex metaphor built out of internalized *loci* where yearning occurs, or where it is possible.[42]

Thus, even Ibn al-Jahm is drawing upon a vocabulary infused with nostalgic resonance. Each subsequent re-contextualization of *al-ruṣāfa* and *al-jisr* adds additional layers of referents and meaning.

Water and the City

As was the case in the pre-Islamic *rithāʾ* where poets utilized liquid imagery such as calls to their eyes, the sky, or the supreme deity to send forth rain to water the deceased's grave and thus renew the life that was lost, the poets of later periods continued to utilize this theme.[43] In the Andalusī *rithāʾ al-mudun*, poets used imagery drawn from the abundant flowing streams that watered gardens, orchards, and fields in al-Andalus. To the poet who stands in the ruined city, life as he knew it has dried up. The description of the verdant and fertile past is contrasted with the desolate present. For example, Ibn Shuhayd extends the reach of distant rivers to al-Andalus, and addresses his lost Cordoba saying:

> The Euphrates flowed plentifully through your two courtyards, as did the Tigris.
> So too the Nile and the River Kawthar.
>
> You were given drink by the life-giving waters of a cloud
> by which your gardens were given life and flourished.[44] [23]

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[42] J. Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd*, 109.

[43] For a fascinating discussion of the *rithāʾ* in general, and of the importance and gendered determination of the symbolic use of liquid flow in the *rithāʾ* and associated *taḥrīḍ* (provocation to seek vengeance), see S. Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 161–205.

[44] Ibn Shuhayd, *Dīwān Ibn Shuhayd al-Andalusī*, ed. Yaʿqūb Zakī (Cairo: Dār al-kātib al-ʿarabī li-l-ṭibāʿa wa-l-nashr, 1969), 109–111. The full poem will be analyzed below.

Ibn Ḥazm, in the *rithāʾ* for his boyhood home cited above, is even more explicit in his comparison of past and present, juxtaposing the well-watered and life-giving past to the barren present.

O best of abodes, abandoned, lovely though you are,
the morning clouds watered you; how splendid you were, how noble.

O unveiled gardens, surrounded by
beautiful garden courtyards that became dust after we left.

In contrast to the above examples that provide no solution or alternative to the state in which the people of al-Andalus find themselves, the following examples present different ways poets manipulated the metaphor of water or liquid with different effects. According to the superscription in his diwan, Ibn Sahl al-Ishbīlī (d. 1245 in Ceuta) composed this poem at the request of Seville's governor al-Sayyid Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Sayyid ibn ʿUmrān in 1242 calling upon Muslims to defend the city against the Christian threat. Ibn Sahl manipulates the dual qualities of water and shows that water can represent death (tears, salt water), while also being a necessity for renewing and perpetuating life (fresh water). The brackish, muddy, and thus, useless water of this world can be exchanged for the pure life-spring of the next, but this exchange can only occur through *jihād*. Through action, tears can be turned into freshwater, and death into life.

Leave your houses for the House of Greatness
And ride the swirling dust[45] to verdant tranquility.

Drink nobly from the muddy springs,
And you will be sated with the waters of an unmuddied basin.

Take upon yourselves the brackish water of the sea,
for by it, you will drink from the Kawthar River.

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[45] I have translated the second hemistich as I did in an attempt to preserve the parallelism I perceive in these verses. In each hemistich, there is an opposition made that can be understood as the material world (*al-dunyā*): the spiritual world (*al-ākhira*) // dryness: fertility. However, *ghamr al-ʿajāj* can also mean 'the tumultuous waves or sea' which would also make sense, considering the fact that many Andalusī poets during this period, including Ibn Sahl, directed their calls to Muslims across the Straits of Gibraltar in North Africa. This reading would also enhance the juxtaposition of fresh and salt water. Both meanings can be read simultaneously.

> He has shown you the right path. The thirsty one complains, but you give shade and quench thirst, like a rainy spring season.[46] [24]

In an example from a Hebrew elegy mourning the destruction of the Jewish communities in al-Andalus and North Africa, Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089–1164) emphasizes water's ability both to destroy and revive. The poem (*ahah yarad ʿal Sefarad/raʿ min ha-shamayim*—Alas! Calamities have come down upon Sefarad from the heavens)[47] is composed in strophic form, and includes a *maṭlaʿ* (introductory strophe), the second line of which ends with the word 'water' (*mayim*). Each strophe of the poem has nine lines that share a rhyme syllable, and a tenth line whose rhyme, like that of the *maṭlaʿ*, is 'water'. Assuming the choral recitation of this *muwashshaḥ* (strophic poem),[48] the *maṭlaʿ* is repeated by the audience or chorus after each strophe, which serves to emphasize the calamity that pours forth from the sky. The *maṭlaʿ* goes as follows:

> Alas! Calamities have come down upon Sefarad from the heavens (*min ha-shamayim*)
>
> My eye! My eye! It runs with water (*yordah mayim*). [25]

The second line is taken from Lamentations 1:16 and the broader tone and theme of this chapter would not be lost on the audience familiar with this context. The very first verse of Lamentations begins thus: "How does the city sit alone, that once contained so many people? She is like a widow that was great among nations." (Lam. 1:1). The imagery and tone of this biblical chapter is strikingly similar to that of the *rithāʾ al-mudun* and the evocation of this verse results in poetic words, references, and meaning which cannot be separated from that of Lamentations—a chapter that recalls Israel's past beauties and charms, and laments the current lot of the Jewish people. The underlying theme of the poem is the sinfulness of the Jews of Ibn Ezra's own time which brought about the calamities, both immediate (i.e., in al-Andalus and North Africa), and of the larger Jewish exile.[49] After enumerating the

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[46] Ibn Sahl, *Dīwān Ibrāhīm b. Sahl al-Ishbīlī*, ed. Muḥammad Faraj Dughaym (Beirut: Dār al-gharb al-islāmī, 1998), 157.

[47] Abraham Ibn Ezra, *Yalkūt Avraham Ibn Ezra*, ed. Israel Levin (New York and Tel Aviv: Israel Matz Hebrew Classics and Edward I. Kiev Library, 1985), 101–103.

[48] For a detailed description of the *muwashshaḥ* form, see Samuel Miklos Stern, *Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry*, ed. L. P. Harvey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 12–41.

[49] Ross Brann provides a more in depth discussion of this poem in "*Tavniyot shel galut be-qinot ʿivriyot we-ʿaraviyot bi-Sefarad*" in *Israel Levin Jubilee Volume* (Studies

losses of important Jewish communities in Andalusī cities such as Lucena, Seville, Cordoba, Jaen, Almeria, and in the North African cities of Fez, Meknes, Ceuta, Sijilmassa, Tlemcen, and Draʿa, the poet blurs the line between these local losses and the Jewish exile from Israel. He speaks for the sinful Jewish people, asking,

> For whom can I wait? And what can I say, when everything, my own hand has done? [26]

Indeed, help can only come from God, and although passive in waiting, Israel raises her head seeking deliverance.

> She remains, tears on her cheeks, in the hand of Hagar who
>
> Rains arrows down upon her, until God looks down from heaven (*mi-shamayim*). [27]

In effect, the poet combines biblical allusion and contemporary events to form a single symbolic-realistic loss. Imagery, form, and rhetoric work together, and the deluge that comes in the repetition of the *maṭlaʿ* emphasizes God's omnipotent power both to destroy and to save.

Ibn Shuhayd's Rithāʾ *for Cordoba*

In his *rithāʾ* for Cordoba, Ibn Shuhayd delineates the city's boundaries in a highly stylized fashion—defining what it is, and what it is not—and mourns the loss of an Arabic literary culture as he defines it.[50] The destruction of Cordoba at the hands of Berber factions not only marked the effective end of the Umayyad dynasty in al-Andalus, but also the end of a perceived 'pure' Arabic culture and political unity upon which the Umayyads and their supporters had based their claims of caliphal legitimacy.[51]

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in Hebrew Literature 1), eds. Reuven Tsur and Tova Rosen (Tel Aviv: University of Tel Aviv, Katz Research Institute for Hebrew Literature, 1994), 45–61 and *Power in the Portrayal*, 120–125. See also Decter, *Iberian Jewish Literature*, 64–71.

[50] Fāṭima Ṭaḥṭaḥ briefly discusses this poem in *al-Ghurba wa-l-ḥanīn fī-l-shiʿr al-Andalusī*, 70–71. Cynthia Robinson also provides a stimulating analysis in "*Ubi Sunt*: Memory and Nostalgia in Taifa Court Culture," *Muqarnas* 15 (1998), 20–31. See also Decter, *Iberian Jewish Literature*, 24–25 and 44–45.

[51] For a detailed historical account of this period, see Hugh Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of al-Andalus* (London and New York: Longman, 1996), 109–130.

Ibn Shuhayd was born into an aristocratic family of high standing which had close ties to the ruling Umayyads and later ʿĀmirids.[52] In his diverse writings, Ibn Shuhayd expresses the importance of striving for and defending the purity of Arabic language and literature. He took issue with the modernist (*muḥdath*) school that originated in the east and was so popular in al-Andalus during his lifetime. In fact, he saw this style as detrimental to poetry and unsuitable to the Andalusī cultural environment. It was his view that

> [j]ust as every place has its own dialect so every age has its proper style, every period its manner and each group of nations its own kind of oratory and manner of rhetoric… Nowadays every poem which does not employ *jināS* or something similar is abhorred by the ears, but moderation in this matter is to be recommended.[53]

A proponent of a specifically Andalusī style, Ibn Shuhayd attempts to distance himself from the *muḥdath* poet in a search for a literary sensibility based on a nostalgic and idealized conception of Arabic linguistic and literary purity. He derides Andalusī grammarians and other litterateurs for allowing the language to deteriorate to the point where it "is simply incorrect stammering (*lukna aʿjamiyya*) [used] to convey the meaning… The Arabs and their language are gone."[54] It is ironic, however, that Ibn Shuhayd's poetry does exhibit a number of 'modern' literary features, as we will see. He is unable to completely escape the literary environment of which he is a product and part.

Ibn Shuhayd seems intent on creating and promoting a distinct Andalusī literature, but where is this Andalus? In his *rithāʾ* for Cordoba, he locates al-Andalus in a literary space very much connected to the larger Arabic culture that he mourns, as well as part of an ideal cultural space that he simultaneously remembers and defines, composed from the point of view of his own literary milieu. What follows is a close reading of this poem that focuses on the themes and strategies of the city elegy as discussed above. I have provided a full translation of the poem, and have divided my discussion into thematically defined units that have been subtitled accordingly.

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[52] James Dickie, "Ibn Šuhayd: A Biographical and Critical Study," *Al-Andalus: Revista de las Escuelas de Estudios Árabes de Madrid y Granada* 29 (1964), 250.

[53] Quoted in Dickie. For Arabic text, see Ibn Bassām al-Shantarīnī, *al-Dhakhīra fī maḥāsin ahl al-jazīra*. Volume 1 Part 1 (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat lajnat al-taʾlīf wa-l-tarjama wa-l-nashr, 1939), 202–3.

[54] Ibn Bassām, *al-Dhakhīra*, Volume 1 Part 1, 229.

1) There is no one at the abandoned campsite to tell us about the loved ones
   so whom can we ask about their situation?
2) Do not ask anyone except for Separation
   for it is what distances you from them, wherever they may have gone.
3) Time oppressed them and they were scattered
   in all directions, and most of them perished.
4) Calamities flowed over their homes and them.
   Both they and [their homes] were [permanently] transformed.
5) So beg Time to embellish their courtyards with flowers
   that practically make their hearts glow.
6) For the likes of Cordoba, the weeping of one
   who cries with an overflowing eye is not enough.
7) An abode, may God forgive the faults of its people,
   for they were Berberized, Moroccanized, and Egyptianized.
8) Everywhere there are groups of them
   perplexed and bewildered in separation.
9) I knew it well when its people were unified
   and life there was green.
10) And the winds of its splendor shone over them
   with scents emanating ambergris.
11) And the abode—perfection had pitched its tent there
   while it was beyond any deficiency.
12) And the people felt secure that its beauty would never change,
   wearing its splendor as a turban and a cloak.
13) O how I long for their nobility in its palaces and its ladies quarters,
   for its full moons concealed in its palaces.
14) And the palace—that of the Umayyad clan—so abundant
   with everything, but the Caliphate was even more abundant.
15) And the Zāhiriyya with its boats that shone brightly
   and the ʿĀmiriyya given life by the stars.
16) And the Grand Mosque overflowing with all who
   recited, heard, and looked on at anything they wished to.
17) And the streets of the markets bearing witness that
   the marketplace was never empty of shopping throngs.
18) O Paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people.
   Both it and they were destroyed.
19) I am afflicted by you in death, as was only right.
   As long as you live, we do not cease to sing your praises.

20) Your courtyards were a Mecca to pilgrims,
the frightened taking refuge in them, finding safety.
21) O abode and its people, in which and with whom the bird of separation alighted
so that they were transformed and became unrecognizable.
22) The Euphrates flowed plentifully through your two courtyards, as did the Tigris.
So too the Nile and the River Kawthar.
23) You were given drink by the life-giving waters of a cloud
by which your gardens were given life and flourished.
24) My sorrow is for the house whose familiar pleasures I knew
and for its gazelles who pranced and swaggered in its courtyard,
25) In the days when the eye of every kindness
everywhere gazed upon it,
26) In the days when the command in it was but one—
that of its Amīr—and the Amīr was the one who issued commands,
27) In the days when the palm of every hand of peace and security
rose to it in peaceful greeting and rushed towards it.
28) My sadness, for its generous leaders and narrators,
its honest ones and protectors, repeats itself.
29) My soul, for its blessing and pureness,
and splendor and glory, is grieving.
30) My heart, for its mild-mannered scholars,
and its refined litterateurs, is rent.[55] [28]

Alone at the ruins

Standing on the ruins of the abandoned campsite (*al-ṭulūl*), Ibn Shuhayd begins his poem searching for his "loved ones" both for the sake of curing his loneliness, and also to question them about these ruins and what has produced them. Unfortunately, the poet receives no answer. The pair of companions who often stands with the poet in the *nasīb* is absent. In fact, we learn in the second verse that the poet is alone with a single listener (signified by the second person singular *lā tasʾalanna* 'do not ask' and referring to the poet himself), whose temporary muteness is ensured through the use of the emphatic prohibitive form of the verb.

[55] *Dīwān Ibn Shuhayd al-Andalusī*, 109–111.

The imagery of the ruins and the absence of any sort of interlocutor create a scene of isolation, desolation and despair.

In the second verse, we remain within the lexical field of the desert with Ibn Shuhayd's references to the symbolically rich Najd and al-Ghawr. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī cites various sources that place al-Ghawr on the southern Arabian coast in Yemen, or on the plain between Jerusalem and Damascus. The more general meaning of the word, *al-ghawr*, is lowland, and idiomatically, when used in conjunction with Najd, or the verbal form *anjada*, the expression, *anjadū wa-aghārū*, means 'whether they have gone upland or down', or 'wherever they may have gone'.[56] This expression, used to describe the expulsion of the Cordoban citizenry and the poet's own sense of bewilderment and isolation in having been left behind, places them somewhere between al-Andalus and the Arabian Peninsula, wandering in poetic limbo.

Verses 3 and 4 are linked by a syntactic parallelism in each of their first hemistichs, as well as by the *jinās* of the first verbs of each, *jāra and jarā*. The final words of each hemistich (verse 3: *jāra l-zamānu ʿalayhim fa-tafarraqū*/Time oppressed them and they were scattered, verse 4: *jarati l-khuṭūbu ʿalā maḥalli diyārihim*/Calamities flowed over their homes) underline a strong connection between people and place, where in verse 3, the focus is on the people of Cordoba ('they'), and in verse 4, it is on the place ('their homes'). This is more clearly articulated at the end of verse 4, and again in verse 18.

4) Calamities flowed over their homes and them.
Both they and [their homes] were [permanently] transformed (*fa-taghayyarat wa-taghayyarū*)

18) O Paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people;
Both it and they were destroyed (*fa-tadammarat wa-tadammarū*).

This pattern is repeated twice, but the poet makes use of other strategies to convey the same relationship between place and people throughout the poem, as will be shown below.

Verse 5 serves as a transition (*takhalluṣ*) between the *nasīb* imagery and vocabulary of the preceding four verses, and the *rithāʾ* proper that occupies the remainder of the poem. Ibn Shuhayd's repeated invocation of Fate in verses 3, 4, and 5 (*al-zamān, al-khuṭūb, al-zamān* respectively) underlines his recognition of its capricious ability to give life, and to

[56] See al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, Volume 4, 217.

take it away. It has destroyed Cordoba and scattered its inhabitants, but it can also be called upon to bring light and life once again to the ruined city, albeit in the form of flowers that will grow over the ruins. This is interesting considering Ibn Rashīq's assertion that "there is no difference between the *rithāʾ* and the *madḥ* [panegyric], except for the fact that the *rithāʾ* contains some sort of indicator that the object of the poem is dead, such as 'he was' or 'this and that have been lost to us', and other devices of this sort."[57] Stefan Sperl, in his examination of the panegyric, points to a structural balance between the *nasīb* and *madīḥ*, where Fate in the *nasīb* is all-powerful, thus leaving destruction and barrenness in its wake. In the panegyric section the *mamdūḥ* holds the power to counter Fate by reviving and offering protection. Applying this antithetical structure, which Sperl calls the 'strophe' and 'antistrophe',[58] to our current poem we notice that Cordoba does not have the power to counter Fate. This actually emphasizes a major difference between the *rithāʾ* and *madīḥ*, that being the finality of the loss in the *rithāʾ*, and the overwhelming power of Fate, as opposed to the *mamdūḥ*'s power in the panegyric. It underlines the fact that the Cordoba Ibn Shuhayd mourns can never be revived, except in verse.

Defining the Boundaries of Cordoba

The actual *rithāʾ* begins in verse 6, and in verse 7, following the pattern established earlier that accords equal attention to place and people, the line starts with mention of the former, and ends with a description of the 'transgressions' of the latter. Having formally begun the *rithāʾ*, Ibn Shuhayd proceeds to define, and obscure, Cordoba's cultural and political borders. As James Monroe points out, in the second hemistich (*fa-tabarbarū wa-tagharrabū wa-tamaṣṣarū*/for they were Berberized, Moroccanized, and Egyptianized), the word *tabarbarū* refers to the Berber Ḥammūdīs who, taking advantage of growing Berber discontent in Cordoba, established themselves as a rival power to the Caliph Sulaymān which ultimately led to the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate. The reference to 'Egyptianization' (*tamaṣṣarū*) points to a lineage the Ḥammūdīs traced back to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, the Prophet's son-in-law

[57] Ibn Rashīq, *al-ʿUmda*, Vol. 2, 147.
[58] Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic Poetry*, 25.

and spiritual and political leader of the Shiʿites, whose adherents, the Fatimids (named for Fāṭima, the Prophet's daughter and ʿAlī's wife), ruled Egypt at the time and challenged the Andalusī Umayyads' claim to the Caliphate.[59]

The verb *tabarbara* is not neutral and the English translation 'to Berberize' does not capture the full meaning of the Arabic in its cultural context. The word Berber carries with it a sense of backwardness, ignorance, and, quite literally, barbarity.[60] To say that someone has been 'Berberized' is an assertion of superiority that marks a clear line between 'us' and 'them'. Standing in al-Andalus, and acting as the defender of the Caliphate and Arabic literary culture that he was, Ibn Shuhayd saw these Berbers as a political, racial, and cultural threat. They were a foreign element, hailing from the other side of the straits (*barr al-ʿudwa*—North Africa), and thus, did not belong in Ibn Shuhyad's conception of Arab Cordoba.[61] Understood alongside his criticism of the state of Arabic in al-Andalus, which he refers to as 'incorrect stammering' (*lukna aʿjamiyya*), *aʿjamī* being a word used by the Arabs to describe the local Spanish Romance language,[62] Ibn Shuhayd is promoting a pure Arab Andalusī culture that is de-localized. He guards al-Andalus from Romance-speaking Spain (*al-ʿajamiyya*) and Berber-speaking North Africa (*al-barbariyya*), in order to preserve its Arabism (*al-ʿarabiyya*).

The verb *tagharraba* ('to be Moroccanized') is richly ambiguous in that, geographically, it can be understood to specify the area of modern day Morocco (in Ibn Shuhayd's time, *al-Maghrib al-aqṣā*—the far west), or the Islamic west in general (*al-gharb al-Islāmī*) which would include al-Andalus and *al-Maghrib al-aqṣā*. Having just condemned the Cordobans to being overrun by Berbers, they are now placed literally in a land not their own (al-Maghrib). The verb's root, *gh-r-b*, also includes

[59] See James T. Monroe, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry: A Student Anthology* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1974), 160.

[60] The Arabic word *barbar* comes from the Greek *bárbaros*, a term used to describe any non-Greek who spoke an incomprehensible language that, to the Greeks, sounded like babbling.

[61] Maya Shatzmiller discusses the rise of 'Berberism' in al-Andalus and the literary genres that expressed it (*mafākhir al-barbar, mafāḍil al-barbar*, *maḥāsin ahl al-Maghrib*). See Maya Shatzmiller, *The Berbers and the Islamic State: The Marīnid Experience in Pre-Protectorate Morocco* (Princeton, NJ: Marcus Wiener Publishers, 2000), 29–39. For their part, the Andalusīs also composed treatises that celebrated the superiority of al-Andalus over that of al-Maghrib. These works are discussed in Chapter Four.

[62] Consuelo López-Morillas, "Language," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*, 36.

the meaning of feeling isolated, foreign, or alienated. As mentioned above, Ibn Shuhayd's criticism of the state of Arabic in al-Andalus points to a desire to return to a time and place in which the language and culture were unadulterated. There is a nostalgic look to a mythical state of linguistic purity that is neither wholly in the west, nor specifically in the present. The poet, standing on the ruins of Cordoba, feels isolated, alone, and out of place, and speaks for the lost Cordobans, of whom he is one.

The Architecture of the Past

After a brief description of the expulsion and exile of Cordoba's population (7–8), verse 9 makes the transition from the present ruined state of Cordoba where we stand with Ibn Shuhayd, to a nostalgic rumination on Cordoba's past. The section (10–18) is notable for the overflowing emotion that each conjunctive *wāw* ('and') extends. Each verse begins with a *wāw* and is followed by a noun, creating a syntactic unit. This larger section can be divided into two smaller sections that are thematically distinct, punctuated by the vocative *yā* in verses 13 and 18.

In the first of the two sections (running from verse 10 to verse 13), rather than relying on a descriptive poetics set in stone, Ibn Shuhayd paints using an impressionist's brush, setting the mood by evoking the scent of flower blossoms, the exquisite perfection of the dwelling that once was, and a beauty Cordoba's inhabitants never imagined could be effaced. Without retreating from the assertion that Cordoba is just as much about place as it is about the people who inhabit/ed it, verse 13 (the transitional verse between the two subsections) relies heavily on the importance of place. This is emphasized by the repetition of the possessive pronoun 'its' (*-hā*), referring to Cordoba, a name, it is important to note, heard for the first and last time in verse 6 of the poem. In fact, since its mention, Cordoba is both absent and present in this possessive pronoun that appears at least once in each verse up to this point. The insistent repetition of 'its' (i.e., Cordoba's) in verse 13 betrays a need for Ibn Shuhayd to reassert the presence of Cordoba, if only poetically, and literally to re-inscribe it onto the landscape.

A tangible re-mapping begins in the following verse (verse 14) and although the pattern established above continues (*wāw* followed by a noun), the references are much more concrete—buildings, palaces, streets, etc. Ibn Shuhayd is now referring to 'real' places, but instead of

realistic and detailed description, he draws upon Arabic poetry's symbolic use of toponyms. Brief mention of the Umayyad palace and the great mosque of Cordoba is sufficient to resonate with meaning in much the same way as mention of symbolic eastern locations such as Najd, Siqṭ al-Liwā, or Baghdad. The evocative power of these place names for Ibn Shuhayd's audience would have been so great that merely hearing their names would have prompted an emotional response without the poet having to provide detailed descriptions.

There is a clear hierarchy that Ibn Shuhayd respects, beginning with the Umayyad palace, the symbolic center of the Caliphate at the height of its power. The Banū Shuhayd came to al-Andalus from Syria during the reign of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I (756–788) following the rise of the ʿAbbasids in the east, and remained loyal to the Umayyads until their fall in 1031.[63] For Ibn Shuhayd, the Umayyads symbolized political strength, vitality, and legitimacy, as well as a more personal reminder of a privileged youth spent within the walls of palaces, courtyards, gardens, and villas. It is likely that Ibn Shuhayd was raised on a steady diet of lore about Umayyad and Arab greatness, as well as a linguistic and literary education that would befit his noble standing. But it is also likely that he had heard talk and sensed the dissolution of this ideal world of the Umayyads whose power, by the time of Ibn Shuhayd's birth in 992, was already waning.[64] A nod to the Umayyads is expected, but it is one tinged with irony and sadness, and the knowledge that their glory days are past.

From here, the poet shifts his focus to palaces built by Muḥammad b. Abī ʿĀmir (who later took the title 'al-Manṣūr'), a high official in the Umayyad court who took advantage of the power struggle that emerged upon the fourteen-year-old Hishām's ascension to the Caliphate in 976. Ibn Shuhayd's father was given his first administrative post under al-Manṣūr,[65] and it was during al-Manṣūr's time that Ibn Shuhayd was born. If verse 14 is read as an obligatory affirmation of loyalty to the Umayyad Caliphate, verse 15 draws attention to itself in such a way as to invite the audience to linger for a moment in the palaces contained therein. There is a symmetry between the two hemistichs which are syntactically identical, and both have parallel *jināS* on the names of

[63] Dickie, "Ibn Šuhayd," 243.
[64] H. Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, 82–129.
[65] Dickie, "Ibn Šuhayd," 247.

two of al-Manṣūr's palaces (*al-Zāhiriyya/tuzhiru* and *al-ʿĀmiriyya/tuʿmaru*). The names of the palaces themselves are not 'original', but rather they allude to a specific place and person respectively. The former is a clear nod, and challenge, to the older Madīnat al-Zahrāʾ, the palace-city established by the Caliph ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III (d. 961) in 936, subsequently destroyed by Berbers around the same time as the sacking of Cordoba, and which, in the years that followed, became a poignant symbol of the past successes of the unified Umayyad state.[66] *Al-ʿĀmiriyya* takes its name from al-Manṣūr (Muḥammad b. Abī ʿĀmir) himself. No trace remains of it except for literary references such as the one we have in front of us, as well as descriptions of its gardens.[67] Finally, the root letters *ʿ-m-r* that form both the palace's name and that of its builder, signifies a flourishing civilization that once teemed with life. Through the manipulation of al-Manṣūr's name, as well as the names of his two main palaces, Ibn Shuhayd emphasizes *his* lost world, which is grand, alive, and personal.

Continuing outward from the regal and fixed symbols of the ruling elite, Ibn Shuhayd moves to the great mosque of Cordoba, a public space symbolic of Cordoba's grandeur. From there, it is on to the bustling markets. The section is brought to a resounding close in verse 18 where all of the aforementioned components of Cordoba are collected under the all-encompassing Paradise (*janna*), but as quickly as the city is contained in this word, which signifies the uncontainable, it is destroyed completely (*fa-tadammarat wa-tadammarū*). We expect that this total destruction is indeed final, and thus, the end. However the job of the poet is not done yet.

The Poet Speaks

In verse 19, in a last ditch effort to save his city, Ibn Shuhayd emphasizes the fact that it is his job as poet, and the audience's job as mourners, to perpetuate Cordoba's life in the only way available to them—by

[66] See D. F. Ruggles, "Arabic Poetry and Architectural Memory in Al-Andalus," in *A Special Issue on Pre-Modern Islamic Palaces*, ed. Gülrü Necipoğlu. *Ars Orientalis* 23. (Ann Arbor: Department of Art, University of Michigan, 1993), 171–178 and *Gardens, Landscapes, and Vision*.

[67] María Jesús Rubiera, *La arquitectura en la literatura árabe: Datos para una estética del placer* (Madrid: Ediciones Hiperión, 1988), 134.

"sing[ing its] praises (*nafkharu*)." Revivification is further achieved by emphasizing that the city was once given life by the waters of the Euphrates, Tigris, Nile, and the River Kawthar in Paradise. The meeting of these waters in Cordoba once allowed it to exist everywhere, straddling the boundaries between east and west, this world and the next. The comparison between a city and Paradise is a common one. We saw it in al-Khuraymī's elegy for Baghdad, as well in numerous examples of Ibn ʿUmayra and Ibn al-Abbār, above. It is, of course, a convenient metaphor that draws upon already established images of the heavenly ideal.[68] It also removes the city from the realm of reality, and bestows upon it a transcendent quality that emphasizes its worldly death, but guarantees it an eternal life in the hereafter.

Verse 24 begins the poem's finale. Here, the poet steps out of the shadows and reluctantly asserts his presence with the possessive 'my' in *asafī* ('my sorrow'), and as the subject of the verb *ʿahadtu* ('I was bound to/I knew'), a role which, up to this point, has been entirely absent. There are three other instances where the poet appears as a verbal subject, hinting at his active presence within the text, but even in these examples his personal voice is subsumed by the plural 'we' (verse 1: *nastakhbiru*, verse 19: *lam nazal… nafkharu*). The focus of the *rithāʾ* is, of course, the destroyed Cordoba. Therefore, it is natural for the poet to give attention to the city. Nonetheless, the poet's importance as spokesperson and elegist is undeniable. Without the poet, there is no poem, and without the poem, Cordoba ceases to exist. So it is from this verse on that Ibn Shuhayd cautiously shares a little space with Cordoba. I say cautiously because the verbal agency of the poet fades as quickly as it came, and all we have left of him is the possessive 'my' once again (*asafī*/my sorrow, *ḥuznī*/my sadness, *nafsī*/my soul, *kabidī*/my heart).

In this final section, there is a negotiation between past (24–27) and present (28–30) in which two syntactic patterns battle for dominance, with the present getting the final word. The syntactic repetition in the last three verses (the same as that of verse 24: *asafī… tatabakhtaru*) expresses the complete and utter despair of the poet's physical and emotional being (*ḥuznī… yatakarraru*/my sadness… repeats itself,

[68] For a discussion of the imagery used and dimensions covered by the Paradise motif in narrative form, see Aziz al-Azmeh, "Rhetoric for the Senses: A Consideration of Muslim Paradise Narratives," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 26:3 (1995), 215–231.

nafsī… tataḥassaru/my soul is grieving, *kabidī… tatafaṭṭaru*/my heart is rent). In the end, the loss expressed by Ibn Shuhayd is distinctly personal and human. The city of Cordoba that the poet mourns was a physical reality that could be mapped upon the landscape, but equally, it was the people that populated the landscape, and who sang its praises that Ibn Shuhayd considered to constitute Cordoba. More precisely, it was the lettered Arab elite that remembered and wrote about Cordoba utilizing poetic strategies that combined concrete realities and imaginative poetic discourse.

The *rithāʾ al-mudun* genre that developed with the urbanization of Arab-Muslim society in the eighth and ninth centuries shared themes, images, and rhetorical strategies with the *rithāʾ* for a person that preceded it. With the move to the city, and new types of loss that accompanied that move, the elegist utilized these inherited aspects of the *rithāʾ*, while incorporating more modern rhetorical devices, urban images, and conceptions of place. In Ibn Shuhayd's elegy for the city of Cordoba, he defines place geographically, architecturally, culturally, symbolically, and literarily. Even in this relatively early example, the poet clearly defines what al-Andalus was, and what it has become, in his choice of classical literary motifs and references. The fall of Cordoba marked the end of the Umayyad Caliphate in al-Andalus, and the imagined Arab past that it represented to Ibn Shuhayd. The loss of this imagined present and past will be repeated in different forms and examined in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER TWO

WEEPING OVER THE POETIC PAST: POETRY INTO PROSE IN AL-SARAQUSṬĪ'S QAYRAWAN *MAQĀMA*

Introduction

One of the obvious characteristics of the *maqāma* is its manifold relationships to previously existing genres and discourses. In fact, by incorporating and even recasting popular sermons, anecdotes, epistolary and poetic genres into the *maqāma* form, the writer calls upon the audience not only to recognize the source material, but to understand the allusions and appreciate the generic shift. Above and beyond the requisite linguistic knowledge for understanding the nuances of the *maqāma*, this genre demands an engagement with the text that assumes a broad knowledge of both popular culture and more scholarly literature.[1] As a consequence of this duality, the *maqāma* straddles the boundary between popular and high literature in that, although the language and style is of the highest form, it constantly makes reference to and draws from popular locales, themes, and stories. In many ways then, the *maqāma* defies strict definition, and thus, it is difficult to read any given *maqāma* divorced from both its influences and context.

In this chapter I look at the *maqāma*'s development and examine in it the themes of loss, nostalgia, and cultural displacement to show how one Andalusī writer, Abū al-Ṭāhir Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Saraquṣṭī (d. 1143), manipulated the genre to express these themes. I look at the ways in which the *maqāma*—through its influences, structure, and language—places itself within the Arabic literary tradition, and how al-Saraquṣṭī treats traditional themes and uses archetypal poetic symbols to express and define his place in that tradition as a twelfth century Andalusī. In this analysis, poetry's relationship both as a competitor to, and integral part of the *maqāma* will be examined and explored. In

[1] Philip Kennedy discusses this dual aspect of the *maqāma* in "Reason and Revelation, or A Philosopher's Squib (the Sixth Maqāma of Ibn Nāqiyā)," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 3 (2000), 84–113 (http://www.uib.no/jais/jais.htm).

al-Saraqusṭī's Qayrawan *Maqāma*,[2] there is an uneasy dialogue between the classical poetic and rhymed prose traditions. An examination of this tension will show how the traditional language of poetry, specifically the genre of *rithāʾ al-mudun* treated in the previous chapter, is recast into prose. I consider whether this translation from one genre to another is a demonstration of mere rhetorical prowess, or rather a more sophisticated attempt to express the author's displacement, through the displacement of genre. In analyzing the work of a single writer, I do not imply that he speaks for al-Andalus as a whole. His is a personal voice, both part of the literary tradition as well as exceptional within it. His work cannot be viewed in isolation from the genre as a whole, and because an understanding of the *maqāma*'s relationship to other literary discourses and models is essential to its appreciation in general, and to this *maqāma* in particular, I begin with a brief literary history. By beginning with an array of views as to what the *maqāma* is and how it relates to other literary forms, I aim to focus on how al-Saraqusṭī works wholly within the limits of the genre to express his particular relationship to the Arabic literary tradition.

The Maqāma *and related genres*[3]

The form that came to be known as the *maqāma* crystallized in the tenth century when Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (d. 1008) composed his collection. Studies of the *maqāma* largely agree that it emerged out of the broader field of *adab* learning, drawing upon the latter's treatment and use of a wide range of themes, motifs, clichés, and images from all manner of literary and intellectual contexts. The *maqāma*'s influences are many, and thus, it must be read within the context of these diverse influences.

In examining predecessors to al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt*, A. F. L. Beeston points to the possible influence of earlier *adab* works such

[2] Number 29 in *al-Maqāmāt al-Luzūmiyya*, ed. Ḥasan al-Warāglī (Rabat: Manshūrāt ʿUkkāz, 1995). Number 22 in *al-Maqāmāt al-Luzūmiyya*, ed. Badr Aḥmad Ḍayf (Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿāmma li-l-kitāb, 1982). I am using the Warāglī text here.

[3] What follows is a survey of some important critical studies on the *maqāma* that are relevant to the arguments I am making here. For a broad and comprehensive study on the genre see Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, *Maqama: A History of a Genre* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002).

as Ibn Durayd's (d. 933) collection of forty stories (*aḥādīth*) included in al-Ḥuṣrī's (d. 1022) *Zahr al-ādāb wa-thamr al-albāb* (Blossoms of Refinement and Fruits of the Intellect), "which were the products of his own imagination but expressed in 'pompous, strange and forbidding language'."[4] Beeston rejects the notion that we can trace al-Hamadhānī's influences to a single source. Rather, he suggests placing the *maqāma* in its more general cultural-literary context, which in this case is the "common stock of Arab anecdotage current at the time."[5] He then examines a possible relationship between the *maqāma* and a text from *al-Faraj baʿda-l-shidda* (Relief after Hardship) by al-Tanūkhī (d. 994), an older contemporary of al-Hamadhānī, which shares similar themes, narrative structure, and language with the *maqāma*. Having placed the *maqāma* into the broader literary and historical context, Beeston concludes that al-Hamadhānī's innovations are the admitted fictionality of the work, and his consistent use of *sajʿ* (rhymed prose). Nonetheless, Beeston adds that the

> admission of the fictional nature of his work, and the use of *sajʿ*, were innovations, but innovations imposed on a type of writing which, both in fundamentals and in some particular details, had a long previous history in Arabic literature.[6]

J. N. Mattock agrees with Beeston's assertion that al-Hamadhānī displayed a measure of originality with regard to self-conscious fictionality in the *maqāma*. However, Mattock does stress that the systematic use of *sajʿ* in a text can be seen in a number of works that date back to as early as the ninth century.[7] He believes that by looking at these earlier proto-*maqāmāt*, it is possible to see the beginnings of the genre, but this search for origins does little to further our understanding of al-Hamadhānī's literary intent. However, the repetition of the recognition scene, the almost obsessive presence and re-emergence of the protagonists, and the use of *sajʿ* in a large number of the tales, all point to what Mattock sees as the earliest example of "the running gag." This, according to Mattock, was al-Hamadhānī's intention and innovation. No matter how many times the narrator is tricked, and no matter how strong the

[4] A. F. L. Beeston, "The Genesis of the *Maqāmāt* Genre," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 2 (1971), 1.
[5] Ibid., 8.
[6] Ibid., 12.
[7] J. N. Mattock, "The Early History of the *Maqāma*," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 15 (1984), 1.

expectation is that some sort of duplicity is going to be revealed, the audience, although perhaps growing increasingly impatient with the narrator's gullibility and naiveté, is always amused.

