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The Literature of Al-Andalus. The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. Eds. María Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, and Michael Sells. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 507 pp. ISBN 0521471591

The Literature of Al-Andalus opens with a passage from Ibn Gabirol's poem "The Palace and the Garden," translated by Raymond P. Scheindlin, that invites the reader to enjoy a visit to Granada and savor its pleasures. The excerpt concludes with a warning: "Halt. Do not cross the boundaries!" (2). The irony of opening with this quote is immediately apparent in the context of this essay collection, which continually and successfully crosses the traditional disciplinary boundaries of literary history. The twenty-six articles, five architectural notes and translated poems included in the volume cover extensive interrelated areas of cultural production, embracing the combined horizons of the other titles in the Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. The disciplinary homes of the editors, an Arabist, a Hebraist, and a Romance scholar, reflect the multiple scholarly and cultural perspectives that they offer in the collection.

In the spirited and superbly written introductory essay, "Visions of al-Andalus", María Rosa Menocal presents the volume as a series of *miradores*. Each chapter, she explains, will provide vantage points on al-Andalus in order to give readers a better appreciation of its complex interweaving of cultures. She addresses the volume to a non-Arabist audience of medievalists that can profit from "fundamental scholarly material on Andalusí literary culture" (8). Although Hispanomedievalists are not specifically included in her description of the range of the collection's potential audience, the volume indeed offers a wealth of material for strengthening the multicultural facets of undergraduate and graduate courses in medieval Iberian literature as well as for scholarly research.

Menocal offers three metaphorical *miradores* as sites of analytic departure: the Alhambra in Granada, Toledo as described in *Don Quixote*, and the Great Mosque of Córdoba. For Menocal, each imagined, remembered and historical space represents the cultural convergences, appropriations and contentions that mark the "powerfully paradoxical and often unexpected cultural history of al-Andalus as a whole" (3). In addition to crossing boundaries, the volume seeks to make problematic the terminology traditionally used to describe relations between Christian, Arabic, and Jewish cultures in medieval Iberia, such as "Reconquest" and "*convivencia*". As Menocal explains, the editors envision the volume as a re-definition of the Andalusí-Arabic

universe "where Arabic is not easily separable from other strands of medieval culture, where it is often a part of a tight weave—as opposed to a proposed foreign 'influence'—and by making the whole of the cloth expressly accessible to those who, like Cervantes's narrator, might recognize the language but not be able to read it" (16).

The structure of the thematically organized sections of the collection underlines the architectural metaphor of the *mirador*, but the volume's changes of register and structure are also somewhat reminiscent of the *muwashshah* and their *kharjas*. For example, a short architectural note on Umayyad palace-building by D.F. Ruggles immediately follows the introduction. The four sections that follow, "The Shapes of Culture", "The Shapes of Literature", "Andalusians", and "To Sicily", also conclude with short meditations on architectural and cultural spaces, three more by Ruggles and one by Cynthia Robinson. The last set of essays, "Marriages and Exiles", is followed by a chapter titled, "To Al-Andalus, Would She Return the Greeting", containing a full translation of Ibn Zaydūn's "Poem in N".

The first section, "The Shapes of Culture", contains five essays: "Language", "Music", "Spaces", "Knowledge" and "Love". Consuelo López-Morillas's article on language examines the linguistic diversity of the Iberian peninsula in the Middle Ages, highlighting the gradual shift of language from a marker of ethnicity to one of religion. She reminds readers that although political and linguistic frontiers are not always contiguous, the development of the languages of al-Andalus is intertwined with politics, demographics, religion and literary production. Dwight Reynolds's contribution on music stresses the intimate relationships between music and poetry in al-Andalus and traces the paths of musical cultural exchanges between Arab and Christian communities as well as the spread of specifically Andalusí styles and genres to the Arabic world as a whole from the thirteenth century on. In "Spaces", Jerrilynn D. Dodds reads tenth-, eleventh- and twelfth-century Mozarabic and Gothic architectural styles as a dialogue between two Christian cultural positions, between "the idea of a pure, embattled separate identity anchored in Christian historicism, and the notion of a layered identity that acknowledges history, belief, and the rich texture of a multicultural world embedded in a powerful, cosmopolitan Umayyad hegemony" (86). Peter Heath's article on "Knowledge" provides a historical overview of the traditional forms of education in the Arabic-speaking world and gives partial translations of medieval Arabic commentaries on the division and transmission of knowledge. Heath situates the development of Andalusí intellectual life—religious, profane, and scientific—within this historical context and in relation to the other cultures of the Iberian peninsula as well. In "Love", Michael Sells focuses on love poetry and thirteenth-century commentaries by Ibn 'Arabī. He describes the intertwining of religious, mystical, and erotic love throughout the Andalusí-Arabic poetic tradition, providing medievalists in other fields with useful information and an additional perspective on the familiar literary blend of the sacred and the profane.

"The Shapes of Literature" contains three essays on as many major literary genres: the *muwashshah*, the *maqama* and the *qasida*. The three chapters

situate Andalusí literary production in Arabic and Hebrew within the broader context of medieval Arabic literature. Tova Rosen details the generic characteristics of the Andalusí *muwashshah*, the only strophic form known to have originated on the peninsula, and gives a thorough review of the critical controversies surrounding romance lyric and the *kharjas*. Rina Drory describes and compares the *maqama* in Arabic and Hebrew, focusing on the interplay of fiction and reality in this hybrid genre. Beatrice Gruendler addresses the inter- and metatextual qualities of the courtly and multithematic *qasida*, signaling the role of classical poetry as "a major unifying field" between Andalusians and other Arab cultures (211).

