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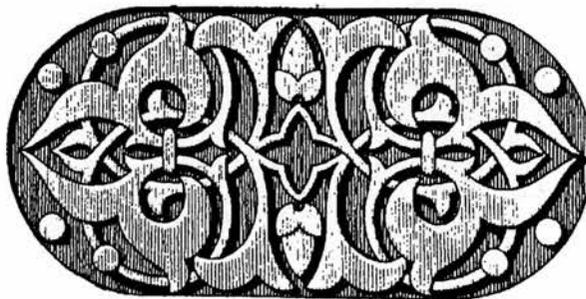
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Colin James Dickson

February 1999.

The Iconography of the Palace --
Court and Court Culture in
Madînat al-Zahra
during the "Golden" Age of
Umayyad al-Andalus.



M.Phil Thesis.



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Contents Page.

Page no.

- (i) Abstract
- (ii) Acknowledgements
- (iv) Map of al-Andalus, from the *Tibyan* (ed. Tibi)
E.J.Brill 1986
- (v) Genealogy of the *Banû* Umayya in al-Andalus.
- (vi) Transliteration
- (1) Introduction
- (6) Chapter 1 -- *The Amirs, their Architecture and their
Courts.*
- (36) Chapter 2 -- *The City Palace of Madīnat al-Zahra*
- (50) Chapter 3 -- *Court ceremonial in Madīnat al-Zahra*
- (72) Chapter 4 (i) -- *Arab literature and Art in Umayyad
al-Andalus.*
- (92) Chapter 4 (ii) -- *Sephardic literature and the Mosabh in
Umayyad Cordoba.*
- (102) Conclusion
- (104) Chronological table of the constructions of °Abd
al-Rahmân III.
- (105) Plan and Picture Appendix.
- (116) Bibliography

Abstract :

This thesis examines the Iconography of the Caliphal Palace of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, and aims to provide an analysis of the inter-relationship between the physical fabric of the Palace, and of the ceremony and cultural endeavours which occurred within it. Having provided a brief history of the *Amirs* and their contributions to the architecture of al-Andalus, and the inferences that may be drawn from the construction of these buildings, the second chapter discusses the physical reality of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, using both archaeological material and source material. The third chapter provides a discussion of court ceremonial, and a discussion of its effect on the psyche of those who participated in it, as well as a comparison of three different courts ; Byzantine, °Abbasid and Umayyad. The last chapter examines another facet of the Iconography of the Palace, namely the attendant courtly culture, focusing particularly on the Arabic literature of the *milieu*. A short sub-chapter follows the fourth chapter, in which the Hebrew literature of the *Mosabh*, and the contribution of the *Sephardim* to the *milieu* are discussed.

Acknowledgements.

A.M.G.D

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The completion of an enterprise such as this causes one to ponder and reflect ; not only on the amount of time spent researching and presenting it, but also on the sheer amount of support which facilitated its completion. I would like to take this opportunity of according my thanks to the many people who helped, in whatever manner in its production -- to them all, heartfelt thanks.

I would however like to single out some people for particular mention. I would like to thank Dr Richard Kimber and Mr Taj Kandoura of the Department of Arabic, for their support, kindness and encouragement and also for the patient and sensitive way in which they opened the wonders of the Arabic language to me. I am not naturally a polyglot, and I must have caused them some real concern ! I would also like to thank Dr Ruth Macrides and Dr Paul Magdalino, who recommended the Byzantine sources used in the third chapter. Byzantium became a source of fascination for me under their tutelage, and although I ultimately " apostasised," I retain this interest. Ms Anne Kettle and Dr Frances Andrews were exceedingly helpful from a 'pastoral' point of view. Without them it is exceedingly unlikely that this project would have come to fruition. Helen Craig also demands a special mention -- without her, the

French material used in this thesis would not have materialised, and her command of the English language ironed out quite a few potential misunderstandings. Richard Urquhart helped me to learn Spanish last year by keeping me supplied with Spanish newspapers and theological magazines, in doing so, he also opened up the possibility of comprehending the splendid Spanish scholarship available in this field. Lastly, I would like to thank Mathew Harpster for giving me a copy of his M.Phil thesis on *Shipbuilding and trade in the Eastern Mediterranean*¹, which gave many ideas on the presentation of this thesis, as did my supervisor, Professor Hugh Kennedy.

This thesis does not only represent hard academic work, it also reflects a great deal of blood, toil, sweat and tears, much of which have been dealt with most ably by the wide circle of friends I am so fortunate to have, I do not wish to single any out, for all have been equally fundamental and helpful. My last, and most profound thanks must be extended to my Parents, and my Grandparents, who not only made many financial sacrifices to enable me both to study as an undergraduate and a postgraduate, but who have also endured my panics, and my obsession with all things Andalusí. Without this understanding, and the infinite love, concern and interest which they have lavished upon me, I could not have got this far. I dedicate this thesis to them as a small token of my love and respect.

I.L.P.D.S

¹ A Copy of this work may be found in the Library of the University of St Andrews.

The *Banu Umayya* in al-Andalus.

°Abd al Raḥmân b. Mu°awiya (*al-Dâhhil*)¹ 756-788

Hishâm I 788-796

al-Ḥakam I 796-822

°Abd al Raḥmân II 822-852

Muḥammad I 852-886

al-Mundhir 886-888

°Abd Allâh 888-912

°Abd al Raḥmân III [*al-Nâsir li Din Allâh*]² 912-961

al-Ḥakam II [*al-Muṣṭansir bi Allâh*] 961-976

¹°Abd al Raḥmân I was known as *الداخل* (the exile) due to his flight from Damascus from the °Abbasid dynasty.

²The *laqab* or honorific title is displayed in square brackets, a nick-name in rounded brackets.

A Note on Transliteration.

In general, the Cambridge system of transliteration from Arabic into English has been used throughout, with a long vowel being signalled thus -- \hat{A} or \hat{a} . In the case of the letter ϵ , ' is used to indicate it in the medial position, and $^{\circ}$ in the initial position. A similar system has been used in Hebrew transliteration. It should be noted that the letter \aleph has been transliterated as Ch and not H, thus *Chazan* and not *Hazan*. Similar rules have been applied when using Greek text, although in this case the letter χ has been transliterated using the conventional k thus *klamidas* not *chlamidas*.

Introduction

AUREA PRIMA SATA EST AETAS, QUAE VINDICE NULLO,
SPONTE SUA, SINE LEGE FIDEM RECTUMQUE COLEBAT.
POENA METUSQUE ABERANT, NEC VERBA MINANTIA FIXO
AERE LEGEBANTUR, NEC SUPPLEX TURBA TIMEBAT
IUDICIS ORA SUI, SED ERANT SINE VINDICI TUTI.

Ovid (43B.C.E.--17 C.E.)¹

The 'Golden Age' is a concept which is known not only to writers but also to historians, for, many civilisations throughout the centuries may be said to have had their 'golden ages.' It should however be noted that these were in many respects exceedingly unlike Ovid's Dionysian vision, for whilst (as a whole) they were characterised by stability, they also tend to have been governed firmly by an centralised administrative system. Along with this stability, as a whole, great advances tended to be made in other fields, in particular the arts, the sciences and in philosophy, both religious and secular. In specifically Andalusian terms, there can be little doubt that this 'golden age' occurred in the latter part of the tenth century, and particularly during the reigns of the Caliph^s °Abd al Raḥmân III *al-Nâṣir* (912-961) and his son al-Ḥakam II *al-Muṣṭansir* (961-976). These were reigns characterised by their

¹ Ovid *Metamorphoses* Bk I lines 89-93 (ed.Miller)

stability, by their cultural and political sophistication (indicated in the complexity of the court structures) and the extent of their diplomatic machinations along the Mediterranean axis and further afield in Africa and Christendom. This general prosperity manifested itself in many ways in al-Andalus, but no more visibly than through the medium of architecture, and it is within this context, of visual display, that *Madīnat al-Zahra* fits. It becomes clear however that *Madīnat al-Zahra* was not just a building, but an experience, in which all of the senses were involved. It was a place of beauty, of ceremony and of art, a place in which all of the resources of the Andalusī state -- both human and fiscal -- were, as it were, on show to the visiting diplomats and rulers who visited there during its short period of existence before its destruction in 404/1013 by the Berbers. It is this aspect -- the projection of sophistication, both in terms of court structure and cultural advance, and opulence with which this thesis is concerned, and the effects which they had both on external visitors, and the numerous members of the Andalusī nobility who also visited there.

Having discussed the correlation between state stability and the use of architecture in al-Andalus, and the increasing complexity of court structure, the physical fabric of the building will be examined and reconstructed through source evidence and other extant examples of Islamic architecture. The human element of the projection of this sophistication, through ceremonial and the patronage of literature and art will then be analysed. In a short section toward the end of the thesis another by-product of this cultural renaissance will be used

as an indicator of the cross-cultural aspects of this renaissance, namely the *Mosabh* literature of the Sephardic Jews.

It is fortunate that the physical remains of *Madīnat al-Zahra* are quite extensive, and it is fitting at this juncture to recognise the efforts of those who have at points through this century sought to excavate portions of the Palace². We are fortunate however to have some sources which refer both to this building, and also, to a lesser extent, to the attendant court and culture. There can be little doubt that the key source in such a study is *al-Muqtabis*³⁺⁴ by Ibn Ḥayyān, in which fragments of a lost work by the court historian ʿĪsā b. Aḥmad al-Rāzī, writing during the 'Golden Age,' are displayed. *al-Muqtabis* describes in great detail the relentless round of ceremonial and the rigorous rules which governed it, thus providing a glimpse into the *mentalité* which generated this important facet of the iconography of the Palace. Also of great importance is the *Kitāb al-Bayān al-Mughrib*⁵ of the fourteenth century historian Ibn Idhārī,⁶ which provides useful information about the physical expense of the construction of the building, of the materials used in it, and of the men who were responsible in its requisition as well as recording historical information. Much of the material which is contained in this source probably came from al-Rāzī as well as from Ibn Ḥayyan. It is perhaps helpful to view *Kitāb al-Bayān al-Mughrib* as an edition of al-Rāzī's work, for there can be little doubt that Ibn Idhārī excluded a great deal of extraneous information from his

² See Chapter 2.

³ Ibn Ḥayyan *al-Muqtabis* ed. Hajjaj Beirut 1965.

⁴ See also *Anales Palatinos del Califa de Cordoba al-Hakam II, Por ʿĪsā b. Aḥmad al-Rāzī*, a Spanish translation of *al-Muqtabis* by Garcia-Gomez (Madrid 1967)

⁵ The second volume of this series, published by E.J.Brill covers the period of Andalusī History in question. (ed. Colin and Levi-Provençal 1955)

⁶ See Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal* London 1996.

own source, which was included by al-Râzî. *Nafḥ al-tîb min ghuṣṣ al-Andalus al-raṭîb*⁷ by the seventeenth century Moroccan historian al-Maqqarî is also useful, providing an exceedingly full, if somewhat nostalgic account of the *milieu* of Umayyad al-Andalus. No such compilation exists in the area of court literature, although material of a slightly earlier period is extant in the *Ta'rikh iftitâḥ al-Andalus*⁸ by the historian and jurist Ibn al-Qûṭiyah. Some mention is also made of *Ta'ifa* literature in al-Maqqarî's work, giving us a clear image of the literature in al-Andalus around the time of *Madînat al-Zahra*. We are however particularly fortunate with the quantity of extant Hebrew literature, which, as already mentioned provides a fascinating indication of the cultural stimulation generated by *Madînat al-Zahra* and its *milieu*. In translation, Karmi's *Anthology of Hebrew Verse*⁹ deserves a special mention, not only because of the many useful examples of Sephardic (and Ashkenazian) literature of this period, but also because of the generally uncomplicated translations.

There is also an ever increasing quantity of secondary literature on the subject, although traditional sources of reference such as the work of E. Levi-Provençal¹⁰ and Torres-Balbas¹¹ should also be consulted, along with *Moorish Architecture* by Barrucand and Badnorz, which whilst historically suspect provides a great deal of useful information. The volume of more general historical texts is also increasing, although *España Musulmana (Siglos*

⁷ al-Maqqari trans. Gayangos *History of the Mohammedan dynasties in Spain* W.H.Allen 1840 (2 volumes)

⁸ trans.Nichols University of North Carolina 1975 (Unpublished PhD thesis, available from Xerox University Microfilms.)

⁹ Penguin 1981

¹⁰ *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane* Paris 1931

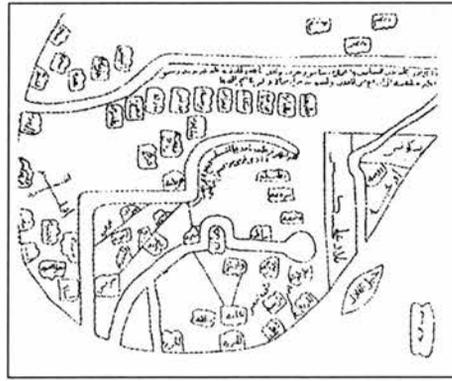
¹¹ *Ciudades Hispano-Musulmanas* Madrid 1985 (Second edition)

VIII-XV)¹² by Arié, and *Muslim Spain and Portugal* by Kennedy provide fascinating introductory reading.

¹² Labor 1994.

Chapter 1.

The Amirs their Architecture and their Courts.



Map of al-Andalus *Şûrat al-Ard* Ibn Hawqal¹

" Do not talk of the court of Baghdad and its glittering magnificence, do not praise Persia and China and their manifold advantages, for there is no spot on earth like Cordoba...."²

Whilst al-Maqqarî's sources may well have been slightly generous in their praise of Cordoba³, there can be little doubt that it constituted a large and

¹ from *Uddat al Jalis* of Ibn Bishri ed. Jones Cambridge 1996.

² cited al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.202

³ An extensive bibliography exists related to the City of Cordoba in the Umayyad period -- see especially Levi-Provençal *Histoire de L'Espagne Musulmane* Tome III Le Siècle du Califat de Cordoue (Paris 1953), and " The ornament of the World" : Medieval Cordoba as a cultural centre " in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* ed. Jayussi Leiden 1992 pp.112-136. Also of interest -- " Muslim Cordoba " by A.J.Arberry in *Cities of Destiny* ed A.J.Toynbee, London 1967 pp.166-177, " Remarques sur le fonctionnement d'une capitale à double polarité : Madînat al Zahrâ Cordoue " by Mazzoli-Guintard in *al-Qantara* XVIII (Madrid 1997) pp.43-65, references in Pavón *Ciudades Hispanomusulmanes* (Madrid 1992) especially pp.216-220 and various notes in Creswell *Early Muslim Architecture* Vol II. Oxford 1940.

important centre in the Mediterranean world of the middle ages. We are told by al-Maqqari ;

" quoting Ash-Shakandi's epistle, Ibnu Ṣaïd, says that the city of Cordoba, with the adjoining cities of al-Zahra and al-Zahira, covered at one time an extent of ground measuring ten miles in length, all of which distance, adds that author, might be traversed at night by the light of lamps...it is moreover said that the buildings of Cordoba in the time of the Banu Umayya were continued to a distance of eight furlongs in length and two in breadth which makes twenty-four miles by six ; all this space being covered with Palaces, Mosques and gardens and houses built along the banks of the Guadalquivir, the only river in al-Andalus to which the Arabs gave a name...." ⁴

commenting on the great size of the city, yet this would not appear to be an exaggeration -- Cordoba's size is also commented upon by Ibn Idhârî in his *Kitâb al-bayân al-mughrib* (Book of the News of the West) --

" From what was said about the city of Cordoba's remains, and size, when it was at its full extent under the Banû Umayya (may God have mercy upon them) the common people (not those who were *wazîrs* or great people) had one hundred and thirteen thousand houses, and there were three thousand Mosques...." ⁵

It appears from al-Maqqari that the city was also divided into residential areas or suburbs⁶ of which he mentions two in the South of the City, nine in the West, three in the North and seven in the East, the suburbs

⁴ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.206

⁵ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* p.232

⁶ ربيض pl./ اربض

surrounding the *Madina* in which the fortified *qaṣabah* or citadel stood at one end. al-Maqqarî also tells us that access was gained to the City by seven gates which he lists.⁷ As such, it appears that not only was Cordoba an important protagonist in the politics of the Mediterranean, but also that she could easily compare with the other great capitals of the medieval world, in the East, Baghdâd and Constantinople, and in the West, Paris, although it must be noted that Cordoba easily exceeded the size of this, the largest city in the West. Unlike Constantinople which boasted its foundation at the hands of Constantine in the fourth century C.E., Cordoba, as a capital city, was only two hundred and fifty years old at its zenith, the Visigothic capital previous to the Muslim conquest being Toledo.