Accepting the *maqāma*'s relationship to other branches of *adab* learning and discourse, Rina Drory also views its overt fictionality as al-Hamadhānī's most important innovation. Before al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt* appeared, "[g]overned by powerful religious-poetic norms, canonical classical Arabic literature in general insisted on the historicity of its texts; fiction, when discussed at all, was usually condemned as a 'lie'."[8] The *maqāma*, she asserts, served as a first step towards Arabic fiction, although a step taken "very cautiously." Drory also points to what she sees as the clear "humorous intent" of al-Hamadhānī, who began to compose *maqāmāt* as a way to lighten the mood during serious *adab* sessions.

In an article that aims to define the *maqāma*'s place in the broader Arabic literary context, Abdelfattah Kilito closely examines aspects of discursive style and generic influences and overlaps, and describes it as "integrating a group of simple genres: the epistle, the sermon, the diverse poetic genres, etc."[9] In his later monograph on the *maqāma*, Kilito examines works by five authors (al-Hamadhānī d. 1009, Ibn Sharaf d. 1067, Ibn Nāqiyā d. 1092, Ibn Buṭlān d. 1092, and al-Ḥarīrī d. 1122) and expands upon his earlier article in a discussion of the relationships between their works and *adab* works contemporaneous to them. He explains his methodology by stating that

> [s]tarting from the hypothesis that a question directed to a work is, at the same time, directed to works contemporary to it, we have, in the first part, placed the *maqāmāt* parallel to other texts of the 4th century (some of which are little known), and we have tried, on the basis of this parallel arrangement, to disentangle a certain number of historical, geographical, social and poetic codes.[10]

Daniel Beaumont also examines certain codes present in two of al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt* (*al-Khamriyya* and *al-Barqaʿīdiyya*), focus-

[8] Rina Drory, "The Maqāma," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*, 190. For a more complete treatment of the development of the *maqāma*, specifically of its importance in the history of Arabic fiction, see Rina Drory, *Models and Contacts: Arabic Literature and Its Impact on Medieval Jewish Culture* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2000), 11–36.

[9] Abdelfattah Kilito, "Le Genre Séance: une introduction," *Studia Islamica* 43 (1976), 51.

[10] Abdelfattah Kilito, *Les Séances* (Paris: Sindbad, 1983), 15.

ing on the recasting of poetry and homily respectively into rhymed prose, and reading the "*maqāma* as a literary form whose purpose is the consumption and reshaping of antecedent texts."[11] Philip Kennedy, in "Some Demon Muse: structure and allusion in Al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāma Iblīsiyya*,"[12] analyzes the *maqāma* by bringing out an array of religious, poetic, and mythical codes embedded in the text, the recognition of which is essential for an appreciation of the work as a whole. Kennedy shows how al-Hamadhānī appropriated material from the public domain of cultural material, and transformed it. In this particular *maqāma*, Kennedy examines the movement from the belief, stemming from pre-Islamic times, that poets are inspired by *jinn* (spirits), to al-Hamadhānī's time where, "by the 10th century we should no longer take the stories of the Jinn at face value."[13] *Al-Maqāma al-Iblīsiyya*, asserts Kennedy, can be read as a work of literary criticism that elucidates al-Hamadhānī's views, and possibly those of his contemporaries as well, concerning ancient ideas surrounding poetic inspiration.

Regarding the social, political, and cultural context out of which the *maqāma* emerged, James Monroe points to the disintegration of the classical court culture that had fostered the development of the Arabic *qaṣīda* in the (eastern) Umayyad period. This environment was vital to the development, growth, and flourishing of an official poetry that served the ruler or patron. According to Monroe, al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt* emerged as a result of the shift in political power from the ʿAbbasid caliphate's central authority to that of the Buwayhids who effectively ruled over ʿAbbasid lands (932–1062). According to Monroe, this political shift was accompanied by a literary shift that marginalized poetry in favor of prose. He argues that although the ʿAbbasid court contained many Persian elements that included certain court rituals, dress, and even the geographical layout of its imperial capital, Baghdad, it held the Arabic language and poetry in high esteem. In fact, Rina Drory argues that it was the ʿAbbasid fascination with pre-Islamic culture, specifically that of the Caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 754–775), that secured pre-Islamic poetry's place in the Arabo-Islamic canon.[14] The Buwayhids,

[11] Daniel Beaumont, "The Trickster and Rhetoric in the *Maqāmāt*," *Edebiyât* 5 (1994), 1.

[12] Philip F. Kennedy, "Some Demon Muse: structure and allusion in Al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāma Iblīsiyya*," *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literatures* 2:1 (1999), 115–135.

[13] Ibid., 128.

[14] Rina Drory, "The Abbasid Construction of the Jahiliyya: Cultural Authority in the Making," *Studia Islamica*, No. 83 (1996), 33–49.

on the other hand, were a Persian-speaking military ruling regime. As a result, "[i]t would appear that the *maqāmah* genre filled a much needed gap produced when the *qaṣīdah* was no longer viable, because military-based courts no longer enjoyed the sublime prestige formerly enjoyed by religious-based ones."[15] Thus, according to this argument, literary patronage in the courtly environment declined.[16] With the development of the *maqāma* and other literary discourses outside of the courtly environment, Arabic poetry faced competition it never had before, resulting in an entirely new type of literary production.

In the pre-Islamic period, the tribal poet held a certain amount of power and prestige in his role as spokesperson for the tribe. Tribal honor was the responsibility of this poet, whose role it was to revile enemies, sing the praises of his own tribe, and recount and record tribal history. This situation continued under the Umayyads who based their rule and legitimacy on the Bedouin tribal ethos and even in the highly urbanized and Persianized ʿAbbasid court, the panegyric continued to play an important role in courtly life. In the later Islamic period however, the tribe was replaced by the state, and the poet's role as the sole voice and diplomatic representative of the tribe's interests was diminished alongside that of the court secretary (*kātib*), who, according to the demands of the profession, was required to master a wide range of scholarly knowledge (philology, poetry, grammar, history, geography, rhetoric, etc.). Thus, whereas

> the 'ancient' poet had a quasi-monopoly over speech, the 'modern' poet found himself in competition with the historian, the jurist, the *ḥadīth* scholar, the commentator, the theologian, the polemicist, etc. Amidst such a polyphony, poetry could no longer be heard as anything but a feeble and timid voice.[17]

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[15] James Monroe ed. and trans., *al-Maqāmāt al-Luzūmīyah by Abū l-Ṭāhir Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Tamīmī al-Saraqusṭī ibn al-Aštarkūwī (d. 538/1143)* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2002), 10–11.

[16] The shift from an Arabic-speaking Caliphal court to the Persian-speaking Buwayhids in Baghdad can be viewed analogously to the situation in al-Andalus when power moved from the Arab Umayyads in Cordoba to the Berber-speaking Almoravids in al-Saraqusṭī's time, a point Monroe expands upon in a later article. See James T. Monroe and Mark F. Pettigrew, "The Decline of Courtly Patronage and the Appearance of New Genres in Arabic Literature: The Case of the *Zajal*, the *Maqāma*, and the Shadow Play," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 34:1/2 (2003), 138–177. This shift and its literary implications will be treated in more detail below.

[17] Kilito, *Les Séances*, 77.

Although Kilito may overstate the extent of poetry's loss in importance at the ʿAbbasid court, it is true that literary merit was no longer accorded solely on the ability to compose poetry. Now, members of the literati were expected to compose prose as well, covering a wide range of genres and themes. This change in expectations contributed to the rise of the polymath writer who drew from an intellectually diverse well of knowledge. It must not be forgotten, however, that although poetry was now forced to share the stage with competing discourses, it was still very much a vibrant form that flourished alongside and within the *maqāma*.

Genre, Geography, and Language

The itinerant nature of the *maqāma*'s protagonists makes it difficult to experience it divorced from geographical literature that is similarly comprised of accounts, anecdotes, strange happenings, and descriptions set in various lands. Using this dimension as a starting point, Kilito reads al-Hamadhānī in the context of geographical writings contemporary to him, concentrating on the geographers Istakhrī (flourished mid-tenth century), Muqaddasī (flourished tenth century), and Ibn Ḥawqal (flourished 943–988).[18] Kilito notes that the *maqāma*, like these medieval geographical writings, is concerned with, and largely limited to, the Islamic world, *dār al-islām*. For example, al-Muqaddasī, in *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm* (The Best Chapters for Gaining Knowledge about Geographical Regions), states this focus explicitly: "We will mention only the lands of Islam, and nothing more. No effort will be made to describe Infidel states, for we have never entered them, and see no interest in referring to them."[19] It is important to note that geographical literature came about as Islamic sovereignty was expanding, and served administrative purposes relating to agriculture, land appropriation, taxation, trade, etc. It is no wonder then that this literature was mainly concerned with Islamic lands. This is not to say that all geographers limited themselves in this way. Richard Bernburg points out that

[18] For brief biographies of these geographers, see the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, 2 Volumes, eds. Julie Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey (London and New York: Routledge, 1998).

[19] Quoted in Kilito, *Les Séances*, 20.

> [t]he exigencies of administering a far-flung empire, burgeoning long-distance and "intercontinental" trade and a well-nigh unlimited curiosity for the entire world, within and without the borders of the Islamic empire, its cultures and learning also propelled geographical study and writing.[20]

In other words, an empire that ruled over a wide expanse of geographical territory and had diplomatic and economic relations with lands beyond its borders could not help but develop a sophisticated art of geographical writing with which to explore and describe that world. There are *maqāmāt* that also take place outside of the Islamic domains (for example, al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāma Qazwīniyya*,[21] and al-Saraqusṭī's *Maqāmat al-Hind* and *Maqāmat Sind*). Nonetheless, in the majority of *maqāmāt*, the protagonists move from city to city within the Islamic world.

It is noteworthy that over the course of this movement, the place names within which the actions occur change from one narrative to the next, but rarely, if ever, is there mention or description of natural topographical features or man-made urban ones. To the *maqāma*'s narrator, unlike in the case of the famous medieval travelers such as Ibn Faḍlān, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Ibn Jubayr, or Benjamin of Tudela,[22] there is little that he finds outstanding or even remotely noteworthy. The constant movement of the protagonists in the *maqāma*, in contrast to the almost complete lack of attention to where they actually are, is significant. In fact, it is quite remarkable that the protagonists seem to be completely at home, no matter where they find themselves. They

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[20] Richard Bernburg, "Geographical Literature" in the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, 245.

[21] Philip Kennedy looks at this *maqāma* in "The *Maqāmāt* as a Nexus of Interests: reflections on Abdelfattah Kilito's *Les Séances*," in *Writing and Representation in Medieval Islam: Muslim Horizons*, ed. Julia Bray (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 153–214.

[22] Ibn Faḍlān, *Risālat Ibn Faḍlān*, ed. Sāmī al-Dahhān (Beirut: Maktabat al-thaqāfa al-ʿālamiyya, 1987); Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭa* (Beirut: Dār ṣādir, n.d.); Ibn Jubayr, *Riḥlat Ibn Jubayr*, ed. Ḥusayn Naṣṣār (Cairo: Maktabat Miṣr, 1992); Benjamin of Tudela, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, introduction by Michael A. Signer, 1983, Marcus Nathan Adler, 1907, and A. Asher, 1840 (New York: Joseph Simon, 1983). The Hebrew can be found in J. D. Eisenstein (ed.), *Osar Massaoth* (Tel Aviv, 1969). For more details on travel writing and the definition of identity, see Elka Weber, "Construction of Identity in Twelfth-Century Andalusia: The Case of Travel Writing," *The Journal of North African Studies* 5:2 (Summer 2000), 1–8.

> move in the midst of a landscape which certainly changes, but is always familiar. Their peregrinations occur on solid ground, on which no novel discovery shakes them. They encounter no bizarre customs in the domain of Otherness that would cause them to knit their brows and open their eyes wide.[23]

Along this extensive itinerary, when do the characters feel at home, and when do they find themselves out of place? In al-Saraqusṭī's Berber *Maqāma*,[24] which takes place close to al-Andalus in Tangiers, the narrator finds the Berbers' behavior quite foreign to that of his own, and manages to draw very distinct divisions linguistically, culturally, and even morally between them and himself, within *dār al-Islām*, and among fellow Muslims. This could point to a shift from the ideal religious definition of Islamic society that considers all Muslims equal, no matter where they are from, to a linguistic, racial, or cultural one where Muslims are differentiated and classed accordingly. This is not to imply that this was strictly a twelfth century development, as there were cultural and racial tensions as early as during the Umayyad period (661–750) in the east which eventually served as one of the rallying cries that led to the ʿAbbasid takeover of the Caliphate. Nonetheless, the differentiation that occurs among Muslims, in *dār al-Islām*, indicates that for al-Saraqusṭī, religious, racial, and cultural definitions do not necessarily fall along the same lines.

In the *maqāma*, the space within which the characters move is a textual one, and is bounded in large part by the frontiers of the Islamic world. As Gil Anidjar points out, "[t]he séance is a place, *un lieu*, then, but one that takes place insofar as it withdraws from identity, from localization."[25] However, despite the fact that the *maqāma* is a place in which the protagonists seem to move about with relative ease physically, language and style make it much less comfortable, even for a highly learned audience. The self-consciously ornate language, along with the dense layering of subject matter and allusion which requires a high level of *adab* learning and the ability to interpret on multiple levels, place both the protagonists and the audience in the unenviable position of

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[23] Kilito, *Les Séances*, 21.

[24] For analyses of this *maqāma*, see James T. Monroe, "Al-Saraqusṭī ibn al-Aštarkūwī: Andalusī Lexicographer, Poet, and Author of *al-Maqāmāt al-Luzūmiyya*," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 28:1 (1997), 1–37; Ignacio Ferrando Frutos, "La *Maqāma barbariyya* de al-Saraqusṭī," *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes* 2 (1991), 119–129.

[25] Gil Anidjar, *"Our Place in al-Andalus": Kabbalah, Philosophy, Literature in Arab Jewish Letters* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 218.

trying to understand a text that is obstinately elusive. This may have been part of the challenge and fun of reading and composing *maqāmāt*, and it was indeed a popular genre in al-Andalus.[26] However, this difficult style of expression is not an incidental aspect of the *maqāma*. Rather, it is central to how the *maqāma* operates. As Kilito states,

> [t]his situation of incomprehension repeats itself, in one form or another, in all of the *maqāmāt*. Between the interlocutors, there is a cut constantly created, [and] a distance, both of which make any exchange hazardous and problematic. Far from being a means of communication, a docile mediator, language appears rather as an obstacle to comprehension. Misunderstanding, equivocation, and 'noise' become the rule of conversation.[27]

Thus, discomfort within the text is produced not by location, but by language. Linguistic style is the means by which the protagonists and the audience are forced out of their familiar surroundings, and thrust into a text that aims to trick and deceive.[28] Although the *maqāma* is written in Arabic, which in one form or another was used as the *lingua franca* across the Mediterranean basin and beyond in Europe and Asia during much of the medieval period, the level of discourse used here can hardly be considered a unifying one. In fact, even the most educated audiences are forced into some level of alienation and isolation in the *maqāma*. The (Arabic) language of the *maqāma* assures a wide readership on the one hand, while simultaneously limiting that readership on the other. It is this alienation—in the Arabic language and literary heritage while located in *dār al-Islām*—that is of interest here. How does the Andalusī writer receive and manipulate the *maqāma* in order to express his own feelings of alienation? Through a close examination of al-Saraquṣṭī's Qayrawan *Maqāma*, I show that this itinerant genre, and genre of itinerancy, provided fertile and flexible material with which to express what it meant to be an Andalusī in the twelfth century.

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[26] Iḥsān ʿAbbās posits that the popularity of the *maqāma* in al-Andalus, specifically those of al-Ḥarīrī, can be attributed to the fact that a number of Andalusīs actually studied with al-Ḥarīrī and transmitted his work to al-Andalus. See ʿAbbās, *Tārīkh al-adab al-Andalusī*, 243–244. See also Hämeen-Anttila, *Maqama*, 206–209.

[27] Kilito, *Les Séances*, 214.

[28] I should add the disclaimer that the level of (in)comprehension varies from one *maqāma* to the next. However, while it is true that al-Hamadhānī's writing is generally much clearer than that of al-Ḥarīrī or al-Saraquṣṭī, the density of literary, linguistic, and cultural allusions in the *maqāma* as a genre constantly forces the audience out of the text in search of requisite keys for understanding.

Al-Saraqusṭī and Losses Past and Present

My decision to examine the work of al-Saraqusṭī stems in large part from his own self-conscious effort to emulate the style of "the master Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥarīrī."[29] By choosing to follow in the footsteps of al-Ḥarīrī, as well as imposing upon himself Abū al-ʿAlā al-Maʿarrī's (973–1057) challenging rhyme scheme (*al-luzūm mā lā yalzam*)[30] as indicated in the collection's title (*al-Maqāmāt al-luzūmiyya*) and in the introduction to that collection,[31] al-Saraqusṭī invites comparison and competition with these lofty names of the Arabic literary tradition.[32] Al-Saraqusṭī further engages tradition through his re-writing of the highly conventional *rithāʾ al-mudun* genre.

As shown in the previous chapter, the *rithāʾ al-mudun* utilizes stock tropes, images, and patterns in order to facilitate the mourning process and to immortalize the lost object of grief. Relying as much on convention as creativity, the poet elicits an emotional response from the audience that is an integral part of this process, while creating a lasting and unique memorial for the lost city. Conventionality is important to the success of the elegy, as it provides a ritual framework within which the poet and the mourners take part in the mourning. In the layering and recalling of past elegies, the *rithāʾ al-mudun* for a particular location is literally built on the ruins of other historical losses that locate it within the larger context of the genre, resulting in a complex and richly textured effect. What happens then, when this traditional edifice is altered? What is the result when a writer evokes the memory of past fallen cities through careful allusion to and utilization of *rithāʾ al-mudun* images and topoi, but uses them outside of their original poetic context? Is the result merely a "[parody] on high literature circulated in courtly

[29] al-Saraqusṭī, 17. I am using James T. Monroe's English translation, *al-Maqāmāt al-Luzūmīyah*, 113.

[30] Literally, "requiring that which is not necessary." This refers to a rhyme scheme that, instead of rhyming the last syllable, as is the norm in rhymed poetry or prose, rhymes more than one syllable, which is more difficult. For al-Maʿarrī's own explanation of this particular rhyme scheme, see Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī, *al-Luzūmiyyāt*, ed. Amīn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Khānijī (Cairo; Beirut: Maktabat al-Khānijī; Maktabat al-Hilāl, 1969), 1–32.

[31] al-Saraqusṭī mentions his deference to al-Maʿarrī in the introduction to his *maqāma* collection (see previous note).

[32] For a complete treatment of al-Saraqusṭī's biography, see Monroe, *al-Maqāmāt al-Luzūmīyah*, 46–54. See also Monroe, "Al-Saraqusṭī ibn al-Aštarkūwī."

circles"[33] for the purposes of entertainment, or does this literary disruption result in an effect that moves quite a bit beyond entertainment?

Al-Saraqusṭī's *Maqāma* number 29 is an elegy for the city of Qayrawan in *maqāma* form. This *maqāma* affords an examination of the effect of the generic shift from poetry to prose. As well, al-Saraqusṭī provides a glimpse of his views on the Arabic literary heritage and culture of his own time. As a work of literary criticism and self-reflection, the *maqāma* is the means by which the author looks back, either nostalgically or ironically, to a time when Arabic poetry reigned supreme. By flouting convention and translating poetry into prose, one wonders whether al-Saraqusṭī is paying homage to a poetic golden age, bidding it farewell, or pointing a way to the future.

Poetry in the Guise of Prose

The translation of the *rithāʾ al-mudun* into prose is not uncommon in Arabic literature. Although it appears slightly after al-Saraqusṭī's death, Usāma Ibn Munqidh (d. 1188) shares his elegiac inspiration in an anthology compiled in the wake of a destructive earthquake in Syria in 1157 entitled *Kitāb al-manāzil wa-l-diyār* (The Book of Campsites and Abodes). Ibn Munqidh introduces the work in a highly personal and poetic manner that evokes the traditional poetic *nasīb*. He states:

> What urged me to compile this book was the ruin [*kharāb*] that was brought to my country and land. Time dragged its tail across it, completely wiping it out, leaving no recourse. It came to a point where it was as if it had never flourished. The courtyards became desolate after once teeming with life, its prosperity destroyed, its inhabitants obliterated. Its habitations became mere traces [*rusūm*], its pleasures turned to mourning and grief…I found relief in compiling this book, making it my tears shed over my home and loved ones [*wa-jaʿaltuhu bukāʾan li-l-diyāri wa-l-aḥbābi*].[34] [29]

The author, standing over the ruins that were once his home, describes its transformation from ebullient life to desolation. He realizes, as does the *qaṣīda* poet, that the past cannot be retrieved and consolation can

[33] Drory, "The Maqāma," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*, 191.

[34] Usāma Ibn Munqidh, *Kitāb al-manāzil wa-l-diyār* (Damascus: al-Maktab al-islāmī li-l-ṭibāʿa wa-l-nashr, 1965), 3–4. See J. Stetkevych's discussion of Usāma Ibn Munqidh in *The Zephyrs of Najd*, 51–53.

only be achieved through symbolic revivification. This comes in the tears of poems with which Ibn Munqidh waters the barren earth. As an anthologist, he also plays the part of the elegist, weeping over the loss of his home, while granting it immortality through poetry. This introduction is his *nasīb*, and the collection of poems is his *rithāʾ*.

Closer to al-Saraqusṭī's home is his predecessor Ibn Ḥazm's (d. 1064) lament for his family residence in Cordoba after the Berber *fitna* of 1013. In hyperbolic language even more reminiscent of the *nasīb* than that of Ibn Munqidh, Ibn Ḥazm stands on the ruins of his former home, remembering it as it once was, and describing what it has become:

> A visitor from Cordova informed me, when I asked him for news of that city, that he had seen our mansion in Balat Mughith, on the western side of the metropolis; its traces were wellnigh obliterated, its waymarks effaced; vanished were its spacious patios. All had been changed by decay; the joyous pleasaunces were converted to barren deserts and howling wildernesses; its beauty lay in shattered ruins. Where peace once reigned, fearful chasms yawned; wolves resorted there, ghosts frolicked, demons sported… Then I remembered the days that I had passed in that fair mansion, the joys I had known there, the months of my ardent youth spent in the company of blooming virgins, very apt to awaken desire in the heart of the most sedate young man.[35] [30]

While displaying an obvious deference to the Arabic poetic heritage, Ibn Ḥazm also expresses a specifically Andalusī pride and a desire to delineate a cultural space for himself and his fellow Andalusīs, both by appropriating the pre-Islamic poetic past, and by distancing himself from it. At the beginning of his treatise on love, *Ṭawq al-ḥamāma* (The Dove's Necklace), he states:

> Spare me those tales of Bedouins (*wa-daʿnī min akhbāri l-aʿrābi*)… Their ways were not our ways, and the stories told of them are too numerous in any case. It is not my practice to wear out anybody's riding-beast but my own; I am not one of those who deck themselves up in borrowed plumes.[36]

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[35] Translation by A. J. Arberry, *The Ring of the Dove by Ibn Hazm (994–1064)* (London: Luzac Oriental, 1953; 1994), 180–181. For the original Arabic text, see Ibn Ḥazm, *Ṭawq al-ḥamāma fī-l-ilfa wa-l-ullāf*, (Beirut: Manshūrāt dār maktabat al-ḥayāt, 196?), 148–149.

[36] Arberry, 18; Ibn Ḥazm, *Ṭawq al-ḥamāma* (196?), 9. See also Eric Ormsby, "Ibn Hazm," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*, 244.

Reading the first passage in light of the second, it is clear that Ibn Ḥazm, never hesitant to express his love for al-Andalus and belief in its superiority over other Islamic lands,[37] is attempting to define Andalusī literary culture as something that is a part of the Arabic tradition, as well as distinct from it. Ibn Ḥazm did compose an elegy in verse using traditional poetic imagery and topoi for his destroyed home, so it would be an overstatement to say that he rejects the classical Arabic poetic tradition outright as he intimates in the second quote. It would be more accurate to describe him as the "*complete* rhetorician . . . equally able to excel in all the genres, and to move with the same facility in poetry as he does in prose."[38] Looking back to the initial lament for his home, we see that, by using the images and themes of the pre-Islamic *nasīb* in a context radically different from the original poetic one, Ibn Ḥazm expresses the respect he feels for the tradition, while underlining the incompatibility of that tradition to his own time. By prosifying the *aṭlāl* and *nasīb*, motifs so quintessentially poetic and inextricably associated with the *qaṣīda*, the writer pays homage to that lofty tradition with a respectful nod, but makes it clear that the time has come for him to leave the ancient ruins of tradition behind and move forth into a creative realm of his own devising.

Wolfhart Heinrichs discusses the issue of rendering poetry into prose, and vice versa, stating that

> [t]ransposition from one medium into the other was considered possible and a good exercise. The transformation of prose into poetry was called *ʿaqd* (literally 'solidifying'), the reverse process, *ḥall* (literally 'dissolving'). Since it was the scribes who promoted these ideas, the process of *ḥall* was much more frequently employed, because it was seen as a means to enrich the style and language of their epistles, and whole books were written about how to proceed.[39]

It is true that in the scribal circles upon which the quote focuses, this prosification may have served as a stylistic or even mechanical exercise. However, it is necessary to further examine the reasons and effects, if any, of such a process. As pointed out above, al-Saraqusṭī has initiated a

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[37] Ibn Ḥazm's demonstration of Andalusī pride—his *Risāla fī faḍāʾil al-Andalus wa-ahlihā*—will be discussed in Chapter Four.

[38] Kilito, "Le Genre Séance," 30.

[39] Wolfhart Heinrichs, "Prosimetrical Genres in Classical Arabic Literature," in *Prosimetrum: Crosscultural Perspectives on Narrative in Prose and Verse*, eds. Joseph Harris and Karl Reichl (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997), 269.

dialogue with the Arabic poetic tradition in his collection of *maqāmāt* in general, and in the Qayrawan *Maqāma* in particular. His 'dissolving' of the poetic *rithāʾ* is more than just a literary trick. He is actively recalling and challenging the poetic tradition, and offering an ambivalent view of that tradition from twelfth century al-Andalus.

The Qayrawan Maqāma (Number 29) by al-Saraqusṭī[40]

Al-Mundhir ibn Ḥumām narrated and said:

Al-Sāʾib ibn Tammām informed us and said:

We set out in a group, traveling in a caravan, until we came to the city of Qayrawan, in the company of a band of murderous desert Arabs and wolflike brigands. We reached it after having worn smooth the surface of the road, at which point the medley of nomadic groups and bands departed from us, one after another. Destruction had overtaken the city, Bedouin Arabs had made off with its power, diminished its cistern and pool, and shaken its Khawarnaq and Sadīr. I therefore halted before those ruins and tracings, and felt nostalgia for those vestiges and tattoo-like markings, for I remembered how many ladies in their howdahs had departed from it, and how many foes had stabbed it in the throat, how many playful maidens and resolute chieftains, well-watered gardens, henna-stained fingertips, neighborhoods and private enclosures, honors and nobilities, free-grazing herds and livestock, benefits and blessings used to be found in those ruins, hence my heart became hardened against those uncouth former traveling companions of mine, and I rejected them as uncivil allies for, when they passed by the ruins, they had failed to stop or turn the reins of their camels toward them, or to greet them as one should greet effaced encampments that are redolent of, and smiling from, former opulence. Instead, it was as if they had come upon an unknown region or followed one another down to a desert water-hole. Only plunder and oppression were of interest to them, and only dyes and tattoos were attractive to them. Therefore, I watered the ruins with tear after tear, and viewed them as one warning example after another, for how many a sheltered woman had been

[40] Translation from Monroe, *al-Maqāmāt al-Luzūmīyah*, 302–306. I thank James Monroe and E. J. Brill for permission to reprint the translation in its entirety. See appendix for the Arabic text.

humbled in them; how many a virtuous one had been overpowered in them; how many a forbidden thing had been made permissible; how many a structure had been torn down; how many a lofty building had been leveled; how many a mediator had been rejected; how many a curtained bridal canopy had been torn to pieces; how many an eardrop and anklet had been plucked off; how many a secure person had been terrorized, and how many a concealed person had been flushed out amid those ruins. While I was expressing my sorrow by invoking God's unity and greatness; while I was contemplating the ruins and deriving a warning from them, I suddenly heard an alarming voice proceeding from among them, whose echo responded, alternated, and took turns with it in resounding. It said: "O ruins, where are your residents? O spring encampments, how numerous are your lodgings! O abodes, is there a dweller within you? O aerie, does anyone nest inside you? Are you dumb or are you deaf? Are you possessed or are you touched by lunacy? How long shall I ring a bell, only to summon or address one who is mute? Indeed, some calamitous event must have smitten this vicinity, worsened its state, and made years and years elapse, until these ruins have come to see red-thighed, rutting male ostriches, along with wild asses, replace moon-like beauties and sagacious men; tawny gazelles hiding in their coverts replace fair-skinned maidens; wild vultures replace virginal beauties; snub-nosed, hairy he-goats replace slender, short-haired purebred horses, and the hoot and the howl of two kinds of owl replace, indeed, the wail of the lute and the neigh of the steed. Woe for all your men! Woe for your ample domain! Woe for your hardships! Woe for your playgrounds! Woe for your stallion-like chieftains! Woe for your Arabs and your non-Arabs! Contrary winds have toyed with your domain, the down-pour of heavy rains has erased your traces; decay has trailed the edges of its robes over you, caused its torrents to flow through your valley, pitched its tent, remained in your courtyard, and worn smooth your camel-park and your abode."

Al-Sā'ib said:

Thereupon, I was alarmed by that speaker and said: "Hail, you who halt at midnight or at midday to break your journey with a brief nap!" I went forth, in his direction, in order to win his friendship and rest my sturdy she-camel. And lo, he was of a tall build and stature. He invited me to remain and stay, and began saying: "My good man, tarry here, rather than hastening off, and be at peace rather than in fear. Let me put you in touch with your comrades, and comfort you in your

weeping and wailing. These ruins are marvels, indeed, but the nights are meant for riding nobly bred coursers of ancient lineage, rather than that camel upon which you impose the arduous task of running at a broad pace or a swift trot, or for seeking right guidance from the nocturnal dream-image and blowing breeze, as you do. You heedlessly pass these ruins by and ignore them, while the stars rise and set over them. Go to yonder sepulcher and you will find in it the sculptured image of a peacock, and behold statues like fair-skinned beauties who will speak to you with no need of a tongue."

Al-Sāʾib said:

So I descended from my camel at his bidding, placed its halter in his hand, tossed him my provision-bag, and went to contemplate those graven images, after I had doffed the clothes of my weakness and debility. I stayed there for a long time, wandering back and forth, for his words had filled me with perplexity and confusion. But when I sought him in the place where I had promised to meet him again, he was missing and I could not find him. Soon I discovered that he had written on a gravestone, with a bright and shiny piece of charcoal [*ṭawīl*]:

> When companionship interferes with your journey,
> do not remain weeping for it before each and every ruin.
>
> Cease remembering Hind and Rabāb,
> for your only concern should be in putting riding-camels to the trot.
>
> Is the earth's entire surface other than an empty desert?
> Hence what is so important about a ruined encampment between Buṣrā and Jāsim?
>
> If raging storms whose violent winds cause destruction,
> have recently blown Qayrawan and its inhabitants away,
>
> Why, formerly, they toppled the thrones of ʿĀd and Jurhum,
> when death trampled their territory underfoot.
>
> O Sāʾib, let my smiling not deceive you,
> for how much weeping hides behind a cheerful smile.
>
> When the world you live in scowls, revealing the fang of distress,
> hope will show you mouths serenely smiling.
>
> Go now, all the wiser for the tribulations I have inflicted on you,
> for my beauties glow upon the cheek of Time.
>
> Mourn not for what has befallen you,
> but kindle instead the shining spark of prudence amid these ruined habitations,

> And avoid avaricious men, for disgraceful experiences affect one,
> at all seasons, because of them.
>
> Indeed, al-Karaj is not the whole world
> nor is all mankind Qāsim,
>
> But rather, our daily bread, in the hand of the Distributor,
> is all that is of value in this world.

Thus I knew that he was that cunning master and predatory wolf, Abū Ḥabīb—may he not prosper!—who was as odious to me as he was dear. [31]

The Arrival—The Companions

The narrator (al-Sāʾib) of this *maqāma* enters the city of Qayrawan accompanied by a group of "desert Arabs (*futtāki l-ʿurbāni*)" and "wolflike brigands (*ṣaʿālīki l-dhuʾbāni*)" and finds it in a state of ruin (*al-kharāb*), following its destruction by "Bedouin Arabs (*al-aʿrāb*)." Standing at these ruins, the reader is immediately placed in the discursive field of the traditional *qaṣīda* and the emphasis on the 'Arab-ness' of al-Sāʾib's companions leads one to wonder just who they are, and what they represent to al-Saraqusṭī.

By the twelfth century when he is writing, attitudes toward the Bedouin roots of Islamic culture had changed quite a bit from those of the early Islamic period, as seen with Ibn Ḥazm above, who was writing a century before al-Saraqusṭī. Bedouin Arab culture had earned itself a privileged place in Islamic society soon after the appearance of Islam in the seventh century. The need to understand the cultural context surrounding God's revelation to Muḥammad made it essential that the new Muslim community possess an understanding of Bedouin social mores, structures, and history. Additionally, the need to codify the rules of the Arabic language in order to guarantee the proper preservation, comprehension, and recitation of the Qurʾān's Arabic text spurred activity wherein scholars set out from the urban centers of Basra, Kufa, and Baghdad for the desert seeking 'native' Arab sources of poetic material and explanations, from which grammatical, historical, and cultural information was extracted.[41] This activity secured the Bedouin's status

[41] See Kees Versteegh, *The Arabic Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 53–73.

as the immutable bearer and protector of 'pure' Arab culture. However, with the urbanization and diversification of the Islamic world that came as a result of Islam's rapid spread into previously non-Arab regions, the 'Arab' became a figure who was both respected and ridiculed.[42]

If the Bedouin Arab occupies an ambiguous moral space in Arabo-Islamic culture, the *ṣuʿlūk* (pl. *ṣaʿālīk*)—vagabond or brigand—is another such character. He represents pre-Islamic society's highest ideals of steadfastness and bravery, despite his outcast status. Having been forced out of the birth tribe as a result of some sort of social transgression, the *ṣuʿlūk* survived on the margins. Nonetheless, although he lived outside of the tribal enclosure, he was not completely isolated from it since his livelihood, obtained through theft, scavenging, and raids, ultimately depended on human society. Thus, the *ṣuʿlūk* lived outside yet parallel to the mainstream society that unwittingly supported him. This dual position is also reflected in *ṣuʿlūk* poetry. Thematic and structural features distinguish the *ṣuʿlūk qaṣīda* from those composed by tribal poets, but instead of isolating the *ṣuʿlūk* poet from the poetic tradition and society as a whole,[43] these distinguishing characteristics are variations within the traditional *qaṣīda* form that aim to articulate a parallel tradition.[44]

The metaphoric and literal affinity of the *ṣaʿālīk* to the desert wilderness, and the strategies for survival that this harsh environment demanded, are articulated in the image of *dhuʾbān al-ʿarab*, "the wolves

[42] Joseph Sadan describes the ways in which this came to manifest itself in medieval literature, pointing to currents of *shuʿūbī* thought, as well as the broader and less ideological tensions that existed (and still exist) between urban and non-urban societies with regard to social graces, etiquette, etc. See "An Admirable and Ridiculous Hero: Some Notes on the Bedouin in Medieval Arabic Belles Lettres, on a Chapter of *Adab* by al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, and on a Literary Model in Which Admiration and Mockery Coexist," *Poetics Today* 10:3 (1989), 471–492. For a more detailed discussion of the *shuʿūbī* movement in general, see H. T. Norris, "*Shuʿūbiyyah* in Arabic Literature" in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: ʿAbbasid Belles Lettres*, eds. Julia Ashtiany et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 31–47. For a treatment of the topic specific to al-Andalus, see James T. Monroe, *The Shuʿūbiyya in al-Andalus, the Risāla of Ibn Garcia and Five Refutations* (San Diego: University of California Press, 1970).

[43] An assertion G. Borg makes in his entry "ṣaʿālīk" in the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, Volume 2, 670.

[44] See Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych's discussion of the *ṣuʿlūk* poet in *The Mute Immortals Speak*, 87–157, in which she describes him as working within the traditional model of the *qaṣīda*, and altering the poem's structure and imagery to reflect the liminal status of the poet. See also her article "Archetype and Attribution in Early Arabic Poetry: al-Shanfarā and the Lāmiyyat al-ʿArab," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 18 (1986), 361–390.

of the Arabs," a moniker implying ferociousness and cunning. This reference appears in al-Shanfarā's *Lāmiyya* (The ode rhyming in 'L'), where he likens himself to the wolf in numerous passages:

> I have in place of you other kin: the wolf, unwearying runner,
> the darting sand leopard, the bristle-necked hyena.
>
> .....
>
> I part at dawn on meager fare like a wolf
> led on, desert into desert, scrawny, grey.
>
> .....
>
> When next morning in Ghumaysa two groups met,
> One asking about me, the other being asked:
>
> "Last night our dogs were whining."
> "A wolf prowling, or a hyena?"[45] [32]

Alan Jones asserts that the "*ṣaʿālīk* are essentially a pre-Islamic phenomenon, not because the practice of outlawry ceased with the coming of Islam, but because the existence of the Islamic *umma* extended a lifeline to the outlaw."[46] In other words, the Islamic community that replaced the pre-Islamic social structure based on tribal affiliation was broad enough to include even the Muslim miscreant. Al-Saraqusṭī's reference to these *ṣaʿālīk al-dhuʾbān* is a literary conceit to be sure, but it is one that would be appreciated by a wide audience familiar with the Arab literary heritage. The characterization of the *ṣuʿlūk* as a figure who lives outside social laws, but in direct contact with that society, also applies to the protagonists of the *maqāma*, who, by their own choice, live "on the margin of society"[47] and survive by utilizing the rhetorical tools of that same society, in order to undermine and profit from it. Referring to the literal typology of the Bedouin Arab and the outcast pre-Islamic *ṣuʿlūk*, al-Saraqusṭī defines his characters, and marginalizes them by the company they keep.