The third section, "Andalusians", offers ten brief biographies of major literary and intellectual figures from the tenth to fourteenth centuries and from Arab, Jewish, Converso and Christian backgrounds: Eric Ormsby on Ibn Ḥazim; Raymond P. Scheindlin on Moses Ibn Ezra; Ross Brann on Judah Halevi; Lourdes María Álvarez on Petrus Alfonsí; Amila Buturovic on Ibn Quzmān; Devin J. Stewart on Ibn Zaydūn; Lenn Goodman on Ibn Ṭufayl; Alexander Knysh on Ibn 'Arabi' and Ibn al-Khāṭib; and Gregory B. Stone on Ramon Llull. Each entry provides representative quotes from each historical author and demonstrates the multidisciplinary lives and multicultural world of these Andalusí intellectuals, some of whom became key figures in what Álvarez mordantly characterizes as "the not quite so Western canon" in her biographical sketch of Petrus Alfonsí (289).

Traditional disciplinary boundaries are crossed again in the fourth segment, "To Sicily", which contains three essays on the Andalusí-Arabic presence in Sicilian literary culture. In "Poetries of the Norman Courts", Karla Mallette emphasizes the importance of the multiculturalism and tolerance of the first generations of Norman rulers for the development of vernacular literature and identifies two distinct poetic periods: the Siculo-Arabic period, characterized by occasional poetry in Arabic dedicated to Christian rulers, and the Siculo-Italian school that developed on the margins of Latinate culture and in the wake of disintegrating tolerance for Muslims. William Granara contributes an essay on the eleventh-century Sicilian Muslim poet Ibn Hamdis, who wrote from exile in al-Andalus and whose poetry nostalgically describes Sicily as a lost paradise. The last chapter in this section, "Michael Scot and the Translators", by Thomas E. Burman, outlines the importance of translations from Arabic to Latin for the formation of Western university curricula in the Middle Ages.

The four essays in the fifth section, "Marriages and Exiles", give brief ethnographies and descriptions of literary cultures of the Mozarabs, Arabized Jews, Sephardim and Moriscos, describing each group's cultural identity and desire to maintain it during Arab rule, Christian reconquests, the Sephardic diaspora and forced conversions. In "The Mozarabs," authored by H.D. Miller and Hanna E. Kassis, Miller argues that Mozarabism should be understood as an "arc of culture" rather than as the "simple predominance of Arabic culture over Latin culture" (419). Kassis delineates two types of Mozarabic literature: works commissioned by the caliph and works intended for the Morarabic community. She observes a definite "Qur'anic

tenor" in Christian writing in Arabic (427). In "The Arabized Jews", Ross Brann analyzes how Arabization led to fundamental changes in the cultural expression of intellectuals that were "by turns participants in a shared cultural experience and socioreligious outsiders" (451). Samuel G. Armistead contributes "The Sephardim", an essay on the vernacular literature of Sephardim after the Expulsion. He notes the fluidity of Judeo-Spanish language in the first generations of the diaspora and traces the development of liturgical and biblical writing, didactic strophic poetry, and oral literature from the late Middle Ages to the Early Modern period. Armistead concludes the essay by emphasizing the survival of medieval Iberian components in the Sephardic ballad tradition. Luce López-Baralt's chapter, "The Moriscos", concludes the fifth section. In her discussion of canonical literature and recently discovered Morisco manuscripts, she describes the underground Spanish Muslim literary culture as "a collective effort to preserve the community's Islamic identity against the overwhelming difficulties of Inquisitorial Spain" (472).

Throughout the volume, the authors and editors provide representative quotes by Andalusí authors. These inclusions keep the focus of the volume on literature and establish an effective balance between the wide range of subjects covered. The volume concludes with a translation of Ibn Zaydūn's *Nūmiyya*, (or "Poem in N"). Earlier in the collection, Michael Sells calls this the "quintessential Arabic love poem" ("Love" 129) and the author of the poem is also one of the subjects of the section "Andalusians", where Daniel J. Stewart explains that the poem expresses the poet's "longing for the lost days of bliss with Wallāda [a princess who was his lover]" (311). Although loss and nostalgia are recurrent themes in the works highlighted throughout the individual essays, the personification of the object of study in the editorial title grafted onto the poem, "To al-Andalus, Would She Return the Greeting", concludes the volume on an overly romantic tone. In addition to this consideration of tone and perspective, untranslated Arabic titles and terms may present potential difficulties for the non-Arabist reader. Contradictory information about the *kharjas* may present further uncertainty. According to the essay on language, the *kharjas* were "discovered" in the 1940s (48). However, Tova Rosen's contribution on the *muwashshah* gives the complete history.

Despite these minor criticisms, the collection offers a great deal of useful information, fresh perspectives on medieval Iberia, and substantial bibliographical references for further investigations. The quality of the writing throughout the volume is superb, and the interdisciplinary and pluricultural approaches of the collected essays make for fascinating, enjoyable reading.

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