In order to understand the background to this development, it is necessary to chart the history of the dynasty which stimulated it, the Banû Umayya. The cities of al-Andalus were not the only components of Andalusî society to evolve under the Banû Umayya however, for society in general and court society in particular evolved alongside the buildings, growing, almost symbiotically with their magnificence. Indeed, al-Maqqarî describes the courtly regime, of ceremonial and culture with a tone almost as nostalgic as his descriptions of the buildings in which they occurred, a notable example seen in his description of the reception of a Byzantine embassy by °Abd al Raḥmân *al-Nâṣir* in the *majlis*⁸ of Madînat al-Zahra --

"..When the Christian nations saw °Abd al Raḥmân's repeated successes, they

⁷ c.f al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.206

⁸ from *جلس* (to sit). In this particular context the *Majlis* was the main audience chamber in the Palace of *Madînat al-Zahra*. A plan of the *Majlis* may be seen on p.105

were filled with terror ; and all hastened to send him ambassadors to him with a view to propitiate his good will. Accordingly, in the year 336 [947-948 C.E.] an embassy arrived in Cordoba with presents from Constantine [VII]⁹ the Emperor of Constantinople...The ambassadors were then introduced to the *Caliph* and were struck with astonishment at the splendour and magnificence displayed before them...the *Caliph* commanded the learned men of his court to address the assembly in speeches in which they should commemorate the superiority of Islam..., and give thanks to God for the mercies he had dispensed [to the true believers]...and they [the learned men] were so overpowered by dread of the august assembly that they fixed their eyes on the ground, and kept silence..."¹⁰

The aim of this Chapter is therefore threefold -- to chart the contributions of the various *Amirs* to the architecture of al Andalus, to describe the evolution of the court structure and its attendant culture and lastly, to establish whether a correlation exists between the stability of the *Amir's* reign and the frequency and type of building which took place within it, in order to act as an index in later chapters.

There can be little doubt that the founder of the Umayyad dynasty in Spain¹¹, °Abd al Raḥmân I, known as " the exile," was a remarkable and charismatic man. One of the few survivors of the Umayyad dynasty (which had been toppled by the rival °Abbasid dynasty in the revolt of 130-133 A.H./ 747-750 C.E.)¹², °Abd al Raḥmân proved himself to be the ideal candidate to

⁹ Constantine *Porphyrogenitos* 913-959

¹⁰ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* Vol II p.137

¹¹ for a detailed discussion of this period, see Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal* pp.30-34 and Ibn al-Qûṭiyah *Ta'rikh*.

¹² see Kennedy *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates* pp.82-124 (London 1992).

wrest the unstable al-Andalus from its *de-jure* rulers in Baghdād, and make it his own. On travelling over the straits from North Africa, he was met with his supporters who marched against the °Abbasid governor, Yûsuf al-Fihri.

Following one battle on the tenth of *Dhû'l hijja* 142 A.H./ 759-760 C.E. the governor was unseated and °Abd al Raḥmân began to consolidate his territories. It would appear that it was at this time that °Abd al Raḥmân chose Cordoba as his capital -- we are told by Ibn Idhârî in *Kitâb al-bayân al-mughrib* that --

" When the exile °Abd al Raḥmân b. Mu°âwiya arrived in al-Andalus, and settled in Cordoba, he assumed command of the people and extended and improved the buildings. He also designated Cordoba as his Capital...."¹³

and whilst from a historical point of view this was not necessarily the most obvious choice¹⁴ it was undoubtedly a good one, providing as it did a central focal point during the early years of Umayyad rule allowing relatively simple access to all parts of the Muslim territories, in addition to presenting a more centralised location than the Visigothic Capital of Toledo, which was very much on the northern frontier of the Muslim domain. As well as establishing a capital, it would also appear that °Abd al Raḥmân was quick to establish supporters in strategic locations throughout his territories, sending °Abd al Raḥmân b. °Uqba to govern Narbonne and Tortosa and Şa°îd b. Ubada al-Anşari to Toledo. It was in this state that al-Andalus continued until °Abd al Raḥmân's death, for, despite attempts made by the °Abbasid *Caliph* al-Manşûr to unseat

¹³ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* p.229

¹⁴ " During the reign of monarchs of the Gothic descent, Cordoba cannot be said to have been the Capital of al-Andalus ; for although it served as a place of temporary residence to some of their kings, it was not, properly speaking, the court of their empire " al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.203

°Abd al Raḥmân, *de-facto* power remained firmly in Umayyad hands, indeed,

°Abd al Raḥmân was so successful in frustrating the *Caliph's* efforts that al-Manṣûr reputedly exclaimed --

" Praise God, who has placed the sea between us and an enemy like that ! "15

Yet °Abd al Raḥmân was not only a political opportunist, it appears from other aspects of his rule that he was seeking to establish al-Andalus as an important power in the Islamic world, a fact seen in his encouragement of learning and scholarship, albeit on a more modest scale than his ancestors in the East, and his successors, °Abd al Raḥmân III and al-Ḥakam II in the West --

"...In the time of °Abd al Raḥmân ibn Mu°awiya, al Bazi° b. Qays brought to al-Andalus the book *al-Muwatta*, received from Mâlik b. Ânas himself (God have mercy upon him) and the method of reading the *Qu'ran* of Nâfi ibn Nu°aimAbu Mûṣa al-Haurain, the scholar of al-Andalus, also returned during his reign..."16

It also appears that the new *Amir* wished to nurture the development of court culture, seen in his patronage of the blind poet Abû al-Mahsi¹⁷. Despite the lack of evidence, it would seem sensible to suggest that an elementary court system was also being established at this time, although it was probably a modest affair, composed of those who had distinguished themselves in °Abd al Raḥmân's *coup*. Learning and culture were, however, not the only items imported at the behest of °Abd al Raḥmân from the East, for along with the mental and spiritual benefits generated from the encouragement of culture, a more physical demonstration of Umayyad was also needed, the former being

¹⁵ Ibn al-Qûṭfiyah *Ta'rikh* pp.76-77.

¹⁶ Ibn al-Qûṭfiyah *Ta'rikh* p.79

¹⁷ This patronage is mentioned by Ibn al-Qûṭfiyah.

perceptible only to those with the knowledge to perceive them. This physical presence was generated through the medium of architecture. Appropriately for someone who evidently wanted to attain the trappings of power quickly, °Abd al Raḥmân's efforts appear to have been concentrated upon erecting symbols of what in the West might have been termed 'Church' and ' State,' in the form of a new residence and a new mosque¹⁸. The circumstances surrounding the erection of these buildings are obscure. It would therefore seem sensible to treat them individually, rather than as complementary which the circumstances behind their construction, and their chronology would seem to suggest.

°Abd al Raḥmân's palace, known as Ruṣafâh¹⁹, after the Syrian town²⁰ in which he is thought to have lived during the reign of the Caliph Hishâm, was designed to evoke an Eastern atmosphere, and therefore to demonstrate the continuation of Umayyad power from the East to the West. It would appear that the desire to recreate the Syrian iconography of the Palace was so strong that native Syrian flora was imported, as al-Maqqarî recounts --

"....He also planted a most beautiful garden, to which he brought all kinds of rare and exotic plants and fir trees from every country...They say that one of the agents sent by °Abd al Raḥman to Syria...provided him with every exotic plant which he could procure...we find that it was situate [*sic.*] to the North of Cordoba, and that when °Abd al Raḥman built it he called it

Munyatu-al-Rissafah. [*sic.*]....." ²¹

¹⁸ a plan of the Mosque with its various additions is displayed on p.111

¹⁹ For a discussion of the Andalusí Palace of Ruṣafâh see EI2 pp.631-632

²⁰ For a discussion of Ruṣafâh in Syria, see Creswell E.M.A. I pp.

18,89,155,266,330,331 and 343 and (E.M.A.) II pp. 109,111,112,115 and 234. See also EI2 s.v. Ruṣafâh pp.630-631

²¹ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* pp.210-211

It must however be made clear that Ruṣafâh was not, as Barrucand and Bednorz appear to imply in *Moorish Architecture*²² the new power centre of °Abd al Raḥmân's al-Andalus²³. It was, as its name -- *Munyat* -- suggests, a recreational building. The power centre of al-Andalus remained, until the foundation of Madînat al-Zahra in 936, the Visigothic²⁴ Palace situated within the *qasabah* of Cordoba described in the following terms by al-Maqqari, citing Ibn Bashkuwâl

"...Ibn Bashkuwâl says that the royal Palace of Cordoba, was an ancient building inhabited in former times by the infidel Sultans who had ruled over the country since the time of Moses. The interior of it, as well as adjoining buildings, was full of primeval constructions, and wonderful remains of the Greeks, Romans and Goths...and the interior apartments were so magnificently decorated as to dazzle the eye with the beauty of their ornaments...The Palace here described...must be the same which some early writers designate under the name *Balatt* Roderick, not that this king built it...By whom it was built is not certain ; the most current opinion is that one of their ancient Kings who resided in the fortress of Almodovar²⁵, below Cordoba built it...." ²⁶

As already mentioned, the circumstances and genesis of the Mosque also provide confusion : al-Maqqarî notes that --

" All historians agree in saying that the moment °Abd al Raḥmân saw himself

²² p. 39

²³ see also Torres-Balbas in *Ciudades Hispano-Musulmanas* Madrid 1985 p.139 in which he argues that the *Munyat al-Russafah* was a recreational building.

²⁴ A description of this Palace may be found in Levi-Provençal HEMIII. A series of articles dealing with Visigothic art by Schluk may be found in *Ars Hispaniae* vol II. (Madrid 1947) pp.227-247. Especially interesting is the article on Visigothic capitals.

²⁵ It is interesting to note that a medieval Castle stands on this site, near Cordoba.

²⁶ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.207

free from rivals, and firmly established on his throne, he began the building of a pleasure house called *Ruṣṣafah*, which we have before described and that of the great Mosque....."²⁷

thus implying that the great or Friday Mosque²⁸, was an entirely new construction as opposed to having its foundations within a modified Church as Ibn Idhârî suggests in *al-bayân al-mughrib* --

"...°Abd al Raḥmân " the exile " began construction of the Great Mosque from a Church in the year 169 [785/786 C.E.]. In the year 170 [786/787 C.E] the building was completed and the crowding dispersed.²⁹ This was the act of a pious and exalted man. The Imam °Abd al-Raḥmân gladly contributed this expense, and immediately undertook further costly building....."³⁰

It would appear that Ibn Idhari's suggestion is more convincing, despite the lack of archaeological evidence, -- we know from *al-bayân al-mughrib* that the Palace was situated next to the Mosque, and if, has been previously argued the Palace was in fact the original Visigothic building, it would seem unlikely that a building the size of the Grand Mosque could be easily integrated into the tightly packed *qasabah* without major alterations -- none of which are documented. A more plausible suggestion however would be that a church was

²⁷ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.217

²⁸ A large bibliography exists concerned with the Mosque -- see especially Creswell, E.M.A. II pp.138-166, Petersen *Dictionary of Islamic Architecture* (London 1996) pp.55-56, Barrucand and Bednorz *Moorish Architecture* (Taschen 1992) pp.70-88, Pavón *Ciudades Hispanomusulmanas* p.140 (Madrid 1992) and Torres-Balbas *La Mezquita de Córdoba y las ruinas de Madinat al-Zahra* (Madrid 1960) as well as works already cited.

²⁹ overcrowding in this Mosque appears to have been an ongoing problem -- even in the reign of al-Ḥakam overcrowding was named as the reason for his extension (see *Kitab al bayan al-mughrib*). It is interesting to note that this must indicate a relatively constant growth in the Muslim population of Cordoba, and perhaps that more Christians must have been converting.

³⁰ Ibn Idhârî *al-Bayan* p.229

next to what was, after all, originally a Christian palace thus corroborating Ibn Idhârî's suggestion. Furthermore the speed with which the operation was accomplished, namely one year, would suggest alteration and not construction. Whatever the basis for both Ruṣafâh and the Mosque, it is important to view them for what they were -- trappings essential to the power centre of a newly founded Muslim dynasty.

After a somewhat fraught succession dispute³¹, °Abd al Raḥmân's successor turned out to be Hishâm, his middle son, born in Cordoba in 141 / 757. Hishâm's architectural contribution is not as impressive as his fathers, for, despite Ibn al-Qûṭîya's contention that he, "...built the Mosque of Cordoba and the bridge over the city's river. °Abd al-Wahid ibn Mughât captured Narbonne during his reign and with the fifth part of the booty of that campaign Hishâm built the bridge and the Mosque..."³² it would appear that he merely repaired the Roman bridge and added an ablutions hall to the Mosque. Although less extravagant than °Abd al Raḥmân I's contribution, Hishâm's restoration of the Roman bridge in 174/ 789, following flood damage ten years previously was nonetheless significant, suggesting as it did a return to the more prosperous times of the Roman empire³³. In this context it is worth noting quite how often contemporary sources allude to the pre-Islamic heritage of the City, and to the excellence of the Visigothic constructions in particular.³⁴ These were evidently seen as

³¹ see Kennedy (pp.38+39) and Ibn al-Qûṭîyah.

³² Ibn al-Qûṭîyah *Ta'rikh* p.95

³³ For details of Roman Architecture in al- Andalus, seeTarracena-Aguirre in *Ars Hispaniae* volume II (Madrid 1947), see especially the article on Roman bridges and viaducts (pp.15-20)

³⁴ c.f. al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.207 (quoted previously)

significant and suggested perhaps, that far from being merely a convenient refuge from the °Abbasids, Cordoba represented a desirable prize in its own right. Furthermore, the Visigothic constructions also demonstrated the comparative sophistication of the society which the Umayyads had so successfully vanquished . The sixteen arched bridge, spanning some 223 metres long, had been allowed to fall into disrepair during the Visigothic period, and, despite the attempts of Umayyad governors in the early days of Muslim occupation to restore it, most notably °al-Samh al-Khawlânî in 101/720³⁵, it was Hishâm's efforts which proved successful. Yet the restoration of the bridge was not only an aesthetic improvement, as Levi-Provençal remarks --

" When one came down from the high part of the *Madina* passing along the main street (°*al-mahadjja al-°uzma*) which led from the *Bab °Abd al-Djabbar* and passed between the Califs [*sic.*] alcazar and the Mosque-Cathedral, one ended up at the only opening on the South side of the rampart and at the bridge over the Guadalquivir...."³⁶

In re-opening this entrance, Hishâm facilitated all-round defence of the *qasabah*.

Unlike his father, there was no doubt who should succeed Hishâm, indeed, Ibn Idhârî suggests that his successor al-Ḥakam was nominated some ten years before his father's death --

"...His *Kunya* - Abû al °Asi. His mother-Zuḥraf. He was born in the year 154 [770/771 C.E]. He was acknowledged after the death of his father in the night of the fifty eighth day of *Ṣafar* in the year 180 [796 C.E] He was [nominated]

³⁵ Levi-Provençal *H.E.M vol.III.* p.370

³⁶ Levi-Provençal *H.E.M. vol III* p.379

successor at sixteen years of age, his rule lasted for twenty-six years...³⁷

Yet despite the security of this beginning, the architectural or social contributions made by al-Ḥakam are minimal, Torres-Balbas noting only that he extended the *Munyat °Ayab*. This was undoubtedly because of the episodes of brutality and repression which occupy so much of his reign, a particularly horrifying example being seen in his demolition of the Cordoban suburb which lay to the South of the Guadalquivir, known as *al-Rabaḍ*, and the exile of its inhabitants to North Africa following a rebellion which occurred there, the genesis of which is described in the following terms by Ibn Idhârî in *al-bayân al-mughrib* --

" In the year 189 [804-805 C.E], the *Imam* al-Ḥakam crucified seventy-two well known men in Cordoba, including Abû Ka'b al Barr, Yahyâ b.Mundhir and Musrur al Khadim. This was the cause of the rebellion...^{38 +39}

What is important to remember about his reign however bloodthirsty, is that he totally consolidated his territory and controlled the rebellion which was beginning to surface under the more benign reign of his father⁴⁰. Furthermore, a resource base was established upon which his successor could build.