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[45] Translation from Michael Sells, *Desert Tracings: Six Classic Arabian Odes*. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989), 24–31. For the Arabic text, see Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd ibn ʿUmar al-Zamakhsharī, *Kitāb al-ʿajab fī sharḥ lāmiyyat al-ʿarab* (Istanbul: Maṭbaʿat al-Jawāʾib, 1300 A.H.).

[46] Alan Jones ed., *Early Arabic Poetry, Volume one: Marāthī and Ṣuʿlūk poems* (Oxford: Ithaca Press Reading for the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Oxford University, 1992), 27.

[47] James T. Monroe, *The Art of Badīʿ az-Zamān al-Hamadhānī as Picaresque Narrative* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1983), 101.

Standing at the ruins of Qayrawan with al-Sāʾib, the audience is immediately invited to contemplate the Arab characters in the *maqāma*, and the extent of their own Arab heritage. There are multiple levels of signification in the literary archetypes that al-Saraqusṭī presents. These brigand Arabs are familiar within the Arabic literary canon and cultural sphere, but foreign in many ways to the urbane author and his audience. The narrator emphasizes the literary-cultural chasm that separates him from "those uncouth former traveling companions… [rejecting] them as uncivil allies for, when they passed by the ruins, they had failed to stop or turn the reins of their camels toward them, or to greet them as one should greet effaced encampments."[48] It is ironic that the Bedouin Arab who essentially invented and perfected the art of weeping over the abandoned campsite can, by the twelfth century, no longer be bothered with anything but "plunder and oppression (*lā yaʿnīhim illā l-ghaṣbu wa-l-ghashmu*)."[49] As Ibn Ḥazm hinted above, it seems that the Arabic literary heritage no longer belongs to the Bedouin Arabs who characterized the idealized pre-Islamic past, but rather, to the urban literati. It is the responsibility of the modern litterateur who will define and preserve the past.

Adding to the significance of these Arab characters is al-Saraqusṭī's choice of Qayrawan as a setting. Qayrawan was sacked by Banū Hilāl Arabs in 1049 and fell in 1057, an event memorialized in a number of *rithāʾ* composed for it.[50] Prior to that year, al-Andalus had only known one significant urban loss, that being the fall of Cordoba in the Berber *fitna*. However, between 1057 and al-Saraqusṭī's own time, al-Andalus had seen the fall of Barbastro in 1064, Toledo in 1085, Valencia in 1094, and Saragossa (al-Saraqusṭī's hometown) in 1118, all duly mourned in verse.[51] Thus, from where al-Saraqusṭī stood, Qayrawan's fall symbolizes the beginning of an unsettlingly lengthening string of losses in the Muslim west, a fact that could not have gone unnoticed by the author. Moreover, to highlight the destruction of a city that fell at the hands of Bedouin Arab tribes only emphasizes al-Saraqusṭī's ambiguous,

[48] al-Saraqusṭī, 257; Monroe, 302.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Among those who composed *rithāʾ* for the city of Qayrawan were Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī (d. after 1063), Ibn Sharaf al-Qayrawānī (1000–1068), and Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Kafīf al-Ḥuṣrī (ca. 1029–95).
[51] See Muḥammad, *Rithāʾ al-mudun*, 125–139.

and perhaps ambivalent attitude toward those symbolic keepers of the Arabic literary heritage.

Added to these military losses are the social, cultural, and political upheavals that accompanied the Almoravid takeover of al-Andalus which had begun with the Sevillan poet-king al-Muʿtamid ibn ʿAbbād's appeal for military assistance in 1090, and was all but complete by the time al-Saraqusṭī composed his *maqāmāt*. The Almoravids were a political-religious reformist movement with its roots in the southern regions of present-day Morocco. Relying upon the *fuqahāʾ* for establishing and maintaining legitimacy rather than upon court poets and litterateurs as was previously the case during the period of the Caliphate and the Taifa Kings (*mulūk al-ṭawāʾif*),[52] the status of Arabic belles-lettres was diminished, even threatened, during this period. The ruins over which the narrator gazes are the vividly remembered ruins of the city of Qayrawan, as well as the crumbling edifice of the classical Arabic poetic tradition itself.

The Ruins Given Voice—The Narrator Loses His

After halting at the ruins of Qayrawan, al-Sāʾib remains consistent with the *nasīb* tradition of Arabic poetry and proceeds to remember and weep for the past. "I…felt nostalgia for those vestiges and tattoo-like markings, for I remembered how many ladies in their howdahs had departed from it, and how many foes had stabbed it in the throat…."[53] The narrator continues to use stock imagery and themes from the *nasīb* in a manner that is more a list of conventional poetic tropes than any real attempt to express himself poetically. To convey his sadness in the face of this destruction, a string of conventional oppositions (*ṭibāq*) is used:

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[52] See ʿAbbās, *Tārīkh al-adab al-Andalusī*, 27–45; H. Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, 154–189. For an insightful treatment of the Almoravids, the challenges they faced transforming themselves from a desert religious movement to an urban empire, and the role the *fuqahāʾ* played in this, see Ronald A. Messier, "Re-Thinking the Almoravids, Re-Thinking Ibn Khaldun," *The Journal of North African Studies* 6:1 (Spring 2001), 59–80. The Almoravids, their successors the Almohads, and the erosion of the Arab litterateur's status under these regimes will be further discussed below.

[53] al-Saraqusṭī, 256; Monroe, 302.

> [H]ow many a sheltered woman had been humbled in them; how many a virtuous one had been overpowered in them; how many a forbidden thing had been made permissible; how many a structure had been torn down; how many a lofty building had been leveled; how many a mediator had been rejected.... (*fa-kam udīla fī-hā min maṣūnin wa-ghūliba ʿalay-hā min ḥuṣūnin wa-ubīḥa min mamnūʿin wa-ḥuṭṭa min rafīʿin wa-rudda min shafīʿin*....)[54]

The repetition of the passive voice creates an internal rhyme in *'u'* (*udīla, ghūliba, ubīḥa, ḥuṭṭa, rudda*) at the beginning of each phrase, that is resolved by the *luzūm mā lā yalzam* rhyme that defines the *maqāma* collection as a whole (*maṣūnin, ḥuṣūnin, mamnūʿin, rafīʿin, shafīʿin*). This passivity is not only rhetorical in purpose. It also serves to underline the inevitability of the events and the overwhelming power of Fate. The narrator is shrinking in importance as forces outside of his control take over.

In the classical Arabic *nasīb*, the poet, standing alone or with two voiceless riding companions, often addresses stones that can neither hear nor respond. For example, in Labīd's *muʿallaqa*, the poet says:

> I stopped to question them. How is one to question
> deaf, immutable, inarticulate stones?

Loneliness, desolation, and silence dominate the scene in which the only voice is that of the poet. However, this monovocal setting provides the poet with a certain amount of control in which he is able to conjure up memories of the past, and by articulating those memories, both revive and overcome them. It is his voice that recalls the loss, and it is that same voice that urges the poet to move on:

> But why recall Nawar? She's gone.
> Her ties and bonds to you are broken.
>
> .....
>
> Cut the bond with one you cannot reach!
> The best of those who make a bond are those who can break it.[55] [33]

Al-Sāʾib, however, is faced with ruins that may resemble those of the *nasīb* on the surface, but which are actually quite different. He is interrupted by what seems to be the silent ruins themselves. "While I was

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[54] al-Saraqusṭī, 257; Monroe, 303.

[55] Translation Sells, *Desert Tracings*, 36–37. For the Arabic, see *Dīwān Labīd b. Rabīʿa al-ʿĀmirī* (Beirut: Dār ṣādir, 1966), 165.

expressing my sorrow by invoking God's unity and greatness; while I was contemplating the ruins and deriving a warning from them, I suddenly heard an alarming voice proceeding from among them."[56] The voice imitates (mocks?), but does not echo al-Sāʾib's laments. Rather, it is echoed itself, providing its own response, and effectively isolating al-Sāʾib from the scene of his own narration. The mysterious voice's "echo responded, alternated, and took turns with it in resounding."[57] At the very point where we are being prepared for an extended *nasīb* in rhymed prose, the voice of a stranger emanating from the ruins, pretending to be an echo, and being echoed itself, disrupts the language and landscape of the *qaṣīda*.

The stranger breaks the silence and takes control. He addresses the ruins, and the *maqāma*'s narrator actually gives him (or perhaps is forced to give) more space than himself. As al-Sāʾib did before, the stranger proceeds to run through an exhaustive list of conventional imagery, using rhetorical strategies culled from the *qaṣīda* repertoire. Again, this conventionality would not be out of place in the context of the *qaṣīda* when used specifically to call to mind and respond to that convention. However in this case, we are removed from the traditional poetic context, and the seemingly endless weeping, lamenting, and description sounds forced, even comical. The stranger combines comparative and descriptive elements of the *nasīb*, and anaphoric strategies of the *rithāʾ al-mudun*. "O ruins, where are your residents? O spring encampments, how numerous are your lodgings! O abodes, is there a dweller within you? O aerie, does anyone nest inside you?"[58] He compares the wild and desolate present to the ebullient and civilized past.

> Indeed, some calamitous event must have smitten this vicinity…until these ruins have come to see red-thighed, rutting male ostriches, along with wild asses, replace moon-like beauties and sagacious men; tawny gazelles hiding in their coverts replace fair-skinned maidens; wild vultures replace virginal beauties.…[59]

He concludes his speech by describing the complete washing out of the ruins' traces by "contrary winds (*al-riyāḥ al-nukb*)," "the downpour of

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[56] al-Saraqusṭī, 257; Monroe, 303.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.

heavy rains (*al-jawd wa-l-sakb*)," and "torrents [flowing] through [their] valley (*ajrā bi-wādīki suyūlahu*)." In addition to being quite commonly found in the *rithāʾ* and *rithāʾ al-mudun*, these storm and water motifs are important in the *madīḥ* (panegyric) genre, where nature is unleashed and its destructive potential is contrasted with its rejuvenating powers and the *mamdūḥ*'s ability to overcome it.[60] With the preceding set of images and devices found in the *nasīb* and *rithāʾ al-mudun*, the author has presented these motifs in the guise of the *maqāma*. Now, with imagery evoking the panegyric, the audience is further prepared for a supplication of some sort. However, we are still removed from the formulaic strategies of the *qaṣīda*, and thus the panegyrist's honeyed verses and outstretched hand are replaced by the duplicitous language of the *maqāma*'s trickster, who in his own way usually tends to make off with considerable recompense. This instance will be no exception.

Prose versus Poetry, Written versus Oral

The stranger attempts to comfort al-Sāʾib by offering some help in finding his friends. "My good man, tarry here, rather than hastening off, and be at peace rather than in fear. Let me put you in touch with your comrades, and comfort you in your weeping and wailing."[61] He finds it incredulous that, in this day and age (it is the twelfth century after all!) he could possibly stumble upon someone like al-Sāʾib standing on the ruins of the destroyed city, weeping and lamenting them using the archaic imagery of the *qaṣīda*, and interprets his tears as being over the loss of his companions. He explains to al-Sāʾib that "[t]hese ruins are marvels, indeed, but nights are meant for riding nobly bred coursers of ancient lineage, rather than that camel,"[62] the implication being that life is meant for living in the present and moving forward, not for dwelling on the past, although a reliance on that past ("riding nobly bred coursers of ancient lineage") is understandable, even necessary. Finally, al-Sāʾib is urged to enter a nearby tomb to gain council from "statues…who will speak…with no need of a tongue."[63] So al-Sāʾib "descended from [his] camel at [the stranger's] bidding, placed its halter

[60] See Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic Poetry*, 9–27.
[61] al-Saraqusṭī, 258; Monroe, 304.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

in his hand, tossed him [his] provision-bag, and went to contemplate those graven images."[64] Wandering for a while in a state of "perplexity and confusion" at the stranger's advice, couched as it is in rather cryptic terms, al-Sāʾib ends up losing the stranger altogether ("But when I sought him in the place where I had promised to meet him again, he was missing and I could not find him."[65] In his place, al-Sāʾib finds that he has left a poem "written on a gravestone, with a bright and shiny piece of charcoal."[66]

The poem reiterates themes set forth earlier in the *maqāma*, urging al-Sāʾib to live for the present and the future rather than dwell on the past. Each line of the poem presents a reference to poetic convention, followed by an aphorism that undermines that tradition. There is reference to Hind and Rabāb, two women's names common in the pre-Islamic *nasīb* ("Cease remembering Hind and Rabāb"). Symbolic place names are mentioned, and their importance is questioned ("Is the earth's entire surface other than an empty desert? Hence what is so important about a ruined encampment between Buṣrā and Jāsim?"). Finally, in keeping with the *ubi sunt* motif that is so much a part of the *rithāʾ al-mudun*, mention of the destruction of ancient tribes places the current loss into a broader cultural-historical perspective ("If raging storms whose violent winds cause destruction have recently blown Qayrawan and its inhabitants away, // Why, formerly, they toppled the thrones of ʿĀd and Jurhum, when death trampled their territory underfoot").

More than a mere 'summing up' of the *maqāma*'s plot and message, the poem completes the dialogue between poetry and prose. Using straightforward language, the poem criticizes the tradition it embodies, whereas the *maqāma* written in difficult to understand prose, attempts to appropriate that meaning. Thus the adage that the best poetry is that which lies the most (*aḥsan al-shiʿr akdhabuhu*) is turned upside down. Also, the *maqāma*, although in written form, is delivered orally. Al-Sāʾib narrates the tale and the audience thus 'hears' what he says, rather than reads it. Even the etymology of the word *maqāma* implies an oral aspect of the genre. According to the literary conceit of the *maqāma*, the composer stands (*qāma/yaqūmu*) in front of an assembly and tells

[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.

his tale on the authority of a chain of transmitters who are traced to the narrator himself. The poem in this *maqāma*, on the other hand, refers in style and content to the ancient past of oral Bedouin poetry, yet it is written, on a tombstone, and in easily erased charcoal, no less.

The Return of the Wolf

The poem ends with a warning to al-Sāʾib to "avoid avaricious men," and the familiar contents of the poem finally identifies the stranger as "that cunning master and predatory wolf, Abū Ḥabīb." Reference to the wolf (*dhiʾb*), returns the narrative to the beginning of the *maqāma* where the narrator first appeared with the group of "wolflike brigands (*ṣaʿālīk al-dhuʾbān*)." In these two "wolflike" characters, *al-ṣaʿālīk al-dhuʾbān* and *al-dhiʾb al-mughtāl Abū Ḥabīb*, at the beginning and end of the *maqāma*, al-Saraqusṭī presents two sides of the same coin, or two archetypes that define and are in dialogue with one another. Although both characters occupy similar locations outside the boundaries of their respective societies, they speak from different literary spaces, i.e. the idealized Arabic poetic tradition and twelfth century Andalusī rhymed prose.

In the deceptive prose style of the *maqāma*, delivered orally, al-Sāʾib rides into Qayrawan with the Bedouin rogues, and quickly loses them. It is by way of poetry written on a gravestone that he finds his way to the contemporary outlaw, Abū Ḥabīb, whom he loses and finds repeatedly throughout the collection of *maqāmāt*. What is al-Saraqusṭī saying with regard to poetry versus prose, and orality versus the written word? How to interpret this seemingly contradictory act of rejecting and clinging to tradition? The *maqāma* 'On Poetry versus Prose', in which al-Saraqusṭī gives a more explicit presentation of his critical ideas concerning the state and role of literature during his own time, provides some insight into this question.[67]

In brief, this is a debate between two brothers who argue over which is a more effective and aesthetically superior form of discourse: poetry or prose. The advocate for poetry bases his arguments on its expressive potential, political expediency, and lofty tradition. He denigrates prose

[67] Gil Anidjar provides a detailed analysis of this *maqāma* in *"Our Place in al-Andalus,"* 219–245.

for its ease, common purpose, and lack of refinement. The defender of prose, for his part, uses many of the same arguments as his counterpart, but turns them around in order to make his own case. He praises its ease, as well as its adherence to the truth and ability to convey meaning clearly and efficiently, pointing to its usefulness in administrative matters and the dissemination of philosophical and scientific thought. Poetry, in his opinion, is a debased form of speech having no practical use and consisting solely of lies. He states that the poet (*al-shāʿir*) and the secretary (*al-kātib*) could not be more different; the secretary wields power through his craft, and the poet ends up weakened and alienated (*fa-gharrabahu ʿan dārihi*) through his. It is true that the debate itself is oversimplified as it "centers on the bipolar opposition between the two genres, in complete disregard for the *maqāma*'s hybrid form."[68] However, this oversimplification is deliberate, as it is the straw man that will be destroyed by the mediating character of the old man (*al-shaykh*) who sits patiently listening to the discussion. When the arguments are done, the man, who displays "a coarse appearance and a threadbare robe," responds. He takes a position between the two extremes, asserting that it is the content, or meaning, of discourse that is important, rather than its form. "The latter [superior discourse] constitutes true pearls, whether it is couched in verse or in prose (*wa-l-qawlu l-fāʾiqu wa-huwa al-durru manẓūman aw manthūran*)."[69] It is a defense of the "hybrid form" of the *maqāma* in which al-Saraqusṭī excels.

The *maqāma*, composed in elevated *sajʿ* represents the median between a poetry whose literary sensibilities are so steeped in tradition that they are ill-suited for 'modern' expression, and a rigid prose style whose conciseness and strict adherence to intended meaning hinder it from expressing the moral, ethical, and social ambiguities of the period that needed to be expressed. The *maqāma* represents a literary-historical moment in which a new discourse is necessary to meet the changing needs of the complex contemporary world.

This 'translation', then, of the *rithāʾ al-mudun* from poetry to prose, indicates an ambivalence toward the poetic past, yet a reluctance to leave it behind entirely. With the rise of the Almoravids in al-Andalus, and the

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[68] Douglas C. Young, "Review Article—Abū Ṭāhir al-Saraqusṭī. *Las sesiones del Zaragocí: relatos picarescos (maqāmāt) del siglo XII. Tr. Ignacio Ferrando. Zaragoza, Spain: Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 1999*," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 32:1 (2001), 77.

[69] al-Saraqusṭī, 378; Monroe, 409.

loss of status that the Arabic litterateur suffered as a result, al-Saraqusṭī uses the *maqāma* to articulate what he feels is his own insecure status as a writer. Written in language that is difficult to decipher because of the complex double-meanings and wordplays, and starring a recurring duo of characters whose adventures present social, political, religious, and literary dilemmas, the *maqāma* itself is a genre of dualities, positioned between east and west, Arab and non-Arab, past and present.

CHAPTER THREE

AL-ANDALUS AND SEFARAD IN THE HEBREW QAṢĪDA

Introduction

The previous chapters have focused on articulations of loss and nostalgia as expressed in Arabic poetry and prose. As shown, the *rithāʾ al-mudun* and the *maqāma* as executed by Ibn Shuhayd and al-Saraqusṭī respectively illustrate intersections of literary convention and personal or communal experiences. These artistic expressions, composed on the heels of real military/political losses and cultural threats, illustrate the multiple discourses available to the Arab litterateur, and the requisite understanding of those discourses on the part of the community to which he speaks and whose emotions he articulates. Whether in poetry or prose, the Arabic writer draws upon nostalgic sentiments present in the earliest pre-Islamic odes. These sentiments are an essential component of the *qaṣīda* and related forms of literature, and centuries after Imruʾ al-Qays wept over the ruins of his beloved's abandoned campsite, the nostalgic tone remained pertinent and useful to the writer expressing a wide range of emotions in a variety of contexts. As the Arabs in al-Andalus faced challenges to their political and cultural hegemony, feelings of loss, nostalgia, and alienation from both a real and imagined past found expression in the *qaṣīda* as a whole, and in particular in the introductory verses of the *nasīb*.

Like his Arab counterpart, the Jewish Andalusī poet composing poems in Hebrew drew on the rich literary tradition of the pre-Islamic poets. As it has been shown elsewhere, the Jewish writer was very much a part of the Arabic literary tradition in terms of intellectual foundations, training, and influence.[1] However, this literature cannot be read simply as Arabic literature written in Hebrew. Because the language is

[1] For example, see Ross Brann, *The Compunctious Poet: Cultural Ambiguity and Hebrew Poetry in Muslim Spain* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Decter, *Iberian Jewish Literature*; Raymond P. Scheindlin, *Wine, Women, and Death: Medieval Hebrew Poems on the Good Life* (Philadelphia; New York; London: The Jewish Publication Society, 1986).

biblical Hebrew, the referential field is quite different from that of Arabic poetry, and therefore has the potential to cover vastly different territory from that of its Arabic counterpart. By writing in biblical Hebrew, the Jewish poet removes his audience from the 'real' and 'stable' ground of contemporary al-Andalus and connects it to the broader Jewish religious, historical, and cultural experience, even when he composes in an undeniably Arabic style. This occurs not only through the poet's choice of language, but also by the collective memory and knowledge of the intended audience. So while these poets utilized a language that expressed their view of "themselves as links in an unending chain of Jewish experience that began with the divine call to Abraham . . . and would culminate in the splendor of redemption,"[2] they lived very much in the Arabo-Muslim dominated and defined culture of the time; they wrote philosophical, literary, grammatical, and religious treatises in Arabic, and adopted and adapted Arabic literary forms in Hebrew. Thus, the Andalusī Jew stood in both al-Andalus and Sefarad,[3] and related to this place from multiple viewpoints.

An analogy can be made between the inherent biblical allusions contained in the Hebrew language and the pre-Islamic imagery and symbolism embedded in the Arabic poetic language. In both of these traditions, archetypal symbols and linguistic references situate the audience simultaneously in the past and the present. The biblical and the pre-Islamic tradition each speak to subsequent generations who are familiar with the language and imagery contained in them, and who are thus able to understand and appreciate these literatures operating on multiple levels. Andalusī Jews writing in Hebrew drew upon both of these traditions in order to articulate a complex view of al-Andalus, and by examining two of Moses Ibn Ezra's (d. after 1135) poems that utilize the classic abandoned campsite motif as well as other 'modern' (*muḥdath*) techniques, I demonstrate that Ibn Ezra's nostalgic look back to the golden age of Andalusī literature relied on an Arabic-educated Jew's unique ability to understand the complex interplay between Arabic and Hebrew literatures. Thus, his poetry provides a good example

[2] Robert Chazan, "Representation of Events in the Middle Ages," *History and Theory* 27:4 (Dec. 1988), 40.

[3] Sefarad takes its name from Obadiah 20: "And the exiles of this fortress of the children of Israel will have that which is to the Canaanites as far as Ṣarfat, and the exiles of Jerusalem, which is in Sefarad, shall possess the cities of the Negev."

of how the Jewish Andalusī litterateur positioned himself in eleventh/twelfth century al-Andalus.

Background to Judeo-Arabic Poetics

When Muḥammad received the prophetic message in a "clear Arabic tongue,"[4] the Arabic language and culture moved out of the Arabian Peninsula and quickly spread, with Islam as its vehicle, to encompass the entire eastern and southern Mediterranean world. Having been both local and oral in the pre-Islamic period, Arabic quickly developed into an imperial language that absorbed, incorporated, influenced, and intermingled with the languages and cultures that existed in lands where Islam took root. In order to preserve the integrity of the Qurʾānic text, and to better facilitate communication and administration across the newly forming Islamic world, Arabic had to be standardized and codified. Pre-Islamic poetry was an important source for Arabic grammatical study and its intense study was necessary for the development of a scientific approach to the understanding of Arabic as the language of pre-Islamic culture and of the Qurʾān. Grammarians from the urban centers of Basra, Kufa, and, later, Baghdad set out to collect linguistic data from Bedouin sources, and to gather, organize and study the vast corpus of pre-Islamic poetry.[5] One direct result of this scholarly linguistic activity was that as Arab society shifted from the desert to the city, Arabic poetry shifted from the oral form to the written, and this affected the ways in which it was composed, collected, and appreciated.[6] Rather than being a literature whose composition depended solely on

[4] Qurʾān 26:192–195 "Truly it is the revelation of the Lord of all worlds, brought down by the Faithful Spirit upon your heart, that you may be one of the warners, in a clear, Arabic tongue [*bi-lisānin ʿarabiyyin mubīnin*]." For a discussion and overview of medieval Arabic literary theory, and the development of notions of linguistic purity and a hierarchy of literary and religious discourses, see Vicente Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age: Selection of Texts Accompanied by a Preliminary Study* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975).

[5] Kees Versteegh provides a clear treatment of the history and development of the Arabic language, grammatical traditions, and dialects in *The Arabic Language*.

[6] For discussions on oral composition and transmission in pre-Islamic poetry, see James T. Monroe, "Oral composition in pre-Islamic poetry," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 3 (1972), 1–53; Michael Zwettler, *The Oral Tradition of Classical Arabic Poetry* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1978); Adonis, *Introduction à la poétique arabe* (Paris: Sindbad, 1985).

inherited Arabian traditions and patterns, poetry in the Islamic period drew inspiration from a wide variety of sources that included the pre-Islamic poetic tradition, as well as religious, philosophical, linguistic, and literary trends circulating in the new urban centers.[7] These currents, which included Greek, Persian and other literatures,[8] developed into an 'Arabo-Islamic' culture. This culture, which was defined more by its Arabic and/or Islamic elements and style than by its actual composition in Arabic or subject matter relating specifically to Islamic theological concerns, was influenced by, and in turn influenced, peoples, literatures, and traditions with which it came into contact.

With Islam's rapid spread out of the Arabian Peninsula, Jews in the new Muslim lands found themselves living in this Arabo-Islamic cultural and intellectual milieu. They adopted Arabic as a means of spoken and written discourse and as a result, Jewish intellectual life was profoundly affected.[9] However, as Rina Drory lays out in detail, it was not until the tenth century that Jews began to adopt and incorporate Arabic models into their own literature.[10] She points specifically to the Karaite role in adopting "the basic Arabic principle of organizing the literary repertoire around one sacred text—the Koran."[11] The religious importance for Muslims of the Arabic language's purity (*faṣāḥa*) and the inimitability of the Qurʾān (*iʿjāz al-Qurʾān*) were key components of a broadly defined cultural and linguistic pride referred to as *al-ʿarabiyya*, or 'Arabism'. This, in turn, informed the concept of *ʿibrāniyya*, or 'Hebrew-ism', according to which Jews made the same

[7] Suzanne Stetkevych discusses the intellectual and religious contexts of the early ʿAbbāsid period and the ways in which scholarly activity affected the composition and appreciation of poetry in *Abū Tammām and the Poetics of the ʿAbbāsid Age* (Leiden; New York; Copenhagen; Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1991).

[8] For a detailed treatment of the Greek to Arabic translation movement, see Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early ʿAbbāsid Society (2nd–4th/8th–10th centuries)* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998).

[9] For treatments of the Judeo-Arabic language, see Joshua Blau, *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic: A Study of the Origins of Middle Arabic* 2nd Edition (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute, 1981) and "Medieval Judeo-Arabic" in *Jewish Languages: Theme and Variations*, ed. Herbert H. Paper (Cambridge: Association for Jewish Studies, 1978), 121–131. For an introduction to Judeo-Arabic literature, see A. S. Halkin, "Judeo-Arabic Literature" in *The Jews: Their Religion and Culture*, ed. Louis Finkelstein 4th Edition (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), 121–154.

[10] Rina Drory, *Reshit ha-magaʿim shel ha-sifrut ha-yehudit be-meʾah ha-ʿasirit* (Tel Aviv: The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics, 1988); See also *Models and Contacts*.

[11] Drory, *Models and Contacts*, 135.

claims for Hebrew and the Hebrew Bible. Around the same time that this Jewish cultural pride emerged and was being asserted in the context of the dominant Arabic culture, debates were occurring within the Jewish intellectual community itself wherein Rabbanite Judaism sought to defend itself against Karaite charges of neglecting the Hebrew Bible in favor of the oral rabbinic tradition.[12] Both of these Jewish intellectual currents—one external, the other internal—led to a renewed vigor in the study of Biblical Hebrew, and the Bible came to occupy a central place in medieval Jewish thought. As a result of these developments, in addition to its obvious religious importance, the Hebrew Bible became a model for literary expression. At the same time, the style and purpose of Jewish writing in general was drastically altered. New to Jewish letters was the Jewish writer who fashioned himself after the Arabic *adīb* (cultured litterateur), who composed in a variety of genres and disciplines.[13] In addition, the idea of a written text ascribed to an author and intended for a reading audience rather than for private use was new to Jewish literature.

A pivotal figure in these religious, cultural, and literary developments was Saʿadya ben Yosef al-Fayyūmī (d. 942) who was the head of the Jewish academy at Sura in Babylonia (Iraq) and who legitimized the Arabic models by adopting, innovating, and incorporating them into the Rabbanite Jewish tradition.[14] He viewed the Biblical text as a literary and linguistic model, applying the Arabo-Islamic idea of *al-ʿarabiyya* to the Hebrew Bible and language.[15] Saʿadya was a prime example of the new Jewish writer, writing for a readership outside of the synagogue, and composing in many of the genres and subjects treated by contemporary intellectuals. This output included writings on Hebrew philology, *halakha* (Jewish law), history, philosophy, Biblical translation and commentary, and polemical works. He focused his attention on the renewal of Hebrew language study as a way to foster a better understanding of the Bible with the goal of renewing the Jewish community's interest and connection to Judaism. Much of this activity was closely linked to the Arabic philological and exegetical projects that themselves were

[12] Brann, *The Compunctious Poet*, 26.
[13] Drory, *Models and Contacts*, 137.
[14] For a biography of Saʿadya, see Robert Brody, *The Geonim of Babylonia and the Shaping of Medieval Jewish Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), specifically Part III "Seʿadyah Gaon and After," 235–332.
[15] Drory, *Models and Contacts*, 143.

comprised of a range of scholarly endeavors that, in addition to those mentioned above that were treated by Saʿadya, included the compilation, study, and composition of poetry. This relationship between poetic activities and gaining a better understanding of the Bible was similar in many ways to what had occurred in eighth and ninth century Iraq in Arabo-Islamic culture when pre-Islamic poetry was memorized and anthologized for the purpose of understanding the language and context of the Arabic Qurʾān by the likes of Ḥammād al-Rāwiyya (d. 785), Khalaf al-Aḥmar (d. 796), and al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī (d. 786). Saʿadya's activities

> were instrumental in legitimizing linguistic research and in sanctioning the newfound interest in the literary properties of the Hebrew Bible. In sum, Saʿadya fostered the literary sensibility that paved the way for the Andalusian school of poets.[16]

This "literary sensibility" bore fruit in the development of a Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus that was composed using Arabic meters, rhyme schemes, and themes. In order for this to occur, a system of courtly patronage similar to that which existed in Arab-Muslim society developed in the Jewish community, and an important patron was the Jewish vizier of the caliph ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III, Ḥasdai Ibn Shaprut (ca. 915–970).[17] It was under his stewardship that Andalusī Hebrew poetry developed into a literary art form quite distinct from the Hebrew poetry that came before, which was either contained in the Hebrew Bible itself, or was composed and performed with a liturgical function in mind.[18] Dunash Ben Labrat (mid-tenth century), a North African who studied in the east with Saʿadya and then returned to the Muslim west and worked under the patronage of Ibn Shaprut in Cordoba, laid the groundwork for the Arabic-style Hebrew poetry that was to come by

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[16] Brann, *The Compunctious Poet*, 27.

[17] For a detailed discussion of the relationship between the development of Andalusī Hebrew poetry and the patron-poet courtly culture, see Dan Pagis, *Ḥidush u-masoret be-shirat ha-ḥol: Sefarad we-Italyah* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1976), 16–41. In this classic work, Pagis provides a fine and detailed treatment of the development of Arabic-style Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus. For a very clear, and shorter discussion of this, see the Introduction to Raymond Scheindlin's *Wine, Women, and Death*.

[18] For a treatment of the Jewish liturgy in general, and the *piyyut* (a liturgical poetic form) in particular see Ismar Elbogan, *Jewish liturgy: a comprehensive history*, trans. Raymond P. Scheindlin (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1993). Specifically, see pages 165–184 "Poetic Additions to the Liturgy" and pages 219–295 "The Period of the Piyyut."

adapting the Arabic quantitative prosodic system to work with Hebrew, and incorporating Arabic poetic themes into his poetry. It was not long before Hebrew poetry flourished in al-Andalus, developing into what was to be considered a golden age of Hebrew literary production. Within a short amount of time, some of the greatest poets the language would know were composing Hebrew poems on a wide variety of topics and in many poetic genres. By the mid-twelfth century, however, the glow of this literary phenomenon, at least in al-Andalus, would start to fade as the relationship between political power and literary patronage began to weaken. The material wealth, political competition, and Arabic/Arabized literary culture that characterized the tenth and eleventh centuries, corresponding roughly with the Umayyad Caliphate and the *mulūk al-ṭawāʾif* period, came to an end with the Almoravids' effective seizure of control over al-Andalus in 1091. The Hebrew golden age of poetry in Spain would continue for another half century or so, but with the rise of the Almohad dynasty in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and its austere interpretation of Islam, Arabic-style Hebrew writing would be forced out of al-Andalus and into other Arab lands, as well as Christian Spain, before disappearing altogether.

Weeping over the campsite's ruins

As discussed above, weeping over the ruins of the abandoned campsite and the imagery associated with that motif was commonly used in the earliest pre-Islamic poems. While descriptions of desert flora and fauna and Bedouin social mores surely reflected the physical surroundings and society of the pre-Islamic poet, these were more than realistic depictions for the sake of mere reportage. In fact, it has been shown by later critics that the erotic prelude (*nasīb*) that includes, among other things, descriptions of the abandoned campsite and reminisces of past love trysts, can serve very specific poetic and emotional goals quite distinct from a depiction of physical reality.[19] Possibly the most famous and oft-quoted discussion of the *qaṣīda*'s structure and the importance of the *nasīb* is in Ibn Qutayba's (d. 889) introduction to

[19] See, for example, Abdelfattah Kilito, *L'auteur et ses doubles: essai sur la culture arabe classique* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1985) for a discussion of the pre-Islamic awareness of literary predecessors and their sometimes grudging adherence to tradition. See also Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic poetry*; J. Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd*.

his literary treatise *al-Shiʿr wa-l-shuʿarāʾ* (Poetry and Poets). Although this passage is often cited as a clear and early example of a prescriptive description of the *qaṣīda* structure, Michael Sells shows that scholarship of the *qaṣīda* up into the twentieth century has suffered from a tendency to take Ibn Qutayba's words at face value without further analysis or criticism. This has, in Sells' view, resulted in scholarship (Arab and non-Arab) that rests on tradition and the repetition of ideas, resulting in a stagnant portrayal of Arabic poetry as largely unchanging and unimaginative—descriptions that can be said to fit the scholarship more than the poetry itself.[20]

When Ibn Qutayba states that the *nasīb* "cause[s] hearts to incline toward [the poet] and faces to turn toward him,"[21] it is arguable that he is describing a literary role more complex than an aesthetic and formulaic prescription in those introductory lines. It is the very power of the images and ideas and their recognition and appreciation by the audience that speak to universal human emotions, for "flirtatious verses (*al-tashbīb*) are close to [all] souls, and grab [all] hearts."[22] The initial verses carry with them an emotional significance beyond the literal for the purpose of getting the attention of the audience. Those first verses do grab the attention of the audience, but they also remain in order to frame the *qaṣīda* as a whole by introducing, emphasizing, or contrasting themes that will follow. It is this idea—the presence of the *nasīb* throughout the *qaṣīda*—that Jaroslav Stetkevych treats in numerous writings.[23] He asserts that, in addition to playing a significant role in the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*, the *nasīb* continued to do so even long after the *qaṣīda* had migrated well beyond the borders of the Arabian Peninsula into other languages, and as long as it remained a poetically viable genre.[24]

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[20] Michael Sells, "The *Qasida* and the West: Self-Reflective Stereotype and Critical Encounter," *Al-ʿArabiyya* 20 (1987), 307–357. This article provides a detailed and sensitive treatment of *qaṣīda* scholarship in the west, as well as a comprehensive bibliography of *qaṣīda* studies.

[21] Ibn Qutayba, *al-Shiʿr wa-l-shuʿarāʾ*, Volume 1 (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1964), 20.

[22] Ibid.

[23] For example, see Jaroslav Stetkevych, "The Arabic *Qaṣīdah*: from form and content to mood and meaning," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3/4, No. 2 (1978–80), 765–774; *The Zephyrs of Najd*; "Toward an Arabic Elegiac Lexicon: The Seven Words of the *Nasīb*" in *Reorientations/Arabic and Persian Poetry*, ed. Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 58–129.

[24] The classical and neo-classical *qaṣīda* form would dominate Arabic poetry into the twentieth century, when it gave way to such modernist movements as romanticism, sym-

The Jewish Andalusī poet, like many of his Arabic-writing counterparts in eleventh and twelfth century al-Andalus, had little to no real contact—beyond the literary—with the deserts and Bedouin lifestyle of the Arabian Peninsula. Nonetheless, the *nasīb* was an integral part of the *qaṣīda* and was understood and appreciated by poet and audience alike, and the poet who composed in Hebrew also used this imagery, sometimes to brilliant effect. In what follows, I show how Moses Ibn Ezra uses the conventional imagery of the Bedouin *nasīb*, specifically that of the abandoned campsite, and combines it with *badīʿ* as well as specifically Jewish religious and historical references. Depending as much on his skill as a poet as on his audience's knowledge of the poetic tradition, Ibn Ezra provides fine examples of the intricacies of this poetry, with its multiple levels of reference, conventionality, and originality. These multiplicities reflect the many voices present in Jewish Andalusī literature and show a poet whose feet are firmly planted inside Andalusī literary culture as one of its most skilled voices, while longing for it from outside its spatial and temporal borders.

