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REVIEWS

The Literature of Al-Andalus. Ed. María Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, and Michael Sells. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000. 507 pages.

This collection of essays, edited by an Arabist, a Hebraist, and a Romance scholar, offers readers a variety of lenses or *miradores* through which to view al-Andalus (7). It contains twenty-six chapters by critics from multiple disciplines, including music, history, literature, and architecture. It is divided into six parts with an introductory chapter by María Rosa Menocal called "Visions of al-Andalus," and aims to reach an audience of non-Arabists.

The book is uniquely organized to parallel the multiple forms that characterize al-Andalus. The volume respects Andalusí culture's frequent resistance to facile classification, and admittedly follows no singular taxonomy. Instead, it has a varied shape (18). This is evidenced by the fact that the volume appropriately begins and ends in the lyric mode, starting with Ibn Gabirol's "The Palace and the Garden," which initiates Menocal's preliminary chapter, and concluding with Ibn Zaydūn's wrenching "Nūniyya" (poem in N), which is the book's sixth part. These poems serve as beacons for the book as they underscore the cultural significance of lyric in al-Andalus, and they embody the Andalusí cultural diversity emphasized in the essays, showing that the Jewish Ibn Gabirol and the Muslim Ibn Zaydūn coincided in the highly-regarded practice of poetic composition.

The volume's multiple forms further include five architectural vignettes that metaphorically and literally bolster and complement five sections of the book. These architectural portraits include D. F. Ruggles's "Madīnat al-Zahrā' and the Umayyad palace" and Cynthia Robinson's "The Aljafería in Saragossa and Taifa spaces." The book's diverse configuration parallels the

heterogeneous, nonlinear makeup of al-Andalus, and contributes a uniquely meshed quality to the collection. The book often points readers to other essays in the volume that contain related information on a topic, which adds to its interwoven character.

In her notably lyrical prose, Menocal prepares readers in the opening chapter for a variety of crucial theoretical and ideological issues that permeate the volume. Some of these topics will be familiar to medievalists, including the discussion of the often ill-suited terminology and nomenclature used to describe *supple* al-Andalus (11–15). Other topics may not be so well known, such as the critique of the concept of Andalusī–Arabic “influence” on “European” culture. This book seeks to position the “Andalusī–Arabic universe” not as separable from other medieval cultures, but as intimately and mutually connected to them (16).

The first of the volume’s six parts, “The Shapes of Culture,” comprises five stunning essays on language (Consuelo López–Morillas), music (Dwight Reynolds), spaces (Jerrilynn D. Dodds), knowledge (Peter Heath), and love (Michael Sells), works that Menocal designates the foundations of the volume (18). It becomes evident that much of what follows in the succeeding parts directly correlates to these broad topics. For example, part two, “The Shapes of Literature,” contains three remarkable essays on prominent literature in al-Andalus, that is, the *muwashshah* (Tova Rosen), *maqama* (Rina Drory), and *qasida* (Beatrice Gruendler). The connections they demonstrate with preceding essays include the palpable link between music and the *muwashshah*, since that strophe was performed as a song in the medieval period, and still is in the modern Arab world (62 and 167).

Part three, “Andalusians,” consists of ten compelling essays on eminent Andalusī figures, including Ibn Hazm (Eric Ormsby) and Moses Ibn Ezra (Raymond P. Scheindlin). These essays are not plain accounts of biographical information. Rather, they situate their subjects in larger social and political milieus, and frequently interpret their cultural significance. Part four, “To Sicily,” has three important works that show the Andalusī presence and prestige at Sicily’s Norman courts (Karla Mallette), even as al-Andalus was greatly reduced by the thirteenth century. Part five, “Marriages and Exiles,” offers two essays on the Mozarabs (H. D. Miller and Hanna E. Kassis) and the Arabized Jews (Ross Brann), and ends with two studies of the exiled Sephardim (Samuel G. Armistead) and Moriscos (Luce López–Baralt). Part six, “To Al-Andalus, Would She Return the Greeting,” evokes loss and longing through Ibn Zaydūn’s poem, a fitting close after the displacement of exile. The index at the end is useful, but a glossary of Arabic terms would have aided readers.

This volume offers medievalists a variety of practical materials about al-Andalus, and it contributes to current theoretical discussions about how to evaluate Andalusī culture. While it does not pretend to provide an ex-

haustive account of Andalusí literatures and cultures, the links it proposes between disciplines and cultural groups advocate other, future *miradores* through which to view al-Andalus and multicultural medieval Iberia.

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Le roman de chevalerie en Espagne: Entre Arthur et don Quichotte.

Por Sylvia Roubaud-Bénichou. Paris: Champion, 2000. 404 páginas.

La rehabilitación del interés por los libros de caballerías, tarea que ha ocupado a más de un ilustre crítico en los últimos años, cojeaba de lado de la introducción amplia, exhaustiva y aguda al conjunto de la materia. El libro de Sylvia Roubaud-Bénichou es ese gran arco de entrada que permite imaginar las posibilidades de investigación y de interpretación especializadas a la vez que detalla los pormenores de visos iniciales, de paralelismos al origen.

Roubaud traza su estudio sobre el itinerario que recorre la caballerescas a través de los avatares de la historia como escritura, un itinerario que espejea acaso el de la autora en su recorrido por bibliotecas de varios países persiguiendo los volúmenes, en su gran mayoría inéditos (aunque las guías de lectura que viene publicando el Centro de Estudios Cervantinos desde hace un tiempo prometen facilitarnos la tarea al resto). La perspectiva es de entrada triple: desde la "materia;" desde las interacciones de la prosa y el verso; y desde personajes que, peregrinando entre la historia y la ficción, articulan técnicas y motivos diversos.

Los diecisiete capítulos son breves e informativos, apuntan a la bibliografía esencial y, en notas, sugieren divergencias con otras posturas críticas. Se abre la discusión a partir de los orígenes franceses del libro de caballerías hispánico (*Enéas, Alexandre*, leyenda de Tebas, leyenda de Troya, materia bretona) para pasar a los lazos específicamente peninsulares desde el entramado entre ficción e historia. (*Historia troyana polimétrica, General Estoria*). Este camino se dibuja primero sobre la mezcla de prosa y verso y después a partir de técnicas de verosimilitud que podemos encontrar en la caballerescas como préstamos incorporados, muchas veces hasta el lugar común: de los visos de la historia a los motivos de las fuentes, la composición conjunta, las figuras de la primera escritura, hasta llegar a la sutil ironía de los *Belianises*.

Ficción e historia se plantean entonces como las coordenadas de la reflexión sobre un conjunto de materiales que se comprueba en este estudio como diverso, innovador y flexible. Pero resultan incluso más interesantes las observaciones sobre los lazos entre ficción y verdad, salpicadas entre discusiones de textos específicos, en las que Roubaud-Bénichou fluctúa

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