From what is said about al-Ḥakam's successor, °Abd al Raḥmân II, son and father were in many respects, although not all, diametrically opposite.

According to Ibn al-Qûṭîyah --

"...He [al-Ḥakam] was a man of excellent conduct and throughout his reign, he

³⁷ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* p.68

³⁸ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* p.71

³⁹ For a full discussion of this revolt and its aftermath, see Kennedy *Muslim Spain and Portugal* pp.43-45.

⁴⁰ Ibn al-Qûṭîyah tells us that " Hisham undertook the shepherding of his subjects with the utmost that a governor could practice of benevolence, equity, modesty...he chose simplicity in his dress and mount...." (p.93)

took it upon himself to honour men of learning, as well as poets, and to assist them in their wishes...."⁴¹

Indeed, encouraging a courtly culture appears to have been one of the strongest features of his reign most notably in his sponsorship of the Iraqi musician Ziryâb⁴².

Yet °Abd al Raḥmân II's contribution to the court was not merely an aesthetic one -- he also brought an increasing formality to the court system which arguably was the point of genesis of the courtly culture and elaborate rituals of the Caliphate of Cordoba, one hundred and fifty years later. According to that enthusiastic court spectator, Ibn al-Qûṭṭiyah --

"...°Abd al Raḥmân [II] was the first to fix the order of the *wazirs* to the Palace and the expression of opinion which prevails to this day..."⁴³

Despite the stability of the reign there are not, as one might expect, any major contributions to the architecture of al-Andalus, apart from the construction of the fortress in Merida⁴⁴ in 222/835, and an Alcazar in Toledo, no longer extant, but mentioned in literary sources. Al-Maqqarî merely notes that --

"...His son, °Abd al Raḥmân *al-awsatt* [the middle] ordered the gilding of the columns and part of the walls of the Mosque...."⁴⁵

a slightly vulgar, yet nonetheless potent demonstration of the financial security of the Amirate at this time. It must be remembered however that whilst few domestic tensions remained evident during the reign of °Abd al Raḥmân II (his

⁴¹ Ibn al-Qûṭṭiyah *Ta'rikh* p.127

⁴² Ziryab is mentioned in many different sources, see especially Levi-Provençal *HEM III* pp. 246, 268-275

⁴³ Ibn al-Qûṭṭiyah *Ta'rikh* p.135

⁴⁴ see Creswell *E.M.A.* vol.2 pp.197-207

⁴⁵ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.219

efficient father had seen to that), a quite considerable external threat was faced, and moreover averted -- that of Viking invaders who attacked Seville in 844. According to Ibn al-Qûṭīyah --

"..°Abd al Raḥmân built the Mosque of Seville⁴⁶ and the walls of the city on account of its seizure by the Normans when they entered in the year 250 [844].." ⁴⁷

Not only did °Abd al Raḥmân II solve the immediate problem, namely the breached walls of Seville, he also sought to ensure that the event could not occur again : by forming an inland navy and building a dockyard (*dar al-ṣind'ah*)⁴⁸ within Seville. He thus produced a buffer against the rapacious Vikings. It would appear that this dockyard functioned exceedingly well ;
"...the *Amir* °Abd al Raḥmân b. al-Ḥakam took preventative measures by ordering the installation of a dockyard in Seville and he constructed ships. He attracted seamen from the coasts of al-Andalus by means of handsome salaries and provided them with instruments and with naphtha. When the Normans undertook a second invasion in the year 244/858, during the reign of the *Amir* Muḥammad, they were met at the mouth of the river of Seville and put to flight. Some of the ships were burned and others turned away....." ⁴⁹

The full achievement of °Abd al Raḥmân II and the importance of his prescience to the survival of al-Andalus can only be fully recognised when one remembers the devastation exacted by the Vikings upon less well prepared

⁴⁶ This probably refers to the Mosque of Ibn Adabas, the remains of which are still extant in the Church of St Salvador. See Petersen *Dictionary* pp.265-266

⁴⁷ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rikh* p.137

⁴⁸ دارالصناعة

⁴⁹ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rikh* p.147

states, particularly the Carolingians and the English. Perhaps °Abd al Raḥmân would not have been so satisfied had he foreseen the turmoil which ensued following his death in 238/852 as clearly as he had perceived the Viking threat.

In *Kitab al-bayân al-mughrib*, Ibn Idhârî's genealogy at the beginning of his account of Muḥammad's (°Abd al Raḥmân II's son) reign is typical, yet one small part stands out as unusual --

"...acknowledged between the fourth and fifth days of *Rabi* at the end of the year 238 [852-853 C.E.].."⁵⁰

The covert meeting which signalled his accession to the *Amirate* took place after a moonlit dash through Cordoba and forms another famous anecdote in *Ta'rîh iftitah al-Andalus*. The circumstances which triggered the meeting are evidence of a new problem, brought in with the increasing complexity of the court system established by °Abd al Raḥmân, that of court factionalism -- an inevitability in an enlarged court. Indeed, it would appear that °Abd al Raḥmân himself was lucky to die of natural causes ;

"..Tarûb, mother of °Abd Allah ibn °Abd al Raḥmân, enjoyed an ascendancy over °Abd al Raḥmân by which she sought to manipulate the succession in favour of her son °Abd Allah. Out of desire she handed out bribes⁵¹ to the residents of the Palace...The eunuch Nasr...formed the desire to kill his master in order to place °Abd Allah in charge and murder Muḥammed...."⁵²

Luckily for both °Abd al Raḥmân and Muḥammad, the scheming eunuch was quickly and fittingly dispatched (he drank the poison he was planning to give

⁵⁰ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* p.94

⁵¹ Nichols translates this as 'favours,' فكانت يسبع اهل القصر من النساء, however, seems to convey the sense of 'bribes. '

⁵² Ibn al-Qûṭîyah *Ta'rikh* p.169

the *Amir*), yet the problem of internecine strife caused by an increasingly complex court structure was one which would not disappear.

Whilst the rarefied atmosphere of court could be regulated to a degree, the forces of nature could not, and although disaster in the shape of Nasr was averted, other problems soon emerged. Famine struck al-Andalus, and, in the wake of popular discontent, rebellious elements quickly gathered momentum, notably those of Ibn Marwân and Ibn Hafṣûn.⁵³ As such it would appear the Muḥammad's reign can be divided into two distinct periods -- the first relatively uncomplicated and the second complicated in the extreme. According to the correlation theory propounded previously, the result should be thus ; that the first part of the reign of Muḥammad should see, if anything, domestic architecture, and in the second part of his reign either military building (to combat the rebellions) or no building (as a result of fiscal instability). This is in fact the case : in a catalogue of Muḥammad's constructions, prepared by Sauto⁵⁴ from *al Muqtabis* by Ibn Ḥayyan, it appears that in the early stages of Muḥammad's reign, tentative moves were made to add to the domestic architecture of al-Andalus. According to al-Maqqarî " Moḥammed, his successor, continued in the work begun by his father..."⁵⁵ In the latter part of his reign however, *huṣun*⁵⁶ were constructed as one would expect from a

⁵³ for a discussion of the rebellions, see Kennedy *ibid.* pp.67-73

⁵⁴ *Obras constructivos en al-Andalus Durante el Emirato de Muhammed I segun al bayan al-Mughrib (Arqelogia Medieval 3 (1997))* see also his article published in *Trabalhos de Antropologia e etnologia* Vol.34 (Sociedade Portuguesa de Antropologia e etnologia 1994)

⁵⁵ al-Maqqarî *Nafḥ* p.219. Muḥammad's contribution to the Friday Mosque in Cordoba is discussed in the works already cited (see note 28), and specifically in the Sauto article previously mentioned in note 54.

⁵⁶ plural of *hiṣn* (Castles in Arabic).For a general discussion of fortification in al-Andalus see " Fortification building in al-Andalus " by J.Zorzoya in *Spanien und der Orient im frühen und Hohen mittelalter* (Berlin 1996) pp.55-73

period of rapidly intensifying rebellion. It is interesting to note that these castles lie in a North-South central axis, presumably to facilitate access to either the extreme east or the extreme west of al-Andalus with greater ease. According to Sauto, *huṣun* were re-fortified in Jaén and Ubeda following the battle of Andújar in 241/854 so that the territories surrounding these areas could be brought within the jurisdiction of the Amirate, as Ibn Ḥayyan remarks --

"...For this reason, the Amir Moḥammed reconstructed the *hiṣn* at Ubeda and the Castle at Jaén so that the Arabs could be re-unified in their obedience..."⁵⁷

It becomes clear from *al-Muqtabis* that the *wazîr* Hisham b.°Abd al-°Aziz was made responsible for the garrison at Jaén and the re-fortification of the *hiṣn* at Ubeda.⁵⁸ Re-fortification is also seen in other areas, in particular the castle at Calatrava⁵⁹, rebuilt by al-Ḥakam, the brother of the Amir in 239 A.H./ 853-854 C.E., which was also re-garrisoned with two immense military regiments. Sauto also notes that Castles were re-garrisoned in Badajoz⁶⁰ (261 A.H. / 874-875 C.E.), following Ibn Marwan's surrender (he was infact to hold the castle at Badajoz for the Amir) and in Rayya and Algeciras in 266 A.H. / 879-880 C.E.⁶¹ Unfortunately this policy of re-fortification and re-garrisoning was not entirely successful, disturbances continuing up to Muḥammad's death.

On his death in 274/886, Muḥammad was succeeded by his son al-Mundhir, who, it appears could well have averted the downward trend which was beginning to take hold of al-Andalus if we are to believe Ibn al-Qûṭīyah in *Ta'rīh iftitāḥ al-Andalus* --

⁵⁷ cited Sauto *Obras*

⁵⁸ Sauto *Obras* p.357

⁵⁹ Sauto *Obras* p.357

⁶⁰ Sauto *Obras* p.358

⁶¹ Sauto *Obras* pp.358-359

"...al-Mundhir turned his attention to Ibn Hafṣûn very resolutely and would have accomplished his design if death had not overtaken him suddenly as he was besieging the rebel...."⁶²

The causes of his death are, as Ibn al-Qûṭfiyah goes on to note, interesting.

"...It is said that Maisur the eunuch of al-Mundhir poisoned the cotton to put on a cut made to bleed the *Amir* because he had threatened the eunuch with punishment..."⁶³

It could be contended that the internecine strife hinted at in the reign of Muḥammad had raised its head, perhaps as suggested previously, a consequence of the increasingly complex court structure. It is perhaps testimony to al-Mundhir's verve and dedication that even within his short reign he had already begun to make material improvements⁶⁴ to the fabric of the Mosque.

If the reign of al-Mundhir was characterised, even within its short span by direction and energy, there can be little doubt that °Abd Allah's (al-Mundhir's successor, whom Ibn Hazm accuses of having the *Amir* murdered) reign was characterised by its total lack of both. Under °Abd Allah the political structure rapidly began to disintegrate, causing the formation of small statelets -- sometimes one *hiṣn* for example that of Murcia and some more sizeable for example that controlled by the Banû al-Hajjâj --

"...Ibrahim Hajjâj of Seville...had a bodyguard of five hundred horsemen..."⁶⁵

To compound the matter, it appears from Ibn al-Qûṭfiyah that not only were

⁶² Ibn al-Qûṭfiyah *Ta'rikh*. p.227

⁶³ Ibn al-Qûṭfiyah *Ta'rikh* p.229

⁶⁴ see al-Maqqarî *Nafḥ*p.219

⁶⁵ al-Maqqarî *Nafḥ* p.439

the statelets outwith the jurisdiction of Cordoba, they were positively against it, supporting the rebellion of Ibn Hafṣūn --

"...The matter of Ibn Hafṣun was becoming serious, and most of the people of l-Andalus were supporting the rebellion..."⁶⁶

Not surprisingly °Abd Allah's architectural contribution is sadly lacking, although it should be noted that he made a considerable extension to the *Munyat al-Naura* which was constructed in 253/867 and alluded to in the poetry of Ubayd Allah b. Yahyâ⁶⁷. At the same time, his court appears to have been reduced to to a loyal band of *muwali*⁶⁸ who shored up the teetering Amirate, as Ibn al-Qûṭīya remarked --

"...The authority of the Amir °Abd Allah acquired strength through [Ibn Abi Abda] so that the summer expeditions were made from Cordoba into all parts of al Andalus, bringing him considerable tribute each year...."⁶⁹

However from a financial point of view, it was to lay the foundations upon which °Abd al Raḥmân III could build. According to Ibn Khaldûn

"...the revenues...before the time of °Abd Allah, amounted to three hundred thousand *dīnārs* ; one third of which went to pay the army, one hundred thousand to the salaries of governors and public officers...During the reign of °Abd Allah, the above sum was considerably increased..."⁷⁰

and whilst this increase was born more out of inactivity than productivity, it

⁶⁶ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rikh* p.229

⁶⁷ see Torres-Balbas *Ciudades* p.140. It is especially interesting to note that the *Munyat al-Naura* are specifically mentioned for their hydraulics.

⁶⁸ Plural of *muwallad*. The *muwallad* were essentially the descendants of the Muslims who had assisted the early Amirs, and in particular °Abd al-Raḥmân I. The term also came to mean a 'client family' i.e. a powerful family who supported an Amir

⁶⁹ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rikh* p.239

⁷⁰ cited al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.131. The question of revenue within al-Andalus during this period is discussed in Kennedy pp.68-69

was fundamental in the foundation of the so called " Golden Age " of the Umayyad dynasty in Spain.

If one successful thing emerged from the disastrous reign of °Abd Allah it must surely have been his grandson, °Abd al Raḥmân III. To overstress the extent of °Abd al Raḥmân's contribution to al-Andalus would be difficult, for not only was it under his reign that the political future of al-Andalus changed irrevocably, the *Amirate* being transformed into a *Caliphate*, but his reign also saw a flowering of culture and learning. It is possible to divide °Abd al Raḥmân's reign into two distinct parts -- from his accession in 300/912 until the defeat of the battle of *al-Khandaq* (Hispanised to Alhandega) in 329/939, and from then until his death in 352/963. This delineation may seem strange, for it could be argued that the natural break is seen in 317/929 with the Caliphal proclamation, but, as will be demonstrated throughout this thesis, the defeat of *al-khandaq* was to have an immense psychological effect on °Abd al Raḥmân III, by then the *Caliph* who had taken as his *lâqab al-Nâṣir* (the victorious) -- a bitter irony given that this most major of defeats occurred following the proclamation in which he declared himself victorious. The first part of °Abd al Raḥmân's reign exhibits a tenacious wish to re-assert the jurisdiction of the *Amirate* and, whilst the remedies used by the *Amir* did not show any strategic brilliance or military prowess⁷¹, they were remarkable in their simple efficiency. Indeed, they were probably successful due to their simplicity as well as the favourable terms offered by the *Amir* to those who capitulated peaceably a feature which is displayed in Ibn Idhârî's account of the surrender of Bobastro

⁷¹ See Kennedy *Muslim Spain and Portugal* for a discussion of °Abd al Raḥmân's campaigns (pp 82-95)

" When Hafṣ b. °Umar b. Hafṣûn's guards were driven out of Bobastro, they abandoned excellent buildings throughout the City. They were earnestly commanded to set fire to the buildings [but] those left did not feel disposed to hang there. *al-Nâṣir*, *Amir* of the faithful wrote [to them] assuring them of their safety, and of his forgiveness [which] they accepted. *al-Nâṣir* sent the *Wazir* Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥudayr, and with him Ṣaïd b. al-Mundhir who stayed in the city of Bobastro..."⁷²

As can also be seen from this passage, the *Amir* was intent that possession of the city should not revert to the rebels, garrisoning it almost immediately with Ṣaïd b. al-Mundhir. °Abd al Raḥmân also employed the ideology of the *jihâd* or Holy War ; a mechanism which allowed the *Amir* to patrol his territories legitimately, without rousing concern in the practically autonomous frontier territories in the north. Furthermore, the idealistic aspect of the *jihâd* was also compelling because anyone wishing to project the image of an orthodox Muslim could not be seen to refuse to take part in a *jihâd* campaign. Such a refusal, after all, was criticised expressly in the *Qu'ran* --

"..When they were told : ' come, fight for the cause of God and defend yourselves,' they replied : ' if only we could fight, we would surely come with you.' On that day they were nearer unbelief than faith. Their words belied their intentions ; but God knew their secret thoughts. Such were the men who, as they sat at home, said of their brothers : ' Had they listened to us, they would not have been slain '....."⁷³

In his utilisation of the *jihâd*, °Abd al Raḥmân was exploiting the *mentalite* of

⁷² Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* p.195

⁷³ *The Qu'ran al-°Imran* 3 : 167+168

his subjects. He was also, however, placing himself on a higher pedestal from which to fall, a fact which could well have cost him dear. In 317/929, the *Amir* saw fit to proclaim himself as *Caliph*.⁷⁴ This was a psychological step of immense proportions for not only was °Abd al Raḥmân no longer proclaiming himself as governor of al-Andalus (*Amir*), which in a *de-jure* sense at least implied °Abbasid approval, but he was proclaiming himself as *Caliph* or successor of the Prophet, thus having no temporal equal. His reasons for doing this are perhaps not immediately clear -- after all, he already had absolute authority in al-Andalus, and, without a serious depletion in resources could not realistically expect to assert his authority anywhere else. However, if one analyses the motives behind this proclamation one can quite clearly see the same *psyche* at work as that which called the *jihâd* a *psyche* which, as already mentioned not only placed the new *Caliph* in higher prominence, but also placed him under greater pressure to succeed.