Moses Ibn Ezra and the Abandoned Campsite

Moses Ibn Ezra's unparalleled poetic skill and versatility, and the fact that his poetry reflects a strong affinity for Arabic poetics, more so even than other Hebrew poets whose relationship to the Arabic literary tradition is already beyond question, makes him a particularly interesting poet to study in the context of Hebrew-Arabic literary interactions. His work displays a strong adherence to the classical *qaṣīda* form that can be considered somewhat conservative compared to other Hebrew poets. He remains firmly within the boundaries set by the Arabic poetics of his time, composing in a style rich in *badīʿ*, and even producing a number of treatises on Arabic-style Hebrew poetics, the only Jewish Andalusī writer to do so: in Hebrew, *Sefer ha-ʿanaq* (Book of the Necklace—an anthology that includes a wide variety of poetic themes built around

bolism, social realism, political commitment (*al-iltizām*), and free-verse. See S. Moreh, *Modern Arabic Poetry, 1800–1970* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976); Salma K. Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements in Modern Arabic Poetry*, 2 Parts (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977); M. M. Badawi, *A Critical Introduction to Modern Arabic Poetry* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970). For an overview of the *qaṣīda* as a genre across languages, see Christopher Shackle and Stefan Sperl eds., *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa*, 2 Volumes (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1996).

the rhetorical device *jinās*), and in Arabic, *Maqālat al-ḥadīqa fī maʿnā al-majāz wa-l-ḥaqīqa* (The Treatise of the Garden: on figurative and literal language) and *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara* (The Book of Conversation and Discussion) which is discussed below. His poetry and literary critical thinking thus drew from the style and conceits of the Arabic *muḥdath* tradition, as well as biblical Hebrew language and imagery, and the collective Jewish historical memory and contemporary personal experience.

Although it is undeniable that the Arabic-style Hebrew poets of Muslim Spain drew inspiration in some degree or another from the Arabic literary culture of the time, Ibn Ezra distinguishes himself as a particularly strong proponent of Arabism (*ʿarabiyya*) in his critical writing and in his poetry.[25] An extended example of this is the third chapter of his treatise on Hebrew poetry (*Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*), which is dedicated to answering the question: "How is it that poetry among the Arabs comes naturally whereas among other nations, it is an affectation?" According to Ibn Ezra, the Arabs' predilection for poetry and rhetoric is geographically determined, a notion he defends with references as disparate as Hippocrates, Galen, the Brethren of Purity (*Ikhwān al-ṣafāʾ*) and the Arab traveler and historian al-Masʿūdī (d. 956).[26] Moreover, he emphasizes the importance of climate rather than race, ethnicity, or religion by pointing out that "even those from our own community [of Jews] who took up residence in their land . . . were light in their pronunciation, delicate of tongue, and graceful in their poetry due to the fact that they had left behind the humidity of al-Shām [Syria] and made their way to the dryness of the Hijāz."[27] Later in the book, he tackles the issue of the Andalusī Jew's superiority in these matters over other Jewish communities, by using comparable arguments concerning the origins of the Jewish Andalusī community.[28]

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[25] On Ibn Ezra's relationship to 'Arabism' see Neḥemiah Allony, "The Reaction of Moses Ibn Ezra to ʿArabiyya," in the *Bulletin of the Institute of Jewish Studies* 3 (1975), 19–40. See also Norman Roth, "Jewish Reactions to the *ʿArabiyya* and the Renaissance of Hebrew in Spain," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 27 (1983), 63–84. Both Allony and Roth are of the view that Ibn Ezra's embrace of *ʿarabiyya* is a betrayal to Jewish culture, and attempt to reconcile their own anti-*ʿarabiyya* biases with this seeming contradiction in Jewish Andalusī life. Nonetheless, the articles provide decent surveys of Ibn Ezra's views toward the Arabs, their language, and their poetry.

[26] Moses Ibn Ezra, *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*, ed. A. S. Halkin (Jerusalem: Hoṣaʿat Mekeṣei Nirdamim, 1975), 30. All references to the *Kitāb* are to this edition.

[27] Ibid.

[28] This is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

His firm grounding in the use of Arabic *badīʿ* style of the ʿAbbasid period and his literary affinity to his Arabic writing contemporaries were factors that can at least partially explain Ibn Ezra's use of contemporary rhetorical devices, as well as the Bedouin motifs and imagery of the pre-Islamic and 'modern' (*muḥdath*) *qaṣīda* more than other Jewish Andalusī poets writing in Hebrew. As Suzanne Stetkevych convincingly argues, the style of poetry that came to be described as *badīʿ* developed in the eighth and ninth centuries. She points to the importance of Muʿtazilite doctrine at that time that necessitated the use of *taʾwīl*, or the interpretation of metaphoric language, to explain certain anthropomorphic verses in the Qurʾān, and shows that the use of rhetorical devices such as *jināS* (paronomasia), *ṭibāq* (antithesis), and *istiʿāra* (metaphor) were utilized for "the *encoding* of meaning into a metaphorical mode of expression; *taʾwīl* is the *decoding* of such a text."[29] In addition to this religious context that expressed and fostered the development of *badīʿ* poetry, philological activity also found expression here. The use of *badīʿ* rhetorical devices, specifically *jināS*, articulated a moment in which the Arabic language itself was being codified, and the study of linguistic sciences resulted in a linguistic "self-consciousness that the new science of *ishtiqāq* [word derivation] has produced."[30] Stetkevych goes on to show that, as Muʿtazilite doctrine fell out of favor, the intellectual milieu that fostered *badīʿ* poetry and allowed for its understanding and appreciation also disappeared. Thus, within the critical tradition of what she calls the "orthodox resurgence,"[31] *badīʿ* becomes less a logical extension of the religious and cultural context, and more about the quantifiable use of specific rhetorical devices. Ibn Ezra lived in a later period (eleventh/twelfth century) where *badīʿ* had become a marker of *muḥdath* style somewhat removed from its religious and intellectual roots in the earlier ʿAbbasid period and seems to approach *badīʿ* in a somewhat prescriptive manner as did later rhetoricians such as Ibn Qutayba (d. 889), Ibn al-Muʿtazz (d. 908), Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi (d. 940), and Ibn Rashīq (d. between 1064 and 1070) whom he quotes or refers to extensively in *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*. Nonetheless, he does skillfully utilize the rhetorical devices to allow them to express meaning and underline certain themes and motifs within the context

[29] S. Stetkevych, *Abū Tammām and the Poetics of the ʿAbbāsid Age*, 8.
[30] Ibid., 28.
[31] Ibid., 19.

of his poems, rather than to serve merely as markers of *muḥdath* style, as is shown below.

Also important to the *muḥdath* poet were the ruins of the abandoned campsite, which were an especially expressive site and potent symbol of loss and nostalgia. These ruins carry with them archetypal symbolic potential that, through the evocation and manipulation of key words, images, and tropes, are able to evoke poetic meaning across historical time and place. Although the *aṭlāl* is one of the oldest and most conventional motifs in the Arabic *qaṣīda*, the ways in which it has been used to express a multitude of emotions and poetic goals is as limitless as the poet's own creativity, as discussed above in Chapters One and Two. *Muḥdath* poets, standing on the ruins of the abandoned campsite, have one foot in the past and the other in the present. Even the division between past and present becomes blurred when the poet, using traditional imagery, infuses it with new and innovative meaning and imagery. The ruined Bedouin campsite is brought into the present, and placed into the service of the contemporary poet.

Thus, Ibn Ezra's predilection for the *aṭlāl* motif can be explained in part by his literary connection to the Arabic poets in the ʿAbbasid period, as Israel Levin discusses.[32] As well, Levin points to autobiographical details that may also have inspired the poet's use of the motif, pointing to its use and efficacy in expressing the poet's own feelings while in exile from al-Andalus in Christian Spain. For Levin, Ibn Ezra laments the loss of al-Andalus (both the larger Jewish communal loss, and Ibn Ezra's own personal loss), the decline of Judeo-Arabic culture, and his own fate among what he would describe as the ignorant Jewish communities of Christian Spain. These feelings are given voice in the imagery of the desolate and isolated abandoned campsite. Speaking both to Ibn Ezra's personal connection to the *nasīb* imagery and the *nasīb*'s role in setting the emotional tone of the poem as a whole, Raymond Scheindlin writes: "It would seem that the nostalgia of the *aṭlāl* motif provided a suitable way of introducing the tone of self-pity that would become an important part of the poem."[33] Dan Pagis also points to

[32] Israel Levin, "*ha-Bekhi ʿal ḥorvot ha-meʿonot we-ha-demut ha-lailit ha-meshoṭeṭet*," *Tarbiṣ* 36 (1966), 278–296.

[33] Raymond P. Scheindlin, "The Hebrew Qasida in Spain," in *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa*, 125–126.

personal and contemporary issues that may have led to a high number of poetic complaints and nostalgic views in Ibn Ezra's poetry.[34]

Ibn Ezra spent his early life in Granada, and then in the Jewish center of learning of Lucena where he studied with the rabbi-poet Isaac Ibn Ghiyāth (1038–1089). After returning to Granada, Ibn Ezra lived the life of a successful courtier-rabbi, enjoying the material and intellectual privileges of the Jewish Andalusī elite. However, when the Almoravids arrived with their particular form of strict religious orthodoxy and established control over al-Andalus in 1091,[35] the Jewish community was severely affected and the Ibn Ezra family was dispersed. Although he remained for a time in Granada, Moses Ibn Ezra eventually left his wife and children behind for unknown reasons, departing sometime before 1095 for Christian Spain where he was to spend the remainder of his life. Clearly, Ibn Ezra's departure from al-Andalus and the rich and privileged Judeo-Arabic culture that nurtured him there—and that he, in turn, epitomized—was a major turning point in his life. The contrast between his life before leaving Granada definitively, and his years in exile, is articulated in his poetic complaints that portray the northern Spanish Jewish communities as uncouth, uncultured, and unintelligible (*ʿimqei peh*).[36]

While there is little doubt that the general tenor of complaint in Ibn Ezra's poetry from this period of exile from al-Andalus reflects a certain reality, we must bear in mind that the reality is a subjective one that relies on Ibn Ezra's personal views of Andalusī culture, his place within it and memory of it, as well as on the larger cultural context of the medieval Judeo-Arabic writer.[37] By looking at these issues, specifically the relationships between Hebrew and Arabic poetry, and Ibn

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[34] Dan Pagis, *Shirat ha-ḥol we-torat ha-shir le-Moshe Ibn ʿEzra u-venei doro* (Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute, 1970), 292.

[35] For a treatment of religious and intellectual trends in al-Andalus during the reign of the Almoravids and the Almohads who came after them, see Dominique Urvoy, *Pensers d'al-Andalus: La vie intellectuelle à Cordoue et Seville au temps des empires berbères (fin XI siècle–debut XIII siècle)* (Toulouse, 1990). H. Kennedy treats the period more generally in *Muslim Spain and Portugal*.

[36] From "*Aḥar yemei ha-shaḥarut*" line 6, in *Shirei ha-ḥol*, Volume 1, ed. Heinrich Brody (Berlin: Schocken Publishing, 1934), 149. For a comprehensive summary of Moses Ibn Ezra's life, see Heinrich Brody, *Selected Poems of Moses ibn Ezra*, trans. S. Solis-Cohen (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1945), xxiii–xxxix. See also Scheindlin, "Moses Ibn Ezra," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*, 252–264.

[37] For a detailed discussion of the contextual factors that may have affected the content of Moses Ibn Ezra's complaint poems, see Brann, *The Compunctious Poet*, 59–83.

Ezra's own relationship to these traditions, the loss and nostalgia he articulates can be better understood.

In the two poems by Moses Ibn Ezra that are analyzed below, the poet expresses his isolation and alienation from a Judeo-Arabic culture that was, for him, a thing of the past. Nonetheless, the poet writes as a proponent of that very culture, using its imagery, style, and language. The difficulty in defining these poems generically, due to the multiple discourses and poetic strategies used, points to the multiple landscapes that they occupy. Although the overall mood of the poems is that of complaint (Ar. *shakwā*, Heb. *telunah*), they contain a number of themes that make defining the poetic goal or purpose difficult. Composed during the poet's exile from al-Andalus in northern Spain, these poems allow us the opportunity to examine the difficulties involved in attempting to define, identify, or re-construct a place based on poetic texts. Although the focus here is on Moses Ibn Ezra as a Jewish Andalusī poet, the analysis can be understood more generally as a model for reading and understanding nostalgia for lost places (geographical, as well as cultural), and the complex, multi-layered, and imaginative geographies that go into the construction of those places. As in the analysis of Ibn Shuhayd's elegy for the city of Cordoba, I have provided full translations of the poems followed by a discussion divided into thematic or syntactic sections.

"The campsites are mute; they do not answer me"

1) The campsites are mute; they do not answer me.
   Their ears, not hearing me, are covered over.
2) Their entryways lament, devoid of any man,
   and their roads, without a passerby, are in mourning.
3) The clouds of my eyes gently trickle down tears,
   but with the blood of my heart, they are mixed.
4) As if there are watering troughs inside me,
   and my head is a sea, and in my ribs there are oceans.
5) But what is the use of my crying at walls
   collapsed from the rain of my tears, worn out?
6) Their inhabitants left me and
   saddened hearts went up in their path.
7) They went on their journey but their memory
   restores strength to sick souls.

8) And in the corners of their dwelling there is cassia,
and the smell of their tents is like aloe.
9) Should I moan in lamentation for them, or for my youth
that passes and grows ever weaker with the passing days?
10) Time is jealous of me so it lays down
baseless charges in place of my desirable deeds.
11) It drove me out and obstructed my way,
and they raised up hurdles in my path.
12) My locks are white like the light of day,
and my eyes are painted with the eye shadow of night.
13) And I lessen my sleep to increase my knowledge,
and increase my wisdom.
14) And I banish sleep all my years,
in order to open locked doors.
15) In seeking knowledge there is strength for my soul—
strength above all other strength—and in my heart are the pathways.
16) I run to extinguish the fire in the heart of my enemies by stratagems,
and I light the lamp in my friends' heart.
17) With my mouth I cause their desire to flow gently,
and the light of heaven comes accompanied by lightning and thunder.
18) The earth is considered small in my eyes
because in it my soul seeks great things.
19) My deeds are considered among the deeds
of men of the age, as brightness is in gloom.
20) I hide them in my humility, but
they scatter their own praise to heaven.
21) My limbs were formed according to a plan,
and who is it who encroaches upon God's deeds?
22) And I was given virtues from my forefathers,
and I added inheritances to these.
23) Ask the stars of heaven about me.
They will not delude you.
24) Those who scorn me speak my praises,
and my enemies express my good qualities, to the end of them.
25) They are like a fire that burns,
but they cause the smoke of incense to rise.
26) Time hides their hearts from prudence,
and sluggish are their legs in following the straight path.

27) Their desire is to destroy my desires,
but my desire is to fulfill the desires of their hearts.
28) And when their mouths filled with laughter before me,
their insides were eaten by the fire of hatred.
29) I dealt with them well, but how can I request recompense
from those weaned from the milk of knowledge?
30) And how can a man hope to pluck with his hand
the fruits of garden beds that were transplanted during a drought?
31) My poems are ornaments of fine gold.
Where is there a man who knows the value of poetry and words?
32) They are girls whom no man has known,
so how can they marry brutish men?
33) It is better that they be kept locked up forever,
and with the passing of the noble ones, they will remain virgins.
34) They are kept inside, away from others, but they are not difficult.
They are light to the soul, but not to be taken lightly.
35) When they rise to the tip of my tongue,
the stars of Ursa Major are dark on the vault of heaven.
36) To ornament the neck of Time, I beget them,
set with precious stones of praise.
37) They traverse deep valleys without feet,
and ascend mountains without sandals.
38) They will not be forgotten by mankind,
until day and night are forgotten.
39) As if taken from the tongues of seers,
and taken from the Holy Spirit.
40) The darkness is their ink, the pen
is the right hand of the sun, and Time is the scroll.[38] [34]

Where Does the Poet Stand?

This *qaṣīda* combines Bedouin campsite imagery and *muḥdath* mannerisms common to both Arabic and Hebrew poetry in this period, as well as references only understandable, or at least appreciable, in a Jewish context. The introductory verses (1–8) of the *nasīb* establish a mood of complaint, but Ibn Ezra will then overlay it with an extended

[38] Moses Ibn Ezra, *Shirei ha-ḥol*, 109–111. See appendix for the Hebrew text.

boast (Ar. *fakhr*, Heb. *hitpaʾarut*) that shines through the darkness of the poet's situation, cut off from family, friends, and intellectual peers. It is the self-praise that Ibn Ezra emphasizes, placing it against the desolate backdrop of the conventional *nasīb*. By contrasting the emptiness of the *aṭlāl* with his own cultural achievements, Ibn Ezra sets up a dualistic relationship between al-Andalus and Christian Spain, and past and present.

The poem begins with the poet standing at the ruins of the abandoned campsite with the only audible voice being his own. The poet's solitude, although not unheard of in the poetic tradition, is notable. Conventionally in the *nasīb*, the poet stands and addresses two riding companions. Arguably the most famous example is the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* of Imruʾ al-Qays which begins:

> Halt, my two friends, and we will weep over the memories of a beloved
> And a campsite that was at the sand dune's rim, between al-Dakhūl and Ḥawmal.[39]

Closer in time and place to Ibn Ezra is this example from the opening verse of a *qaṣīda* by Ibn Shuhayd:

> My two friends, grief has been unceasing since they left.
> It will remain thus as long as my beloved stakes out a claim and settles in my heart.[40] [35]

This stands in contrast to the loneliness Ibn Shuhayd evokes in the city elegy analyzed in Chapter One—a loneliness similar to the one Ibn Ezra evokes here. Physical isolation from his community runs throughout Ibn Ezra's *qaṣīda*, poignantly expressed in the first verses. However, although he stands alone at the campsite, he is in the company of his poetic peers. The deaf and mute campsite of very first line evokes Labīd's *muʿallaqa* where he says:

> I stopped to question them. How is one to question
> deaf, immutable, inarticulate stones?[41]

In Ibn Ezra's poem, the poet standing alone with no audience or companions but the wind, and tradition, is significant. His total solitude underlines the self-praise that will soon appear, emphasizing his peerless

[39] al-Tibrīzī, *al-Qaṣāʾid al-ʿashr*, 20.
[40] Ibn Shuhayd, *Dīwān Ibn Shuhayd*, 121.
[41] Sells, *Desert Tracings*, 36; *Dīwān Labīd b. Rabīʿa al-ʿĀmirī*, 165.

genius as well as his connection to the poetic community of which he is a part, and from which he is isolated.

In the very first two words of the poem (*meʿonot/maʿanoti*, campsites/answering me), the past of the Bedouin campsite and the present of modernist (*muḥdath*) poetic sensibilities are manifest. This particular wordplay points to past and present literary traditions, and is echoed throughout the poem structurally in the bipartite verses, which are comprised of paired clauses falling neatly on each side of the hemistich break. In addition to the density of *jinās* that is initiated with these first two words, the poem is also replete with antithesis (Ar. *ṭibāq*). All of these elements emphasize dualities that recur in the poem between purity and impurity, the self and the other, here and there, the past and the present.

Ibn Ezra also uses a rhetorical device called *tawriyya*, which S. A. Bonnebakker defines as "a kind of word-play based on using a word with a double meaning in a context where both meanings are allowable, at least syntactically, though only one of them is actually intended by the author."[42] However, as Magda al-Nowaihi points out, authorial intention is difficult to ascertain, and therefore all a critic can do is determine whether the poet was aware of the double meaning of the word.[43] In this case, only an audience fluent in the language of the Hebrew Bible and Arabic and Hebrew wine poetry would appreciate the double meaning of the words.

The words *ʿarelot* and *mehulot*, translated as 'covered over' and 'mixed' respectively in the poem (verses 1 and 3), also refer to states of impurity and purity, or being uncircumcised and circumcised. The relationship between 'covered over' and 'uncircumcised' as two related meanings of *ʿarelot*, is obvious. The term *mehulot*, which can mean both 'mixed' and 'circumcised' (i.e., pure according to Jewish law), is where the ambiguity arises, for purity implies a separation of elements, rather than mixing. Thus, the word *mehulot* can mean both one thing and its opposite. Read in conjunction with the ears of the abandoned campsite, which are *ʿarelot* ('covered over' or 'uncircumcised'), we are faced with yet another opposition of past and present, and the poet's view of his situation on impure soil. Appreciation of this double enten-

[42] S. A. Bonnebakker, *Some Early Definitions of the Tawriya and Ṣafadi's Faḍḍ al-Xitām ʿan at-Tawriya wa-l-Istixdām* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton and Co., 1966), 9.
[43] al-Nowaihi, *The Poetry of Ibn Khafājah*, 122.

dre is further enhanced when we consider the mixture of biblical and poetic references involved.

The inspiration of the phrase, *we-ozneihem . . . ʿarelot* ("and their ears are covered over") is Jeremiah 6:10, where Jeremiah asks: "To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised (*ʿarlah oznam*), and they cannot hear."[44] Jeremiah speaks, wishing to be heard, but to no avail. His audience (the Jewish community) is unreceptive, as are the campsites to the poetry of Ibn Ezra. These unhearing campsites locate the cultural milieu from which Ibn Ezra speaks in the poem as a whole. It is in the very first line of the poem that Ibn Ezra lays the groundwork for the complaint and boast that will occupy much of the text, alluding to a poet's worst nightmare—an audience that does not hear his words.

The word *mehulot*, which in the context of the poem signifies the mixing of blood and tears, appears in Isaiah 1:22 where, in a passage comparing the iniquities and sins of the people of Judah and Jerusalem with the purity they could achieve through faith and good judgment, God says: "Your silver has become dross, your wine mixed (*mahul*) with water." The connotation is, of course, the pure becoming diluted or less pure, and the allusion is clear enough in these first lines of the poem where Ibn Ezra will soon begin an extended complaint mixed with self-praise, comparing the past with the present, al-Andalus with Christian Spain, and himself with his contemporaries. In this quote, the act of mixing water with wine is one of dilution. Additionally, although Ibn Ezra does not refer directly to Isaiah 1:18 ("Come now, and let us reason together said the Lord; even though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; and even though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool"), he and his audience, with the aforementioned direct allusion to Isaiah 1:22, would likely have this chapter in mind.

It is worth pausing for a moment in this field of imagery—the mixing of wine with water, and the opposing of red and white—as it would surely resonate with an audience familiar with Arabic wine poetry and medieval wine-drinking practices where this mixing was part of the ritual. According to the convention, the mixing of wine and water can

[44] Biblical quotations and translations here are from *The Holy Scriptures: A Jewish Bible According to the Masoretic text* (Tel Aviv: Sinai Publishing, 1996).

be described in a strictly visual and concrete manner, as Abū Nuwās (d. 814) does in this example:

> The mixing created out of it a brilliance like topaz
> shining with wonders of light.
>
> With us, the wine is like garnet in redness,
> and the wine cup appears to be made of white sapphire.[45] [36]

Abū Tammām (d. ca. 844) combines a number of metaphors, describing wine and the process of mixing thus:

> She was difficult, but the mixing tamed her bad character
> so that she learned from the good manners of the water.
>
> She is foolish; her bubbles play with intellects
> as verbs toy with nouns.
>
> She is weak, but given the chance,
> she kills. Such is the power of the weak.
>
> .....
>
> It is as if her splendor and the splendor of her cup
> are fire and light, fixed in a vessel,
>
> Or an unbored white pearl, filled,
> as if pregnant, with a red ruby.[46] [37]

In the following poem by Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (dates unknown),[47] the poetic convention and imagery of mixing water with wine is combined with Aristotelian philosophical ideas concerning the nature of mixed elements.[48] Mixing results in the wine's losing its own 'wine-ness', so that it takes on the characteristics of water. The allusions are complex, as the red wine is represented by the Christian woman—known by her red face—who is made Muslim by the water of the ritual ablutions. The language used to express this 'conversion', however, has to be taken somewhat tongue in cheek, as it does come couched in the language of the wine party.

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[45] Abū Nuwās, *Dīwān* (Beirut: Dār ṣādir, 1962), 17.

[46] Abū Tammām, *Diwān Abī Tammām bi-sharḥ al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī*, Volume 1, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbduh ʿAzzām (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif bi-Miṣr, 1964), 20–39.

[47] See Iḥsān ʿAbbās' discussion of the problem in establishing this poet's biography in Ibn al-Kattānī, *Kitāb al-tashbīhāt min ashʿār ahl al-Andalus*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1966), 335.

[48] Philip Kennedy discusses Aristotle's treatment of the philosophical issue of mixing (*mixis*) in "Reason and Revelation, or A Philosopher's Squib (the Sixth Maqāma of Ibn Nāqiyā)."

Many a shining red Christian wine
brought by a drinking companion even more radiant.

They poured water on it, giving the impression
that it was a Muslim washing for purification.

A red wine that returns to its opposite through mixing.
It is as if in it there is a lover who is concealed.[49] [38]

In Ibn Ezra's poem, the allusion is to blood mixed with tears, or wine mixed with water, a convention that draws upon the opposing nature of the two liquids (hot and cold, joyful and sad, the life giving quality of wine as blood versus death represented by salt water tears) and the need to temper wine's strength. Samuel ha-Nagid (993–1055 or 1056) treats the metaphor thus:

Even the mourner whose tears fall with his heart's blood
disperses his grief in retreat with wine.[50] [39]

Returning to al-Nowaihi's statement regarding the poet's intentions, or at least his awareness of the multiple significations of words, there is little doubt considering how tightly Ibn Ezra's allusions and double meanings inform one another that the poet was well aware of the ambiguities, and counted on his audience to recognize and appreciate them. In these first three lines, with their density of rhetorical devices and intertextual references drawn from the biblical and classical Arabic and Hebrew poetic traditions, Ibn Ezra demonstrates the multiplicities and intersections of the Judeo-Arabic cultural identity as he sees them, and speaks to the community of like-minded and similarly cultured Jews from whom he lives far removed.

Finding Strength in the Self

In this *nasīb*, the poet stands in the present looking out over the ruins of the past, which are deaf, dumb, and destroyed. They are useless, and in fact, it is the poet's dwelling in the past that brings him so much

[49] Ibn al-Kattānī, *Kitāb al-tashbīhāt*, 97. For more examples of this imagery in wine poetry, see pages 88–100.

[50] Peter Cole ed., trans., intro., *The Dream of the Poem: Hebrew Poetry from Muslim and Christian Spain 950–1492* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007), 46.

pain. Ibn Ezra continues his lament in verses 4–6, but in verse 7, the poet finds strength in memory and rouses himself from self-pity:

> 7) They went on their journey but their memory (*zichram*)
> restores strength to sick souls.

Verses 7 and 8 move toward the transition (*takhalluṣ*) of verse 9, the division between past and present:

> 9) Should I moan in lamentation for them, or for my youth
> that passes and grows ever weaker with the passing days?

Here, the poet stands firmly in the present, and begins an extended complaint about his fate of having been thrown into a world of inferior intellects, which he uses, in turn, as a backdrop for his boast, the overarching theme of the poem.

The boast hinges on two themes: gaining wisdom in old age,[51] and poetic skill. In verses 10–13, Ibn Ezra manipulates the conventional black/white opposition commonly used in Arabic and Arabic-style Hebrew poetry in descriptions of the striking beauty of a beloved's eye (in Arabic, this contrast in the eye is called, *ḥawir*). He uses the same imagery, but instead of depicting a dark-eyed beauty, he presents a sleep-deprived old man with dark rings under his eyes whose hair has turned white with age. Ibn Ezra manipulates Time's positive and negative aspects in that, although it has been harsh with him, it is Time's byproduct—old-age—that the poet is able to control and exploit in order to increase his own knowledge.

After a long section of self-praise that expands upon this wisdom-in-old-age theme and is intertwined with complaint and invective (*hijāʾ*) that serves to emphasize Ibn Ezra's own positive traits, verse 29 marks the beginning of a second *takhalluṣ* into the final section of the poem in which the poet shifts the focus of the praise to his own work. This section (29–32) is punctuated by a series of structurally related verses in which the first hemistich contains positive statements, and the second is countered by a negative one. The repetition of this structure emphasizes the contrasts. Having clearly stated his current predicament, the poet, in verses 33 and 34, decides that his poems must be protected from

[51] Raymond Scheindlin provides a comparative study of this theme in "Old Age in Hebrew and Arabic *Zuhd* Poetry," in *Judíos y musulmanes en el-Andalus y el Magreb. Contactos intelectuales*, ed. Maribel Fierro (Madrid: Collection de la Casa de Velázquez, 2002), 85–104.

those unable to appreciate their value, and that "it is better that they be kept locked up forever… They are kept inside, away from others, but they are not difficult." The metaphor of the 'virginal' poem is quite conventional, the idea normally being that they reach their audience, or in the case of a panegyric, their patron, in a pure state ready to be enjoyed. For example, Abū Tammām says of his poems:

> When they arrive at kings' courts, they are received
> as the finest young noble women, untouched.[52] [40]

In contrast to this idea of presenting his poems to others, Ibn Ezra decides that his poems will remain virgins forever, never to be enjoyed by those unable to appreciate them. Thus, we are referred back to the opening verse of the poem ("The campsites are mute; they do not answer me / Their ears are covered over, and do not hear me.") The poet is neither heard, nor does he get a response from the campsites. For his part, he creates, but decides to withhold his work from those unworthy of receiving it. The campsites are deaf and mute, so *he* will do the speaking, but at the same time, he will withhold his poems from them, remaining silent and saving them for a better audience, for better times.

Eternal al-Andalus/Sefarad

In the final verses of the poem, Ibn Ezra grants his poems an eternal quality not bound to this world. He is far from the literary culture of al-Andalus—and the place that produced him—and the thriving Judeo-Arabic culture he mourns is practically gone. However, it is in the very products of that culture, i.e., learning and poetry, that al-Andalus can be preserved, as long as the poetry itself is remembered, recorded, and recited. In the last six verses of his poem, Ibn Ezra launches his poetry into the eternal and infinite cosmos. Throughout the poem, the overwhelming majority of verses are made up of paired images falling on either side of the hemistich break that create a very distinct and predictable syntactic and semantic rhythm. However, the final verse breaks this rhythm, and contains three metaphors, rather than the expected two. Up to this point, the regular bipartite verse, and the anticipation of it,

[52] Abū Tammām, *Diwān Abī Tammām*, Volume 2, 95.

drives the poem and leads the audience forward, and the introduction of these three metaphors in this last verse is somewhat jarring. Interrupting the flow toward the end of the poem, achieved by the bipartite verses, the poem as a whole is inscribed upon the heavens—an idea alluded to in the previous verses (35–39), and formally and explicitly realized in this one:

40) The darkness is their ink, the pen
is the right hand of the sun, and Time is the scroll.

Ibn Ezra began this poem by remembering and weeping over the fleeting days of youth and the irretrievable past evoked by the abandoned campsite motif. He gains strength in memory and even manages to control time itself in his tireless quest for knowledge. Armed with memories of the past and his ability to overcome time, Ibn Ezra is able to define and preserve the Andalus he has lost, from outside of that time and place. In his poetry, he carries Andalusī culture with him; that culture is composed of pre-Islamic Arabic and Hebrew biblical elements, and poetic imagery and style from his contemporary Judeo-Arabic literary context.

"How long will lovers cry out in vain?"

1) How long will lovers cry out in vain
to the ears of campsites that are ruined?
2) In not hearing, they are like the deaf.
Or are they like the dumb, unable to answer their cries?
3) They stand crying, for their inhabitants are the head of exiles,
according to the vicissitudes of fate.
4) They travel with their tents but in the shadow of their
ribs, their friends are hidden.
5) The stars of the luminaries rise over the vault of the earth,
and they even come at midday.
6) I do not know whether it was they who despised the land,
or whether it was the land that vomited out its inhabitants.
7) They left, having possessed their homes only for a short while
because they were driven out from amongst men and did not go
[voluntarily].
8) Upon the ruins of their dwelling, jackals burst forth,
and from between the cracks of their walls, lamentations rise.

9) Cries are heard from their mouths from all corners
of the ruins of their campsite, but they are not seen.
10) I weep more than they until
they gaze earnestly at me in wonder.
11) I will set my rage against tears that fall
until they destroy [the ruins] irreparably.
12) O woe for the gazelles that once rejoiced there,
and now instead of them, ostriches gather there to sing.
13) O [how I long] for the days when my black hair
was drenched with the dew of youth,
14) And for my locks, where the ravens of my youth
gathered but for a moment, then flew away.
15) Skirts of joy were dragged haughtily in the days of youth,
and the wine of love was drunk.
16) Were they fashioned from dripping myrrh, or was it only from
the perfumed mixture of Ibn Yosef's deeds that they were created?
17) [He is] the noble one before whom other nobles are humbled;
the earth has pride over the heavens because of him.
18) In wearing his tattered robes, the sun is lifted,
and the moon is raised up.
19) Mountains of frankincense will break forth joyfully,
and trees of perfumed spices sing to him and applaud.
20) If mankind is made impure out of stupidity,
or the foolish are defiled because of the blood of folly,
21) Then he will purge their blood by the spirit of his mouth,
and he will sprinkle the water of his prudence upon them, purifying them.
22) They appear rich in understanding in their own eyes,
but they are impoverished and crushed in his presence.
23) The seas of understanding surge,
but they congeal when the drops of his clouds flow.
24) The day that the rains of understanding stopped,
they ran around to find the speech of God, but they did not find it.
25) Likewise, when they partake of the produce of his counsel,
they are no longer hungry or thirsty.
26) All clear speakers become fools in front of him,
and writers of books and wisdom are nothing.
27) Those who stand under the safe branches of his protection
sleep in the teeth of Time without fear,

28) For his shrewd eye sees the future so that
even seers attest to him and prophecy his coming.
29) If on days of heat his hands dripped upon the crags of rocks,
they would grow grass.
30) His lovers give thanks for his favors,
as do all those who are jealous of him and hate him.
31) Ever since the spirit of time generously gave us Yitzhak,
the sins of Fate were forgiven.
32) Please take blessings from the tongue of a friend whose
legs are constrained in a prison.
33) For the Days have set him up for their mark;
they shoot the enclosures of his heart, and they do not miss.
34) His friends were a support to them
Until his enemies gnashed their teeth. Is it because they do not
know him?
35) Behold necklaces more desirable than fine gold,
brought to his neck to ornament it.
36) Songs encrusted with sapphires of love;
with love's precious stones they are set.
37) The stars of the heavens glorify themselves in them,
for it is after their oldest brother that they are named.
38) North and south, they raise up the remnant of my soul
on the wings of my greetings to you.
39) Until God, all of whose deeds are marvelous,
arouses mercy and does marvelous things.
40) Perhaps when the ones scattered in pain are gathered,
they will count me among the best of those who perished.[53] [41]

According to the Arabic superscription of this poem, Ibn Ezra "addresses Abū Ibrahīm Ben Baron Ben Shett"[54] and although the main theme or poetic goal is a praise of his friend, Ibn Ezra focuses more on himself and his situation in exile than he does the object of praise (*mamdūḥ*).

[53] Moses Ibn Ezra, *Shirei ha-ḥol*, 40–41. See appendix for the Hebrew text.

[54] Ibn Ezra also dedicates poem no. 33 in the diwan to him. According to Yitzhak Baer, Ibn Ezra and Ben Shett (Bene Venisti) were friends. See Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, Volume 1, trans. Louis Schoffman (Philadelphia and Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1992), 388. See also Yitzhak Baer, "*ha-Maṣav ha-poliṭi shel yehudei Sefarad be-doro shel R. Yehuda ha-Lewi*," *Zion* new series 1 (1935/36), 16. The only biographical information Baer provides is that he was a doctor from Saragossa.

The poet balances elements of complaint and self-praise that overshadow the panegyric in the end. He expresses his distance from his literary roots in al-Andalus through the desolation described in the *nasīb*, as well as in the rhetorically subdued poetic language utilized throughout the poem, notably the lack of rhetorical decoration characteristic of the *badīʿ* style seen in the previous poem. By looking at where, and how, the poet places himself within the poem I show that the poet's own conception of his place is at the same time ambivalent and central. As the poet, he sets the poetic action into motion, yet he is quickly swept into the background by events out of his control. Thus, agency, or lack thereof, plays a prominent role in the poem. Unlike in the previous poem, the poet is a character in the events, but he does not control them. As in the last poem, there is a strong contrast between the past and the present, but the movement from past to present provides little solace here.

Finally, understanding biblical language and imagery *and* poetic discourse is key to appreciating the expressions of nostalgic complaint contained in this poem, as was the case in the previous poem. Through the skilled use of biblical allusion, Ibn Ezra provides a spiritual, historical, and emotional touchstone that allows the audience to engage powerfully and intimately with the poetic text. However, intertextual references and readings can move both ways—from Bible to poem, and from poem to Bible. Ibn Ezra relies on the audience's knowledge of the Bible in order to understand the poem, and he also relies on poetic literacy for the poem to act upon the audience's understanding of the Bible as well. In other words, the Bible and the poem act as exegetical tools for the other.

The Poet's Absence at the Abandoned Campsite

The sound of lovers crying (*ḥoshkim yikraʾu*) over lost loves is common at the abandoned and ruined campsite of the *nasīb*. As in the last poem, and also in Ibn Shuhayd's elegy for that matter, the ruins here are deaf and mute, providing no response for the crying lovers. What is noteworthy, however, is that from the very first line, the poet does not speak directly. He stands removed from the vibrancy of the past, outside of a scene that has already been emptied of all life. This is achieved first of all with the absence of the first-person address so common in the first lines of the *nasīb*. It is the lovers that cry, not the poet, at least

initially. Ibn Ezra emphasizes this with the rhyme and meter of the poem. The rhyme syllables are *-aʾu*, which requires a verb conjugated in the third person plural to occupy the final position of each verse. Moreover, the meter (a variation of *ha-shalem*; Ar., *al-kāmil*) emphasizes this final verb, as the last foot of each verse contains three long syllables, drawing attention to the ending.[55] This rhyme and emphasis thus highlights everything and everyone *except* the poet—the departed lovers, the abandoned campsites, the stars in the sky, etc. I include the transliteration of these first lines to illustrate this.

1) *ʿad meh be-garon ḥoshkim yikraʾu / ḥinam ʿalei oznei meʿonim shaʾu*
2) *ka-ḥershim hem laʾazin o ilmim / ki laʿanot et ṣoʿakeihem laʾu*
3) *ʿamdu mevakim ki shekhuneihem be-roʾsh / golim ʿalei fi ha-zeman yaṣaʾu*

1) How long will lovers cry out in vain
   to the ears of campsites that are ruined?
2) In not hearing, they are like the deaf,
   Or are they like the dumb, unable to answer their cries?
3) They stand crying, for their inhabitants are the head of exiles,
   according to the vicissitudes of fate.

It is not until verse 6 that we hear the voice of the poet as the verbal subject, although even here that voice is one of hesitation and unknowing.

6) I do not know whether it was they who despised the land,
   Or whether it was the land that vomited out its inhabitants.

However, instead of emerging and speaking out here, the poet's voice retreats as quickly as it appeared, giving way in verse 7 once again to the land that has been emptied of its past, and the beloveds who once inhabited that past.

The *nasīb*, which comprises the first twelve verses, is completely conventional in its imagery and Ibn Ezra uses these conventions to lament his exile from al-Andalus and the vibrant intellectual climate that once spoke and understood this poetic language. He also alludes to the historical exile of the Jewish people, and thus, the separation of

[55] See David Yellin, *Torat ha-shirah ha-Sefardit*, (Jerusalem: Ḥevrah le-hoṣaʾat sefarim sheʿal yad ha-Universitah haʿIvrit, 1940), 48. For a detailed description of rhyme and the quantitative metrical system in Hebrew adapted from Arabic poetics, see Pagis, *Ḥidush u-masoret*, 105–140. See also B. Hrushovsky, "Prosody, Hebrew" in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1972), 13: 1211–1220.

the poet from his homeland is at the same time, personal, historical, and communal.

Verses 13–15 subtly shift the focus of the lament onto the poet himself, where he longs for the bygone days of a carefree and sensuous youth. In contrast to the previous poem, in which aging resulted in an accumulation of knowledge and wisdom, here old age in the present brings only sorrow and nostalgia for lost youth and the Andalusī wine parties of the past.

13) O [how I long] for the days when my black hair
was drenched with the dew of youth,

14) And for my locks, where the ravens of my youth
gathered but for a moment, then flew away.

15) Skirts of joy were dragged haughtily in the days of youth,
and the wine of love was drunk.

This short section serves as a transition into the praise that begins thus:

16) Were they fashioned from dripping myrrh, or was it only from
the perfumed mixture of Ibn Yosef's deeds that they were created?

The Ambivalent Panegyrist

It is important to underline the pessimism with which Ibn Ezra has infused this poem. The *nasīb* portion of a carefully constructed panegyric *qaṣīda* is meant to set the tone for the praise of the *mamdūḥ*. This is achieved with imagery that emphasizes his strength of character, bravery, magnanimity, and other praiseworthy traits, often through contrast with the desolation of the abandoned campsite. The tone set by this *nasīb* is, on the whole, quite dark, and although this could be understood as providing a strong contrast to the patron's positive attributes (according to convention), the emotional impact of the first fifteen verses does not quickly dissipate with the beginning of the praise section. The melancholy imagery of the introductory *nasīb* persists into the panegyric and serves to paint a bleak picture of the present. Here, Ibn Ezra manages to draw attention to his own state of loneliness and alienation in a land far from home. While it is true that the poem is addressed to a friend, it ends up being about the poet himself. The panegyric section (20–31) is rather conventional, and underlines the

patron's nobility, radiance, purity, intelligence, eloquence, and generosity, all expressed in hyperbolic terms that could arguably describe anyone. It is admittedly unfair to fault Ibn Ezra for such conventional verse, or even to question the sincerity of his relationship with Ibn Shett, since the panegyric form is oftentimes more about a conventional exchange of praise for payment or some other form of thanks in order to preserve and strengthen existing social and power structures.[56] What is important, however, is understanding that Ibn Ezra's ambivalence toward the panegyric reflected his opinions of a poet's moral and ethical responsibilities and his position in society. Elsewhere, he rails against the panegyrist's use of excessive flattery that approaches insincerity. In *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*, Ibn Ezra attributes the following quote to Plato speaking about insincere praise. He says: "He who sings your praises with virtues not your own when he is content with you, will blame you for faults not your own when he is displeased with you (*man madaḥaka bi-mā laysa fī-ka min al-jamīl wa-huwa rāḍin ʿanka dhammaka bi-mā laysa fī-ka min al-qabīḥ wa-huwa sākhiṭ ʿalayka*)."[57] In the same chapter, Ibn Ezra tells of a patron who, upon hearing an exaggerated praise, says to the panegyrist: "I am beneath what you say about me, but above what you think of me (*anā dūna mā qulta wa-fawqa mā fī nafsika*)."[58] It is the hyperbolic and often insincere language of the conventional panegyric that Ibn Ezra disdains, and so in addressing and even praising a friend, the poet uses the panegyric to further emphasize his own isolation and despair, and to draw attention to the loss of noble peers such as Ibn Shett and the aristocratic circles of which he was a part. In times such as these, poetry, and the social contract of which it is a part, has been emptied of meaning.

Living in exile in Christian Spain where he deemed the Jewish community to be ignorant and uncultured, Ibn Ezra could only wonder what was worth praising at all. In a study of one of Ibn Quzmān's (d. 1160) panegyric *azjāl* (sing. *zajal*; a colloquial strophic poetic form), James Monroe explains a 'missing' panegyric section, previously thought to be lost in the manuscript, as being quite deliberate on the poet's part,

[56] See Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy: Myth, Gender, and Ceremony in the Classical Arabic Ode* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

[57] Moses Ibn Ezra, *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*, 158.

[58] Ibid., 192.

claiming that the omission reflected his view of the current political and cultural situation. In previous times, when the power of the ruler was supreme, and the panegyric was meant as a ritual manifestation of glory, the panegyric pact between poet and patron held firm. However, this was not possible

> in the lackluster Almoravid present, when the poet is being called upon to extol the accomplishments of ordinary men, often his peers, with whose shortcomings he is all too familiar. Given such a situation, Ibn Quzmān has invented a new genre of anti-panegyric that refrains from all forms of praise while, at the same time, it tantalizes the patron by ultimately withholding from him the amusement it at first promises to offer him.[59]

Having had his world turned upside down as a result of the Almoravids' assumption of power in al-Andalus, and having witnessed the decline in cultural production and the court culture that fostered this production that accompanied their arrival, even were he to condone the composition of panegyrics, Ibn Ezra may have found it difficult to write a truly sincere praise without having it colored by his own negative experiences. In this poem ostensibly dedicated to a friend, Ibn Ezra couches his praise in conventional language, and places it between an introductory *nasīb* that emphasizes solitude, destruction, and the passing of time, and a final section that focuses on the poet's own literary attributes. In so doing, he underlines his deplorable condition as well as his inability to do anything to improve it. At the same time, he displays a persistent desire to articulate and preserve the life that he had left behind in al-Andalus.

Multiple Exiles

Because the Jewish Andalusī poets relied on biblical Hebrew as their poetic language, every word of their poetry has the potential for rich and multi-layered allusion. One cannot always read biblical allusions into a poet's choice of any given word or phrase, but sometimes a poem

[59] James T. Monroe, "The Underside of Arabic Panegyric: Ibn Quzmān's (unfinished?) '*Zajal no. 84*'," *Al-Qantara: Revista de Estudios Árabes* 17:1 (1996), 108. For an analysis of another *zajal* that can be read as an anti-panegyric by Ibn Quzmān, see Alexander Elinson, "Contrapuntal Composition in a *Muwashshaḥ* Family, or Variations on a Panegyric Theme," *Medieval Encounters* 7:2 (2001), 174–196.

demonstrates links to specific biblical verses, stories, or themes that must be considered in order to fully appreciate the poem's meaning. These links do not have to be particularly direct. By using a biblical allusion throughout an entire poem for example, the result can be an understated yet clear emotional tone that informs and underlies the work as a whole. This exegetical process can work both ways too. By forcing the audience to revisit the Bible through the prism of poetry, the poet is able to highlight and play with certain rhetorical tricks present in the Bible not emphasized or immediately recognized in the scriptural context.

In this *qaṣīda*, the theme of exile is underscored by Ibn Ezra's multiple references to the story of Joseph in Genesis. In addition to the biblical story's evocation of separation from the homeland and eventual redemption, the historical present and the biblical past are further joined through the patron's name, Ibn Yosef. The first reference to exile and the story of Joseph is in the poem's third verse:

> 3) They stand crying, for their inhabitants are the head of exiles (*be-roʾsh golim*),
> according to the vicissitudes of fate.

The Hebrew phrase *roʾsh golim* is from Amos 6:7 which reads: "Therefore, they will go into exile (*be-roʾsh golim*), and those who are unrestrained will be removed (*sar*) from the banquet table." Directly preceding this verse, in Amos 6:5–6, we read: "Those who chant with the lute and, like David, make musical instruments for themselves, Who drink from bowls of wine and anoint themselves with the finest ointments, but they do not grieve for Joseph's affliction." The name Joseph here refers to the tribe of Joseph, but in the context of this particular poem, Joseph the patriarch, who was held captive in Egypt, would also resonate with the audience. The allusion to the familiar Andalusī wine party is clear, but in the biblical context of Amos 6:7, the Jews are being castigated for living a life of earthly pleasures that threatens the strength of the Jewish kingdom. Of course, the context is radically different in twelfth century al-Andalus. Rather than criticize this way of life, Moses Ibn Ezra, who is forced to live away from family and friends, misses it.

In verse 32, speaking from the prison of exile, the poet begs the *mamdūḥ* to receive his poems favorably ["Please take blessings from the tongue of a friend whose legs are constrained in a prison (*batei ha-asur*)"]. The prison of exile evokes the prison in which Joseph and

Pharaoh's two officers—*sar ha-mashkim* (Pharaoh's steward) and *sar ha-ʿofim* (Pharaoh's baker)—were held (Genesis 40:3).[60] The word *sar*, in turn refers to verse 17 of the poem ["[He is] the noble one (*sar*) to whom other nobles (*sarim*) are humbled; the earth has pride over the heavens because of him"]. It is interesting to note here that Ibn Ezra ties these verses together through a *jināS* that weaves its way between the biblical and poetic text. In Amos 6:7 quoted above, the word *sar* (*samekh, vav, resh*), meaning 'to be removed', shares two root letters with *asur* (*aleph, samekh, resh*) in verse 32, and both words share consonant sounds with the words *sar* and *sarim* (*sin, resh, resh*), meaning 'noble'. The sound effect may rely a lot on an audience's ability to shift between the biblical and the poetic text, but this is not too much to ask of an educated medieval Jewish audience, or at least the peers Ibn Ezra longs for.

Through a clever manipulation of the double meaning of the phrase *nasaʾ roʾsh* (to lift one's head; to count or number among), the last verse

> 40) Perhaps when the ones scattered in pain are gathered,
> they will count me (*roʾshi yisaʾu*) among the best of those who perished.

recalls the words of Joseph: "Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head (*yisa Pharaoh et roʾshkha*), and restore you to your office" (Genesis 40:13). In the Bible it is Pharaoh who has the power to restore his ministers to their previous positions. In a panegyric, one would expect that this power belongs to the *mamdūḥ*. However, in the poem this power belongs to God, "all of whose deeds are marvelous" (verse 39), to the poems produced by Ibn Ezra, and to the community for which he yearns.

Is it Worth the Price?

As with any exchange good or gift, the price or value of the product depends as much on its intrinsic worth as on the reputation of the

[60] The theme of imprisonment appears elsewhere in Ibn Ezra's work, notably in the introduction to *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara* where he speaks of his exile and distance from his homeland by stating: "I am a prisoner in jail; actually, I am buried in a tomb," *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*, 4.

producer. Just as advertising today aims to increase the demand for, and value of a product, so too does the panegyrist, by praising his own work, aim to increase the value of the poem. In the last six verses, Ibn Ezra draws attention to his own poetry, even placing it above the *mamdūḥ* in importance. However, in this section of self-praise, the poet is eclipsed by his own poetry, and again the poet's agency is weakened. In praising his poetry and offering it up to the *mamdūḥ*, the poet becomes, in fact, no more than that which he produces. He *is* his poetry, and without the cultural milieu that once fostered it, the poet and his art are threatened with extinction. Conversely, through his poetry, Ibn Ezra can bring forth that milieu that includes himself, Ibn Yosef, and the cultured Jews of al-Andalus.

The imagery in verses 35–40 moves from the tangible and earthly outward to the infinite. Using the metaphor of poetry as a necklace, or words strung together (Ar. *kalām manẓūm*)[61] in verse 35, Ibn Ezra concretizes the image and literally bedecks the patron with poetry. The next verse elaborates on that imagery, drawing from Song of Songs 5:14 ("His hands are like gold rings set with precious stones; His belly is like bright ivory overlaid with sapphires"), and infuses the line with sensuality and overflowing love. As we move outward into the stars of heaven that take their names and glory from the patron (verse 37), we have left the physical reality of this world, along with the pain of exile, and moved into God's realm and the possibility of redemption (verse 39). It is noteworthy that we last heard of the patron, Ibn Yosef, in verse 31. By devoting the final verses to a lament over his own condition, a plea to God for assistance, and a praise for his poetry, Ibn Ezra moves the panegyric theme into the background, whereas the dual exile of the poet from al-Andalus, and that of the Jews, is highlighted. As the poem ends with this praise of his poetry, Ibn Ezra looks to immortalize himself with his verses. He recalls an Andalus where the

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[61] The image of 'ordered' or 'strung-together' discourse is common in classical Arabic poetry and literary theory. Abū Tammām says:

I have strung for him a necklace of poetry; the seas have dried up,
its jewels unable to compete in making a necklace like it. [42]

Diwān Abī Tammām bi-sharḥ al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī, Volume 2, 94. Ibn Rashīq illustrates poetry's superiority to prose using this metaphor. He asks: "Do you not see that pearls—considered to be related to spoken expression, analogous and similar to it—do not give a feeling of safety, nor do they prove useful for that which they have been acquired, when unstrung?…When they are strung together, they are better preserved against banality, and their beauty is clearer, even when used frequently." Ibn Rashīq, *al-ʿUmda*, Volume 1, 19.

Arabized Jewish poets once thrived. This place will never exist again unless Jewish exiles like himself are gathered together in a community where this poetry can be appreciated, and this place may only exist in the poem, or with death.

In both of the poems analyzed here, Ibn Ezra speaks wholly from within the Judeo-Arabic literary tradition, and articulates physical and cultural losses through the medium of the Arabic-style Hebrew *qaṣīda*. These poems express the laments of a poet living in exile far from family, friends, and colleagues, and they also express his temporal distance from the past—a past that was indeed a golden age of literary and scholarly production, but which was quickly fading into memory for Ibn Ezra. By relying on *muḥdath* rhetorical devices and imagery, specifically those of the desert and the abandoned campsite (*al-aṭlāl*), as well as implicit and explicit allusions to the Hebrew Bible and Jewish communal history, Ibn Ezra addresses a community of which he is no longer a part, and in many ways, is quickly ceasing to exist, except in poetry.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE VIEW FROM AL-ANDALUS: LOOKING EAST, WEST, AND SOUTH FOR ANDALUSĪ IDENTITY

Introduction

In her study on orientalism in the Middle Ages, Suzanne Conklin Akbari asserts that medievalists who make use of Edward Said's thesis in *Orientalism*[1] have been somewhat uncritical in accepting and incorporating his dichotomous view of east-west relations into their own work. Akbari skillfully argues that the medieval world was, in fact, divided into three regions rather than two—Asia, Europe, and Africa. By examining a number of medieval geographic texts, she demonstrates that these regions were not understood in any sort of fixed or essentialized way, and that it was only in the fourteenth century that the idea of an Orient that was the mirror image of the Occident emerged. Remaining cognizant and sensitive to changing times while reading geographical texts, Akbari follows the advice of geographer David Harvey who "cautions against using maps as cultural artifacts without situating them in their proper context." She concludes that

> [m]edieval efforts to map the world—both in the images of the *mappaemundi* and the words of descriptive geographies—reveal moments of "crystallization," as Harvey puts it, when the process of mapping brings an entity into apparent being.[2]

When writers aim to define their nation, homeland, or culture in relation to an 'other', it results in these "moments of 'crystallization'" when the place comes into being through literature, reflecting and creating the reality of cultural identification.

In his history of al-Andalus, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb* (The Perfumed Breeze), al-Maqqarī (d. 1632) mentions a number of works that praise al-Andalus

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[1] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

[2] Suzanne Conklin Akbari, "From Due East to True North: Orientalism and Orientation," in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 31. See David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 80–83.

and enumerate specifically what distinguishes it from other lands.[3] He quotes a passage from Ibn Ghālib's (twelfth century) *Farḥat al-anfus* (Joyful Spirits) that highlights the Andalusī's good taste in "clothing and food, cleanliness and purity, love of singing and partying, composing songs… [his] devotion to seeking knowledge, as well as his love of wisdom, philosophy, justice, and fair treatment." He stresses that "the people of al-Andalus are of Arab lineage (*wa-ahl al-Andalus ʿarab fī-l-ansāb*)" and that the people of al-Maghrib are indebted to al-Andalus culturally, agriculturally, and technologically due to the fact that exiled Andalusīs brought this knowledge to those lands. Ibn Saʿīd (d. 1286) also notes the Maghribī debt to the Andalusīs, but then goes on to praise North Africa itself, measuring it according to an eastern standard by designating Marrakesh (the imperial capital of both the Almoravids and the Almohads) as the 'Baghdad of al-Maghrib'.

Al-Maqqarī also includes an excerpt from Ibn Bassām's (d. 1147) *al-Dhakhīra fī maḥāsin ahl al-jazīra* (Treasury of the Charms of the People of the Iberian Peninsula), his anthology and tribute to Andalusī literary culture. While his main concern in compiling this work is to highlight and distinguish Andalusī literary achievements in relation to the eastern Islamic world, Ibn Bassām still places great importance on the 'purely' eastern Arab elements (real or imagined) upon which Andalusī culture stands. While he extols the unique qualities of al-Andalus, he cannot help but point out that "the noblest Arabs of the east conquered it and the chief armies of al-Shām and Iraq settled there. Thus, their descendents remained everywhere, with noble blood."[4] However, at the same time that he praises the eastern heritage of al-Andalus, Ibn Bassām disparages those who "refuse anything that is not eastern, returning again and again to reports of [the east]… Even if a crow caws in those lands, or a fly buzzes in the farthest reaches of al-Shām or Iraq, they will fall to their knees as if in front of an idol, or recite it as if it were a masterpiece."[5] Neither statement nullifies the other, but rather, taken together, they illustrate an Andalusī cultural self-definition that holds the east in high esteem while at the same time striving to assert independence from it.

[3] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 150–156.
[4] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 154.
[5] Ibn Bassām, *al-Dhakhīra* Volume 1, 2.

What is common to each of the texts that al-Maqqarī includes is the notion that eastern Arab lineage and the high cultural refinement that goes along with it is what sets the Andalusī apart. As well, a number of them place great importance on the superiority of al-Andalus over al-Maghrib, and the debts of the latter owed to the former. Throughout the Andalusī period, geography, cultural heritage, and changing political-historical contexts led Andalusī writers to focus on their relationship to the east and to al-Maghrib as the contrasting mirrors through which they viewed and defined themselves; the east represented al-Andalus' cultural pedigree, and al-Maghrib was a threat to such a notion. The Berbers as a people, along with the place they came from, were the antithesis for those in al-Andalus who sought to view themselves as inheritors and perpetuators of an Arabic culture with direct ties to the east.

In this chapter, I examine the *risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* (treatise on the superiority of al-Andalus) and variations on that theme. By looking at texts that seek to assert the cultural uniqueness and superiority of al-Andalus, while at the same time linking Andalusī culture to an idealized eastern past and shunning contemporary North Africa, I show how a relatively fixed literary theme developed over a period of four centuries to evaluate the ways in which Andalusī writers viewed their changing relationship to the Islamic east and west. These changing views resulted in varying expressions of their conception of al-Andalus and Andalusī identity. I consider a number of texts including each of Ibn Ḥazm's (d. 1064) and al-Shaqundī's (d. 1231 or 1232) *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* (Treatise on the Superiority of al-Andalus), Moses Ibn Ezra's (d. after 1138) chapter entitled *Shufūf jāliyat al-Andalus fī shaʾn al-shiʿr wa-l-khuṭab wa-l-nathr* (The Translucence of al-Andalus' Jewish Community in Matters of Poetry, Rhetoric and Prose), and Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb's (d. 1374) *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* (Boasting Match Between Malaga and Salé) and *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār fī dhikr al-maʿāhid wa-l-diyār* (The Measure of Superiority in Mentioning Homes and Abodes). I examine the ways each attempts to define al-Andalus by relating it to the east and to al-Maghrib, and how political, literary, and personal contexts affect their different representations of Andalusī identity.

While it is true that from the very beginnings of Andalusī history, al-Andalus and al-Maghrib were closely linked—geographically, politically, and culturally—the relationship between the lands on either side of straits was anything but static. As a result of changing dynasties,

rulers, and specific political contexts, relations between al-Andalus and al-Maghrib were sometimes amicable, other times hostile, and yet other times balanced precariously between the two. The writers of the works treated below lived in very different times and in different intellectual and confessional communities, and thus, they position themselves in relation to the 'other' in ways that are respectively confident and conservative, openly hostile yet nostalgic for the lost past, and then somewhat ambivalent about where, or if, al-Andalus still exists at all. What is common to all of them is that they write from a place removed from the homeland, either in exile or immediately following military defeat and personal loss. Each of the writers is forced to define himself and his homeland from the outside looking in, and looking back to better times.

Praise for the City and the Literary Debate

The genre of *faḍāʾil* (merits) literature specifically focusing on geographical locations can be dated to the ninth century. The earliest known example devoted to the praise of a single city is a work entitled *Faḍāʾil al-Baṣra* by ʿUmar b. Shabba (d. 875). Others soon followed, including *Faḍāʾil Baghdād* by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Sirkhasī (d. 899), *Faḍāʾil Makka* by Mufaḍḍal b. Muḥammad (d. ca. 912), *Faḍāʾil Balkh* by Abū Zayd al-Balkhī (d. 932), *Faḍāʾil Miṣr* by Ibn Zawlāq al-Miṣrī (d. 996), *Faḍāʾil al-bayt al-muqaddas* by al-Wāsiṭī, and *Faḍāʾil al-Shām wa-Dimashq* by al-Rabʿī (d. 1052). Following al-Rabʿī's treatise, there was a steep increase in the number of *faḍāʾil* epistles composed.[6]

In addition to works devoted solely to extolling the virtues of various places, examples of the *faḍāʾil* theme can be found in broader geographical and historical works. For instance, Ibn ʿAsākir (1105–76) introduces his history of Damascus with this theme. He begins the narrative by locating the city firmly within the religious tradition, explaining the derivation of the regional name, al-Shām, with the story of the descendents of Noah's son, the Banū Sām, who settled the area. He then proceeds to a discussion of the city's relationship to the prophet

[6] Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Wāsiṭī, *Faḍāʾil al-bayt al-muqaddas*, ed. Isaac Hasson (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1979); Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Rabʿī, *Faḍāʾil al-Shām wa-Dimashq*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Damascus: Maṭbūʿāt al-majmaʿ al-ʿilmī al-ʿarabī bi-Dimashq, 1950), 5.

Muḥammad, relying on *ḥadīth*. It is only after establishing Damascus' favored place within Muslim religious geography that Ibn ʿAsākir goes on to describe the city's population, *ʿulamāʾ*, mosques, weather, topographical features, and history.[7] The religious importance of cities would remain the focus of *faḍāʾil* writings on other cities such as Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, which, after Damascus and al-Shām, was the city most treated by the *faḍāʾil* literature. This reliance on, or at least precedence of the religious significance of a city was a main feature of the genre due in no small part to the fact that the genre is closely associated with *ṭabaqāt* literature, or the biographical dictionary, itself an essential component of *ḥadīth* scholarship. These studies were necessary for assessing the trustworthiness and capability of local scholars as transmitters and as Zayde Antrim points out, "as expressions of local pride, these dictionaries [*ṭabaqāt*] allowed Muslims to celebrate the contribution made in their town to the sustenance of the most authoritative body of knowledge, after the Qurʾān, in Islam."[8] Texts in Arabic that focused on representing cities did not begin to appear until the eighth century. From the ninth through the eleventh centuries, these texts crystallized into a more formal genre of local geography that included discussions of topography, history, and biography, all of which were indispensable in defining a city's importance, as well as that of its inhabitants, specifically in the context of *ḥadīth* scholarship.

The development of *faḍāʾil* literature on cities also coincided with the urbanization of Islamic society, as was the case with the *rithāʾ al-mudun* discussed above. After all, the new urban centers provided citizens with identities and allegiances distinct from the tribal structure that dominated Arab life that was largely not sedentary preceding Islam. Additionally, although it would seem quite natural for residents of cities to favor and exalt their own city over another for political, social, or religious reasons, one cannot ignore the pre-existence of a similar and broader genre of *munāẓara* literature in which the author sets up and executes a debate claiming the superiority of one thing, person, or place, over another. There are precedents to the Arabic development of this genre in other Near Eastern literatures, for examples exist in

[7] Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tahdhīb tārīkh Dimashq al-kabīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir Badrān (Beirut: Dār al-masīra, 1979).

[8] Zayde Antrim, "Ibn ʿAsākir's Representations of Syria and Damascus in the Introduction to the *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38:1 (2006), 109.

Ancient Egyptian, Sumerian, Akkadian, Aramaic, and Syriac. In Arabic literature itself, specifically in pre- and early-Islamic poetry, there are examples of literary contests and claims of superiority in the themes of *fakhr* (boasting) and *hijāʾ* (invective), as well as in the related *naqīḍa* (poetic joust), one of the most famous of which was that between Jarīr ibn ʿAṭiyya (d. 729) and Hammām ibn Ghālib al-Farazdaq (d. 728).[9]

Geert Jan Van Gelder places the beginning of the "'literary debate' proper" with al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 868/9).[10] According to Van Gelder, a defining feature of the literary debate is that the voices of the two sides of the debate speak for themselves, often necessitating the personification of the opposing parties as, for example, in 'The Boasting Match between Musk and Civet' (*Mufākharat al-misk wa-l-zabād*) or 'The Contest of Winter and Summer and the Arguments of One against the Other' (*Iḥtiṣām al-shitāʾ wa-l-ṣayf wa-ḥtijāj aḥadihimā ʿalā ṣāḥibihi*).[11] In addition to these debates argued in the first person from the point of view of the combatants, al-Jāḥiẓ also composed a number of works with an authoritative narrator. This narrator serves as the advocate for one thing over the other as in 'Preference for the Belly over the Back' (*Tafḍīl al-baṭn ʿalā-l-ẓahr*), 'Preference for Blacks over Whites' (*Tafḍīl al-sūdān ʿalā-l-bīḍān*), and 'Boasting Match Between Girls and Boys' (*Mufākharat al-jawārī wa-l-ghilmān*).[12]

Although Arabic literature did contain elements of what would develop into the debate (*mufākhara, munāẓara*, or *tafḍīl*) genre, Van Gelder argues that the Greek, Persian, and Syriac precedents constituted a literary culture that, with the spread of Islam and subsequent Arabization of the Fertile Crescent and Persia, found expression in Arabic. In other words, although he was writing in Arabic, al-Jāḥiẓ was articulating an older Near Eastern tradition.[13] Regardless of the specific origins of the genre, the epistolary debate can be viewed as coming out of both the Arabic poetic tradition, and the prose traditions of other languages and cultures with which Arabic came into contact.[14]

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[9] See A. A. Bevan ed., *The Naḳāʾid of Jarīr and al-Farazdaḳ*, 3 Volumes (London, 1905–1912).

[10] Geert Jan Van Gelder, "The Conceit of Pen and Sword: On an Arabic Literary Debate," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 32:2 (Autumn 1987), 329–360.

[11] Ibid., 333. Both of these treatises have been lost.

[12] al-Jāḥiẓ, *Mufākharat al-jawārī wa-l-ghilmān*, ed. Charles Pellat (Beirut: Dār al-Makshūf, 1957).

[13] Van Gelder, "The Conceit of Pen and Sword," 335.

[14] This genre continues to flourish in contemporary Arabic literature. See Clive Holes, "The Dispute of Coffee and Tea: A Debate-poem from The Gulf" in *Tradition*

Ibn Ḥazm and his Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus

Ibn Ḥazm, a contemporary of Ibn Shuhayd treated above in Chapter One, was born during the era of Muḥammad b. Abī ʿĀmir al-Manṣūr's de facto rule (r. 970–1002), which was a period of Andalusī strength and prosperity.[15] However, despite Cordoba's success at the time, al-Manṣūr's reign also struck at the heart of Umayyad pride and legitimacy due to the fact that al-Manṣūr, a high government official (*ḥājib*, chamberlain) and not a member of the Umayyad family, effectively ruled in the dynasty's name. It was also during this period that he radically increased the government's reliance on Berber troops.

The presence of Berbers in al-Andalus was nothing new of course, as the very first Muslim forces to land in the Iberian Peninsula consisted largely of newly converted Berbers, led by Ṭāriq b. Ziyād in 711. However, the Caliph al-Ḥakam II (d. 976) initiated an active recruitment policy of Berber militias that in turn encouraged Berber immigration to al-Andalus. Al-Manṣūr continued this policy, and actively sought to create a professional standing army made up largely of Berber units. These units were initially used to fight Christian invaders, but were later used against Muslims in the cities as well to quell unrest. As Berber numbers and power within the military increased, they sought to assert this power politically, and were ultimately a major factor in the collapse of the Cordoban Umayyad Caliphate. The events of the Berber *fitna* (1008–1031) were felt both professionally and personally by Ibn Ḥazm. As a strong and active supporter of the Umayyad caliphate, he saw this dynasty crumble to the ground along with his family home in Cordoba, forcing him into exile in Játiva.[16] The tragic results of these

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and Modernity in Arabic Language and Literature, ed. J. R. Smart (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1996), 302–315; Mark Wagner, "The Debate Between Coffee and Qat in Yemeni Literature," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 8:2 (July 2005), 121–150. For more on literary debates, see W. Heinrichs, "Rose versus narcissus: observations on an Arabic literary debate" in *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Mediaeval Near East: Forms and Types of Literary Debates in Semitic and Related Literatures*, eds. G. J. Reinink and H. L. J. Vanstiphout (Leuven, Belgium: Departement Orientalistiek, Uitgeverij Peeters, 1991), 179–198; Geert Van Gelder, "Arabic debates of Jest and Earnest," in the same volume, 199–211.

[15] For a biography and bibliography, see Eric Ormsby, "Ibn Ḥazm," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*.

[16] An event eulogized in both prose and verse. See his *Ṭawq al-ḥamāma fī-l-ilfa wa-l-ullāf*, ed. al-Ṭāhir Aḥmad Makkī (Cairo: Dār al-maʿārif bi-Miṣr, 1975), 126–127. For his elegy for Cordoba, see Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl al-aʿlām*, 107–108.

events for Ibn Ḥazm very possibly colored his views of Berbers and their place within his notion of Andalusī society.

In a discussion of varying myths of Berber origins, Maya Shatzmiller argues that Ibn Ḥazm may have written his detailed genealogical work *Jamharat ansāb al-ʿarab* (Compilation of Arab Genealogy) in response to an assertive Berber movement similar to the *shuʿūbiyya* movement in the east.[17] According to Shatzmiller, during the ninth and tenth centuries geographers and historians came to grapple with the question of Berber origins. These scholars came up with three possibilities:

1) Berbers came from Palestine and wound up in North Africa after the death of their forebear Jālūt (Goliath), who was part of the Arab Muḍar tribe.
2) Berbers were descendants of Noah's son, Ḥām, who was either born in North Africa, or ended up there as a result of the curse of Ḥām.[18]
3) Certain Berber groups were said to have originated from South Yemen, and to have belonged to the tribe of Ḥimyar.[19]

Ibn Ḥazm adheres to the second theory and vehemently opposes the third. He says:

> Some claim that [the Berbers] are from Yemen, descendants of Ḥimyar, whereas others trace their lineage to Barr b. Qays ʿAylān. However, there is no doubt that this is wrong. Whether Qays ʿAylān had a son named Barr is totally unknown by the genealogists. The Ḥimyarī tribe never went to the land of the Berbers, except for in the lies of the Yemenī historians.[20]

Whatever intentions he may have had for writing the *Jamhara* as a whole, it is clear that in it, Ibn Ḥazm clearly defines the Arabs and the Berbers as having come from completely different lineages, devoting separate sections to each. However, it is not so much lineage itself that interests him, but rather, culture, specifically Arab culture.

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[17] Shatzmiller, *The Berbers and the Islamic State*, 34. Shatzmiller also looks at the effect that displacement from North Africa had on the development of Berber historiography and writings that praise the merits (*faḍāʾil*) of the Berbers, 31–39.

[18] See Genesis 9: 20–27.

[19] Henri Pérès discusses the tendency of Berber Taifa kings to attempt to legitimate their sovereignty by establishing and solidifying pure Arab roots, or *nasab*, by relying on these stories of origin. See *La poésie andalouse en arabe classique au xi-ème siècle* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1953), 91.

[20] Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-ʿarab*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Cairo: Dār al-maʿārif bi-Miṣr, 1962), 495.

In his *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* Ibn Ḥazm fixes his gaze eastward, rather than southward. While the fall of the Cordoba caliphate was indeed an important turning point in the history of the Iberian Peninsula, it was still a relatively early loss. The overwhelmingly positive tone of the epistle, focusing almost exclusively on presenting a survey of Andalusī learned men and their merits (*faḍāʾil*) is curious given the unstable political reality in which Ibn Ḥazm lived. It is tempting to interpret his writing of the *risāla* as the result of a compulsion to dig in his heels and assert the importance and permanence of the Andalusī intellectual scene. In fact, what is most important to Ibn Ḥazm is the glorification and preservation of Arabic courtly culture based on *adab* (manners, good grooming).[21] For Ibn Ḥazm, this culture and that of the (non-Arabized) Berbers is separate. The epistle is an early eastward-looking and somewhat conservative contribution to Andalusī *faḍāʾil* literature that is inspired by earlier works of that genre. Ibn Ḥazm's desire to praise and distinguish al-Andalus while at the same time placing it within a well-established traditional genre displays a relationship between west and east similar to that of Ibn Bassām mentioned above, and Moses Ibn Ezra, upon whose treatise I elaborate below.

Ibn Ḥazm's epistle takes the conventional form of a response to a letter written by Ibn al-Rabīb al-Tamīmī of Qayrawan to Ibn Ḥazm's uncle, faulting the Andalusīs for not committing the great thinkers, writers, and kings of al-Andalus to posterity. Ibn al-Rabīb praises al-Andalus as the "depth of superiority, the wellspring of all that is good and noble, the source of all rarities, and the origin of all treasures."[22] He wonders why, unlike the inhabitants of all other great civilizations, the Andalusīs are "completely inadequate, and totally neglectful" when it comes to their "scholars recording the merits of their lands and preserving their country's glorious deeds forever in books."[23] Ibn Ḥazm's response is a polite correction of this impression, which he begins: "My

[21] For a discussion of Ibn Ḥazm's views of courtly culture, see Michelle M. Hamilton, *Representing Others in Medieval Iberian Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), specifically 15–31.

[22] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 156. This epistle can also be found in *Faḍāʾil al-Andalus wa-ahlihā li-Ibn Ḥazm wa-Ibn Saʿīd wa-l-Shaqundī*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-jadīd, 1968) and *Rasāʾil Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusī*. Volume 2, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut: al-Muʾassasa al-ʿarabiyya li-l-dirāsāt wa-l-nashr, 1981).

[23] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 157.

brother, Abū Bakr. I send you the greetings of a brother who longs to see you, for great distances stretch between us."[24]

According to form, Ibn Ḥazm initiates his *risāla* with a *ḥadīth* that he interprets as making reference to al-Andalus. He regards the *ḥadīth* as one of Muḥammad's "most outstanding prophecies…as it tells of something before its existence (*ikhbāruhu bi-l-shayʾ qabla kawnihi*)."[25] According to the *ḥadīth*, the prophet was napping at the home of Umm Ḥarām, his aunt. He had a dream in which he saw his followers traveling by sea in order to spread Islam and upon waking he said to her, "You will be among the first ones." Indeed, some forty years later, she accompanied her husband Abū al-Walīd ʿUbāda b. al-Ṣāmit on the Muslims' first naval campaign to Cyprus. Ibn Ḥazm's argument that this *ḥadīth* refers to al-Andalus hinges on the prophet's use of the word 'first' which implies that other naval campaigns followed, eventually to reach the Iberian shore.