The architectural record⁷⁵ of *al-Nâsir* up to this point is fairly typical of the more successful *Amirs*, and in particular °Abd al Raḥmân I, indeed it positively proves the correlation suggested previously about stability and architectural production. This began with the re-fortification of strategically important sites in order to establish *Huṣun*⁷⁶ (presumably to garrison previously rebellious territory) in Seville (913), Toledo, Ecija, Ojén (921)

⁷⁴ The proclamation is discussed in greater depth by Kennedy pp.90-91. See also " The Command of the Faithful in al-Andalus : A study in the articulation of Caliphal legitimacy " by J.Safran in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* vol.30 May 1998 pp.183-198 (Cambridge 1998)

⁷⁵ A table of buildings commissioned by al-Nâsir is presented on p.119 of the thesis.

⁷⁶ c.f. *Obras Constructivas en al-Andalus durante el Gobierno de °Abd al Raḥmân III Segun el volumen del Muqtabis*. Juan Sauto - *Qurtuba* 1 (1996)

and Alange and the fortification of Ceuta⁷⁷, and culminated in the rebuilding of the *Sûq* in Cordoba following a fire, and the erection of a new Palace outside Cordoba, Madînat al-Zahra. One might even say that it was fairly modest for a man in *al-Nâsir's* position, yet, he had the testimony of his own success : not only had he united a previously disunited al-Andalus, installed a mandarin class of bureaucrats and begun the formation of an army⁷⁸, but, most importantly, he had restored the jurisdiction of Cordoba over al-Andalus to such an extent that he felt he could proclaim himself as *Caliph*. Defeat however was not to be an unknown concept for *al-Nâsir*.

In his history of al-Andalus, *al-Muqtabis*, the chronicler Ibn Ḥayyan recounted the following--

"...On the next day, Wednesday, the army forced open the gate of Simancas and fighting [continued] on the Thursday morning, 19 *Shawwal* involving both sides in the utmost efforts. The battle raged throughout the following Friday. The Christians withstood the Muslims with great fortitude until they were faced with the prospect of defeat. Then they launched a charge, at which the Muslims were overrun, and were disgracefully exposed, by which the Christians achieved their grievous objective : the enemy forced them to withdraw towards a very deep trench (*khandaq*), to which the name of the battle refers. They [the Muslims] were unable to avoid it and a large number fell in. Some were trampled by others, thanks to the crush of people and the weight of the throng, into which the *Sultan* was carried willy nilly. He fought his way through his troops and abandoned his camp and what was in it, which

⁷⁷ See Torres-Balbas *Ciudades* pp.476-477.

⁷⁸ See Kennedy p.82 onwards

the enemy seized. *al-Nâsir li-Din Allah* eventually came upon a troop of men who had been out as a raiding party ; he collected these forces together and stopped with them above the river. The enemy had already cut short their pursuit. He spent the day there in agitation, sure that God was putting the Muslims to the test. Then he rode home, setting out for *Madînat al-Faraj* which is called *Wâdî al-Hijara*, where he rested. Then he proceeded to Cordova."⁷⁹

Whilst a defeat in one battle to someone who had won so many may well appear a matter of little consequence, the shockwaves at the result of *al-khandaq* can not be underestimated -- the defeat at the hands of King Ramiro II of Leon could quite easily have halted the Umayyad ascendancy⁸⁰⁺⁸¹. Furthermore, although Ibn Ḥayyan's account makes no mention of any dissension in the Muslim forces, it is fairly evident from his account that it did, caused by a mixture of xenophobia (the *jundis*⁸² resented the *ṣaqaliba*⁸³ placed in command) and sheer pique (the frontier lords resented being drawn away from their volatile territories). As if to compound the severity of the situation, as already mentioned, *al-Nâsir* had placed himself upon a high pedestal from which to fall, not only was he expected as *Caliph* to mobilise the *jihâd*

⁷⁹ Ibn Ḥayyan *al-Muqtabis V* cited *Christians and Moors in Spain* Volume III (Arabic sources) ed. Ahmad Ubaydli and Charles Melville.

⁸⁰ The notion that the status of the Palace of Madînat al-Zahra was enhanced as an iconographic propoganda buffer against the defeat is explored in Chapter 2.

⁸¹ The background to the battle of *al-khandaq* and its aftermath is discussed in Kennedy op cit. pp.93-95

⁸² Native Andalusi soldiers. Problems with the *Jundis* was not a new phenomenon in al-Andalus -- see Kennedy p.35

⁸³ from the Arabic for Slav. The *Ṣaqaliba* were imported slaves from the slave emporium at Verdun, and constituted the bulk of *al-Naṣirs* newly formed army. Members of the *Ṣaqaliba* were to ascend to positions of high rank, most notably Ja'far, the *Hajib* of al-Hakam II. It is interesting to note that this xenophobia was transferred from the *Ṣeqaliba* to the Berbers in the reign of al-Hakam II, and those of his ancestors with equally destructive results. For a discussion of the *Ṣeqaliba* see Kennedy p.87

campaign, he was also expected, as an indication of Allah's favour to win --

"...Have they other Gods to defend them ? Their idols shall be powerless over their own salvation, nor shall they be protected from Our scourge.

We have bestowed good things upon these men and upon their fathers, and made their lives too long. Can they not see how We invade their land and curtail its borders ? Is it they who will triumph....."⁸⁴

The end result of *al-khandaq*, namely the 'victorious' *Caliph* (his own *lâqab*) fleeing ignominiously for his life, can not have instilled confidence either in his own abilities, or in the legitimacy of his position in the eyes of his subjects. Whilst immediate reprisals were swift (the main protagonist of the discontent, Fortun b. Moḥammed of Huesca was executed) two problems were exposed by the defeat which would require longer and more far reaching solutions, namely, that the prestige of the *Caliphate* had been severely dented and that evidence of a dangerously wilful nobility had also been displayed. *al-Naṣir's* solution was both creative and ingenious -- to elevate through ceremony and sheer extravagance the profile of the new Palace of Madînat al-Zahra begun in 936, and whilst the full impact of this mechanism will be discussed in later chapters, it is perhaps worthwhile to remark at this stage, that Madînat al-Zahra not only projected an even more luxuriant aura than had existed previously, thus attempting to regain the respect afforded to the jurisdiction of Cordoba before the defeat by both inhabitants and visitors to al-Andalus, but it also provided a singularly attractive and uncontroversial prison in which to keep the nobility happy -- and removed from their power centres. Madînat

⁸⁴ *The Qu'ran al-anbiya* 21:43 +44 *ibid.* p.230

al-Zahra was not the only ostentatious piece of architecture indulged in before or after *al-khandaq* -- indeed, one of the other notable additions during this part of *al-Nâsir's* reign, namely that of minaret on the Friday Mosque in Cordoba also speaks, like the increased profile of Madînat al-Zahra of a concerted attempt to 'save face' -- according to al-Maqqari, citing Ibn Bashkuwâl --

" In the year three hundred and fifty four [945/946 C.E.], the *Amir* °Abd al Raḥmân ordered the old tower of the Mosque to be pulled down, and the present magnificent structure to be erected in its stead. The first thing done was to dig the foundations, a work which lasted forty-three days, the excavation being so deep that the workmen were stopped by water ; the building was then begun and completed in the space of thirteen months...it was firmly believed that the tower had not its equal in point of height and beauty in any countries subject to the rule of Islam....⁸⁵⁺⁸⁶

It is one of the tragedies of Umayyad al-Andalus that such a formative man should be so shattered by defeat, which, as already suggested was made more severe by his own posturing , but the impact of which could never compare with the success of his earlier reign. This bitter irony is commented upon by Ibn Idhârî, who remarks in *Kitab al-bayân al-mughrib* --

"...*al-Nâsir* passed away in the blessed month of *Ramadan* in the year 350 [961] (may God have mercy upon him). A history was found in his own handwriting, in it he said " The days of pleasure given to me within my reign

⁸⁵ al-Maqqarî *Nafḥ* p.224

⁸⁶ This construction is discussed in Barrucand and Badnorz op cit. p.85. It is interesting to note that the minaret is still extant, although it has been much altered and encased in a Baroque shell -- see p.113

was such and such a day in such and such a month in such and such a year." And when those days were added up, only fourteen were found. Be amazed oh ignorant person ! about this world and the lack of generosity, and its cupidity with perfection of circumstances in its prominent people. Indeed, the *Caliph al-Nâsir* ruled for fifty years, seven months and three days and there was not granted to him in this world any happiness except fourteen days !...."⁸⁷

It would perhaps have come as some comfort to *al-Nâsir* to know how successful the reign of his son al-Ḥakam II⁸⁸ was to be. al-Ḥakam's succession appears not to have been in any doubt at any time -- indeed, it becomes quite clear from *Kitab al-bayân al-mughrib* that he appears to have been heir-designate for quite some time, Ibn Idhari remarking that " *al-Nâsir* trusted him above all other." ⁸⁹ It is however typical of al-Ḥakam that although less ostentatious than his father, his contribution, namely an addition to the Friday Mosque appears to have been most generous. In *Kitab al-bayân al-mughrib* Ibn Idhârî describes the building of this extension⁹⁰, and it is perhaps worthwhile reading this account, bearing in mind the suggestion that this may have been a propaganda exercise mounted in order to transfer the people's affection from the dead *al-Nâsir*, their first *Caliph*, to his son, al-Ḥakam *al-mustanşir bi-Allah*, their second --

" The Caliphate [of al-Ḥakam] opened with the supervision of the extension of the main Mosque in Cordoba, which was the first job undertaken by him, and he entrusted these tasks to his *hājib* and his *şaiḥ al-dawleh* -- his name : Ja'far

⁸⁷ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* p.232

⁸⁸ For a discussion of al-Ḥakam II's policies, see Kennedy *Muslim Spain and Portugal*.

⁸⁹ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* p.231

⁹⁰ A plan of this extension may be seen on p.111

b. °Abd al Raḥmân, the Slav. And this was on the fourth day of *Ramadan*, the second day of his Caliphate. The first thing he [al-Ḥakam] entrusted him [Ja'afar] was the supervision of the obtaining of the stones to be used in the construction, the transportation of which begun in the aforementioned Ramadan. The population of Cordoba had grown greatly, and the Mosque had become too confined to bear them, and weariness bore in on them in their crowding. *al-Mustanşir* was rapid in enlarging it. He went out in order to draw up a detailed plan of the Mosque, and summoned the *Sheiks* and the engineers. They plotted the boundary of the extension, and plotted its course from the *Qibla* of the Mosque to the end of the space which stretched for the length of eleven naves. The length of the extension from the north to the south was ninety-five cubits, and its width from the east to the west was like the breadth of the rest of the Mosque. And he cut from this arcade the passage from the palace⁹¹ which was used by the *Caliph* for coming and going to prayer, and went to his place at the side of the *Minbar* inside the *Maqşura*⁹². This extension was made from the very best and strongest materials used in the extension of the Mosque.

A mention of the bequests and pious endowments made by *al-Mustanşir bi-Allah*, the exalted, to the people of Cordoba.

When the extensions were completed, the *Caliph* summoned the nobles, the *faqis*, the witnesses, the leaders of the people, the nobles, the *Qadis* and the *Imams*. On this occasion al-Ḥakam praised and extolled Allah, giving thanks that the completion of the noble building occurred at his hands. He added to

⁹¹ See the discussion of the reign of °Abd al Raḥmân I for the position and nature of the Palace in Cordoba.

⁹² A plan of the *Maqşura* may be found on p.112 in the Plan appendix.

this with even greater prosperity, by setting up an endowment, so that a quarter of his income from all of the regions and districts of al-Andalus up to the frontier, (these being his inheritance from his father, the *Amir* of the Faithful), was divided among the needy, as a result, they would received a quarter of the rents and revenues of his estates year after year ; unless there was a famine in Cordoba, in which case this income would be divided amongst all of them, so that God could bring them back to prosperity. al-Ḥakam appointed the collation and distribution of this endowment respectively to the *hājib* Ja'far and to his *Wazir* and *Kitab* 'Isa ibn Futays. And those present bore witness to this, and also that the male slaves [owned by the *Caliph*] should be liberated. After this, al-Ḥakam left as a holy warrior for the land of the polytheist....⁹³

It is interesting to note in this account how the grandeur of the extension⁹⁴ is emphasised by, and emphasises the ceremonial of the dedication service -- a fine example of the interaction between court ceremonial and the building in which it occurred.

It becomes quite clear in the reign of al-Ḥakam, and indeed in the reign of his predecessors, that architecture and court life played an important part in their lives : not only did they act as a demonstration of their wealth and piety, but they could also, as with *Madīnat al-Zahra*, provide some much needed psychological *placebos*. It should also be noted that a correlation does exist between construction and political stability, seen in many of the histories

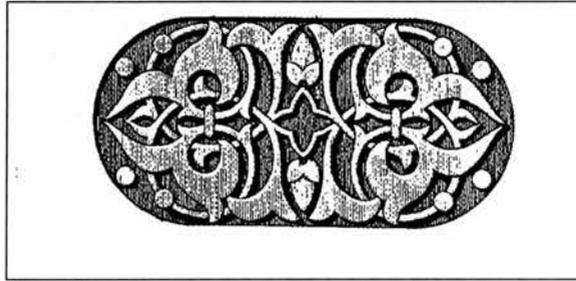
⁹³ Ibn Idhārī *Bayan* p.233-234.

⁹⁴ الزيادة

described previously, which would seem to suggest that in the mere fact of its construction, *Madīnat al-Zahra* was utterly remarkable.

Chapter 2.

The City Palace of Madīnat al-Zahra



Vegetal decoration from the *Majlis* of *Madīnat al-Zahra*.¹

There can be little doubt that the buildings of the complex of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, nestling at the foot of the *Jabal al-ʿarus* have roused some of the most nostalgic commentary from successive generations of Arab historians. Indeed, it would appear from the aura of other-worldliness and mysticism with which accounts of it are infused, that the physical reality of the palace, razed to the ground in 404/1013 during the Berber uprising might have come, despite their architectural excellence, as somewhat of a disappointment. It is in essence this relationship between the written record and the archaeological evidence unearthed since the beginning of serious excavations in 1910² that makes a study of the buildings of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, and in particular the public buildings, so interesting. A discussion of the physical reality of *Madīnat*

¹ Barrucand and Bednorz *MA*.

² *El Salon de ʿAbd al Rahman III* (Cordoba 1995) pp.11-40.

al-Zahra is therefore required to do two things - to reconcile physical evidence and the written record and to attempt to reconstruct those things which have been destroyed, pillaged, or simply decayed in the nine hundred years between the destruction of the palace and the beginning of the excavation. Another set of questions must also be posed, in particular relating to the iconographic message presented by the palace ; what do the nature of the buildings and their positioning within the complex tell us about the *milieu* of tenth century al-Andalus ? what can they tell us about the *mentalité* of the man who commissioned them, and the State which he controlled ?