Having thus affirmed al-Andalus' place in the Islamic religious landscape, Ibn Ḥazm gives brief and general praise to his birthplace, Cordoba, focusing almost exclusively on the intellectual achievements of its scholars, rather than on the physical beauty and grandeur of the city. However, it is curious that although he is composing a treatise praising al-Andalus, he does betray his belief that despite the presence of praiseworthy intellectuals, the east is the real source of intellectual prowess. In a conventional passage that defines Cordoba according to its clime, Ibn Ḥazm states that

> [w]e have as much understanding and intelligence as our clime dictates, despite the fact that light (*al-anwār*) comes to us only after it has been banished and sent west (*mugharrabatan*) from its source where it rises (*maṭliʿihā*).[26]

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[24] Ibid., 158.

[25] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 161–162. See *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi-sharḥ al-Imām Muḥyi al-Dīn al-Nawawī*, Volume 13 (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 1994), 59.

[26] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 163. Ibn Rushd (d. 1198), in his *Kitāb al-kulliyyāt*, as well as in his commentary on Plato's *Republic* and middle commentary on Aristotle's *Meterology*, makes use of similar climatic evidence supporting the superiority of al-Andalus in terms of the sciences by pointing out that al-Andalus is located in the fifth clime, along with Greece, Iraq, and Egypt. See A. I. Sabra, "The Andalusian revolt against Ptolemaic astronomy: Averroes and al-Biṭrūjī," in *Transformation and Tradition in the Sciences: Essays in Honor of I. Bernard Cohen*, ed. Everett Mendelsohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 133–153. I thank George Saliba for this reference.

The words glossed in Arabic in the above quote are translated so as to express the literal, geographic/astronomical, and metaphoric sense of the passage. Ibn Ḥazm is not only a skilled belle-lettrist, but also a poet who expresses himself in poetic terms, and the meaning of the above statement is enhanced when considered in the broader context of his thought. In the following verses, he praises his intellectual prowess, and his pride of place emerges from the idea that al-Andalus is only as bright as its most illustrious intellectuals, and that al-Andalus is not an appropriate place for someone of his own dazzling intelligence:

> I am the sun shining in the sky of knowledge,
> My only fault is that I rose in the West:
>
> Had I risen in the firmament of the East,
> Nothing would have been lost then of my fame!
>
> I have a deep love for the region of Iraq, and
> No wonder that a lover finds himself lonesome here![27]

Using the language of the lover separated from the beloved, and the image of an intellect that has risen in the west and is alienated from like minds, Ibn Ḥazm combines traditional *fakhr* (boasting) and *shakwā* (complaint) themes by cleverly inverting east and west with the rising of his sun in the west (*al-gharb*). Thus, even in this rather conventional preamble to his treatise, Ibn Ḥazm refers to his alienation from the wellsprings of intellectual activity in the east, and this in a work of praise for al-Andalus.

He then goes on to provide a direct response to Ibn al-Rabīb's specific charge that there is a dearth of writings by, and about, al-Andalus' learned men (*ʿulamāʾ*). Ibn Ḥazm's apparent lack of interest in the city as a physical place is interesting given the attention that architecture and geography are given in other writings about this city, and cities in general in *faḍāʾil* literature. Instead, Ibn Ḥazm has chosen to focus upon the biographical element of the *faḍāʾil* genre to the exclusion of geographical and topographical discussions that are often part of other treatises of this sort.[28]

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[27] Translation A. R. Nykl, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry and its Relations with the Old Provençal Troubadours*. (Baltimore: J. H. Furst, 1946), 102.

[28] For example, see Donald P. Little, "Mujīr al-Dīn al-ʿUlaymī's Vision of Jerusalem in the Ninth/Fifteenth Century," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 115:2 (1995), 237–247. See also Abū al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAlī b. al-Jawzī, *Faḍāʾil al-Quds*, ed. Jabrāʾīl Sulaymān Jabbūr (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīda, 1979) with its descriptions of

By way of an introduction to the main topic, Ibn Ḥazm puts forth a defense against Ibn al-Rabīb's claims by pointing out that "if the situation were really as [he] describes it, then [the Andalusīs] are no different from any other great civilization,"[29] citing examples of similar neglect of Baghdad, Basra, Kufa, Khurasan, Tabaristan, Jurjan, Kirman, Sijistan, Rayy, Sind, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Egypt. He then goes on to present an array of justifications including an Arab proverb ("The people who renounce the world the most are those who live in it / *azhad al-nās fī ʿālam ahluhu*"), Jesus' biblical teachings ("The prophet is deprived of reverence only in his own land / *lā yafqid al-nabī ḥurmatahu illā fī baladihi*"), and Muḥammad's rejection by his own Quraysh tribe.[30] In fact, Ibn Ḥazm can only think of one treatise that even mentions Qayrawan (Ibn al-Rabīb's homeland), which is Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Warrāq's *al-Mughrib ʿan akhbār al-Maghrib* (The Amazing Story of North Africa's History). He points out that al-Warrāq is "Andalusī through and through, even though he was raised in Qayrawan; his forefathers were from Guadalajara, but he emigrated to, and is buried in Cordoba." In a digression on genealogy, Ibn Ḥazm states that it is the consensus of "the greatest historians, past and present…to attribute a man's ancestry (*yansibū*) to the place he emigrates to and settles in, rather than the place he came from." He cites examples of important historical figures and companions of the prophet whose genealogies are traced to the cities of Kufa, Basra, Damascus, Cairo, and Mecca, but who hailed from other places. He concludes that, "we are entitled to those who come to us from elsewhere…just as we do not have any hold over those who leave us."[31] This discussion is accorded a position in the treatise that makes it clear that for Ibn Ḥazm, al-Andalus is defined by the people who lived there, wrote there, and died there—the Andalusī intellectual class—rather than by the physical place. For Ibn Ḥazm, anyone can be an Andalusī, and al-Andalus, even under threat of destruction, will endure as long as Andalusīs continue in their intellectual pursuits, and are written about and remembered.

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the Aqṣā mosque and other architectural structures of Jerusalem. Al-Rabʿī includes descriptions of the Umayyad mosque, different buildings, tombs, the city walls, etc. in his *Faḍāʾil al-Shām wa-Dimashq*. María Jesús Rubiera provides a nice survey of treatments of architectural descriptions in Arabic literature in *La Arquitectura en la Literatura Árabe*.

[29] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 163.

[30] Ibid., 166.

[31] Ibid., 163–164.

The remainder of the treatise is a treatment of al-Andalus' scholarly and literary achievements in the fields of *aḥkām al-qurʾān, ḥadīth, fiqh,* Arabic language, poetry, history, biographical dictionaries, medicine, philosophy, mathematics, and engineering, providing a comprehensive view of a vibrant intellectual scene up to and including Ibn Ḥazm's time. He does emphasize again, though, that this milieu is strongly connected to the east, "the source of knowledge… Iraq, the place where those who engage in intellectual inquiry go."[32] Even in attempting to establish al-Andalus' intellectual importance, he cannot help but look eastward for validation. In his concluding remarks, he draws comparisons between Andalusī scholars and some luminaries from the east. Of course, the Andalusīs are able to hold their own against the eastern masters, but the very fact that Ibn Ḥazm feels the need to measure Andalusī culture against the classical eastern standard is indicative of a culture that is proud, but not quite distinct. He says:

> If we were to mention Abū al-Ajrab Jaʿūna b. al-Ṣumma al-Kilābī in matters of poetry, we could not claim any competition for him save Jarīr and al-Farazdaq… and if we named Baqī b. Mukhallad, there would be no competition except for Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī or Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Nishābūrī or Sulaymān ibn al-Ashʿath al-Sijistānī or Aḥmad b. Shuʿayb al-Nisāʾī.…[33]

Ibn Ḥazm does not define al-Andalus in terms of al-Maghrib. In fact, he overlooks it completely, fixing his gaze on the Arab east. He addresses a fellow scholar, Ibn al-Rabīb from Qayrawan, a city that was, at the time, the closest major Arab intellectual center to al-Andalus (Fez would not become an important military, political, and intellectual center, from an Andalusī perspective anyway, until later in the Almoravid period). During the time that Ibn Ḥazm was writing, the western Maghrib (present-day Morocco and Algeria) was not yet on the map, at least not from a political or intellectual standpoint (as defined by Ibn Ḥazm). Although the Berbers are undisputedly present in al-Andalus by the eleventh century, it will take the rise of the Berber Almoravids, Almohads, and Marinids to assert al-Maghrib's place in the Andalusī imagination in a tangible way. With al-Andalus clearly under threat on a number of fronts, most visibly and recently manifested in the destruction of Cordoba and the fall of the caliphate, Ibn Ḥazm stakes

[32] Ibid., 177.
[33] Ibid.

a proud, but defensive position by composing this treatise in the vein of earlier *faḍāʾil* literature that connects al-Andalus to the east and to the lofty tradition of *ḥadīth* scholarship, specifically *ṭabaqāt* literature. Al-Maghrib and its inhabitants are overlooked in favor of the eastern roots of al-Andalus' Arabic intellectual and literary culture. A century or so later, a Jewish courtier-rabbi will express similar sentiments.

Moses Ibn Ezra on the Superiority of the Andalusī Jewish Community

In addition to being a first-rate poet, Moses Ibn Ezra is also notable for having authored the only work of its kind on Jewish literary history, culture, and theory in Judeo-Arabic that has survived, *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*. The *Kitāb* is loosely organized around eight questions concerning poetry and Andalusī Jewish culture which allow the author to speak at length on a number of poetic issues specific to the Jewish experience in al-Andalus. As Ross Brann has noted, a number of modern studies on the *Kitāb* have focused on the book's value as a prescriptive manual for composing Hebrew poetry, as well as Ibn Ezra's own strong advocacy of Arab culture (*al-ʿarabiyya*).[34] Unlike many of these interpretations, Raymond Scheindlin approaches the *Kitāb* not as a prescriptive work on writing poetry, but rather as "an ambivalent defense of Golden Age Hebrew poetry"[35] and an argument in favor of its legitimacy. Brann agrees, and by looking at Ibn Ezra's *Kitāb* in the context of his other poetic theoretical work *Maqālat al-ḥadīqa fī maʿnā al-majāz wa-l-ḥaqīqa* and his Hebrew poetry, Brann argues that Ibn Ezra wrote the *Kitāb* for courtier-rabbis such as himself in order to justify their participation in a poetry that had little philosophical or moral worth.[36] Rina Drory takes this idea a step further, and although she agrees that Ibn Ezra wrote the *Kitāb* to defend the whole endeavor

[34] Brann (*The Comupunctious Poet*, 69–71) surveys several critical studies on *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara* including Yellin, *Torat ha-shirah ha-Sefardit*; Pagis, *Shirat ha-ḥol*; Neḥemiah Allony, "*ʿIyyunim we-diyyunim be-sefer ha-ʿiyyunim we-diyyunim (Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara) le-R. Moshe Ibn ʿEzra*," in *Studia Orientalia Memoriae D. H. Baneth Dedicata* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1979), 52–53; Joseph Dana, *ha-Poʾetikah shel ha-shirah ha-ʿivrit bi-Sefarad bi-yemei ha-benayim ʿal pi R. Moshe Ibn ʿEzra u-mekoroteha* (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1982).

[35] Raymond P. Scheindlin, "Rabbi Moshe Ibn Ezra on the Legitimacy of Poetry," in *Medievalia et Humanistica* 7 (1976), 101–115.

[36] Brann, *The Compunctious Poet*, 82.

of composing Hebrew poetry, she disagrees that his intended audience was the Andalusī courtier-rabbi, who would have benefited little from such a defense. Rather, she asserts that the *Kitāb* was written for the Jewish community living in Christian Spain, where Ibn Ezra spent the last years of his life. By considering the isolation that Ibn Ezra expressed in a number of poems, as well as in the introduction to *Maqālat al-ḥadīqa*, Drory concludes that Ibn Ezra lived in an atmosphere that demanded an assertion of his Jewish and Arab identity. Thus, it was his status as outsider in the Christian north that produced a strongly proud Judeo-Arabic text meant to convince the Jews who lived there what he and his Andalusī peers already knew, that composing Hebrew poetry in the Arabic style was a valid activity, and that Andalusī Jews were its best practitioners.[37] Drory's argument is an interesting one, especially the aspect of it that focuses on Ibn Ezra's status as an intellectual in exile which compelled him to aggressively assert his Andalusī identity. However, would the Jewish community of northern Spain that Ibn Ezra derisively referred to as unintelligible and uncouth have been receptive to his arguments? Would they even have understood such arguments written in educated Arabic, and that assumed knowledge of Arabic poetic discourse? It is doubtful that he would have expected them to. After all, he makes it clear in the introduction to the *Kitāb* that in Christian Spain he is alone, without peers, and in effect, dead. He states:

> At the end of my life, fate has cast me into long exile (*al-ightirāb al-ṭawīl*) and prolonged disappointment in far off horizons and distant frontiers. I am a prisoner in jail; actually, I am buried in a tomb.[38]

Although the distance and separation from Andalusī culture may have prompted Ibn Ezra to write it, the *Kitāb* is likely addressed to the peers he had left behind, with the faint hope that they could still hear his cry from the wilderness. At the same time, he may even have been writing to himself, ambivalently defending the morally questionable activity of writing Arabic-style poetry in Hebrew, as both Brann and Scheindlin argue.

The fifth chapter of the *Kitāb* specifically addresses the issue of "The Translucence of al-Andalus' Jewish Community in Matters of Poetry,

[37] Rina Drory, "Literary Contacts and Where to Find Them: On Arabic Literary Models in Medieval Jewish Literature," *Poetics Today* 14:2 (Summer, 1993), 277–302.
[38] Moses Ibn Ezra, *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*, 4.

Rhetoric, and Prose." This chapter, which includes a detailed discussion of Jewish Andalusī linguistic and poetic luminaries up to and including Ibn Ezra's own time, resembles Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* in many respects.[39] As discussed above, Ibn Ḥazm's treatise was a variation on *ṭabaqāt* works (biographical dictionaries), an important part of the *ḥadīth* scholarly apparatus that provided detailed information on *ḥadīth* transmitters and their localities. Ibn Ḥazm used the *faḍl al-Andalus* genre to assert the importance of Andalusī scholarly activities, while at the same time linking that intellectual milieu to the Arab east. Ibn Ezra does the same thing, but in a Jewish context.

Ibn Ezra's proof of the Andalusī Jewish community's superiority over other Jewish communities in literary matters rests on three related foundations: the Arabs' innate skill in composing poetry,[40] the Jewish adoption of this skill in al-Andalus, and the Andalusī Jewish community's noble origins. He opens his argument by directly linking the Jewish community of al-Andalus to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin of Jerusalem. He provides biblical quotations to make his point that the Jews of al-Andalus are a part of the biblical landscape, just as Ibn Ḥazm opened with a *ḥadīth* to link Arab al-Andalus to the Islamic religious tradition. Ibn Ezra goes on to state that "without a doubt, the people of Jerusalem, from whom our community is descended, were the most knowledgeable in terms of linguistic purity and transmitting the science of religious law (*aʿlam bi-faṣīḥ al-lugha wa-naql ʿilm al-sharīʿa*)."[41] He goes on to explain that Andalusī Jews quickly became Arabized and mastered the Arabic language and literary heritage, until "Allah revealed to them the secret of the Hebrew language and its syntax (*ḥattā kashafa Allāh ilayim sirr al-lugha al-ʿibrāniyya wa-naḥwihā*)."[42]

Ibn Ezra's discussion is organized according to *ṭabaqāt*, or generations, and according to discipline. The first generation includes Abū Zakarīyā Yaḥyā b. Daʾūd al-Fāssī (d. 1000) who was among the first grammarians to apply Arabic grammatical principles to the scientific study of Hebrew grammar, and the linguists and poets Dunash Ben Labrat (mid-tenth century) and Menachem Ben Saruk (last third of the

[39] Ibn Ezra does mention that he had composed a treatise entitled *Maqāla fī faḍāʾil ahl al-ādāb wa-l-aḥsāb* (On the Praiseworthy Traits of Men of Letters and Other Noble People), but it has been lost. See *Kitāb al-muḥāḍara wa-l-mudhākara*, 80; Pagis, *Shirat ha-Ḥol*, 16, note 8.

[40] Ibn Ezra discusses this in detail in the third chapter of the *Kitāb*, 28–44.

[41] Ibid., 54.

[42] Ibid., 56.

tenth century) who engaged in a famous debate concerning the suitability of Arabic poetics to Hebrew poetry. He then proceeds through the generations, and provides an impressive list of Jewish Andalusī intellectuals in a wide variety of disciplines, including more extensive discussions of a number of individuals whom he felt deserved particular attention. He speaks of Samuel ha-Nagid (d. 1056) who "was the source of natural talent in matters of poetry; he was harmonious of speech, well-read, eloquent, good at producing new themes, creative, skillful in his inventiveness, pure of form, and experienced in deflowering virginal themes."[43] Ibn Ezra also describes Samuel ha-Nagid's son Joseph whose "knowledge of Arabic language and poetry was second only to his knowledge of Hebrew."[44] He devotes considerable space to Solomon Ibn Gabirol (d. ca. 1053) who "tamed his character, refined his nature, renounced worldly pleasures, and set his soul toward higher goals after having cleansed it of the impurities of base appetites. [His soul] accepted what he brought to it in terms of the graces of philosophical sciences and mathematical learning."[45] According to Ibn Ezra, Ibn Gabirol was also the one who "opened the door of *badīʿ* to the Jewish poets."[46]

Ibn Ezra then goes on to discuss the litterateurs' literary attributes and strong moral characters, and the sheer length of the list of poets speaks to the strength of the Jewish Andalusī community's artistic and intellectual output. It is this community of Arabized Jewish scholars that Ibn Ezra longs for, and that he wishes to somehow become a part of once again. Toward the end of the chapter, he counterbalances his praise with an explanation of his omission of the "hordes" (*awshāb*) and "riffraff" (*ziʿnifa*) who claim they are knowledgeable in matters of poetry, but, of course, are not. Although he does not name names, this section essentially defines what bad poetry is, and the definition makes clear that literary skill is based on moral criteria and true rhetorical prowess, and is more than merely "composing according to poetic meters and following the correct rhymes and assonances."[47] These skills cannot simply be learned, but rather, they depend on a whole moral and literary universe that Ibn Ezra is no longer a part of.

[43] Ibid., 60.
[44] Ibid., 66.
[45] Ibid., 68.
[46] Ibid., 70.
[47] Ibid., 82.

As an Andalusī out of his environment in Christian Spain, Ibn Ezra writes from a place physically far from home, and toward the end of the Hebrew golden age in al-Andalus. He asserts his 'Arabness' in the outward format and structure of the chapter, not to mention overt praise for the Arabs in matters of poetry and linguistic scholarship, and his uniquely Jewish Andalusī identity and pride amidst northern Jews who, according to Ibn Ezra, had little interest or connection to that world. He writes doubly removed from Arab al-Andalus; he is a Jew who had lived comfortably yet uneasily in a majority Arab-Muslim environment,[48] and when he is no longer in al-Andalus, Judeo-Arabic culture is something to be embraced, extolled, and missed.

Al-Shaqundī and his Defense of al-Andalus[49]

Al-Shaqundī's brief biography as treated by al-Maqqarī is quoted from Ibn Saʿīd's *Ikhtiṣār al-qidḥ*. Ibn Saʿīd informs us that al-Shaqundī is from the village of Shaqunda, on the southern bank of the Guadilquiver River near Cordoba, and that he died in Seville in 1231/2. Aside from the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* and a few fragments of poetry included by Ibn Saʿīd in his brief biographical account of al-Shaqundī, al-Maqqarī mentions a poetry anthology entitled *Kitāb ṭuraf al-ẓurafāʾ* (Masterpieces of the Elegant), but it has not been preserved.

Ibn Saʿīd's father and al-Shaqundī were contemporaries and attended a number of scholarly-literary salons (*mujālasāt al-uns*) together. It was at one of these gatherings in Ceuta, on the North African coast, that al-Shaqundī and Abū Yaḥyā b. al-Muʿallim of Tangiers get into a dispute concerning the superiority of their respective homelands. Ceuta's Almohad governor, Abū Yaḥyā b. Abī Zakarīyā, puts an end to the bickering, complaining that "the discussion here is dragging on, and we are losing the thread of it," and he urges each man to compose "a treatise on preference for his homeland (*risāla fī tafḍīl barrihi*)."[50] So, in the presence of two North Africans on their side of the straits,

[48] As Brann discusses in *The Compunctious Poet*.

[49] Emilio García Gómez includes a discussion and Spanish translation of al-Shaqundī's treatise, as well as that of Ibn al-Khaṭīb which is treated below, in his book entitled *Andalucía contra Berbería: Reedición de Traducciones de Ben Ḥayyān, Shaqundī y Ben al-Jaṭīb*. (Barcelona: Publicaciones del Departamento de Lengua y Literatura Árabes, 1976).

[50] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 186.

al-Shaqundī proceeds to describe the ways in which al-Andalus is superior to al-Maghrib, or the land 'over there' (*barr al-ʿudwa*). The argument, however, is not one of geography or race, but rather, of the superiority of Andalusī Arab culture. He defines al-Andalus as the sum of its Arabic literary achievements that, unfortunately for al-Shaqundī, are achievements that occurred in the past. As a result, a comparison is forced between the political, cultural, and literary golden age of the Umayyad and Taifa periods, and the lackluster present in which al-Shaqundī and al-Andalus lived under the Berber Almohads. Thus, al-Shaqundī equates al-Andalus with high Arabic culture, and al-Maghrib with lower Berber culture.

Structurally, the *risāla* can be divided into three sections dealing with 1) kingship, 2) the *ʿulamāʾ* and poets, and 3) cities. Al-Shaqundī ties the three sections together by focusing on the Taifa poet-king al-Muʿtamid ibn ʿAbbād (d. 1095), and the city of Seville, the culturally vibrant city that he once ruled, and which was controlled during al-Shaqundī's lifetime by the Almohads until the effective end of their rule over al-Andalus following their final withdrawal to Marrakesh in 1228.

It is not known exactly when al-Shaqundī composed this treatise. However, beginning in 1209, some twenty-two years before his death, Christian raids into al-Andalus (Jaen, Baeza, Valencia, and the areas surrounding Cordoba) had begun anew after a period of relative calm, and any Andalusī confidence that the Almohads had things under control was being severely tested. As the Christians continued to make incursions into Muslim territory and the Almohad ability to counter these attacks was weakening, Andalusīs grew increasingly uncomfortable, as is evidenced in the following account that comes specifically in the context of Portuguese raids around Seville in 1225. Although in response to specific events, the quote reveals general feelings of concern and vulnerability:

> The Portuguese had come to raid this region and had pillaged and taken what they found. Al-ʿĀdil, the ruler of the Maghreb, was in Seville at the time with his *wazīr*, Abū Zayd b. Yujjān, and the high officials and Almohad *shaykhs*. They had neither the money nor the means to resist the enemy: the power of the empire was then in decline and the luster of the dynasty tarnished. If a disaster afflicted one of its subjects, if his flocks were raided, he could not hope for any help or get any assistance.[51]

[51] Quoted in H. Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, 262–263. For a full overview of the rise and fall of the Almohad dynasty, see Kennedy 196–272. For original quote see al-Ḥimyarī, *Kitāb al-rawḍ al-miʿṭār*, 395.

Al-Shaqundī writes in this context of a weakened central government, and declining Andalusī fortunes. His *risāla* is a clear look back to better times during which Arabic poetry and culture held sway in courts across a stronger al-Andalus, most brilliantly and symbolically in Seville, which was the Andalusī capital of the quickly failing Almohad Caliphate.

Acknowledging that "the throne of the entire Islamic west is currently… in the Caliphate of the Banū ʿAbd al-Muʾmin [the Almohads]," he points out that, in the past "we also had kings."[52] He underlines al-Andalus' eastern Arab lineage, as did those mentioned above (Ibn Ghālib, Ibn Bassām, Ibn Ḥazm, and Ibn Ezra), emphasizing that al-Andalus was once ruled by descendents of the Quraysh tribe, referring to the Umayyads. It was, according to al-Shaqundī, during the period of Umayyad rule, which lasted until the caliphate's collapse in 1031, that poetry and learning flourished in al-Andalus. He adds that literary production continued to do well as a result of the Umayyads' fall and the subsequent fracturing of al-Andalus into independent Taifa states that "spent great deals of money on the sciences, and competed in rewarding both poetry and prose."[53]

The transition from the topic of kingship to that of poetry and other scholarly pursuits hinges on an anecdote about the Berber Yūsuf b. Tashfīn that points to his ignorance of Arabic poetry. According to the story, when Ibn Tashfīn took control of the Iberian Peninsula in 1091, there was a poetry contest held in which poets composed panegyrics for the new Almoravid ruler over al-Andalus. Not understanding the poetic imagery contained in a poem written in his honor, Ibn Tashfīn had to rely on one of the kings who had asked for his help against the Christians—al-Muʿtamid b. ʿAbbād—for an explanation (al-Muʿtamid was imprisoned soon after in Aghmat, Morocco, where he died). The anecdote has an apocryphal ring to it, but nonetheless demonstrates the radical cultural break that had occurred in the transition from the Taifa period when Arabic poetry was encouraged and appreciated by enlightened patrons such as al-Muʿtamid, to that of the Almoravids when potential patrons could barely understand, let alone appreciate, Arabic poetry. It does seem bold of al-Shaqundī to poke fun at a Berber's ignorance in the presence of the Almohad governor of Ceuta, Ibn Abī Zakarīyā. In fact, al-Shaqundī even reserves a measure of scorn

[52] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 188.
[53] Ibid., 189.

for the Almohads themselves, concluding the section by tersely telling his interlocutors to "shut up, for were it not for [the Almoravids], you would not be enjoying your despotic rule over the people of al-Andalus (*fa-uskutū fa-law lā hādhihi l-dawla la-mā kāna la-kum ʿalā-l-nās ṣawla*)." A line of poetry is all that is needed to make things right though, or perhaps al-Shaqundī is mocking Ibn Abī Zakarīyā with this double-edged praise. Fire is powerful and brilliant, but is it not also destructive? Is al-Shaqundī counting on his host to miss this subtlety, just as Ibn Tashfīn missed the point of a panegyric composed in his honor in the previous anecdote?

> Truly the rose is plucked from a thorny stem,
> And fire rises out of ash.[54]

Al-Shaqundī accords short treatment to the *ʿulamāʾ* of al-Andalus, but the rhetorical style with which he does treat the subject is forceful and concise. Presenting what is essentially a list of jurists, linguists, grammarians, philosophers, astrologers, physicians, historians, and literary critics, along with the titles of their principle works, al-Shaqundī makes use of repetition for enhanced effect. The passage begins with the command "tell me (*fa-akhbirnī*)," and is punctuated by the question "do you have the likes of so-and-so? (*hal la-kum mithla.*…)," repeated over twenty times within the span of a single paragraph.[55] Compared to the indirect (and gentler) "As for…there is (*ammā*…*fa-*)" that Ibn Ḥazm used in his *risāla* to punctuate each learned field, al-Shaqundī addresses Ibn al-Muʿallim directly and in a much more adversarial way. This is clearly a heated monologue, unlike Ibn Ḥazm's friendlier response. The stakes in the thirteenth century are that much higher.

In the section on poetry, al-Shaqundī similarly repeats the question "do you have the likes of so-and-so?" in order to emphasize the superiority of Andalusī poetry. The poets he mentions, such as al-Muʿtamid, Ibn Zaydūn, Ibn Khafāja, and al-Ruṣāfī, to name but four, "are limited to those whose fame is as clear as morning."[56] At the end of this tribute to the Andalusī poets, in what initially appears to be a rare moment of graciousness, al-Shaqundī allows Ibn al-Muʿallim the chance to defend himself by giving him the opportunity to put forth *his* best poets. However, before he has a chance to say anything at all,

[54] Ibid., 192.
[55] Ibid., 192–193.
[56] Ibid., 222.

al-Shaqundī snatches back the narrative, arguing that "of your poets, I do not know anyone more well-known or who has composed more poetry than Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Jarrāwī." And besides, al-Shaqundī continues, "it would have been more in your interest to renounce his praise, and forget about him entirely." The last word is ultimately given to an unnamed Andalusī who, after hearing a line of al-Jarrāwī's poetry, says sarcastically: "Praise Him who made [al-Jarrāwī's] spirit, his lineage, and his poetry harmonize with one another in dullness."[57] Thus ends the 'exchange' on the topic of poetry.

The final section of al-Shaqundī's *risāla* treats a number of Andalusī cities in response to Ibn al-Muʿallim's "insistence on mentioning cities, and explaining that which is beautiful about them, and that which Allāh, exalted is He, has bestowed upon them and denied others."[58] Al-Shaqundī discusses the cities of Seville, Cordoba, Jaen, Granada, Malaga, Almeria, Valencia, and the island of Majorca, not mentioning "any cities other than those that were once independent kingdoms, subsequently taken over by the Almohads."[59] To include locations outside of the Almohad realm would be an affront, a way of drawing attention to the current ruler's geographical limits. However, in his treatment of each city, the Almohads go unmentioned. He describes places as they were during the golden age that al-Shaqundī implicitly mourns throughout the treatise, rather than what they have become in his own time.

Al-Shaqundī begins with Seville, and using lyrical language that emphasizes Seville's natural and manmade beauty, he presents a description of the city as "a cosmopolitan urban center where anything is possible, to the point where they say that were one to seek bird's milk in Seville, it would be found."[60] It is the prototypical garden, a perfect setting for drinking wine and enjoying all the trappings of the Andalusī wine party. Seville's river is compared favorably to the Tigris and the Nile: "Its heights are forested, but without lions, and its river is the Nile, but without crocodiles."[61] The city certainly does not lack sources of delight, containing "all that is necessary for enjoying oneself, and for the drinking of wine." He goes into some detail concerning the

[57] Ibid., 210.
[58] Ibid., 212.
[59] Ibid., 222.
[60] Ibid., 212.
[61] Ibid., 213.

diversity of musical instruments to be found in Seville, and reminiscent of the statements made by Ibn Ghālib and Ibn Saʿīd mentioned above, al-Shaqundī points out that, "in the land across the water [al-Maghrib], there exists nothing like these [instruments] except for what has been taken from al-Andalus." By focusing on the earthly delights of Seville, al-Shaqundī presents the Andalusī capital of the Almohads as a place of sensory pleasure, an affront to the austere religious reformers, and as "an expression of the merits of al-Andalus as a whole (*al-ʿibāra ʿan faḍāʾil jamīʿi l-Andalus*)."[62] For al-Shaqundī, Seville's physical beauty, cornucopia of commercial and bacchanal pleasures, and intellectual and artistic atmosphere comprised a paradise lost—a symbol of al-Andalus.

Cordoba is praised in more sober, but no less idealistic terms. Its glory also lies in the past, and thus al-Shaqundī can only recall those glories based on memory or second-hand accounts. Cordoba was the former Umayyad capital, and al-Shaqundī does not let the opportunity pass to mention that the Umayyads, during the reign of al-Manṣūr, ruled over both al-Andalus *and* al-Maghrib (*al-barrayn*). He points out that the city was known for its "citizenry's adherence to religious law" and its "mastery over learning [in general]." Most importantly, concerning the importance of the relationship between power and scholarly learning, "its kings bowed down to its scholars…and [these kings] did not put forth a vizier or advisor who was not learned."[63]

His descriptions of Cordoba's architectural gems—the palace complexes of al-Zāhira and al-Zahrāʾ, the great mosque, and the *qanṭara* (great stone bridge)—are based on the testimony of others. His language is indirect and passive as he tells of what "is related (*yuḥkā*)" or what "I have heard (*wa-qad samiʿtu*)." In this way, al-Shaqundī emphasizes that, by the thirteenth century, the city has been transformed into a set of historical sites—relics of a bygone age. In this period directly preceding what will be the final fall of these Muslim-ruled cities to Christian kingdoms in al-Shaqundī's time (except for Granada which will hold out until 1492), in his description of Cordoba's Grand Mosque, rather than focus on the structure and artistic splendor of one of the city's most famous buildings, he chooses to focus on the humiliating role the Christians played in its construction and upkeep. He has heard that

[62] Ibid., 214.
[63] Ibid., 214.

"the Great Mosque's chandeliers come from Christian bells and that the additions undertaken by Ibn Abū ʿĀmir [al-Manṣūr] were done so with materials carried by the Christians themselves from destroyed churches."[64] With this focus on the past, and al-Shaqundī's attempt to re-capture a time when power relations between the Christians and Muslims were reversed, the author underscores his unease in the present. He remembers Cordoba not by its positive attributes (of which there were many), but rather, by the negative images of Christian subjugation that the city now brings to mind.

Granada, the "Damascus of al-Andalus," stands out among the descriptions of cities as al-Shaqundī turns his attentions toward the city's importance as a center of learning and poetry, specifically poetry written by women. After brief descriptions of its former military strength, "its casbah with its imposing walls and high structures," and its markets, river, homes, baths, and gardens, he proceeds to focus on three of Granada's famous women poets—Nazhūn al-Qalāʿiyya, Zaynab bint Ziyād, and Ḥafṣa bint al-Ḥājj. Curiously, despite the fact that he holds these poetesses in high regard, only Zaynab was mentioned in the previous section dealing with poets. While it is true that al-Shaqundī admits at the end of his epistle that he has chosen only to mention poets from the Andalusī canon, there is no fixed rule as to how women are included and classified in this canon, and so one wonders how he decided where to place these particular women poets. Regardless, the result is that the male poets (with the exception of Zaynab bint Ziyād) of the previous section are allowed to speak for themselves through their poetry as part of the living poetic tradition, whereas Nazhūn and Ḥafsa are relegated to the realm of bygone relics and only spoken about. They are treated as voices from a past that is defined by and contained in al-Shaqundī's larger narrative.[65]

To conclude, al-Shaqundī provides a personal anecdote meant to emphasize the uniqueness and superiority of al-Andalus over all other

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[64] Ibid., 216.

[65] Marlé Hammond examines the interaction between the poetry of Nazhūn and the male-produced texts that create a literary context, or frame, for her work. See "He said 'She said': Narrations of Women's Verse in Classical Arabic Literature. A Case Study: Nazhūn's *Hijāʾ* of Abū Bakr al-Makhzūmī," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 6:1 (January, 2003), 3–18. For a broader treatment of the place of female poets in the Arabic literary canon, see her *The poetics of s/exclusion: Women, gender and the classical Arabic canon* (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2003).

lands, albeit with an eastward gaze. Up until this final passage, his proof of the superiority of al-Andalus had been based on the testimony of others. Now, the first person 'I' emerges, bringing us back to al-Shaqundī's present.

> One day, I was in the presence of [the *faqīh* Abū Bakr b. Zuhr], when a foreigner, a scholar from Khurasān, came in. Ibn Zuhr honored him and I asked: "What do you think about the scholars, writers, and poets of al-Andalus?" to which he replied, "I say that God is great (*kabbartu*)!" I did not understand what he meant by this, and reacted coldly. Abū Bakr b. Zuhr understood [my confusion] from my cold gaze and asked me: "Have you not read the poetry of al-Mutanabbī?" I replied: "Of course. I have memorized all of it," to which he said: "Then you have no one but yourself to blame for your confusion." At that point, he reminded me of what al-Mutanabbī said:
>
> > I said that God is great (*kabbartu*) concerning their abodes
> > when the sun appeared from them, for there is nothing like them in the east.
>
> I then apologized to the man from Khurasān and said to him: By God, you are truly great in my eyes, whereas I find myself somewhat diminished (*qad wa-Allāhi kaburta fī ʿaynayya bi-qadri mā ṣaghurat nafsī ʿindī*)… Thank God for allowing these suns to rise in the west.[66]

Situated in the North African coastal city of Ceuta, in the far western reaches of the Islamic world, al-Shaqundī argues that the achievements of his homeland trump those of his hosts. By responding to these North Africans with invective, sarcasm, and defensive posturing, al-Shaqundī seeks to remove the Almohads from al-Andalus once and for all, and return to better times. In the end, in his desire to reverse these losses and preserve that past, al-Shaqundī defers to an unnamed great scholar from the east to give the epistle a stamp of approval from al-Mutanabbī. The literary culture of al-Andalus becomes, like al-Mutanabbī, a symbol of Arab literary greatness. As long as the Arabic literary heritage of al-Andalus is preserved and perpetuated, the place that contained that culture also lives on. While the Umayyads and the Taifa kings are gone, as are the poets who thrived under them, what is important in the Almohad present and in the looming future of al-Andalus' final days is the preservation of the literary golden age. In his *risāla* al-Shaqundī seeks to assert the cultural superiority of al-Andalus

[66] al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* Volume 3, 222.

over that of al-Maghrib, the birthplace and heartland of the Almohad movement that ruled over the remains of al-Andalus and served as a constant reminder that the golden age was over, and was in danger of fading into oblivion.

Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb and the Setting of the Andalusī Sun

Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 1375) is rightly remembered as one of the shining stars of Andalusī literary culture. Writing in a number of genres and on a wide variety of subjects including poetry, history, Sufism, religious topics, Arabic language and grammar, philosophy, geography, and medicine, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was truly an exemplary figure in his own time.[67] Probably the most effusive and lengthy homage to Ibn al-Khaṭīb comes in the form of the magisterial history of al-Andalus, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb min ghuṣn al-Andalus al-raṭīb wa-dhikr wazīrihā Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb* (The Perfumed Breeze from the Tender Branch of al-Andalus, with Mention of its Vizier, Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb), written by al-Maqqarī (d. 1632) while he was living in Damascus. Written in honor of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, almost the first two thirds of this massive work are devoted to a political and literary history of al-Andalus from the Muslim conquest in 711 to the fall of Granada in 1492. For al-Maqqarī, Ibn al-Khaṭīb is a fitting symbol for the scholarly and literary eminence of al-Andalus, and for its part, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* provides a permanent memorial both to the man and the place, whose last Muslim inhabitants were being expelled from Castilian Spain during al-Maqqarī's lifetime in 1609.[68] Thus, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and al-Andalus converge to become symbolic of one another, emblematic of a time and place that continues to look to the past in order to come to terms with a disappearing Andalusī present.

In his *risāla*, Ibn Ḥazm focuses exclusively on al-Andalus as a product of those who lived there, linking Andalusī culture to the Arab east and

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[67] For a biography and bibliography, see Alexander Knysh, "Ibn al-Khaṭīb," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*. See also Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh ʿInān, *Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb, ḥayātuhu wa-turāthuhu al-fikrī* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Istiqlāl, 1968).

[68] For a discussion of what may have inspired al-Maqqarī to undertake this work see Ralf Elger, "Adab and Historical Memory: The Andalusian Poet/Politician Ibn al-Khaṭīb as presented in Aḥmad al-Maqqarī (986/1577–1041/1632) *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*," *Die Welt des Islams* 42:3 (2002), 289–306.

making no reference to al-Andalus' place in relation to al-Maghrib, or the Andalusīs in relation to Berbers. Moses Ibn Ezra traces a parallel lineage for Andalusī Jews by ascribing their superiority to their eastern roots and their skill in adopting Arabic learning. Al-Shaqundī, writing under a weakening Almohad government and faced with the imminent disappearance of al-Andalus, produces an example of *faḍāʾil* literature that makes the cultural and political tensions between al-Maghrib and al-Andalus much clearer, couching his discussion in a more aggressive and adversarial tone. He looks to the past and divides his attention between mention of the luminaries of al-Andalus who define its cultural heritage, and physical geographical sites that equally comprise the place.

In his *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sets out to present a clear distinction between the Andalus that he remembers, and al-Maghrib where he resides while composing this work. The geographical division of the Muslim west along a North/South axis implied in this treatise reflects an awareness of the distinctiveness of each side of the straits, or of the past as represented by al-Andalus, and the present represented by al-Maghrib, but as I show, this divide is not so clearly defined by Ibn al-Khaṭīb. When Almohad Seville fell to Christians in 1248, all that remained of Muslim-ruled territory in the Iberian Peninsula was Granada and the lands directly surrounding it. Any real political, administrative, or cultural links that had existed between al-Andalus and al-Maghrib from the eighth to the fourteenth centuries were being severely tested as Naṣrid Granada became more isolated from the rest of the Muslim world. At the same time however, as a court functionary and poet, Ibn al-Khaṭīb did manage to secure the support of the Marinids (based in Fez) against the Christian *reconquista*. In fact, both the separation and bridging of al-Andalus and al-Maghrib are on display in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writing, and his apparent ambivalence to the idea of a truly distinct Andalus is notable. I focus on this ambivalence in the following discussion of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* which expresses the personal and political moment in which he lives, and reflects an attempt to fix the geographical borders of an Andalus that is all but disappeared. At the same time, he concedes that Maghribī and Andalusī cultures were very much intertwined. I also refer to other works in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb compares al-Andalus and al-Maghrib in varying ways, specifically *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār fī dhikr al-maʿāhid wa-l-diyār*.

Al-Andalus versus al-Maghrib

Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā differs slightly in form from the previously discussed works by Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Ezra, and al-Shaqundī. Although those works do contain an element of implied competition in their vaunting of the praiseworthy traits of al-Andalus, Ibn al-Khaṭīb chooses the debate form proper (*mufākhara*) to compare the cities of Malaga and Salé.[69] This formal choice affects the contents of the epistle, and the descriptions and comparisons made by the author—while surely inspired by observation, experience, and personal convictions—are also defined by the literary genre in which they are couched (or at least one would expect them to be). Ibn al-Khaṭīb did compose a number of descriptive geographies based on his travels in al-Andalus and al-Maghrib,[70] but I have chosen to focus on *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* because of the curious intersection between form and content, and the somewhat ambivalent manner in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb goes about praising al-Andalus at the expense of al-Maghrib.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb wrote *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* during his sojourn in North Africa. He ended up there after following his patron, the Naṣrid emir Muḥammad V al-Ghanī bi-llāh (r. 1354–1359, 1362–91), into political exile in 1359. Muḥammad V's entourage settled in the Marinid capital of Fez, but Ibn al-Khaṭīb decided to leave Fez in order to see more of the country. He finally settled in Salé on the Atlantic coast, where he stayed for almost two years, receiving a monthly stipend of five hundred silver dinars from the Marinid sultan Abū Sālim (r. 1359–1361).

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[69] John Mattock discusses the debate form in detail in "The Arabic Tradition: Origin and Developments," in *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Mediaeval Near East*, 153–163. See also Geert Jan Van Gelder, "The Conceit of Pen and Sword"; Ibrahim Geries, *Un genre littéraire arabe: al-maḥāsin wa-l-masāwī* (Paris: G. P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1977) and *A Literary and Gastronomical Conceit: The Boasting Debate Between Rice and Pomegranate Seeds* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002).

[70] Notably *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār* (The Measure of Superiority) which I discuss more below. Also *Khaṭrat al-ṭayf fī riḥlat al-shitāʾ wa-l-ṣayf* (The Specter's Quiver: traveling in the winter and summer) which meticulously describes the Naṣrid sultan's journey throughout his dominion; *Nufāḍāt al-jirāb fī ʿulālat al-ightirāb* (Shaking the Dust off the Rucksack: finding comfort for the stranger) which is a standard *riḥla* travelogue that provides extensive information on the political and social life of the western Marinid domains. All of the epistles by Ibn al-Khaṭīb that I refer to here are from *Khaṭrat al-ṭayf: raḥalāt fī-l-Maghrib wa-l-Andalus 1362–1347*, ed. Aḥmad Mukhtār al-ʿAbbādī (Beirut: *al-Muʾassasa al-ʿarabiyya li-l-dirāsāt wa-l-nashr*, 2003).

Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā is couched in a conventional debate style, in which the narrator, who surely knows what he is talking about "due to the fact that [he] lived in both places and saw what was there," agrees to a request from an unnamed petitioner to "compare the two cities of Malaga and Salé to determine which is preferable."[71] The treatise does not much resemble more colorful examples in the Arabic geographical tradition of *ʿajab* or *gharīb* writings (accounts of strange or unfamiliar people, places, and practices), for the two cities are well known to the author. In his writing, and in his life, he remains within a world familiar to him. Ibn al-Khaṭīb is no different from most travel writers in this respect. In the traditional Arabic travelogue, the traveler usually remains within the boundaries of the Islamic world (*dār al-islām*), the most common reasons for travel being pilgrimage to Mecca or religious shrines, or seeking out famous scholars and/or educational institutions.[72] Like the Muslim pilgrim, or even the picaresque hero of the *maqāma* who never seems to be out of place despite his constant movement into unknown lands, Ibn al-Khaṭīb remains on stable ground. He describes these two cities in a detached and methodical manner that reflects the ease and comfort with which he moves in this world.

As al-Shaqundī did in his *risāla*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states his preference from the start, with the result that the treatise is less a debate from both sides of an argument than a point-by-point proof of Malaga's superiority. He begins:

> Malaga is too much more important, too much more famous, too much more illustrious, too much more well placed, its inhabitants too much more generous, and it is too much more widely sought after to trade boasts and arguments, or to place in opposition to or compete [with Salé]…However, I will fulfill your request.[73]

He specifies the criteria for comparison—defense (*al-manʿa*), artisanal skill (*al-ṣanʿa*), location (*al-buqʿa*), fame (*al-shunaʿa*),[74] dwellings

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[71] Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Khaṭrat al-ṭayf*, 57.

[72] See C. E. Bosworth, "Travel Literature," in the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* volume 2. See also Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori eds., *Muslim Travelers: Pilgrimage, Migration and the Religious Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

[73] Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Khaṭrat al-ṭayf*, 57.

[74] Although *shunʿa* is commonly known to mean 'hideousness' or 'repulsiveness', with a *fatḥa* over the *nūn*, it means 'fame'. See Reinhart Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, Volume 1, 3rd Edition (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), 791.

(*al-masākin*), culture (*al-ḥaḍāra*), architecture (*al-ʿimāra*), historical sites (*al-athāra*), and grace and splendor (*al-naḍāra*)—and proceeds to compare the two cities according to each.

Of course, Malaga is the better in each of the nine categories, but when looking at *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* in the context of his other geographical writings, and according to the boasting match genre, Ibn al-Khaṭīb hints that his preference for Malaga over Salé, and al-Andalus over al-Maghrib, is not so clear. Praise for Malaga is consistently longer than Salé's blame, yet he is inconsistent with the length he accords Salé, sometimes going into great detail in denigrating the city, and other times providing little more than a quick brush-off. For example, in the argument on defense, Ibn al-Khaṭīb extensively criticizes Salé:

> Salé, as you know, has pretty insignificant walls; its barriers are poor for defense and resistance. Floodwaters weaken them; their only hope is repair. Its casbah is attached to the city, and from the point of view of fortification, it shirks its responsibility. It has a single wall, without balustrades to protect it. Its gate is exposed, no shield to defend it. The water there is bad, and it does not have a known well, nor a spring with sweet water. In recent times, the Christians took possession of it in broad daylight.[75] No perceptible hand responded, and there were no war machines used, nor did any factions vie for the crown. It has a paucity of arms, an absence of success, decrepit walls, and its affairs are in disarray.[76]

Other times, however, he has nothing to say at all. Compare the above treatment of Salé to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's discussion of artisanal skill (*ṣanʿa*) in the two cities:

> Malaga, may Allah protect it, has silk brocades embroidered with gold; it is the source of choice leatherwork, pottery desired in other places, and muslin for wrapping around oneself; it is the place where copper is worked, equivalent to the Yemeni city of Ṣanʿāʾ in terms of clothing, a place of pilgrimage for merchants to fill up their bags before returning home. The perceptions of both man and jinn all testify to this fact. It is never denied the rising sun.
>
> And what craft does Salé have to offer, or to support itself with, or to export to distant lands, or to adorn itself with for holidays?

[75] A reference to the Spanish occupation under Alfonso el Sabio which lasted for 24 days in 1260.

[76] Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Khaṭrat al-ṭayf*, 59.

> Now that the superiority of artisanal skill has been established, let us move to the matter of location.…[77]

It is surprising that a master rhetorician such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb would not see fit to accord Salé equal, if negative, treatment. After all, as Van Gelder points out in his discussion of the *mufākhara* (boasting match) genre:

> The author, even if he is partial himself, at least pretends to present a more or less impartial and unbiased description of a debate and should be able to show both the positive and the negative sides of each contestant.[78]

Ibn al-Khaṭīb has chosen to compare the two cities according to a debate format that, at least according to convention, necessitates an equal treatment of the competing sides. However, although he is a writer who is surely capable of such a task, he seems to pull back from an all out attack on Salé.

Rachel Arié asserts that in *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb "exudes an Andalusī patriotism that relies on the tradition of al-Shaqundī."[79] Is this really the case, though, or is she reading into the treatise what she expects to encounter given Ibn al-Khaṭīb's Andalusī roots, and the genre he has chosen? Referring to another of his geographically-themed epistles, *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār*, Arié remarks that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's "remarkably balanced passages, his choices of synonyms, and the progression and rhythmic unity [of the work] sing the praises of the Naṣrid cities," thus betraying his "secret preference for his Andalusī homeland."[80] Again, this "secret preference" is borne out less in the text itself than in Arié's expectations of what to find in it. The text does display a skilled use of rhythm, parallelism, rhymed prose, and overall style, but she seems to overlook the second half of the treatise that deals specifically with Maghribī cities in a similarly skilled manner.

In his discussion of *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā*, Aḥmad Mukhtār al-ʿAbbādī does point out how odd it is that Ibn al-Khaṭīb treats Salé so negatively, "despite his love for al-Maghrib, specifically Salé, where he sought refuge in times of trouble." He concludes that Ibn al-Khaṭīb is

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[77] Ibid.
[78] Van Gelder, "The Conceit of Pen and Sword," 331.
[79] Rachel Arié, *L'Espagne musulmane au temps des Nasrides (1232–1492)* (Paris: Éditions de Boccard, 1973), 449.
[80] Ibid., 450.

simply expressing "nationalistic feelings" and that "these feelings go back to an age old and traditional competitive spirit which existed between Andalusīs and Maghribīs, which we have seen clearly in al-Shaqundī's epistle."[81] This spirit may indeed have existed, but it is not clearly reflected in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's varying views on the places he writes about. Like Arié, al-ʿAbbādī ventures an explanation based on the assumption that al-Andalus and al-Maghrib are clearly and diametrically opposed in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's mind. However, I would argue that the border between north and south is much less clear than when al-Shaqundī was writing (at least as al-Shaqundī imagined it). A comparison between *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* and *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār* demonstrates this.

Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār was, like *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā*, written while Ibn al-Khaṭīb was living in Salé, and it aims to compare al-Andalus to al-Maghrib. The first part of the text takes place at an inn and is comprised of an old traveler's descriptions and impressions of a number of Andalusī cities, as told to a young man. In the second part, the same young man happens across an old wordsmith in the marketplace telling of his fantastic adventures. The younger man asks him about the cities of al-Maghrib and a long list of descriptions follow. It is not until the end of the old man's speech that the youth recognizes "the shaykh, his traveling companion, and his jug of wine; he had disguised himself with watered down coloring."[82] *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār*, with its fictional form, rhymed prose framed by a narrative *isnād*, and recognition of the old man at the end aligns the work much more closely with the *maqāma* genre than other rhymed prose narratives by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, including *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* which lacks a fictional framework and the recognition scene common to many *maqāma*s. I only mention this because many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's rhymed prose epistles, especially the ones dealing with travel (*Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā, Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār, Khaṭrat al-ṭayf, Nufāḍāt al-jirāb*) have been referred to as *maqāma*s, when in fact, they lack most of the defining characteristics of that genre.[83] This distinction is significant in trying to determine how to

[81] Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Khaṭrat al-ṭayf*, 11.

[82] Ibid., 111.

[83] For example, see Knysh, "Ibn al-Khaṭīb," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*; Rachel Arié considers Ibn al-Khaṭīb important in the revitalization of the *maqāma*, a point I do agree with, although I do not agree with her use of these particular rhymed prose epistles as proof. See Arié, *L'Espagne musulmane au temps des Nasrides (1232–1492)*, 448. See also her "Notes sur la *Maqāma* Andalouse," *Hespéris-Tamuda* 9:2 (1968), 202–217. I imagine it is the rhymed prose and geographical movement of the narra-

read and approach an understanding of his geographical descriptions when some are couched in a quasi-fictional narrative style, and others are written in a seemingly more straightforward expository form. As a body of work these geographical writings are difficult to interpret without wondering when Ibn al-Khaṭīb is writing in an expository or fictional manner, or both.

In *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār*, cities of al-Andalus and al-Maghrib are described in elegant rhymed prose that includes first praise, and then blame. No city is spared. For example, in *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā*, Malaga "is the most radiant, abundant in seedlings and grapevines, has the most fragrant flowers and brightest days,"[84] and it is also praised in *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār*. However, the traveler in this latter work goes on to point out that "its cotton plants make the soil wretched, garbage lines its streets…its alleyways are narrow, not at all wide, its wells are rotten and grimy, the taste of their waters makes it not worth storing."[85] Salé, for its part is denigrated in *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā* for its deficiencies in all of the nine categories of comparison with Malaga, whereas in *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār*, it is "the very best and most favorable of cities, with a moist and wide riverbed, firm foundations, ornamentally-detailed walls, graceful and beautiful."[86]

Perhaps we can explain Ibn al-Khaṭīb's inability to whole-heartedly praise al-Andalus and blame al-Maghrib according to biography, at least partially. After all, he did spend a relaxing two years living in Salé, with pay, far from the political intrigues and machinations of Granada that would eventually lead to his death in 1375. In *Mufākharat Mālaqa wa-Salā*, he has chosen a form of argumentative discourse, yet he does not give a convincing argument for al-Andalus or against al-Maghrib. He praises al-Andalus according to form and that "traditional competitive spirit" al-ʿAbbādī talks about, but he does it from the comfort of his home in Salé at a time during which the Marinids are clearly dominant in the Muslim west. In *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār*, he

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tor that makes these treatises resemble the *maqāma*, although it is important to note that practically all belle-lettristic prose of this period is rhymed. For a discussion of the important defining characteristics of the *maqāma*, see Kilito, *Les Séances*, 101–106. While it is true that in later periods the definition of a *maqāma* was rather flexible, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's clear adherence to the classical *maqāma* form in *Miʿyār al-ikhtiyār* and elsewhere indicates his knowledge and respect of earlier and stricter definitions.

[84] Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Khaṭrat al-ṭayf*, 62.

[85] Ibid., 76.

[86] Ibid., 101.

treats al-Andalus and al-Maghrib on somewhat equal terms, but using a discourse with a fictional frame, which makes it more difficult to take it wholly seriously. In his less than consistent treatment of al-Andalus and al-Maghrib, he does display a skilled writer's ability to write in many genres, according to different conventions and generic requirements. However, he neither conspicuously ignores al-Maghrib as Ibn Ḥazm does, nor does he revile it and its inhabitants in the manner of al-Shaqundī. Rather, he gives a less defensive, more nuanced view of the Muslim west as being a continuum, with no fixed border dividing al-Andalus and al-Maghrib. In fact, with a view that takes into account contacts and power relations that have run in both directions between north and south over the centuries, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, consciously or not, exemplifies his fourteenth century reality that al-Andalus as a distinct entity is quickly disappearing, and that Marinid North Africa represents the northern and western boundary of the Islamic world.

CONCLUSION

A FINAL LOOK BACK

In 1248, the city of Seville falls to the Christians marking the effective end of Muslim hegemony in the Iberian Peninsula. Although the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada will hold out for another two and a half centuries before falling to the Castilians Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492, by the mid-thirteenth century al-Andalus had ceased to exist as a viable political entity. However, as shown, intimations of the end came centuries before. Constructions and re-constructions of al-Andalus take place in a poetic imagination that moves between memories of a literary golden age and personal-historical experiences. All of the writers treated in this study lived during transitional moments in Andalusī history that could easily be described as cultural upheavals, most notably the decline in status of the Arab (or Arabic-style) litterateur. Moreover, their choices of genre reflect and express these ruptures. Each genre consists of discourses, styles, and fields of imagery that in themselves carry meaning.

The city elegy (*rithāʾ al-mudun*) is, of course, rooted in loss. In the early eleventh century, in mourning the loss of Cordoba—a Cordoba rich in Arab tradition, and literary and cultural heritage—Ibn Shuhayd constructs his poetic monument to his beloved city out of his own perceptions, memories, and use of literary conventions from the *rithāʾ al-mudun*. Al-Saraquṣṭī, writing about a century later, reflects different political-cultural challenges, and presents an elegy to the city of Qayrawan in rhymed prose. The shift from the *qaṣīda* to the *maqāma* marks a change in the twelfth century Andalusī's relationship to the poetic past from one of respect, to a more complex and uneasy one. This heritage is both embraced and rejected as poetry is translated into highly embellished prose, and the Arabic language itself can no longer by relied upon as a mediator between representation and reality.

Moses Ibn Ezra, who wrote from outside of al-Andalus but firmly within the Andalusī poetic universe, adds further dimension to the reconstruction of al-Andalus as a Jewish writer whose career straddled linguistic and cultural worlds and who embodied multiple religious and literary histories. He writes from a doubly exiled position—that of the

larger Jewish diaspora, as well as his own displacement from the literary culture of al-Andalus to the Christian north of Spain. His poetry is infused with a pride for his Andalusī past, and a melancholic nostalgia for it. By writing in the 'modernist' (*muḥdath*) style and utilizing the oldest of Arabic literary conventions, the ruined campsite (*al-aṭlāl*), all in biblical Hebrew, Ibn Ezra embodied the multiple identities that define Jewish al-Andalus.

Finally, the treatises discussed here that proclaim the superiority of al-Andalus over other regions by Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Ezra, al-Shaqundī, and Ibn al-Khaṭīb, provide a lens through which to view a shifting sense of Andalusī identity as the fortunes of literary culture changed from the eleventh to the fourteenth century. Each writer expresses his conception of al-Andalus as shaped by al-Andalus' changing relationship to the eastern Islamic world (*al-mashriq*), the Christian north, and North Africa (*al-maghrib*). These conceptions move from a distinct conservatism and adherence to eastern tradition in Ibn Ḥazm and Ibn Ezra, to a more defensive and nostalgic assertion of Andalusī greatness in al-Shaqundī, to an ambivalent and somewhat ambiguous statement of Andalusī-Maghribī ties in the writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb.

For the writers treated in this book, temporal distance from the places and events they recall is not the only factor in determining the nostalgia they expressed. The yearning for the eastern past that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I expressed in eighth century Cordoba was informed by the language in which he wrote, and can be viewed as a model for later Andalusīs. As I have shown in the preceding chapters, these writers remembered and defined al-Andalus to last as long as these works are read by looking back to the past and using different literary forms that themselves rely on the language and imagery of nostalgia. It is through the writing of these texts, and reading them, that the borders of al-Andalus are defined and preserved even after al-Andalus seems to be gone. But, of course, it is not quite gone. Links to and echoes of al-Andalus can be heard even after the final end of Muslim rule in al-Andalus in 1492, in the *aljamiado* literature of crypto-Muslims,[1] the

[1] Texts written by Spanish Muslims or crypto-Muslims in Castilian and Aragonese using Arabic script. See Vincent Barletta, *Covert Gestures: Crypto-Islamic Literature as Cultural Practice in Early Modern Spain* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Luce López-Baralt, "The Moriscos," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*. Miguel Ángel Vázquez, "Poesía morisca (o de cómo el español se convirtió en lengua literaria del islam," *Hispanic Review* 75:3 (2007), 219–242; Gerard Wiegers, *Islamic Literature in*

Ladino songs of expelled Jews,[2] and in contemporary works such as those cited in the Introduction.

Finally, there are connections to al-Andalus built on even more solid and geographically symbolic foundations. On July 10, 2003, the Muslim call to prayer sounded over the city of Granada for the first time in over five hundred years. Situated at the top of the Albaicin district, the newly established Great Mosque of Granada (La Mezquita Mayor de Granada) has a commanding view of the Alhambra palace, the final stronghold of the Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula before their capitulation to the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492. The community of Spanish Muslims responsible for building this mosque insists that the choice of location is not in any way an expression of nostalgia for the past of al-Andalus. They speak of a mission grounded very much in the present, viewing the mosque as a new spiritual center for Granada's Muslim community. Some see it as the harbinger of "the return of Islam to Spain," and even as becoming "the centre for the revival of Islam in Europe."[3] However, even in denying the role of nostalgia in choosing a site for the new mosque, reference to the Andalusī past is hard to avoid, an inevitable result of the mosque's architecture and geography. Competing for dominance of the city's skyline with the Alhambra Palace, itself a symbol of Islam's last stand in Spain, the mosque is a concrete representation of Spain's Muslim past, and an attempt to redefine that past, in the present. The new mosque appropriates vistas, architectural styles, imagery, and cultural memory to enter into a dialogue with the past and just as Boabdil did in 1492, and as writers and poets did centuries before, Granada's contemporary Muslim community looks back and utilizes past discourses, to speak in, and of, the present. Thus, al-Andalus continues to exist, through remembrances of the past, and contemporary articulations.

Spanish & Aljamiado. Yça of Segovia (fl. 1450), His Antecedents & Successors (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994).

[2] See Samuel G. Armistead, "The Sephardim," in *The Literature of Al-Andalus*.

[3] Abdel-Latif, Omayma, "Back in Spain—with a difference" 7–13 August 2003 *Al-Ahram Weekly On-line* http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2003/650/fe1.htm

APPENDIX

SELECT ARABIC AND HEBREW TEXTS

[1]

تَبَدَّتْ لَنَا وَسْطَ الرُّصَافَةِ نَخْلَةٌ — تَنَاءَتْ بِأَرْضِ الغَرْبِ عَنْ بَلَدِ النَّخْلِ
فَقُلْتُ شَبيهِي في التَغَرُّبِ وَالنَّوَى — وَطُولِ التَّنَاءِي عَنْ بُنَيَّ وَعَنْ أَهْلِي
نَشَأْتِ بِأَرْضٍ أَنْتِ فيها غَريبَةٌ — فَمِثْلُكِ في الإقْصاءِ وَالمُنْتاي مِثْلِي
سَقَاكِ غَوَادِي المُزْنِ مِنْ صَوْبِها الذي — يَسُحُّ وَيَسْتَمْرِي السِّمَاكَيْنِ بِالوَبْلِ

[2]

وَقَفْتُ بالزَّهْراءِ مُسْتَعْبِراً — مُعْتَبِراً أَنْدُبُ أَشْتاتا
فَقُلْتُ أيا زَهْراءُ أَلا فَارْجِعي — قَالَتْ وَهَلْ يَرْجِعُ مَنْ مَاتا
فَلَمْ أَزَلْ أَبْكِي وَأَبْكِي بِها — هَيْهات يُغْني الدَمْعُ هَيْهاتا
كَأَنَّما آثارٌ منْ قَدْ مَضَى — نَوَادِبُ يَنْدُبْنَ أَمْوَاتا

[3]

رَأَيْتُ آدَمَ في نَوْمي فَقُلْتُ لَهُ — أَبا البَرِيةِ إنَّ النّاسَ قَدْ حَكَموا
أَنَّ البَرابِرَ نَسْلٌ مِنْكَ قَالَ إذَنْ — حَواءُ طالِقَةٌ إنْ كانَ ما زَعَموا

[4]

قِفا نَبْكِ مِنْ ذِكْرَى حَبيبٍ وَمَنْزِلِ — بِسِقْطِ اللِّوَى بَيْنَ الدُّخولِ فَحَوْمَلِ
فَتُوضِحَ فالمِقراةِ لَمْ يَعْفُ رَسْمُها — لِما نَسَجَتْها مِنْ جَنوبٍ وَشَمْأَلِ

[5]

قالوا وَلَمْ يَلْعَبِ الزَّمانُ بِبَغْـ — دادَ وَتَعْثُرْ بِها عَواثِرُها
إِذْ هي مِثْلَ العَروسِ باطِنُها — مُشَوِّقٌ لِلفَتَى وَظاهِرُها
جَنَّةُ خُلْدٍ وَدارُ مَغْبَطَةٍ — قَلَّ مِن النّائِباتِ واتِرُها

[6]

يا هَلْ رَأَيْتَ الجِنانَ زاهِرَةً — يَروقُ عَيْنَ البَصيرِ زاهِرُها
وَهَلْ رَأَيْتَ القُصورَ شارِعَةً — تَكُنّ مِثْلَ الدُّمَى مَقاصِرُها
وَهَلْ رَأَيْتَ القُرى الّتي غُرِسَ الـ — أَمْلاكُ مُخْضَرَّةً دَساكِرُها
مَحْفوفَةً بِالكُرومِ وَالنَّخْلِ وَالرّيـ — حانِ ما يَسْتَقِلّ طائِرُها

[7]

فَإِنَّها أَصْبَحَتْ خَلايا مِن الـ — إِنْسانِ قَدْ أُدْمِيَتْ مَحاجِرُها
قَفْراً خَلاءً تَغْوى الكِلابُ بِها — يَنْكَرُ مِنْها الرُّسومَ زائِرُها

[8]

بِزَنْدَوَرْدَ وَالياسِريَّةِ وَالشَّطْـ — طَيْنِ حَيْثُ انْتَهَتْ مَعابِرُها
وَبِالرُّحَى وَالخَيْزُرانِيَّةِ الـ — عُليا إِلى أَشْرَفَتْ قَناطِرُها
وَقَصْرِ عَبْدُوَيْهِ عِبْرَةٌ وَهُدًى — لِكُلِّ نَفْسٍ زَكَتْ سَرائِرُها
فَأَيْنَ حُرّاسُها وَحارِسُها — وَأَيْنَ مَجْبورُها وَجابِرُها
وَأَيْنَ خِصْيانُها وَحَشْوَتُها — وَأَيْنَ سُكّانُها وَعامِرُها
أَيْنَ الجَراديَّةُ الصَّقالِبُ وَالـ — أَحْبُشُ تَغْدو هُدْلاً مَشافِرُها

[9]

لا تَرِدَنْ غَمْرَةً بِنَفْسِكَ لا — يَصْدُرُ عَنْها بِالرَّأيِ صادِرُها
عَلَيْكَ ضَحْضاحُها فلا تَلِجْ الغَمـ — ـرَةَ مُلْتَجَّةً زَواخِرُها

[10]

دونكَ غراءَ كَالوَذيلةِ لا — تُفْقَدُ في بَلْدَةِ سَوائِرُها
لا طَمْعاً قُلْتُها وَلا بَطَراً — لِكُلِّ نَفْسٍ هَوًى يُؤامِرُها
سَيَّرَها اللهُ بِالنَّصيحةِ وَالـ — ـخَشْيَةِ فاسْتُدْمِجَتْ مَرائِرُها
جاءَتْكَ تَحْكي لَكَ الأُمورَ كَما — يَنْشُرُ بَزَّ التّجارِ ناشِرُها
حَمَّلْتُها صاحِباً أَخا ثِقَةٍ — يَظَلُّ عَجَباً بِها يُحاضِرُها

[11]

فَيَا دَارُ لَمْ يُقْفِرْكِ مِنّا اِخْتِيَارُنا — وَلَوْ أَنَّا نَسْتَطيعُ كُنْتِ لَنا قَبْرا
.....
وَيا خَيْرَ دارٍ قَدْ تُرِكْتِ حَميدَةً — سَقَتْكِ الغَوَادِي ما أَجَلَّ وَما أَسْرا
وَيا مُجْتَلَى تِلْكَ البَسَاتِينِ حَفَّها — رِياضُ قَوَارير غَدَتْ بَعْدَنا غَبْرا
وَيا دَهْرُ بَلِّغْ سَاكِنيها تَحِيَّتي — وَلَوْ سَكَنوا المَروينَ أَوْ جاوَزوا النَّهْرا

[12]

فَواجِسْمي المُضْنَى وَواقَلْبي المُغْرَى — وَوانَفْسي الثَّكْلَى وَواكَبْدي الحرّا
وَيا هَمُّ ما أَعْدَى وَيا شَجْوُ ما أَبْرَى — وَيا وَجْدُ ما أَشْجَى وَيا بَيْنُ ما أفْرا
وَيا دَهْرُ لا تَبْعُدْ وَيا عَهْدُ لا تَحُلْ — وَيا دَمْعُ لا تَجْمَدْ وَيا سُقْمُ لا تبرا

[13]

فَيا أَسَفاه يا أَسَفاه حُزْنا يُكَرِّرُ ما تَكَرَّرَتْ الدُّهورُ

[14]

تَذَكَّر عَهْدَ الشَّرْقِ وَالشَّرْقُ شاسِعُ وَذابَ أَسَى لِلْبَرْقِ وَالْبَرْقُ لامِعُ

.....

وَكَيْفَ بِشَقْرٍ أَوْ بِزُرْقَةِ مائِهِ وَفيهِ لشُقْر أَوْ لزُرْق مَشارِعُ

[15]

يا حُمْصُ أَقْدَرَكِ المَقْدورُ حينَ رَمى لَمْ يَرْعَ فيكِ الرَّدَى إلّا وَلا ذِمَماً

.....

يا جَنَّةُ زَحْزَحَتْنا عَنْ زَخارِفِها ذُنوبُنا فلَزِمْنا البَثَّ وَالنَدَما

يا سائِلي عَنْ مُصابِ المُسْلِمينَ بِها اصْغُ لتَسْمَعَ أَمرا يورثُ الصمما

.....

فَكَمْ أَسارَى غَدَتْ في القيدِ موثَقَةً تَشْكو مِن الذِّلِّ أَقْداما لَها حِطَما

وَكَمْ صَريعٍ رَضيعٍ ظَلَّ مُخْتَطِفا عَنْ أمِهِ فهو بالأَمْواجِ قَدْ فُطِما

.....

وَكَمْ بِطريانَةٍ أَبْقَى الأَسَى نَدْبا في القَلْبِ يَبْعَثُ وَجْدا كُلَّما كَلَّما

يا حُسْنَها عرف للحُسْنِ جامعة ما طارَ قَطُّ لَها إلا النَعيمَ جما

[16]

وَيَنْدُبُ عَهْداً بالمُشَقَّر فاللِّوَى وَأَيْنَ اللِّوى مِنْهُ وَأَيْنَ المُشَقَّرُ

[17]

أَلا أَيُّها القَلْبُ المُصَرِّحُ بِالوَجْدِ — أَما لَكَ مِنْ بادي الصَّبابَةِ مِنْ بُدِّ
وَهَلْ مِنْ سُلُوٍّ يُرْتَجى لِمُتَيَّمٍ — لَهُ لَوْعَةُ الصّادي وَرَوْعَةُ ذي الصَّدِّ
يَحِنُّ إِلى نَجْدٍ وَهَيْهاتِ حَرَّمَتْ — صُروفُ اللَّيالي أَنْ يَعودَ إِلى نَجْدِ
فيا جَبَلَ الرَّيَّانِ لارِيَّ بَعْدَما — عَدَتْ غِيَرُ الأَيَّامِ عَنْ ذلِكَ الوِرْدِ
وَيا أَهْلَ وُدّي وَالحَوادِثُ تَقْتَضي — خُلُوّيَ عَنْ أَهْلٍ يُضافُ إِلى الوُدِّ
أَلا مُتْعَةٌ يَوْماً بِعارِيَةِ المُنَى — فإِنَّا نَراها كُلَّ حينٍ إِلى الرَّدِّ
أَمِنْ بَعْدِ رُزْءٍ في بَلَنْسِيَةٍ ثُوى — بِأَحْشائِنا كَالنّارِ مُضْرَمَةُ الوَقْدِ
يُرَجّي أُناسٌ جُنَّةً مِنْ مَصائِبٍ — تُطاعِنُ فيهِمْ بِالمُثَقَّفَةِ المُلْدِ
أَلا لَيْتَ شِعْري هَلْ لَها مِنْ مَطالِعٍ — مَعادٌ إِلى ما كانَ فيها مِن السَّعْدِ
وَهَلْ أَذْنَبَ الأَبْناءُ ذَنْبَ أَبيهِم — فَصاروا إِلى الإِخْراجِ مِنْ جَنَّةِ الخُلْدِ

[18]

ما هي إِلّا قِطْعَةٌ مِنْ أَرْضِكُم — وَأَهْلُها مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ مِنْهُم

[19]

قُرْطُبَةٌ هي التي تَبْكي لَها — مَكَّةُ حُزْناً وَالصفا وَزَمْزَمُ
وَحُمْصُ وَهي أُخْتُ بَغْداد وَما — أَيّامُها إِلّا الصَّبا وَالحُلُمُ

[20]

قِفَا غَيْرَ مأْمورَيْنِ وَلْتَصْدَيا بِها — عَلى ثِقَةٍ لِلغَيْثِ فاسْتَقِيَا القَطْرا
بِجِسْرِ مَعَانٍ وَالرُّصَافَةِ إِنَّهُ — عَلى القَطْرِ أَنْ يَسْقي الرُّصَافَةَ وَالجِسْرا

[21]

وَقَدْ مَنَعَ التَهْويمَ أَنّي هائِمٌ بِعَيْشٍ مَضَى بَيْنَ الرُّصافَةِ وَالجِسْرِ
وَجَنَّةِ دُنيا لا نَظيرَ لِحُسْنِها تَفَجَّرَتِ الأَنْهارُ مِنْ تَحْتِها تَجْري

[22]

عُيونُ المَها بَيْنَ الرُّصافَةِ وَالجِسْرِ جَلَبْنَ الهَوَى مِنْ حَيْثُ أَدْري وَلا أَدْري

[23]

جادَ الفُراتُ بِساحَتَيْك وَدِجْلَة وَالنِّيلُ جادَ بِها وَجادَ الكَوْثَر
وَسُقِيتَ مِنْ ماءِ الحَياةِ غَمامَةً تَحيا بِها مِنْكَ الرِّياضُ وَ تَزْهَرُ

[24]

خَلّوا الدِّيارَ لِدارِ مُلْكٍ وارْكَبوا غَمْرَ العَجاجِ إِلى النَّعيمِ الأَخْضَرِ
وَتَسَوَّغوا كَدَرَ المَناهِلِ فِي السُّرَى تُرْوَوا بِماءِ الحَوْضِ غَيْرَ مُكَدَّرِ
وَتَجَشَّموا البَحْرَ الأُجاجَ فَإِنَّه سَبَبٌ بِهِ تَرِدونَ نَهْرَ الكَوْثَرِ
.....
اضْحَى الهُدَى وَشَكَا الظَّمَا وَلأَنْتُم ظِلٌّ وَرِيٌّ كالرَّبيعِ المُمْطِرِ

[25]

אֲהָהּ יָרַד / עַל סְפָרַד / רָע מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם
עֵינִי עֵינִי יֹרְדָה מַיִם

[26]

לְמִי אֲשַׁבֵּר / וּמָה אֲדַבֵּר / וְהַכֹּל יָדִי עָשְׂתָה

[27]

רַק בִּכְיָהּ / עֲלֵי לֶחְיָהּ / בְּיַד אָמָּה אֲשֶׁר קִשְׁתָּה
מְאֹד תּוֹרֶה / עֲדֵי יֵרֶא / אֲדֹנָי מִשָּׁמָיִם

[28]

١ ما في الطُّلولِ مِن الأَحِبَّةِ مُخْبِرُ فَمَن الَّذي عَنْ حالِها نَسْتَخْبِرُ
٢ لا تَسْأَلَنَّ سِوَى الفِراقِ فَإِنَّهُ يُنْبِيكَ عَنْهُم أَنْجَدوا أَمْ أَغْوَروا
٣ جارَ الزَّمانُ عَلَيْهِمُ فَتَفَرَّقوا في كُلِّ ناحِيَةٍ وَبادَ الأَكْثَرُ
٤ جَرَتِ الْخُطوبُ عَلى مَحَلِّ دِيارِهِم وَعَلَيْهِم فَتَغَيَّرَتْ وَتَغَيَّروا
٥ فَدعِ الزَّمانَ يَصوغُ في عَرَصاتِهِم نوراً تَكادُ لَهُ الْقُلوبُ تُنَوَّرُ
٦ فَلِمِثْلِ قُرْطُبَةٍ يَقَلُّ بُكاءُ مَنْ يَبْكِي بِعَيْنٍ دَمْعُها مُتَفَجِّرُ
٧ دارٌ أَقالَ اللّهُ عَثْرَةَ أَهْلِها فَتَبَرْبَروا وَتَغَرَّبوا وَتَمَصَّروا
٨ في كُلِّ ناحِيَةٍ فَريقٌ مِنْهُمُ مُتَفَطِّرٌ لِفِراقِها مُتَحَيِّرُ
٩ عَهْدي بِها وَالشَّمْلُ فيها جامِعٌ مِن أَهْلِها وَالعَيْشُ فيها أَخْضَرُ
١٠ وَرِياحُ زَهْرَتِها تَلوحُ عَلَيْهِمُ بِرَوائِحٍ يَفْتَرُّ مِنْها الْعَنْبَرُ
١١ وَالدَّارُ قَدْ ضَرَبَ الْكَمالُ رِواقَهُ فيها وَباعُ النَّقْصِ فيها يَقْصُرُ
١٢ وَالْقَوْمُ قَدْ أَمنوا تَغَيُّرَ حُسْنِها فَتَعَمَّموا بِجَمالِها وَتَأَزَّروا
١٣ يا طيبَهُمْ بِقُصورِها وَخُدورِها وَبُدورُها بِقُصورِها تَتَخَدَّرُ
١٤ وَالْقَصْرُ قَصْرُ بَنِي أُمَيَّةٍ وافِرٌ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ وَالْخِلافةُ أَوْفَرُ
١٥ وَالزَّاهِريَّةُ بِالْمَراكِبِ تَزْهَرُ وَالْعامِريَّةُ بِالْكَواكِبِ تُعْمَرُ
١٦ وَالْجامِعُ الأَعْلَى يَغَصُّ بِكُلِّ مَنْ يَتْلو وَيَسْمَعُ ما يَشاءُ وَيَنْظُرُ

١٧ وَمَسالِكُ الأَسْواقِ تَشْهَدُ أَنَّها لا يَسْتَقِلُّ بِسالِكيها الْمَحْشَرُ
١٨ يا جَنَّةً عَصَفَتْ بِها وَبِأَهْلِها ريحُ النَّوَى فَتَدَمَّرَتْ وَتَدَمَّروا
١٩ آسى عَلَيْكِ مِن الْمَماتِ و حُقَّ لي إِذْ لَمْ نَزَلْ بِكِ في حَياتِكِ نَفْخَرُ
٢٠ كانَتْ عِراصُكِ لِلمُيَمِّمِ مَكَّةً يَأْوِي إِلَيْها الْخائِفُونَ فَيَنْصَرُوا
٢١ يا مَنْزِلاً نَزَلَتْ بِهِ وَبِأَهْلِهِ طَيْرُ النَّوَى فَتَغَيَّروا وَتَنَكَّروا
٢٢ جادَ الْفُراتُ بِساحَتَيْكِ وَدِجْلَةٌ وَالنِّيلُ جادَ بِها وَجادَ الْكَوْثَرُ
٢٣ وَسُقيتَ مِنْ ماءِ الْحَياةِ غَمامَةً تَحْيا بِها مِنكَ الرِّياضُ وَتُزْهَرُ
٢٤ أَسَفي عَلَى دارٍ عَهَدْتُ رُبوعَها وَظِباؤُها بِفنائِها تَتَبَخْتَرُ
٢٥ أَيَّامَ كانَتْ عَيْنُ كُلِّ كَرامَةٍ مِنْ كُلِّ ناحِيَةٍ إِلَيْها تَنْظُرُ
٢٦ أَيَّامَ كانَ الأَمْرُ فيها واحِداً لِأَميرِها وَأَميرِ مَنْ يَتَأَمَّرُ
٢٧ أَيَّامَ كانَتْ كَفُّ كُلِّ سَلامَةٍ تَسْمو إِلَيْها بالسَّلامِ وَتَبْدُرُ
٢٨ حُزْنِي عَلَى سَرَواتِها وَرُواتِها وَثِقاتِها وَحُماتِها يَتَكَرَّروا
٢٩ نَفْسِي عَلَى آلائِها وَصَفائِها وَبَهائِها وَسَنائِها تَتَحَسَّرُ
٣٠ كَبِدِي عَلَى عُلَمائِها حُلَمائِها أُدَبائِها ظُرَفائِها تَتَفَطَّرُ

[29]

فَإِني دَعاني إِلى جَمْعِ هذا الكِتابِ ما نالَ بِلادي و أَوْطاني مِن الخَرابِ فَإِنَّ الزمانَ جَرَّ عَلَيْها ذَيْلَهُ وَصَرَفَ إِلى تَعفِيَتِها حَوْلَهُ وَحَيْلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَأَنْ لَم تَغْنَ بالأَمْسِ موحِشَةَ العَرَصاتِ بَعْدَ الأُنْسِ قَدْ دَثَرَ عُمْرانُها وَهَلَكَ سُكّانُها فَعادَتْ مَغانيها رُسوماً وَالمَسَرّاتُ بِها حَسَراتٍ وَهُموماً ... فَاسْتَرَحْتُ إِلى جَمْعِ هذا الكتابِ وَجَعَلْتُهُ بُكاءً للدِّيارِ وَالأَحْبابِ.