The Arabic sources³ give us some details about the beginning of construction. The source material available to us in almost complete agreement that development on the site of the Palace⁴, some five kilometres from Cordoba, began in 936⁵ and that it was named after a favourite concubine of °Abd al Raḥmān III *al-Naṣir*'s . The circumstances which motivated its construction are, however, less agreed upon. The account given by al-Maqqarī is telling from a point of the development of the legends of the site --

"...The cause of the building of the city of al-Zahra is thus related by a certain doctor, a native of Cordoba. One of *al-Naṣir*'s favourite concubines happening to die possessed of considerable wealth, the Sultan ordered that the whole of

³ Many Arabic sources of the time discuss the construction of the Palace (affirming yet again the importance of the construction). Of particular note are Ibn Idhārī's *Kitab al-bayan al-Mughrib*, which has an extensive account of the construction of the Palace and al-Maqqarī who gives us a detailed discussion of the materials and logistics of constructing the Palace, citing authorities such as Ibn Khalikan.

⁴ A plan of the palace is displayed for reference in the plan appendix on p.105. It is also worth noting that articles of some interest may be found on the Internet -- see bibliography " internet resources " for further information.

⁵ c.f. Ibn Idhārī *Bayan*. It should be noted that whilst the sources are in agreement about the date of construction, some of the secondary material is not, indeed, Petersen declares in the *Dictionary of Islamic Architecture* that *Madīnat al-Zahra* was constructed by °Abd al Raḥmān II (p.167) which is patently incorrect.

her property should be spent in the redemption of captives. A search was made in the country of the Franks, but not one Muslim captive could be found ; upon which *al-Naṣir* was greatly delighted, and thanked God for it. His mistress al-Zahra, whom he loved passionately, then said to him -- " Build with that money a city that may take my name and be mine..."⁶

If this account is at least partially correct one obvious conclusion to be made is that the construction of the Palace was in itself an indication of Umayyad supremacy and of their military strength -- they were so successful that there were no prisoners to redeem. The lack of prisoners also stressed the temporal stability and level of diplomatic *détente* which characterised the latter part of *al-Naṣir*'s reign. As such it could be argued that the building of the Palace was a physical statement of the station to which *al-Naṣir* had elevated himself in his assumption of the title of Caliph. The sources are also very much in agreement that the palace necessitated a huge expenditure of resources, both fiscal and in terms of manpower, on both raw materials and their transportation from the quarries throughout al-Andalus and North Africa to the site.

Information about the huge numbers of workmen working on the site is given by al-Maqqarī who remarks that --

"....The number of workmen and slaves daily labouring at the building was ten thousand ;-- the number of mules and other beasts of burden constantly employed in the transport of the materials fifteen hundred, or, according to others fourteen hundred mules and four hundred camels belonging to the Caliph, and one thousand mules hired for the occasion, at the rate of three

⁶ al-Maqqarī *Nafh* Vol.I Bk.III Chpt.III p.232

*mithqâls*⁷ a month each. Eleven hundred burdens of lime and gypsum were conveyed every third day for the use of the building. The daily pay of one part of the men was one *dirham*⁸ and a half each, others received two *dirhams* and one third....."⁹

It also becomes clear that the raw materials were themselves exceedingly expensive, with a very great deal of marble being used --

"...Building was begun in the days of *al-Naṣir*, in the year 325. Each day, six thousand rock cut stones were used, not counting those used in foundations or flooring. Marble from Carthage in Africa and Tunisia was brought there by the following trusted men ; °Abd Allah b. Yûnis, Hasan of Cordoba and °Ali b. Ja'far of Alexandria. *Al-Naṣir* paid three *dinars* used for every unit of marble used, and eight *dinars* for every columns. The *dinars* came from Sijilmassa..."¹⁰⁺¹¹

The sources would seem also to suggest that the pace at which work was carried out was somewhat frenetic, a fact which is supported when one remembers that inscriptions were found in the Mosque which suggested that it was consecrated for worship in 941 -- less than five years after the building commenced.¹² Despite this rate of construction, work continued on the Palace for a total of fifty-years, throughout the remainder of the reign of °Abd al

⁷ The Encyclopedia of Islam notes that this term implied that the *dinar* was the "full weight," the theoretical weight of the coin being 4.37g (p.298 Vol.III).

⁸ The standard silver coin.

⁹ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.233

¹⁰ This reference to Sijilmassa is not insignificant as an indicator of the state of the Caliphate at this time. Gold coins had ceased to be minted in 106/724 and had only been re-instated by al-Naṣir in 317/929 (See E. o. I. Vol III. p.297), showing the revitalised economy. Sijilmassa was an exceedingly important Saharan trading base in Southern Morocco. It was severely damaged during the civil war following the death of the Şultan, Mulai Ismail in 1727, and allowed to decay during that century. For further reading see Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors*, (Princeton 1995).

¹¹ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* (See extract).

¹² see Barrucand and Badnorz *MA* p.61

Rahmān and into that of his son al-Ḥakam¹³. The end result was a massive complex of buildings and gardens measuring 1520 metres by 745 metres and 2700 metres by 1500 metres, a perfect rectangular configuration like that seen frequently in the palaces of the middle East,¹⁴ for example, the Syrian Palace of Mshâttâ.¹⁵

As already stated, the end result of a massive and ornate palace complex was truly magnificent. It is however somewhat of an irony that although we are abundantly clear who commissioned it, we are unsure who was responsible for its execution, although the following names are generally associated with its construction -- Maslama b. °Abd Allah, the chief architect, °Ali b. Ja'far¹⁶, who was evidently in charge of transportation of raw materials from North Africa and °Abd Allah b. Yunis and Hasan b. Muhammad both from Cordoba and both master builders.¹⁷ We also know that al-Ḥakam, the future heir-designate was involved in the project, indeed, Ibn Idhârî informs us that *al-Naṣir* " trusted him above all others...."¹⁸ It is however unclear to what extent he was involved in the project -- to derive from that information as Barrucand and Badnorz do in *Moorish Architecture* that --

"...it must be assumed that al-Ḥakam was not just the sponsor of the project, but also a leading architect...."¹⁹

is however probably incorrect since only a highly skilled architect could have overseen such a project, and one who was moreover familiar with eastern

¹³ see Ibn Idhârî *Bayan*.

¹⁴ see C.Ewart in *Orientalisch wurzeln westislamischer baukunst in Spanien*. p.33

¹⁵ This Palace is discussed in Creswell, *E.M.A.* Vol. Ipp.350-405.

¹⁶ These names are also mentioned in the Ibn Idhârî extract quoted earlier.

¹⁷ See Barrucand and Badnorz *MA* p.62

¹⁸ See Ibn Idhârî *Bayan*.

¹⁹ See Barrucand and Badnorz *MA* p.62

building techniques. The basic form²⁰ of the Palace was of a three tiered construction, the different levels being linked by ramps²¹, noted by al-Idrîsî -- "*Madînat al-Zahra* was an important city, built in tiers one above the other, so that the ground of the uppermost tier was at the level of the rooftops of the middle, and the ground of the middle at the level of the rooftops of the lowest. All three were surrounded by walls. The Palace stood in the uppermost region...in the middle region were orchards and gardens while the Friday Mosque and private dwellings were situated on the lowest level...."²²

It becomes clear however that whilst al-Idrîsî is correct in his description of a three-tiered complex, that his information about the distribution of the buildings is not²³. According to the archaeological information²⁴ the military quarters were situated on the lowest level with the military headquarters (*Dar al-Jûnd*). It also appears that the living quarters mentioned by Ibn Idhârî²⁵ were also housed on this level, although much of this level still requires excavating²⁶. The middle tier housed administrative buildings and government officials whereas the top tier housed the Caliph's residence, which corroborates al-Idrîsî's account. It is quite clear that a visual statement of Caliphal power was being made in the distribution of these buildings on three tiers -- at the top the Caliph and at the bottom the armed forces. It should also be noted that as

²⁰ The most recent discussion of the form and composition of the Palace may be found in *Madînat al-Zahra - Arquitectura y Decoracion* by Hernandez-Gimenez (Granada 1995).

²¹ See Hernandez-Gimenez *Madînat* p.59

²² Barrucand and Badnorz *MA* *ibid.* p.63

²³ This distribution may be seen in the plan on p.105

²⁴ see in particular Barrucand and Badnorz *MA* Chapter on *Madînat al-Zahra* (pp.51-61)

²⁵ see Ibn Idhârî *Bayan*.

²⁶ Hernandez-Gimenez discusses in some detail the recent excavations on the portion of the living quarters known as the *Dar al-Ja'far* on pp.67-71 of *Madînat*.

well as stressing the supremacy of the Caliph the integration of the state organs with the Caliph's Palace and the *Dar al-Jûnd* showed the fundamental unity and integrity of the state, which, according to this iconography relied on the headship of the Caliph to maintain stability. One puzzle is however raised -- why was the Mosque to be found on the lowest level, when one could reasonably assume that it would have occupied the premier position in the upper level of the Palace, next to the Caliph's residence ? The reason for this undoubtedly lies in another theoretical principle of the Umayyad State, and indeed of any pious Muslim State, that fidelity to Islam, not social class is the distinguishing principle. In its location, on the lowest level, the Mosque was stressing the fundamental equality of all Muslims before God. A further symbolic unity may be seen in the fact that the Mosque was modelled on the same principles as the grand Mosque in Cordoba²⁷ -- although the Caliph was physically removed from his subjects, he was worshipping in a similar building at the same time -- a representation of the unity of Islam, and an effective mechanism to prevent discontent at ' absentee Caliphs.' It is also worth noting that a slightly more obvious reason may be given for the situation of the Mosque, namely that it had to be on a lower level to afford access to all the inhabitants of the Palace, who, for reasons of security and propriety could not wander through the Caliph's private quarters.

Having established the theophanic message of *Madinat al-Zahra*, it is exceedingly important to stress that it was not designed as a holy site of Islam -- it was above all a visual representation of temporal power (albeit with the

²⁷ see Barrucand and Badnorz *MA* p.66

endorsement of Allah), evidence for which is seen in the fact that the public buildings and in particular the main audience chamber or *Majlis* are the ones which exhibit the greatest evidence of workmanship and are the most extravagant. This emphasis is very much born out by al-Maqqarî, who remarks about the *Majlis* in his book that --

"..Another of the wonders of al-Zahra was the hall called *kasru al-khilafa*²⁸ the roof of which was of gold and solid but transparent blocks of marble of various colours, the walls being likewise of the same materials. In the centre of this hall, or, according to the some, on the top of the above described fountain, which is by then placed in this hall, was fixed the unique pearl presented to *al-Nasir* by the Greek Emperor...among other valuable objects. The tiles that covered the roof of this magnificent hall were made of pure gold and silver..."²⁹

Although the archaeological evidence does not confirm this degree of extravagance, there can be little doubt that the reception hall contained many features worthy of note³⁰. The floor, which was proportioned using a trapezoidal pattern as in the Syrian Palace of Mshâtâ³¹, was decorated with patterned tiles³², examples of which can be seen in the Aljaferia, the eleventh century *Banû Hud* Palace in Saragossa.³³ The middle register -- the walls -- were decorated in three main ways ; geometric patterning, inscriptions

²⁸ Although a translation would seem to suggest that this was the Caliph's Palace, it seems that the pearl mentioned was present in buildings off the *Majlis* (See Ibn Idhârî)

²⁹ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.236

³⁰ An extensive discussion of these features, and the decoration of the Palace as a whole may be found in *Madinat* by Hernandez-Gimenez. The section discussing the use of architectural art on pp.95-124 is exceedingly useful.

³¹ see *Spanien*, article by Ewert p.36.

³² see p.108 (second illustration)

³³ *ibid.* p.33

executed in a fine *kūfic* script³⁴ and vegetal decoration either carved or in mosaic³⁵, all of which were orthodox forms of decoration, and may be seen in earlier and later buildings both in the East and in al-Andalus. It must be noted however that the vegetal decoration shows evidence of evolution. Although based on traditional Islamic motifs, and distributed in the 'natural'³⁶ manner also adopted by the artists of the Byzantine³⁷ and Sassanid empires, thus suggesting the organic nature of the decoration, there is evidence of specifically Andalusí themes, for example, pine-cones and bunches of grapes³⁸. The visual statement of the vegetal decoration³⁹ is therefore clear -- *Madīnat al-Zahra* was not a nostalgic reminiscence of Umayyad supremacy in the East, but a vibrant and defiant re-iteration of Umayyad supremacy in the West. At frequent intervals throughout the *Majlis* were finely decorated columns, which Ibn Idhari tells us cost a basic eight *dinars* each⁴⁰, presumably this rate being for an uncarved column. Above the columns⁴¹ and the middle register were fine multi-part arches⁴² which must have created an impression of great height, complementing the impression of size created by the many columns. Unfortunately the ceiling of the *majlis* was destroyed, although it is not inconceivable to suggest that it was decorated in a similar style to that seen in

³⁴ see A.Fernández-Prentas "Calligraphy in al-Andalus" in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* ed. Jayussi (Leiden 1992) pp.639-679

³⁵ see p.109 (both illustrations)

³⁶ This does not mean that the decoration was not symmetrical, merely that the symmetry was based on natural forms.

³⁷ see Hernandez-Gimenez *Madinat* p.127

³⁸ see *El Salon* and Barrucand and Badnorz *MA*, also Hernandez-Gimenez *Madinat* (p.84)

³⁹ an example of this decoration may be seen on p.107

⁴⁰ see Ibn Idhârî *Bayan*

⁴¹ an illustration of a column capital may be seen on p.106 (second illustration). A capital attributed to the palace may also be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum in the Islamic art section (collection no. A.10 1922-?)

⁴² see p.112

other Andalusí Palaces, for example the Alhambra,⁴³ built in the fourteenth Century by the Nasrids in Granada, which was undoubtedly influenced by the memory of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, and was arguably the Nasrid equivalent architecturally. It is after all fairly inconceivable that such an extravagant construction would be surmounted by a plain ceiling⁴⁴. It would also appear that there were other assembly halls and public buildings within the complex although their precise function is unknown. From the sources it is fairly clear that the main *Majlis* was the site for all important state affairs held within *Madīnat al-Zahra*. Quite clearly the buildings of *Madīnat al-Zahra* were designed to stress the economic and architectural sophistication of the *milieu*. It also becomes evident that the buildings were constructed in such a way to complement the extravagant and important ceremonial which took place within them. If one were to draw a biological analogy, if the complex was seen as the heart of the Andalusí state, the ceremonies would be seen as the oxygenated blood which ran through them.

It should be noted that the buildings of the Palace were not the only important feature of the palace complex, for it becomes clear that the setting of the Palace in a magnificent series of gardens was almost as striking. It is particularly interesting to note that the lakes are described as being of quite a considerable size, Ibn Idhârî remarking that --

"...Every day, the fish in the lakes were given eight hundred loaves of bread, and this was the least unusual thing which happened..."⁴⁵

⁴³ see Graber *The Alhambra* (London 1978) -- various references to *Madīnat al-Zahra*.

⁴⁴ see p.108 (first illustration)

⁴⁵ see Ibn Idhârî *Bayan*

Unfortunately very little information is given about the precise design of the gardens although they are frequently mentioned, in particular in *al-Muqtabis* by Ibn Ḥayyân⁴⁶. It is worthy of note that three main features were achieved by the gardens -- visually they affirmed the fertility of the area and stressed the scientific skill of irrigating⁴⁷ what would otherwise be a barren and dry land. Thirdly, the presence of flowing water alleviated the dryness and heat of the land. The presence of gardens also affirmed the Eastern heritage of the Palace, for, it becomes clear that gardens were also considered an important part of the Eastern Palace, the historian Theophanes remarking of the Syrian Palace of *Qasr al-Hair* that --

"...And he [Hisham⁴⁸] began to found palaces in open country and town, and to create sown fields and gardens and to make water channels...."⁴⁹⁺⁵⁰

There are also some basic points which may be made relating to the structure of the gardens, information about which may be derived from other extant gardens in al-Andalus. This however a risky business, as Dickie --

" Writers on the subject rely overmuch in the present appearance of gardens on Muslim sites, choosing to ignore that the garden is of its nature the most evanescent of art forms, one season alone sufficing to effect a change..."⁵¹

⁴⁶ see next Chapter.