[30]

وَلَقَدْ أَخْبَرَني بَعْضُ الرّوادِ مِنْ قُرْطُبَةٍ وَقَدْ اسْتَخْبَرْتُهُ عَنْها أَنَّهُ رأى دورَنا بِبَلاط مُغيث في الجانِبِ الغَرْبِي مِنْها وَقَدْ امحَتْ رُسومُها وَطَمَسَتْ أَعْلامُها وَخَفِيَتْ مَعاهِدُها وَغَيْرُها

البلى وَصارَتْ صَحاري مُجْدِبَةً بَعْدَ العُمْرانِ وَفيافي موحِشَةً بَعْدَ الأُنْسِ وَخَرائِبَ مُنْقَطَعَةً بَعْدَ الحُسْنِ وَشِعاباً مُفْزِعَةً بَعْدَ الأَمْنِ وَمأوى للذِيابِ وَمَعازِفَ للغيلانِ وَمَلاعِبَ للجانِّ . . . وَتَذَكَّرْتُ أَيّامي بِها وَلَذاتي فيها وَشُهورَ صباي لَدَيْها مَعَ كَواعِبَ إلى مِثْلِهِنّ صَبا الحليم.

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المقامة آلتاسعة وآلعشرون للسرقسطي

حَدَّثَ آلمُنْذِرُ بْنُ حُمامٍ قَالَ : أَخْبَرَنَا آلسَّائِبُ بْنُ تَمّامٍ قَالَ : خَرَجْنَا فِي جَمَاعَةٍ ذَاتِ قَيْرَوَانٍ حَتَّى مَرَرْنَا بِمَدِينَةِ آلْقَيْرَوَانِ مَعَ نَفَرٍ مِنْ فُتَّاكِ آلْعُرْبَانِ وَصَعَالِيكِ آلذُّؤْبَانِ فَوَصَلْنَاهَا وَقَدْ وَطِئْنَا آلطَّرِيقَ وَتَزَايَلَ آلخَلِيطُ مِنَّا وَآلْفَرِيقُ وَقَدْ آسْتَوْلَى عَلَيْهَا آلْخَرَابُ وَذَهَبَتْ بِدَوْلَتِهَا آلأَعْرَابُ فَأَغَاضَتْ حَوْضَهَا وَغَدِيرَهَا وَزَلْزَلَتْ خَوَرْنَقَهَا وَسَدِيرَهَا فَعُجْتُ عَلَى تِلْكَ آلأَطْلاَلِ وَآلرُّسُومِ وَثُقْتُ إِلَى تِلْكَ آلآثارِ وَآلْوُسُومِ فَذَكَرْتُ كَمْ ظَعَنَ بِهَا مِنْ ظَاعِنٍ وَطَعَنَ فِي لَبَّتِهَا مِنْ طَاعِنٍ وَكَمْ كَانَ بِهَا مِنْ خَوْدٍ شَمُوعٍ وَشَهْمٍ زَمُوعٍ وَرَوْضٍ مَهْضُوبٍ وَبَنَانٍ مَخْضُوبٍ وَجَنَابٍ وَحَرَمٍ وَفَضْلٍ وَكَرَمٍ وَسَرْحٍ ونَعَمٍ وَعَوَارِفَ وَنِعَمٍ فَقَسَتْ نَفْسِي عَلَى أُولئِكَ آلأَجْلاَفِ وَبَاعَدْتُهُمْ مِنْ أَحْلاَفٍ أخلافٍ حِينَ مَرُّوا بِهَا فَمَا وَقَفُوا لِماماً وَلاَ عَطَفُوا زِمَاماً وَلاَ حَيَّوْهَا رُبُوعاً طَاسِمَةً نَافِحَةً عَنِ آلنَّعِيمِ بَاسِمَةً وَكَأَنَّهُمْ إِنَّمَا مَرُّوا عَلَى مَجْهُولٍ أَوْ تَلاَحَقُوا إِلَى مَنْهَلٍ لاَ يَعْنِيهِمْ إِلاَّ آلْغَصْبُ وَآلْغَشْمُ وَلاَ يَثْنِيهِمْ إِلاَّ آلْخِضَابُ وَآلْوَشْمُ فَقَرَيْتُهَا عَبْرَةً بَعْدَ عَبْرَةٍ وَتَأَمَّلْتُهَا عِبْرَةً إِثْرَ عِبْرَةٍ فَكَمْ أُدِيلَ فِيهَا مِنْ مَصُونٍ وَغُولِبَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ حُصُونٍ وَأُبِيحَ مِنْ مَمْنُوعٍ وَفُسِخَ مِنْ مَصْنُوعٍ وَحُطَّ مِنْ رَفِيعٍ وَرُدَّ مِنْ شَفِيعٍ وَمُزِّقَ مِنْ حِجَالٍ وَنُزِعَ مِنْ رُعْثٍ وَأَحْجَالٍ وَذُعِرَ مِنْ آمِنٍ وَأُثِيرَ مِنْ كَامِنٍ فَبَيْنَا أَنَا أُهَلِّلُ وأُكَبِّرُ وأَتَأَمَّلُ وَأَعْتَبِرُ إِذَا بِصَوْتٍ رَائِبٍ مِنْ بَيْنِ تِلْكَ آلْخَرَائِبِ وآلصَّدَى يُجَاوِبُهُ وَيُعَاقِبُهُ وَيُنَاوِبُهُ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ : «يَا طُلُولُ ، أَيْنَ آلْحُلُولُ؟ وَيَا رُبُوعُ ، كَمْ ذَا آلرُّبُوعُ؟ وَيَا دِيَارُ ، هَلْ فِيكُنَّ دَيَّارُ؟ وَيَا وَكَنُ ، أَيْنَ آلسَّكَنُ؟ أَعِيٌّ أَمْ صَمَمٌ؟ وَجِنٌّ أَمْ لَمَمٌ؟ حَتَّامَ أَضْرِبُ آلْجَرَسَ وَكَأَنِّي أُنَادِي أَوْ أُكَلِّمُ أَخْرَسَ؟ إِنَّ أَمْراً مَا نَابَ ، طَرَقَ آلْجَنَابَ ، أَحَالَ آلأَحْوَالَ ، وَأَدَارَ آلسِّنِينَ وَآلأَحْوَالَ حَتَّى تَعَوَّضْتُ مِنَ آلأَقْمَارِ وَآلأَذْمَارِ بِهَيْقٍ خَاضِبٍ

وَحِمَارٍ وَمِنَ ٱلْبِيضِ ٱلأَوَانِسِ بِٱلأُدْمِ ٱلْكَوَانِسِ وَمِنَ ٱلْحِسَانِ ٱلخِرَادِ بِٱلنُّوَرِ ٱلشِّرَادِ وَمِنَ ٱلْجُرْدِ ٱلسَّلاَهِبِ بِٱلْخُنُّسِ ٱلْقَرَاهِبِ وَمِنْ رَنَّةِ ٱلْعُودِ وَصَهِيلِ ٱلْجَيَادِ بِأَنَّةِ ٱلْبُومِ وَعَوِيلِ ٱلْفِيَادِ. آهٍ مِنْ رِحَالِكِ. آهٍ مِنْ فَسِيحِ مَجَالِكِ. آهٍ مِنْ مَصَاعِبِكِ. آهٍ مِنْ مَلاعِبِكِ. آهٍ مِنْ قُرُومِكِ. آهٍ مِنْ عَرَبِكِ وَرُومِكَ. لَقَدْ لَعِبَتْ مَجَالِكِ ٱلرِّيَاحُ ٱلنُّكبُ وَعَفَى رُسُومَكِ ٱلْجَوْدُ وَٱلسَّكْبُ لَقَدْ سَحَبَ عَلَيْكِ ٱلبِلَى ذُيُولَهُ وَأَجْرَى بِوَادِيكِ سُيُولَهُ وَخَيَّمَ بِسَاحَتِكِ وَأَنَاخَ وَٱسْتَوْطَأَ ٱلْمَبْرَكَ وَٱلْمَنَاخَ».

قَالَ : فَذُعِرْتُ لَهُ مِنْ قَائِلٍ وَقُلْتُ : «يَا لَهُ مِنْ مُعَرِّسٍ أَوْ قَائِلٍ»، وَمِلْتُ إِلَيْهِ لأَغْنَمَ أُنْساً وَأُرِيحَ عَنْساً فَإِذَا بِهِ مُشَذَّبُ ٱلْخَلْقِ وَٱلْقَامَةِ فَدَعَانِي إِلَى ٱلاِلْبَابِ وَٱلاقَامَةِ وَجَعَلَ يَقُولُ : «يَا أَيُّهَا ٱلرَّجُلُ، ٱلرَّيْثَ لاَ ٱلْعَجَلَ وَٱلأَمْنَ لاَ ٱلْوَجَلَ. أَنَا أُلْحِقُكَ بِأَصْحَابِكَ وَأُسَاعِدُكَ عَلَى بُكَائِكَ وَٱنْتِحَابِكَ. إِنَّ هذِهِ لَلْعَجَائِبُ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّيَالِي لَلْعِتَاقُ ٱلنَّجَائِبُ لاَ مَا تُكَلِّفُهُ مِنْ وَخْدٍ وَرَسِيمٍ وَتَسْتَهْدِيهِ مِنْ طُرُوقِ طَيْفٍ وَهُبُوبِ نَسِيمٍ. تَمُرُّ بِهَا غُفْلاً وَتُعْرِضُ عَنْهَا طَوَالِعَ وَأَفَلاً. سِرْ إِلَى ذلِكَ ٱلنَّاوُوسِ تَجِدْ هُنَاكَ تِمْثَالَ طَاوُوسٍ وَتَرَى ٱلدُّمَى كَٱلْبِيضِ ٱلْحِسَانِ تُكَلِّمُكَ مِنْ غَيْرِ لِسَانٍ».

قَالَ : فَنَزَلْتُ لَهُ عَنِ ٱلرَّاحِلَةِ وَجَعَلْتُ فِي يَدِهِ ٱلْمِقْوَدَ وَأَلْقَيْتُ إِلَيْهِ ٱلْمِزْوَدَ وَسِرْتُ لأُشْرِفَ عَلَى تِلْكَ ٱلصُّوَرِ وَقَدْ خَلَعْتُ لِبَاسَ ٱلضَّعْفِ وٱلْخَوَرِ فَأَطَلْتُ هُنَاكَ إِقَامَةً وَتَرَدُّداً وَقَدْ أَوْسَعَنِي قَوْلُهُ تَبَلُّداً وَتَلَدُّداً وَطَلَبْتُهُ حَيْثُ وَعَدْتُهُ فَفَقَدْتُهُ وَمَا وَجَدْتُهُ وَأَلْفَيْتُهُ قَدْ خَطَّ فِي بَعْضِ ٱلصَّفَائِحِ بِسَاطِعٍ مِنَ ٱلْفَحْمِ لاَئِحٍ (مِنَ ٱلطَوِيلِ) :

إِذَا مَا أَتَتْ مِنْ دُونِ سَيْرِكَ صُحْبَةٌ ... فَلاَ تَبْقَ عَنْهَا بَاكِياً كُلَّ طَاسِمِ
وَدَعْ ذِكْرَ هِنْدٍ وَٱلرَّبَابِ فَإِنَّمَا ... يُهِمُّكَ إِعْمَالُ ٱلْمَطِيِّ ٱلرَّوَاسِمِ
وَهَلْ صَفَحَاتُ ٱلأَرْضِ إِلاَّ بَلاَقِعٌ ... فَمَا بَالُ دَارٍ بَيْنَ بُصْرَى وَجَاسِمِ
لَئِنْ عَصَفَتْ بِٱلْقَيْرَوَانِ وَأَهْلِهَا ... عَوَاصِفُ أَوْدَتْ بِٱلرِّيَاحِ ٱلنَّوَاسِمِ
فَمِنْ قَبْلُ ثَلَّتْ عَرْشَ عَادٍ وَجُرْهُمٍ ... وَدَاسَ حُمَيَّاهَا ٱلرَّدَى بِٱلْمَنَاسِمِ

أَسَائِبُ، لاَ يَغْرُرْكَ مِنِّي بَاسِمٌ فَيَارُبَّ بَاكٍ إِثْرَ جَذْلاَنَ باسم
إِذَا كَلَحَتْ دُنْيَاكَ عَنْ نَابِ أَزمَةٍ أَرَتْكَ اَلأَمَانِي وَاضِحَاتِ اَلْمَبَاسِمِ
فَسِرْ غَانِماً مِنِّي اَلتَّجَارِبَ إِنَّمَا تَلُوح عَلَى خَدِّ اَلزَّمَانِ مَيَاسِمِي
وَلاَ تَبْكِ مَا قَدْ فَاتَ وَاقْدَحْ بِزَاهِرٍ مِنَ اَلْحَزْمِ فِي تِلْكَ اَلرُّبُوعِ اَلطَّوَاسِمِ
وَدَعْ عَنْكَ بُخَّالَ اَلرِّجَالِ فَرُبَّمَا أَتَتْكَ اَلْمَخَازِي مِنْهُمُ فِي اَلْمَوَاسِمِ
فَمَا اَلْكَرَجُ اَلدُّنْيَا وَلاَ اَلنَّاسُ قَـــــاسِمٌ وَلكِنَّهَا اَلأَرْزَاقُ فِي كَفِّ قَاسِمِ

فَعَلِمْتُ أَنَّهُ اَلشَّيْخُ اَلْمُحْتَالُ وَاَلذِّئْبُ اَلْمُغْتَالُ، أَبُو حَبِيبٍ لاَ دَرَّ دَرُّهُ مِنْ بَغِيضٍ إِلَيَّ حَبِيبٍ.

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وَلِي دونَكُمْ أَهْلونَ سِيدٌ عَمَلَّسٌ وَأَرْقَطُ زُهْلولٌ وَعَرْفاءُ جَيْأَلُ
.....
وَأَغْدو عَلَى الْقوتِ الزَّهيدِ كَما غَدا أَزَلُّ تَهَادَاهُ التَّنَائِفُ أَطْحَلُ
.....
وَأَصْبَحَ عَنّي بالْغُمَيصاءِ جالِساً فَريقانِ مَسْؤولٌ وَآخَرُ يَسْأَلُ
فَقالوا لَقَدْ هَزَّتْ بِلَيْلٍ كِلابُنا فَقُلْنا أَذِئْبٌ عَسَّ أَمْ عَسَّ فُرْعُلُ

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فَوَقَفْتُ أَسْأَلُها وَكَيْفَ سُؤَالُنا صُمّاً خَوالِدَ ما يُبِينُ كَلامُها
.....
بَلْ ما تَذَكَّرُ مِنْ نَوَارَ وَقَدْ نَأَتْ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ أَسْبَابُها وَرِمَامُها
.....
فاقْطَعْ لُبَانَةَ مَنْ تَعَرَّضَ وَصْلُهُ وَلَشَرُّ واصِلِ خُلَّةٍ صَرَّامُها

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מְעוֹנוֹת מֵעֲנוֹתִי נֶאֱלָמוֹת / וְאָזְנֵיהֶם שְׁמֹעַ לִי עֲרֵלוֹת
וְאָנוּ שַׁעֲרֵיהֶם מִבְּלִי-אִישׁ / וְדַרְכֵיהֶם בְּלִי עֹבֵר אֲבֵלוֹת
עֲנַן עֵינַי לְאַט יַזִּיל דְּמָעוֹת / וְאַדְּ הֵמָּה בְּדַם לִבִּי מְהוּלוֹת
כְּאִלּוּ שִׁקֻּתוֹת מַיִם בְּקִרְבִּי / וְרֹאשִׁי יָם וּבְצָלָעַי מְצוּלוֹת
ה וּמָה-הוֹעִיל בְּצָעְקִי אֶל-גְּדֵרוֹת / פְּרוּצוֹת מִמְּטַר בְּכִיִי וּבָלוֹת
יְצָאוּנִי שְׁכוּנֵיהֶם וְעָלוּ / בְּרַגְלֵיהֶם לְבָבוֹת הָאֲמֵלוֹת
וְהָלְכוּ הֵם לְמַסְעֵיהֶם וְזִכְרָם / יְחַזֵּק הַנְּפָשׁוֹת הַנְּחָלוֹת
וּבְמִקֻּצָעוֹת מְגוּרֵיהֶם קְצִיעוֹת / וְרֵיחַ אָהֳלֵיהֶם כַּאֲהָלוֹת
עֲלֵיהֶם אֱהֵמָה אוֹ עַל-בְּחֵרוֹת / אֲשֶׁר מִיּוֹם לְיוֹם הוֹלְכוֹת וְדַלּוֹת
בְּנֵי יָמִים חָמָדוּנִי וְשָׁמוּ / לְמַחְמַדֵּי עֲלִילוֹתַי עֲלִילוֹת
הֶדִיחוּנִי וְשָׁכוּ אֶת-אֶרְחַי / וַיְסֹלּוּ עֲלֵי דַרְכִּי מְסִלּוֹת
קְוֻצּוֹתַי כְּאוֹר הַיּוֹם לְבָנוֹת / וְרֹאוֹתַי בְּפוּדְּ-לַיִל כְּחוּלוֹת
וְאַמְעִיט אֶת-תְּנוּמָתִי לְהַרְבּוֹת / תְּבוּנָתִי וְחָכְמָתִי לְהַפְלוֹת
וְאָנִיד אֶת-שְׁנוֹתַי כָּל-שְׁנוֹתַי / לְפַתֵּחַ דְּלָתוֹת הַנַּעֲלוֹת
וּבִדְרֹשׁ הַתְּבוּנָה עֹז לְנַפְשִׁי / עֲלֵי-כָל-עֹז וּבִלְבָבִי מְסִלּוֹת טו
וְאֵשׁ לֵב חֹמְדֵי אָרוּץ לְכַבּוֹת / בְּתַחְבֻּלוֹת וְנֵר דּוֹדֵי לְהַעֲלוֹת
בְּפִי אַזִּיל מְטַר חֻפְצָם בְּנַחַת / וְאוֹר שַׂחַק בְּלַפִּידִים וְקַלּוֹת
קְטַנָּה נֶחְשְׁבָה תֵּבֵל בְּעֵינַי / הֲכִי לָהּ בִּקְשָׁה נַפְשִׁי גְּדֹלוֹת
וַיֶּחָשְׁבוּ פְּעָלַי בֵּין פְּעֻלּוֹת / מְתֵי הַדּוֹר נִגֹּהוֹת בַּאֲפֵלוֹת
וְאַסְתִּירֵם בְּעַנְוָתִי וְאָבֵן / יְפִיצוּן הֵם עֲדֵי-שַׂחַק תְּהִלּוֹת כ
יְצוּרַי נוֹצְרוּ עַל-קַו וּמִי זֶה / אֲשֶׁר יַשִּׂיג בְּפֹעַל אֵל גְּבֻלּוֹת
וְהָנְחַלְתִּי חֲסָדִים מִקְּדוּמַי / וְהוֹסַפְתִּי לְאֵלֶּה הַנְּחָלוֹת
שְׁאַל-נָא בַעֲדֵי כּוֹכְבֵי שְׁחָקִים / הֲכִי לֹא-יֻחֲזוּ לָדְּ מַהֲתַלּוֹת
מְהוֹלְלַי יְחַוּוּ מַהֲלָלַי / וְחֹמְדַי מַחֲמַדֵּי עַד-לְכַלּוֹת
וְהֵם כָּאֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׂרֹף וְאָבֵן / תְּעוֹלֵל אֶת-עֲשַׁן בֹּשֶׁם לְהַעֲלוֹת כה
וּמִשֶּׁכֶל זְמָן צָפַן לְבָבָם / וְרַגְלֵיהֶם דְּרֹדְּ יִשֶּׁר עֲצֵלוֹת
רְצוֹנָם לַאֲבִיד חֻפְצִי וְאָבֵן / רְצוֹנִי מִשְׁאֲלוֹת לִבָּם לְמַלֹּאת

וּפִיהֶם יִמְלְאוּ בִשְׂחוֹק לְפָנַי / וְטֶחוֹתָם בְּאֵשׁ קִנְאָה אֲכוּלוֹת
גְּמַלְתִּים טוֹב וְאֵיכָה מִגְמוּלִי / חֲלֵב-מַדָּע אֲבַקֵּשׁ-לִי גְּמוּלוֹת
ל וְאֵיךְ גֶּבֶר יִקַּו לֶאְרוֹת בְּיָדוֹ / פְּרִי כַנּוֹת בְּצִמָּאוֹן שְׁתוּלוֹת
וְשִׁירוֹתַי חֲלִי-כֶתֶם וְאַיֵּה / אֱנוֹשׁ יַכִּיר פְּנִינֵי שִׁיר וּמִלּוֹת
עֲלָמוֹת לֹא יְדָעָן אִישׁ וְאֵיכָה / לְאִישִׁים בְּעֲרִים יִהְיוּ בְעוּלוֹת
צְרֵרֹת יִהְיוּ נֶצַח וּבַאֲבַד / נְדִיבִים יֵשְׁבוּ לָעַד בְּתוּלוֹת
כְּבוּדוֹת עַל-אֲנָשִׁים לֹא כְּבֵדוֹת / וְקַלּוֹת עַל-נְפָשִׁים לֹא נְקַלּוֹת
לה וְהָעֵת יַעֲלוּ עַל-חוּג לְשׁוֹנִי / בְּנוֹת-עַיִשׁ בְּחוּג-שַׁחַק אֲפֵלוֹת
לְהַעְדוֹת גַּרְגְּרוֹת יָמִים יְלִדְתִּים / מְמַלְּאִים בְּתַרְשִׁישֵׁי תְּהִלּוֹת
יְשֵׁטוּן מִבְּלִי-רֶגֶל עֲמָקִים / וְהָרִים יַעֲלוּ מֵאֵין נְעָלוֹת
וְלֹא-יִשָּׁכְחוּ מִפִּי יְצוּרִים / עֲדֵי יִשָּׁכְחוּ יָמִים וְלֵילוֹת
כְּאִלּוּ מִלְּשׁוֹן חִזִּים לְקוּחוֹת / וּמֵרוּחַ קְדֹשִׁים הֵם אֲצוּלוֹת
ט וְהָאֹפֶל דְּיוֹ לָהֶם וְהָעֵט / יְמִין-שֶׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּמִים מְגִלּוֹת.

[35]

خَليليَّ ما انْفَكَّ الأَسَى مُنْذُ بينِهِم حَبيبي حَتَّى حَلَّ بِالقَلْبِ فاخْتَطَّا

[36]

صاغَ المِزاجُ لَها مِثالَ زَبَرْجَدٍ مُتَأَلِّقٍ بِبَدائِعِ الأَضْوَاءِ
فَالخَمْرُ فينا كَالبجَادِي حُمْرَةً وَالكَأْسُ مِنْ ياقوتَةٍ بَيْضاءِ

[37]

صَعُبَتْ وَراضَ المَزْجُ سَيِّئَ خُلْقِها فَتَعَلَّمَتْ مِنْ حُسْنِ خُلْقِ الماءِ
خَرْقاءُ يَلْعَبُ بِالعُقولِ حَبَابُها كَتَلَعُّبِ الأَفْعالِ بِالأَسْماءِ

وَضَعيفةٌ فَإذا أَصابَتْ فُرْصَةً قَتَلَتْ كَذلِكَ قُدْرَةُ الضُّعَفاءِ

.....

وَكأَنَّ بَهْجَتَها وَبَهْجَةَ كَأْسِها نَارٌ وَنُورٌ قُيِّدَا بِوِعاءِ

أَوْ دُرَّةٌ بَيْضَاءُ بِكْرٌ أُطْبِقَتْ حَبَلاً عَلَى يَاقُوتَةٍ حَمْرَاءِ

[38]

وَمُدامَةٍ حَمْراءَ نَصْرانِيَّةٍ زَهْراءَ جاءَ بِها نَديمٌ أَزْهَرُ

صَبُّوا عَلَيْها الماءَ حَتَّى خَلَتْها لما أَتَتْهُمْ مُسْلِماً يَتَطَهَّرُ

حَمْراءُ تَرْجِعُ ضِدَّها بِمِزاجِها فَكَأَنَّ فيها عاشِقاً يَتَسَتَّرُ

[39]

וְשַׁכּוּל אֲשֶׁר דָּמָיו מְסוּבִים בְּדִמְעוֹתָיו / יְגוֹנָיו בְּדַם אֶשְׁכּוֹל יְנוּסוּן וְיִדֹּדוּ

[40]

إذا حَضَرَتْ ساحَ المُلوكِ تُقَبِّلَتْ عَقائِلُ مِنْها غَيْرُ مَلْموسَةٍ مُلْدُ

[41]

עַד-מֶה בְּגָרוֹן חְשְׁקִים יִקְרָאוּ / חִנָּם עֲלֵי אָזְנֵי מְעוֹנִים שָׁאוּ
כַּחֲרָשִׁים הֵם לַאֲזִין אוֹ אִלְּמִים / כִּי לַעֲנוֹת אֶת-צֹעֲקֵיהֶם לָאוּ
עָמְדוּ מְבַכִּים כִּי שְׁכוּנֵיהֶם בְּרֹאשׁ / גִּלִּים עֲלֵי פִי הַזְּמָן יָצָאוּ
עִם-אָהֳלֵיהֶם צָעֲנוּ אָבֵן בְּצֵל / צַלְעוֹת בְּנֵי הָאֲחָוָה הָחְבָּאוּ
ה זָרְחוּ עֲלֵי חוּג הָאֲדָמָה כּוֹכְבֵי / מָאוֹר וְאַךְ בַּצָּהֳרַיִם בָּאוּ
לֹא אֵדְעָה אִם-בָּאֳרָצוֹת בָּחֲלוּ / אוֹ הָאֲרָצוֹת שִׁכְנֵיהֶם קָאוּ

נָסְעוּ וְלַמִּצְעָר נְוֵיהֶם יָרְשׁוּ / כִּי גֹרְשׁוּ מִגֵּו וְלֹא יָצָאוּ
עַל-מִפְרְצֵיהֶם פָּרְצוּ תַּנִּים וּבֵין / גְּדֵרוֹת בְּקִיעֵיהֶם נָהִי יִשָּׂאוּ
יִשָּׁמְעוּ קִינִים בְּפִיהֶם מִפְאַת / חָרְבוֹת מְעוֹנֵיהֶם וְלֹא יֵרָאוּ
כָּזֹה וְכָזֶה אֶסְפְּדָה מֵהֶם עֲדֵי / יִתְבּוֹנָנוּ בִי הֵם וְיִתְפַּלָּאוּ
אָשִׁית חֲמָסִי עַל-דְּמָעוֹת עָרְפוּ / עַד-עָרְפוּ אֹתָם וְלֹא נִרְפָּאוּ
הָהּ עַל-צְבָאִים צָהֲלוּ בָהֶם וְהֵן / תַּחְתָּם יְעֻנִּים לַעֲנוֹת נִצְבָּאוּ
וַאֲבוֹי עֲלֵי יָמִים קְוֻצּוֹתַי בְּטַל / יַלְדוּת יְמֵי הַשַּׁחֲרוּת נִמְלָאוּ
וּלְמַחְלְפוֹת רֹאשִׁי אֲשֶׁר-בָּם דָּגְרוּ / עֹרְבֵי בְחֹרֵי אַדְּ כְּרֶגַע דָּאוּ
טו שׁוּלֵי שְׁשׁוֹנִים נִסְחֲבוּ רוֹמָה יְמֵי / נֹעַר וְיֵינִי אַהֲבָה נִסְבָּאוּ
מִמָּר-דְּרוֹר נוֹצְרוּ וְאִם מִמֶּרְקָחֵי / פֹעַל בְּנוֹ יוֹסֵף לְבַד נִבְרָאוּ
הַשָּׂר אֲשֶׁר לוֹ נִכְנְעוּ שָׂרִים כְּמוֹ / עַל-הַשְׁחָקִים בּוֹ אֲרָצוֹת גָּאוּ
בִּלְבוּשׁ בְּלוֹיֵ מַחְלְצוֹתָיו יִגְּבְהוּ / שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ וְיִתְנַשָּׂאוּ
גִּבְעוֹת לְבוֹנָה יִפְצְחוּ רִנָּה וְלוֹ / יַעְנוּ עֲצֵי-בֹשֶׂם וְכַף יִמְחָאוּ
כ אִם מִפְּתַיּוּת נִגְאֲלוּ אִישִׁים וְאִם / בִּדְמֵי כְסִילוּת בְּעֵרִים נִטְמְאוּ
דָּמָם יְדִיחֵהוּ בְרוּחַ פִּיו וּמֵי / שִׁכְלוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם יַז וְיִתְחַטָּאוּ
דָּמוּ עֲשִׁירֵי-בִין בְּעֵינֵיהֶם אֲבָל / יִתְרוֹשֲׁשׁוּ אֶצְלוֹ וְיִדַּכָּאוּ
יִתְגָּעֲשׁוּ יַמֵּי תְבוּנָתָם וְעֵת / נִטְפֵי עֲנָנָיו יְזָלוּ יִקְפָּאוּ
יוֹם נֶעְצְרוּ גִשְׁמֵי תְבוּנָה שׁוֹטֵטוּ / לְמִצֹא דְּבַר הָאֵל וְלֹא מָצָאוּ
כא כֵּן עֵת תְּבוּאַת מַעֲצוֹתָיו יִשְׁבְּרוּ / לֹא יִרְעֲבוּ לָעַד וְלֹא יִצְמָאוּ
כָּל-דִּבְרֵי צַחוֹת לְפָנָיו נוֹאֲלוּ / וּמְכַתְּבֵי סֵפֶר וּבִין נִשָּׂאוּ
מִסְתּוֹפְפִים בְּכָנָף שְׁלוֹמָיו יִשְׁנוּ / בְּמִתַּלְעוֹת יָמִים וְלֹא יֵרָאוּ
כִּי עֵין זְמָמָיו תֶּחֱזֶה בָאוֹת עֲדֵי / חֹזִים יְעִידוּהוּ וְלוֹ נִבְּאוּ
לוֹ עַל-נְקִיקֵי הַסְּלָעִים עָרְפוּ / כַּפָּיו יְמֵי הַחֹם אֲזַי יִדְשָׁאוּ
ל שָׁוּו בְּהוֹדוֹת לַחֲסָדָיו אֹהֲבָיו / עִם-כָּל-מְקַנְאָיו וַאֲשֶׁר יִשְׂנָאוּ
רוּחַ זְמָן מִיּוֹם בִּיצְחָק נָדְבָה / חַטַּאת יְלָדָיו הַיְקוּם נָשָׂאוּ
קַח-נָא בְרָכָה מִלְּשׁוֹן רֵעַ אֲשֶׁר / רַגְלָיו בְּבָתֵּי הָאֲסוּר נִכְלָאוּ
יָמִים הֻקִימוּהוּ לְמַטָּרָה וְאַדְּ / יוֹרוּ סְגוֹר לִבּוֹ וְלֹא יֻחְטָאוּ
הָיוּ זְרוֹעַ אֹהֲבָיו לָהֶם עֲדֵי / שֵׁן חָרְקוּ צָרָיו הֲכִי בוֹ רָאוּ
לה הִנֵּה עֲנָקִים מִכְּלִי-פָז נֶחְמְדוּ / אֶל-גַּרְגְּרֹתָיו לַעֲדוֹת יוּבָאוּ

שִׁירִים בְּסַפִּירֵי יְדִידוֹת עֻלְפוּ / וּבְיַהֲלֹמֵי אַהֲבָה מֻלָּאוּ
יִתְפָּאֲרוּ כּוֹכְבֵי שְׁחָקִים בָּם הֲכִי / עַל-שֵׁם אֲחִיהֶם הַבְּכוֹר נִקְרָאוּ
צָפוֹן וְיָמִין אֶת-שְׁאָר נַפְשִׁי עֲלֵי / כַּנְפֵי שְׁלוֹמוֹתַי לְךָ יִשָּׂאוּ
עַד רַחֲמָיו יָעִיר וְיַפְלִא לַעֲשׂוֹת / הָאֵל אֲשֶׁר כָּל-מַעֲשָׂיו נִפְלָאוּ
אוּלַי בְּהִקָּבֵץ פִּזּוּרֵי כֹּאֲבִים / רֹאשִׁי בְּרֹאשׁ הָאֹבְדִים יִשָּׂאוּ. מ

[42]

نَظَمْتُ لَهُ عِقْدًا مِنَ الشِّعْرِ تَنْضُبُ الْـ ـبِحارُ وَما دانَاه مِنْ حَلْيِهَا عِقْدُ

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