⁴⁷ for a discussion of irrigation and hydraulic technology in al-Andalus, see Thomas F. Glick in the *Legacy of Muslim Spain* ed. Jayussi in " Hydraulic technology in al-Andalus " pp.974 - 987 also P. Cressier in *Spanien und der Orient im Frühen und Hohen mittelalter* in " L'Hydraulique d' al-Andalus."

⁴⁸ We can not be entirely certain that Hisham did construct *Qasr al-Hair*

⁴⁹ cited Cresswell *EMA* vol.1 OUP 1933 p.343

⁵⁰ και ηρξάτο κτι ζειν κατα χωραν και πολιν παλατια και, και κατασπορος ποιεν και παραδτισους και νδατα εκβαλλειν

⁵¹ see " The Hispano-Arab Garden : Notes towards a typology " in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* ed. Jayussi pp.1016-1036

Having taken Dickie's *caveat* to heart, it is perhaps fair to suggest that the basic plan of the gardens would have been of the absolutely standard quadripartite design, reminiscent of the Persian *Chahar bagh*, the four areas representing the four areas of paradise, divided by the four rivers of paradise, the *Jayhân*, the *Sayhân*, the *Nil* and the *Furât*. If they did indeed conform to this standard, the gardens of *Madînat al-Zahra* would probably have been irrigated by gravity from the *taqsim* or irrigation pool⁵². Within the lakes there were also pavilions similar to that in the gardens of the Alhambra⁵³⁺⁵⁴. Another feature which may well have been present in *Madînat al-Zahra* was the *hayr al-haywanat* or zoological garden -- a feature of many Umayyad Palaces in the East. The imagery of the magnificent palace in these Paradise-like gardens⁵⁵ is quite clear -- that the physical power centre of al -Andalus(*Madînat al-Zahra*) and the ruling dynasty (the Umayyads), were there at the ordinance of Allah and were therefore protected by divine providence. It is perhaps not untenable to suggest that the combination of fine buildings and idyllic surroundings must also have encouraged some potentially disruptive Andalusí magnates who were housed in *Madînat al-Zahra* to stay there -- incarcerated in a beautiful and perfect prison.⁵⁶

Thus far, the following conclusions may be drawn from the Palace -- that it was constructed in such a way as to suggest and demonstrate both the

⁵² an illustration of an aqueduct used to convey water to the *taqsim* may be seen on p.111.

⁵³ see Graber *ibid.* p.120

⁵⁴ Articles of interest on Ta'ifa architecture by Torres-Balbas may be found in *Ars Hispaniae* Vol.IV (Madrid 1949). The Alhambra is discussed on pp.83-87.

⁵⁵ The idea that an eschatological dimension was involved in Palace architecture, albeit of a slightly later era is explored in " Ta'ifa Palace Architecture" by Robinson in *Gesta* vol.XXXVI (1997) (pp.145-155)

⁵⁶ see discussion about *Madînat al-Zahra* in Kennedy *Muslim Spain and Portugal* Longman 1996

temporal stability and the fiscal security of the state. Secondly, that the Caliph was the supreme ruler in al-Andalus, a position which he held by the grace and endorsement of Allah, shown by the positioning of the buildings, and the paradise like situation of the Palace. Lastly, the sheer physical cost of the *Majlis* and the fiscal resources ploughed into it, suggest that the Palace was designed to stress the temporal superiority and power of the Caliphs to all visitors to the Palace, a notion which was tempered by the pious situation of the mosque which stressed the unity and equality of the faithful.

Having attempted to define the statement behind the physical buildings of the Palace, it is perhaps sensible to ponder upon the impetus behind the elevation from *Munyat* to Palace, remarked upon by al-Maqqarî --

" This City, which at first was only intended as a spot of recreation for his mistress, *al-Naṣir* soon took for his residence, making it the abode of his guards and the officers of his household ; he built the Palace of solid materials and beautiful design, and ornamented the interior with costly magnificence.."⁵⁷

It should be noted however that such an exercise presents a great possibility for over-analysis and therefore for error. We can not begin to undertake a psychological profile of *al-Naṣir* from the information made available by Arab historians, apart from to saying that he was obviously supremely determined, and very much committed to the re-unifying of the fragmented Andalusī state which he inherited. If Ibn Idhârî is to be believed, *al-Naṣir's* reign was not one which brought him pleasure. Despite his many victories and his obvious success, he implied that few days of his reign actually

⁵⁷ al-Maqqarî *ibid.* p.232

brought him happiness⁵⁸. It would seem sensible to suggest that such disillusionment could well have been caused by one negative event in his reign -- a description which could well fit the humiliating defeat at *al-khandaq* in 939⁵⁹. As already noted, a defeat by the Christians was a humiliating prospect for an *Amir*, let alone a *Caliph* and in particular one who had rather presumptuously taken as his own *laqab al-Naṣir* -- the victorious. It was in fact nothing less than a devastating blow to the integrity of his claim to the title of *Caliph* and to the standing of the Umayyad dynasty in the Muslim World. The luxury and statement of temporal power may therefore be seen not only as a propaganda measure, but as a real and necessary re-iteration of Caliphal power in the wake of this humiliation -- a statement which was made not only for the benefit of those diplomats who sought alliances with *al-Naṣir* but also to stress the concepts of ordination and power to his own subjects, reeling at the defeat. Having suggested this however, it is perhaps worthwhile to note that this is a fundamentally unanswerable question -- one perhaps ought to concentrate on the physical reality of the building, to quote al-Maqqari --

"..In one thing, however, we find all authors agree, namely, that there was never built a more splendid hall than this, either in the times preceding Islam or afterwards...."⁶⁰

⁵⁸ See Chapter 1.

⁵⁹ See Chapter 1.

⁶⁰ al-Maqqarī *ibid.* p.237

Chapter 3.

Court Ceremonial in Madīnat al-Zahra.

" Thine, Lord, is majesty, all pomp and power,
Kingship whose splendour yet more splendid grows
O'ertopping all in glory and wealths dower...." ¹

Ibn Gabirol (1021-1070) *Kether Mulkhuth*

"..government by ritual came to an end, and government
by administration began...."

*Southern Medieval Humanism and other studies*²

Whilst Southern's observation may well be accurate in certain respects, there can be little doubt that his statement could not be applied to the Umayyad state of al-Andalus, indeed, one might say that in the context of the Andalusi state³, government by ritual and government by administration were practically inseparable, as al-Maqqarī notes --

"...It is generally known that the strength and solidity of their empire consisted

¹ Loewe *Ibn Gabirol* Halban 1989 p.119

² cited Magdalino *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180* Cambridge 1993 p.237

³ An extract from Grabar's 1955 PhD thesis (Princeton) entitled "Ceremonial and Art in the Umayyad Court," is available from the internet, although it should be noted that this refers to the Umayyad Court in the Middle East. (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/med/grabar1.html>)

principally in the policy pursued by these princes, the magnificence and splendour with which they surrounded their court, the reverential awe with which they inspired their subjects...."⁴

It must be stated however, that al-Andalus was not the only medieval state which utilised ceremonial as a means of demonstrating its sophistication at this time, two other examples being the °Abbasid Caliphate of the East and the Byzantine Empire, both of which appear to have relied upon a very visual type of government. Indeed, ceremonial played such an important part in the *milieu* that contemporary handbooks were written, describing the role of ceremonial in these courts, *The Book of Ceremonies*⁵, compiled at the behest of the Emperor Constantine VII *Porphyrogenitos*, and *Rûsum dar al-Khilafa*⁶, compiled by an Iraqi *Kâtib* Abu al-Hasan Hilâl b. al-Muhassin b. Abu Ishaq Ibrahim b. Hilâl b. Ibrahim b. Hayyun, also known as Hilâl al-Sabi. Both of these sources are systematic in approach, and describe the progression of the ceremony from beginning to end thus providing important and extremely useful information about the milieu. Unfortunately no such equivalent exists from al-Andalus, yet, this should not be taken to indicate a lesser emphasis on ceremonial, merely that such a work was not commissioned, or is no longer extant. Fortunately however, the historian Ibn Ḥayyân preserved in his *al-Muqtabis*⁷ fragments of a larger work by the historian al-Râzî, of Iranian origin, which describe in great detail the ceremonial of *Madînat al-Zahra*, thus

⁴ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.98

⁵ available in a French and Greek edition -- *Le Livre des Cérémonies* trans. Vogt Paris 1967

⁶ available in an English translation by Salem -- *Rules and Regulations of the °Abbasid Court* Beirut 1977

⁷ available in Arabic only, edited by Hajjaj Beirut 1965. It should be noted that a Spanish translation of fragments of al-Râzî's work exists entitled *Anales Palatinos del Califa de Cordoba al-Hakam II* Madrid 1967.

providing an opportunity to compare the salient features of the ceremonial employed in the court, leading toward a greater understanding of the court ceremonial of *Madīnat al-Zahra*. Before such an exercise is undertaken however, it is worthwhile to reflect upon the purpose of court ceremonial in general.

It would appear from the sources that ceremonial as carried out in the three courts in question may be split into two distinct types -- ceremonies conducted for the benefit of visiting dignitaries or diplomats which were evidently intended to inspire a sense of awe in the visitor and to intimidate them prior to negotiation, such ceremonial may be seen in *al-Muqtabis* in the descriptions of the reception of the *Banû Jazar* in *Madīnat al-Zahra*⁸, in Liuprand of Cremona's account of his reception by the Byzantine Empire Constantine⁹ and in Hilâl al-Sabi's ephrastic description of the reception of a Byzantine ambassador to Baghdad by the °Abbasid Caliph *al-Muqtadir bi-Allah*¹⁰. It is interesting to reflect in these accounts upon the interaction between the magnificence of the architectural surroundings and of the splendour of the ceremonial which took place within them. The second type of ceremonial is undoubtedly harder to understand, that of ceremonies carried out within the Palaces for the inhabitants of the Palace and other State functionaries with no external visitors present. Fortunately however, this particular phenomenon has received a great deal of scrutiny by anthropologists, in particular Mary Douglas, who notes that

" Institutions systematically direct individual memory and channel our

⁸ Ibn Hayyan *al-Muqtabis* p.40

⁹ Liuprand *Antapodosis* p.209

¹⁰ Hilal *Rûsûm* p.16

perceptions into forms compatible with the relations they authorise. They fix processes which are essentially dynamic, they hide their influence, and they rouse our emotions to a standardized pitch on standardized issues..."¹¹

It would therefore appear that, as well as providing a visual testimony of state unity, ceremonial also had the effect of 'programming' the individual to recognise his position *vis-à-vis* his fellows and the ruler. In the case of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, it becomes clear that this was a necessary function, a fact which is obvious when one remembers how rebellious *zu'ama'*¹², uncontrolled, nearly destroyed the political structure of al-Andalus during the disastrous reign of °Abd Allah. If the premise of control is extended further, and the work of the anthropologist Rosen¹³ consulted, it becomes obvious how fundamental the physical fabric of *Madīnat al-Zahra* was in ensuring this stability --

"..A very considerable part of an individuals character is constituted by the social *milieu* from which he draws his nurture. To Moroccans, geographical regions are inhabited spaces, realms within which communities organise themselves to wrest a living and forge a degree of security...their main focus is on the identity of persons *in situ* because the site itself is a social context through which an individual becomes used to ways of living in space. To be attached to a place is, therefore, not only to have a point of origin -- it is to have those social roots, those human achievements, that are distinctive to the kind of person one is..."¹⁴

¹¹ Douglas *How Institutions think* Syracuse 1986 p.92

¹² زعماء / زعيم -- lit. rulers or magnates

¹³ Douglas refers heavily to his work with Moroccan Berbers in her book.

¹⁴ Douglas *ibid.* p.103

There can be little doubt that initial contact in any situation is very important so it is therefore hardly surprising that a great deal of effort was made to ensure that a positive image of the state was immediately given. This feature can be seen clearly in the following extracts, the first from Liuprand of Cremona's account of his first visit to Constantinople --

"...Finally we left Venice on the twenty-fifth of August and reached Constantinople on the seventeenth of September. It will be a pleasant task to describe the marvellous and unheard of manner of our reception. Next to the Imperial residence at Constantinople there is a place of remarkable size and beauty which the Greeks call *Magnavra*, the letter V taking the place of the digamma, and the name being equivalent to 'fresh breeze.' In order to receive some Spanish envoys¹⁵, who had recently arrived, as well as myself and Liutefred, Constantine gave orders that this palace should be got ready and the following preparations made...."¹⁶

The second account, taken from *Rûsum dar al-Khilafah*, also demonstrates the use of people to suggest the great size of, in this particular case, the °Abbasid Capital of Baghdad --

"In the days of *al-Muqtadir bi-Allah*, may the blessings of Allah be upon him, an envoy was sent to him by the Byzantine Emperor [Constantine VII]. In his honour, the Residence¹⁷ was furnished with beautiful trappings and decorated with splendid implements. The Chamberlains and their lieutenants and the retinues in accordance with their ranks were all in proper formation at its gates,

¹⁵ Liudprand makes many references to this Spanish delegation. It is interesting to note that Ibn Idhârî makes reference in his *Kitab al-bayan al-Mughrib* to such a delegation, and to the gifts with which they returned from the Byzantine Emperor.

¹⁶ Liudprand of Cremona *Antapodosis* trans. Wright ? p.207

¹⁷ Hilâl refers to the °Abbasid Palace in this manner.

corridors, passageways, crossways, courtyards and courts. The soldiers, of different ranks and in excellent attire, were drawn up in two lines and mounted on animals with saddles of gold and silver ; and near them were the reserve horses in similar elegance, displaying many types of arms and equipment. They stretched from the upper Shammasiyyah gate to near the residence. Behind them stood the servants, the Caliphs private servants and outdoor servants in elegant uniforms wearing swords and gilded belts...The markets, streets, roofs and alleys of the eastern part of the City were filled with crowds of spectators...In the Tigris, the *Shath^cat tayyarat, zabazib, shabbarat, zallalat* and *ṣumayriyyat*¹⁸ were splendidly ornamented and equipped. The envoy and his procession then walked until they reached the residence...." ¹⁹

The *Banû Jazar* and their Berber delegation had to travel some distance before arriving at Cordoba, and from there to *Madīnat al-Zahra*. Having entered the City or State, it appears that the next stage in the ceremonial²⁰ was to be greeted by a representative of the state, in the case of the *Banû Jazar*, by Yahya b. °Ali who was obviously sent to escort them to *Madīnat al-Zahra*, it is interesting to note how the delegation encountered increasingly senior officials as it progressed through al-Andalus --

"..On the day of the Sabbath, on the thirtieth day of *Shawwal*, the welcoming ceremonies were initiated by °Ali al-Baghdadi, the secretary of Ja'afar b. °Ali, following the arrival in al-Andalus of the escort of the delegation, Yahya b. °Ali

¹⁸ Different types of Ships.

¹⁹ Hilâl al-Sabi *Rûṣum* p.16

²⁰ It is interesting to remember that Western dignitaries were also received in *Madīnat al-Zahra*. The account of the Ottonian Abbot John of Gorze also describes this ceremonial and the various mechanisms employed. See Levi-Provençal H.E.M.ii pp.153-163.

and the *Banû Jazar* who brought with them good news about the vanquishing [of Ziri b. Manad al-Sanhaja]²¹... [the delegation were then met] by the secretaries, Ibn Muḥammad and Aḥmad b. °Abd al Malek the *Sâhib al-Naḥzul* [who] received Yahya b. °Ali and the *Banû Jazar*..²²

This progression of officials was also observed in Baghdad, as noted by Hilâl al-Sabi --

"..When the envoy entered he was led to the house of Naṣr al-Qushuri, where he found a large crowd and beheld a greatly impressive sight. Mistaking Qushuri for the Caliph, he showed awe and reverence, until he was told that he was the Chamberlain. He was then led to the residence assigned to the *wizârah*, then held by the *wazir* °Ali b. Muḥammad b. al-Furat. Here he saw a more impressive sight than at Naṣr's, the Chamberlain. He was certain that this was the Caliph, but he was informed that this was the *wazir* Ibn al-Furat. He greeted the *wazir* and paid his respects, and was seated in a place between the Tigris and the gardens, which was well furnished with drapes and seats of honour. He was surrounded by servants and *ghulam* carrying battle-axes and swords. In a few hours he was called to the presence of *al-Muqtadir bi-Allah*..²³

Although not mentioned specifically in Liudprand's account, it seems tenable to suggest that a similar procedure was followed in the Byzantine court, the delegation being initially greeted by the *logothete tu dromo*.²⁴

²¹ see Kennedy *Muslim Spain and Portugal* pp.103- 104.

²² Ibn Ḥayyân *al-Muqtabis* p.40

²³ Hilâl al-Sabi *Râṣum* p.16

²⁴ see Tinnefield ' Ceremonies for foreign ambassadors at the Court of Byzantium and their political background " in the *Byzantinische Forschungen* number XIII 1993 p.193

Evidently this procedure was intended to foster a sense of increasing awe in the visiting diplomat, and, one might cynically suggest, to provide numerous opportunities for diplomatic gaffes, thus increasing the discomfiture of the *Legatio* and manoeuvring him into a more malleable negotiating position. It would appear at this stage that it was customary to give gifts to the ruler, noted both by Liudprand who notes that --

"..In my doubt and perplexity it finally occurred to me that I might offer the gifts, which on my own account I had brought for the emperor, as coming from Berengar, and trick out my humble present with fine words. I therefore presented him with nine excellent cuirasses, seven excellent shields with gilded bosses, two silver cauldrons, some swords, spears and spits, and what was more precious to the emperor than anything, four *carzimasia* ; that being the Greek name for young eunuchs who have had both their testicles and their penis removed. This operation is performed by traders at Verdun, who take boys into Spain and make a huge profit..."²⁵

and by Ibn Ḥayyân who records that --

"...[Ibn Muḥammad and Aḥmad b.°Abd al-Malek the *Saḥib al-Naḥzul*] brought eighty-six mares with bridles and saddles and mules to carry the cumbersome weight [of] 50 *baniqa*²⁶, 30 *qabab*²⁷, 13 linens, forty-four *jabah*²⁸ of white linen, slaves and ten garments of beaten cotton from Tangier..."²⁹

²⁵ Liudprand of Cremona *Antapadosis* p.209

²⁶ lit. garments

²⁷ The meaning of this word is uncertain, it could possible refer to collars (قبة) for the garments.

²⁸ A Sleeveless cotton garment.

²⁹ Ibn Ḥayyân *al-Muqtabis* p.40

This stage being accomplished, it was customary to be ushered into the presence of the Emperor or Caliph. It should however be remembered that this was after the exchange of gifts, which was, arguably, a symbolic acknowledgement of subservience to the ruler -- in return for his help, the gratitude of the group which he was aiding, or negotiating with, would be forthcoming. This was however not the last stage of the progression toward the head of state, for it would appear, that other mechanisms were often employed to affirm the power and sophistication of the ruler whether visually, or through the use of mechanical devices. It would seem that the focal point of these mechanisms was often the throne of the main reception hall, undoubtedly drawing the attention of the visiting legate to the ruler of the state. Both Hilâl al-Sabi and Liudprand mention this, with Hilâl al-Sabi recording the visual impact of the throne :

"Samsam al-Dawlah sat in a golden *sidillah*, and under his great elevated seat ran a stream of water in a lead plated bed. Golden fire burners with lighted aromatic sticks were placed before him"³⁰

Liudprand on the other hand appears to have been captivated by the Byzantine machinery :

"..Before the emperor's seat stood a tree, made of bronze gilded over, whose branches were filled with birds, also made of gilded bronze, which uttered different cries, each according to its varying species. The throne itself was so marvellously fashioned that at once moment it seems a low structure, and at another it rose high into the air. It was of immense size and was guarded by

³⁰ Hilâl al-Sabi *Rûşum* p.20

lions, made either of bronze or of wood covered over with gold who beat the ground with their tails and a gave a dreadful roar with open mouth and quivering tongue. Leaning upon the shoulders of two eunuchs I was brought into the presence of the Emperor...after I had three times made obeisance to the emperor with my face upon the ground, I lifted my head and behold ! the man whom just before I had seen sitting on a moderately elevated seat now changed his raiment and was sitting on the level of the ceiling..."³¹

Although not mentioned specifically by Ibn Ḥayyan, it is fairly likely that the throne of the *Majlis* in *Madīnat al-Zahra* was also visually impressive, a fact which is suggested by reference in *al-Muqtabis* to "the throne of the *Majlis*, which overlooked the gardens of the Palace of al-Zahra."³²

Unfortunately since the throne is no longer extant, this must remain purely conjecture. It is also worth noting that although not specifically noted by Ibn Ḥayyân, al-Maqqarî makes a brief mention of a pool filled with quicksilver which was used to simulate lightning.³³ It becomes clear from this analysis that many complex mechanisms were employed to enforce was essentially a simple objective -- the affirmation of the superiority of the ruler. It is interesting to ponder upon the interaction of three different elements upon the legate -- the use of mechanical or aesthetic devices to impress him, the gradual increase of

³¹ Liudprand of Cremona *Antapadosis* pp.207-208

³² Ibn Ḥayyân *al-Muqtabis* p.119 (المجلس الموفى على الرياض بقصر الزهراء)

(السريير في) In "Ceremonial and Art at the Umayyad Court," Graber notes the distinction made by the Arab historians between the *kursi* or chair of courtiers, and the *ṣarir* or throne of the Caliph a distinction which was evidently intended to stress the importance of the ruler. It is interesting to note that in the above quotation, the term *ṣarir* is used.

³³ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* vol.II (reference unknown)

psychological pressure placed upon him and the physical impact of the splendid architectural surroundings. By impinging on all of his senses, the legate was mentally thrust into a perception of power and sophistication which would undoubtedly have meant a slightly more malleable negotiating position.

It must be stressed that, however effective these measure were with regard to foreign visitors, they would have been less suitable for the citizens of the state, and in particular for those who were associated with the Palace or the organs of power and who would almost certainly have been observers at many ceremonies such as those described previously. In order to ensure the controlling aspect of ceremonial, more 'ordinary' yet nonetheless effective measures had to be employed. The most obvious mechanism was that of stratification -- a rigorous enforcement of rank with the ruler at the pinnacle, and successively wider ranks of nobles and officials beneath him, a concept known in the Byzantine court³⁴ as *katastasis*, which echoed visually the heavenly hierarchy, with the Emperor as God's chosen occupying His place in the earthly hierarchy thus also confirming the legitimacy of the regime.³⁵ Whilst the Islamic theophany was different, the concept was very much the same with the Caliph, or successor of the Prophet (and therefore Allah's chosen) at the pinnacle of the hierarchical structure. It becomes clear if the following accounts are scrutinised that the stratifying principle was very much in evidence at all times. Firstly, an account of the breaking of the *Ramadan* fast from *al-Muqtabis*³⁶ --

³⁴ for a discussion of ceremonial and its uses in the Byzantine Court, see Magdalino *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180* Cambridge 1993. pp.237-248.

³⁵ 'εΝΝΟΜΟΣ ΠΙΣΤΑΣΙΑ

³⁶ A diagram showing the distribution of dignitaries within the *Majlis* may be seen on p.115 within the plan and photograph appendix.

"...On the day of the Sabbath, the first day of Shawwal, the Amir of the faithful³⁷ took his place on the throne of the reception hall which overlooked the gardens of the Palace of al Zahra with consummate grace and perfect poise. His brothers were the first to salute him, as dictated by tradition - Abu Asbagh, °Abd al aziz and Abu Muṭarrif, along with the lesser brothers then assumed their positions to the right of the throne. After that, Abu Qasim Asbagh took up his position at the left of the throne, followed by the *Wazirs*. After they had sat down, those below them took their places ; Ja°far b. °Ali took his place, along with the senior *fatās*³⁸ who were positioned on either side of the throne. The Master of the Falcons and the jewellery, Judr, took his position at the right hand side of the throne with the senior *fatās*, who then assumed their places as dictated by custom. The master of the robes and official clothing assumed his position with the senior *fatās*. The *hâjib*³⁹ took his place at the right hand side of the throne, the *wazir*⁴⁰, *Kitâb*⁴¹, and prefect of the city of Cordoba, Ja°afar b. °Uthman, followed by a prefect of the high ranking police, Yaḥya b. °abd Allah b. Yaḥya b. Idris, who was followed by another prefect of the high ranking police [who also held a position in the] army, Qasim ibn Muḥammad ibn Tamliṣ. Muḥammad b. °abd Allah ibn abi °Umar, a prefect of the middle ranking police and the *Qadi* of Seville then took his place. A *hâjib* then came to stand

³⁷ One of the numerous titles used in the Arabic sources for the Caliph. In this case al-Ḥakam.

³⁸ lit. young man. This term could refer to either servants, pages (*ghulâm*) or slave soldiers. It seems sensible to suggest that in this particular instance they were soldiers, possibly *ṣaqâliba* mounted as a body-guard for the Caliph.

³⁹ The *hâjib* was essentially the prime minister of the Umayyad state. The title, which implies Chamberlain or door keeper was probably assigned because the *hâjib* ran his own court at the entrance of the Palace, where petitioners would meet him. See Kennedy *Muslim Spain* p.45

⁴⁰ Honorific title awarded to ministers.

⁴¹ Secretary

at the left of the throne - the prefect of army horses Ṣaïd ibn Aflah, followed by another prefect of the high ranking police, Aḥmad ibn ʿisa ibn Fatis, followed by a prefect of the middle ranking police ʿAbd al Raḥmân Muḥammad b. Hisham al Tujibi . An opening was created in their wake, and, after an interlude, servants ranked according to their station appeared -- the *Saḥib al-Naḥzul*, the treasurers, the inspectors, the secretaries [and] the trusted men -- all in their proper places. They were joined on this occasion by Yaḥya b. ʿAli al-Andalus who was given access to them as an honour to him. The right and left sides of the reception hall were lined with senior eunuchs and people, according to their station, then the secretaries, the servants and the masters of the stirrup to the end of the reception hall until they reached the portico...."⁴²

Secondly an account of the summoning of the Caliph from *Rûṣum dar al-Khilafah* by Hilâl al-Sabi :

"Then the *wazir* enters accompanied by the chamberlains. As he approaches the throne, they stand back. After kissing the ground, the *wazir*⁴³ approaches until he is quite close to the Caliph. If the Caliph honours him by stretching out his hand, the *wazir* will take his hand, kiss it, and go back until he stands five arms lengths to the right of the throne. After him the chief chamberlain admits the commander of the army who kisses the ground and stands to the left of the throne. He then admits the chiefs of the *Diwans*⁴⁴, the secretaries and then calls the generals, who are preceded by the Chamberlains lieutenants according to their positions. They stand, as prescribed, to the right and the left of the throne.

⁴² Ibn Ḥayyân *al-Muqtabis* ibid. p.119.

⁴³ The function of the *Wazir* in the Abassid court was similar to that of the *hâjib* in the Umayyad court in al-Andalus.

⁴⁴ Essentially different offices of the civil service

Then the call is made to the descendants of Hashim, to those wearing *al-danniyat*⁴⁵ and to the leaders of prayers, all of whom stand at the reception carpet, greet the Caliph and then stand alone. Then the judges are admitted ; first, the Judge of Judges or *Qaḍī al-Hadrah*. When the general permission is given, the soldiers enter and stand in two lines between two ropes stretched in the *al-Salem* courtyard. The reason for these ropes is to prevent commotion, inconvenience, mingling⁴⁶, and overcrowding, and to enable the Caliph to see and recognise from afar whoever is admitted. This contributes to the dignity of the audience and makes it more awe inspiring...⁴⁷

Lastly we have an account of the promotion of a *Nobilisimon*⁴⁸ from *The Book of Ceremonies* :

"When the acclamations are finished, the Sovereigns, the *Cesars* and the *Nobilisimon* take their place in the *triklinos*...[the senate] prostrate themselves at the feet of the emperor and kiss his knees before doing the same for the co-Emperor. They kiss one knee of the *Cesar* to the right and one knee on the left. They kiss the hand of the *Nobilisimon* who is standing up...they then leave the *triklinos* for the Church of the Holy Wisdom where the liturgy of the feast takes place according to the ceremonial."⁴⁹

It is interesting to note that these respective sections comment upon the first sight of the Emperor or Caliph, although the mode of arrival is different in all

⁴⁵ A garment which marked some court functionaries.

⁴⁶ This is one of the most blatant example of the enforcement of the concept of stratification.

⁴⁷ Hilāl al-Sabi *Rāṣūm* pp.63-64

⁴⁸ νωβελησιμον

⁴⁹ *Le Livre des Cérémonies* p.35, taken from the account -- 'ὅσα δεῖ παραφνλαττειν ἐπι χειροτονια νωβελησιμον It is interesting to note how this ceremony, like the account of the breaking of the feast of *Ramadan* occurred along with a religious event. Truly an embodiment of *Katastasis*.

three cases ; in al-Andalus, the Caliph arrived after the gathering had assembled, seating himself in an elaborate and regulated manner,⁵⁰ in Constantinople, the Emperor was already seated elsewhere when the procession presented itself and in Baghdad, the senior representatives of the Palace staff presented themselves to the Caliph in his private apartments. Although different in their execution, it is obvious that the focal point of the exercise was clearly the Caliph or Emperor, stating iconographically that the ruler was the central element of the ceremony, and by extension the State -- another example of *katastasis*. Quite clearly if one applies the theories of Mary Douglas, the stratification was not only a visual representation of the *katastasis* or hierarchy approved by God, it also served to inculcate in the individuals who took part in the ceremony, a knowledge and perception of their own inferiority in reference to the Caliph and their position *vis-à-vis* other courtiers. It also becomes clear that this stratification was rigorously upheld by the use of titles within the court system, in essence a verbal enforcement of the visual stratification, seen clearly when one refers to the account from *al-Muqtabis* and to the various degrees of prefecture of the Police (*Sāhib al-Shurtah*). It must be noted however that the awarding and use of titles has often been fundamentally misunderstood by historians, as evidence of a rapid 'devaluing' of court hierarchy, providing evidence of general disintegration, a misunderstanding often revealed in the work of the Marxist historian Ostrogorsky :

"The changes which Alexios introduces into the system of court titles were

⁵⁰ see the translated account on p.61

exceedingly characteristic of the disintegration of the Byzantine administrative system."⁵¹

This is however fundamentally inaccurate, in both a Byzantine and an Andalusí⁵² context. If one examines the various *Ashab al-Shurtah*, it becomes clear that the vast majority were powerful and potentially anarchic *zu'ama'*, like °Abd al Raḥmân b. Hisham al-Tujibi, the head of the disruptive Tujibi dynasty which had rebelled against the inept °Abd Allah, and even in 930 against °Abd al Raḥmân III *al-Naṣir*.⁵³ Titles were, as it were, being used as further 'cement' to shore up the hierarchical structure. It is interesting to consider that whilst titles served this function in all three courts, the position within the Court hierarchy of the title holders was often different, a fact which emerges very clearly when one compares the dignitaries in the two accounts mentioned from the Islamic world. It would appear from the account of Hilâl al-Sabi that the Chief Chamberlain, and the holder of the title of *wazir* occupied a relatively equal position in the °Abbasid court hierarchy with the *wazir* being, if anything, slightly superior. This was undoubtedly not the case in the Umayyad Court in *Madīnat al-Zahra* for the Chamberlain or Hâjib appears to have occupied the most important position both in the court, and politically, an example being seen in the fact that Ja'far, the Slav Hâjib of al-Ḥakam II, was jointly responsible for the acquisition of funds and building materials for the extension of the mosque in Cordoba.⁵⁴ It is also apparent that, conversely, the title of *wazir* was also applied differently ; whereas there appears to have been only

⁵¹ Ostrogorsky *History of the Byzantine State* London 1993 p.367

⁵² For a discussion of titles in Cordoba, see especially Vallvé *el-Califato de Córdoba* in the Chapter " La organización político-administrativo " Madrid p.75 onwards.

⁵³ see Kennedy *Muslim Spain and Portugal*.

⁵⁴ See the account in Chapter 1

one associated with the ceremony in Hilal's account, many are mentioned by Ibn Ḥayyan. It is also interesting to note that whereas Hilal mentions numerous bureaucrats in the progression of the ceremony, Ibn Ḥayyan asserts that numerous prefects, with the title of *Sahib* participated in the Umayyad ceremony. As far as one can ascertain, it seems that al-Naṣir had re-vitalised a mandarin class of administrators, using loyal *muwali* to head the various divisions of the infrastructure, necessitating the creation of another class of offices ; that of the Prefects, who probably had little *de-facto* power or responsibility. The result of the prefecture was the absorption of the potentially troublesome *zu'amā*. It would appear that this was either not necessary in Baghdad, or that positions in the administration were used for a similar purpose.

Stratification on its own would however have been dangerous -- to have continually enforced inequality whilst failing to stress unity could only have ended in disaster, yet one did not want to compromise the important stratification suggested above either. It becomes clear that this unity was stressed through the medium of dress, for, it becomes clear that participants in all three courts were expected to wear official clothing --

"...°Abbasid dignitaries wear black outer garments and shoes ; and they adorn themselves, according to rank, with girdles and swords. Those of them who become judges, however, wear *al-taylasan*. Judges of Baghdad, and the judges of other cities and towns who are entitled to wear black, wear black gowns, *taylasan*, *danniyat* and *qaraqifat*...The guards and leaders wore various kinds of black garments and turbans ; and on their feet they wore black socks and

leather shoes. Such are the rules of dress to which they adhered. Those below them in rank were forbidden to wear black, but were free to choose other colours...According to custom, the robes of honour given to army generals were as follows : a plain black turban, a black garment with a hoop, tied at the bottom, and another plain black robe without a hoop ; red *susi* cloth, gilded or plain embroidery, and a loose, sleeveless *dabiqi* garment...; and a red-sheathed sword, ornamented with white silver and with a silver-capped handle. On the sheath of the sword there is a ring of silver and a similar one on the strap. Its handle serves as an axe. They are also given two quivers for arrows and a standard..."⁵⁵

The Book of Ceremonies notes that --

"...On the day before, a verbal order⁵⁶ is given for the celebration to the *deferendarion*,⁵⁷ to the public auditor and [to] the whole senate so that..they will come in ceremonial dress in the morning. In the morning, the whole senate dons ceremonial dress as do the secretaries and others, and they also take the insignia in order to escort the sovereigns. When all is ready, the Patriarch comes and enters St Stephen's by Daphne⁵⁸ and waits for the sovereigns..."⁵⁹

Although not mentioned specifically in *al-Muqtabis*, it would seem likely that official robes were worn in *Madīnat al-Zahra* during state occasions, from the individual mentioned in the account of the breaking of the fast of *Ramadan*, the "Master of robes and official clothing."⁶⁰ It is interesting to note how failure to

⁵⁵ Hilāl al-Sabi *Rūṣum* pp.74-75

⁵⁶ αποκρισις

⁵⁷ δεφερενδαριον

⁵⁸ Ἅγιον Στεφανον της Δαφνης

⁵⁹ *The Book of Ceremonies* p.33

⁶⁰ صاحب البرد و الطراز

indicate this visual unity could be frowned upon --

" Muḥammad b.°Umar b. Yaḥya b. al-°Alani visited the residence of al-Muti... He was accompanied by the servant Niḥrir, by the *wazir* Muḥammad b. al-Hasan b. Ṣālihan, by Ibn al-Khayyat, the chief of the *Diwan* of correspondence, and by al-Hasan b. Muḥammad b. Naṣr, the Chief of the *Diwan* of Post and information. All of them were dressed in black except Muḥammad b.°Umar, who was dressed in white. The Chamberlain, Mu'nis al-Fadli, met them and said to Muḥammad b.°Umar : O noble one, this is not the dress of the residence, nor does your presence in this manner entitle you to an audience... Muḥammad b.°Umar said : what is it you want, O Chamberlain ? The Chamberlain said : to have you change your attire in compliance with tradition, or depart....."⁶¹

It becomes clear that in such a 'visual' *milieu*, displeasure could also be communicated via the medium of clothing, seen in Liudprand of Cremona's account of his second visit to Constantinople, protesting at the ill-treatment of Berengar --

"...His nobles for their part, who with their master passed through the plebeian and barefoot multitude, were dressed in tunics that were too large for them and were also because of their age full of holes. They would have looked better if they had worn their ordinary clothes. There was not a man among them whose grandfather had owned his tunic when it was new. No one except Nicephorus⁶² wore any jewels or golden ornaments, and the emperor looked more disgusting than ever in the regalia that had been designed to suit the persons of his ancestors. By your life, sires, dearer to me than my own, one of your nobles'

⁶¹ Hilāl al-Sabi *Rūṣum* p.61

⁶² Nicephorus II Phokas (963-969)

costly robes is worth a hundred or more of these. I was taken to the procession and given a place on a platform near the singers..."⁶³

Having discussed the need to stress unity, it also appears that the ruler, be he Emperor or Caliph distinguished himself with regalia of an antique or symbolic nature ;

"..The people enter the tribunal⁶⁴ of nineteen couches⁶⁵ along with the guards, the citizens and the army. The Chamberlain then dictates how people enter the portico of [the place] of the nineteen couches, whilst the rulers sit in the aforementioned *triklinos* carrying⁶⁶ the *divitisia*, the *klamidas* and the *stemmata*....."⁶⁷

Similarly in Baghdad --

" It has been the tradition of the Caliph to sit on an elevated seat on a throne covered with pure Armenian silk. The Caliph wears a long-sleeved garment, dyed black ; the outer garment is either plain or embroidered...He does not, however, wear *sigillatum* silk brocade or decorated garments. He wears a black *ruşafiyah* on his head, and adorns himself with the sword of the Prophet, may Allah bless him. He also keeps another sword on his left between the two cushions of the throne. On his feet he wears red boots ; and in front of him he has the *Qur'ân* of ʿUthman...on his shoulders he wears the garments of the Prophet, may Allah bless him ; and in his hand he holds the Prophets staff....."⁶⁸

⁶³ Liudprand of Cremona *Antapadosis* p.240

⁶⁴ Τριβουναλιω

⁶⁵ The *Decanneacubita*

⁶⁶ φοροντες τα διβητησια και τας χλαμηδας και τα στεμματα

⁶⁷ *The Book of Ceremonies* p.33

⁶⁸ Hilâl al-Sabi *Rûşum* p.73

Although no such garments or items are mentioned specifically by the sources with regard to *Madīnat al-Zahra* there can be little doubt that the Caliph wore special clothing which would have distinguished him from the other courtiers -- presumably the Umayyads when in power in the East had made use of the same regalia mentioned in the above description.

It becomes clear from *al-Muqtabis* that these 'internal' ceremonies also occurred at very carefully regulated times, a time which was almost entirely regulated by the Caliph himself --

"..The Caliph *al-Mustanşir bi-Allah* took his seat which marked the end of the fast. He then received the oath of allegiance from those assembled, in the *Mihrab* of the eastern reception hall in the Palace of al-Zahra...The crowd sat with great ceremony in accordance with tradition. His brothers stood at the front of the throne, and the *wazirs* to the left side of the platform.⁶⁹ The servants also stood before him as tradition requires. The white *mawālī* from Cordoba approached [at which point] his brothers sat down. On the right his full brother Abû al Asbagh °Abd al-°aziz and Abû al-Mutarrif, and on his left side, Al-asbagh Abû al-qasim. The *Wazirs* then sat down. After the creation of an opening, the assembled proceeded forward....."⁷⁰

It is also interesting to note how the pattern on seating was also regulated by the Caliph. The significance of this from an iconographic perspective is clear-- the rhythm of the state was inexorably linked with the life of the Caliph, thus suggesting that the future of the state was tied to the future

⁶⁹ مسطبة

⁷⁰ Ibn Hayyan *al-Muqtabis* ibid. p.28

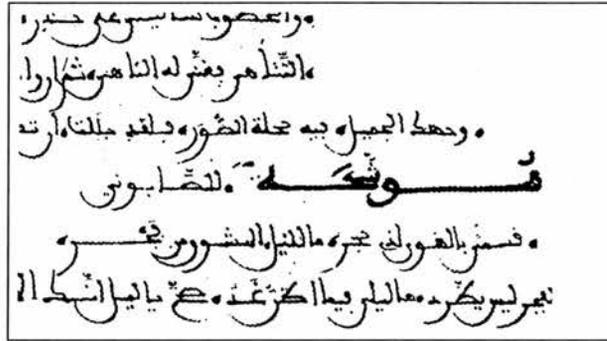
of the Caliph and of his dynasty -- another reflection of the *katastasis* so rigorously implemented in the Byzantine Court.

From this discussion, it becomes quite clear that court ceremonial played an important part in court life in al-Andalus, Byzantium and in the °Abbasid territories in the middle East, enforcing images of power and unity to outsiders and inculcating a sense of subservience and therefore of pacifism into those who participated in it. From an Andalusí perspective, it becomes apparent that ceremonial played an exceedingly important role in ensuring the co-operation and discipline of the *zu'amá*, who appear, due to the frequency of the ceremonial activity, to have been almost continually absent from their power bases. Even had they wished to rebel, it is highly unlikely that they would have done given the assertion in the iconography that their future, and that of al-Andalus, was linked firmly to the fate of the Caliph. It is also quite clear that there was considerable interaction between the splendour of the Palace,⁷¹ which showed the wealth and sophistication of al-Andalus, and the ceremonial which took place within, which in essence asserted that the good fortune of the state was due to the endorsement of Allah, and of his order, with the Caliph at the hierarchical pinnacle. This order was enforced by the use of clothing and titles, which as already mentioned helped to 'cement' the order suggested by the ceremonial. *Madīnat al-Zahra* and the ceremonial which took place within it was quite clearly an all-encompassing experience ; every sense which could be appealed to was, in order to ensure the order of the state and its continuation.

⁷¹ see Chapter 2.

Chapter 4.

Arab Literature and Art in Umayyad al-Andalus.



Part of the 'Uddat al Jalis (Scribe C)¹

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake ;
Or set upon a bough to sing
To Lords and Ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or is to come.

W.B. Yeats *Sailing to Byzantium*²

Yeats's evocation of 'other worldly' decadence encapsulates the reaction of many historians to the perceived extravagances of the medieval Mediterranean states, for, there can be little doubt that from Baghdad in the East to Cordoba in the West, the Mediterranean empires formed a colourful

¹ Ibn Bishri 'Uddat .

² *The Poems of W.B. Yeats* ed. Jeffares p.249 London 1988.

comparison with the less exotic North. To understand the vibrant cultural *milieu* as an extravagant and fundamentally useless appendage to the harsh political realities of these societies is, however, to misunderstand seriously the function played in courtly life especially, by art, culture and their exponents. Indeed, it becomes clear from many of the sources of this period that courtly culture was seen as a necessity and as an indication of the prestige, wealth, sophistication and therefore indirectly, power of the particular political unit³. It also becomes clear that for every area of culture, there was an epicentre ; in the °Abbasid East Baghdad, in the Byzantine Empire Constantinople, and in al-Andalus Cordoba. The purpose of this chapter is to consider the place of courtly culture within the *milieu* of al-Andalus, and secondly to examine the personalities who produced this work, and the people who encouraged them through the medium of patronage in their task. Before such a task is undertaken however, it is perhaps worth considering the nature of the sources, for, particularly to a non-Arabist, the amount of material in translation is exceedingly small -- the technical difficulties encountered when translating Arabic verse⁴ intimidating all but the most advanced linguists⁵. Furthermore, many of the historians of the time such as Ibn Ḥayyân, concentrated on the mechanics of the government and the politics of the time ; to them, the deeds of a successful ruler and his government would have implied a high standard of

³ for a further discussion of this, see S.Jayussi in " Andalusí Poetry : The Golden Period " *LMS*. pp.317-367

⁴ Many scholarly works exist on the subject of the Arabic poetry of al-Andalus, for introductory reading see especially S. Jayussi, " Umayyad verse " in *The Cambridge History of Arabic literature* (Cambridge 1983), E.Levi-Provençal *La civilisation arabe en Espagne, vue générale* (Cairo 1938), I.Nykl *Hispano-Arab poetry and the Relation with the old Provençal Troubadours* (Geneva 1974), Palencia *Historia de la Literatura Árábigo-Española*(Barcelona 1928).

⁵ For a more technical discussion of the *genre*, see " Andalusí Belles-Lettres " by P.Cachia in *LMS*.pp.301-317

life in every area, and therefore, they concentrated on the prestige and power of the Amirs and Caliphs. All is not lost, however, in such a course of study, for that great court watcher of al-Andalus, Ibn al-Qûṭṭiyah, provides, in his *Ta'rih iftitâḥ al-Andalus* a veritable treasury of verse throughout his account from the arrival of °Abd al Raḥmân I to the death of °Abd Allah. Al-Maqqarî also recounts some verse, although to him, the poets rather than the poems are the more worthy of comment (a further indication of the high place occupied by literature in the medieval Arab world), similarly, Ibn Idhârî in *Kitab al bayân al-mughrib* records some verse, notably the panegyric poetry surrounding the generosity of °Abd al Raḥmân I, although no translation of this work exists in English. There is, thankfully, another important source, this time from *Madînat al Zahra* itself, namely the history of the court historian al-Râzî which was used by Ibn Ḥayyan in his *al-Muqtabis*. This source is available in Spanish translation,⁶ and describes not only the poetry, but more importantly for a study such as this, the use of that poetry within the courtly milieu of the palace.

Another great Andalusí writer, Ibn Ḥazm, exists in translation, most notably in his *Ring of the Dove* -- a treatise on love, which, as will be discussed, provides a great deal of interesting information. Although Ibn Ḥazm lived in the time following the destruction of *Madînat al-Zahra*, he was very much a product of the *milieu* inspired by the palace and the Umayyad Caliphate, and, it is in this context that he will be studied.

⁶ *Anales Palatinos del Califa de Cordoba al-HakamII, por °Isâ Ibn Ahmad al-Râzî* (Traducción de un Ms. Árabe de le Real Academia de la Historia por Emilio Garcia Gomez). An edition of the Arabic text of Ibn Ḥayyan is also available entitled *al-Muqtabis fi akhbâr balad al-Andalus (al-Ḥakam II) (Al-Muqtabis VII) (Beirut 1965)*

From the beginning of *Ta'rih iftitah al-Andalus*, it becomes clear that patronage of the arts and artists was an important visual statement of the Amirs wealth, and of his own intellectual prowess, both points being demonstrated by Ibn al-Qûṭīya in his account of the reign of °Abd al Raḥmân II --

" He was a man of excellent conduct and throughout his reign took it upon himself to favour men of learning and letters...."⁷

Ibn al-Qûṭīyah is also keen to demonstrate the Amirs own aesthetic sensibilities, most notably in the following anecdote --

" The man of letters closest to °Abd al Raḥmân was °Ubaid Allah b. Qarluman b. Badr al-Duḥil. One day Ziryab was singing for the Amir these verse of al-°Abbas ibn al-Ahraf as °Ubaid Allah listened :

Said Zulum, namesake of the dark

" My dear I think you are too lean."

" O you who aim and pierce my heart,
you well know where strikes the dart !"

°Abd al Raḥmân observed that the second verse seemed detached from the first and to show no connection to it, that there should be a verse between them to unite the two and thus make sense. °Ubaid Allah...improvised thus

Said Zulum, namesake of the dark

" My dear I think you are too lean."

I answered her with tears flowing like strung pearls⁸,

⁷ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rikh* p.127

⁸ Although not immediately obvious in the translation, this inclusion of this line in the Arabic text shows evidence of great technical skill, particularly when one remembers that it was improvised --

فاختبا و الدمع منحدر مثل الخمان خرى من النظم

" O you who aim and pierce my heart,
you well know where strikes the dart ! ""⁹

It is important to notice that not only does this imply °Abd al Raḥmân's prowess, further evidence is also given of the importance of patronage.

Another much lauded figure of Andalusī culture, mentioned not only in the above anecdote, but also by al-Maqqarī is Ziryab¹⁰, who, according to Ibn al-Qûṭīyah --

"...came to the court of °Abd al Raḥmân b. al-Ḥakam (God have mercy upon him) having occupied a place of intimacy with the Amir ibn Ḥarun al-Amin¹¹, successor of Ḥarun. al-Mu'min¹² his successor, reproached Ziryab for various things so that when al-Amin was killed, Ziryab fled to al-Andalus where he was flattered by °Abd al Raḥman b. al-Ḥakam with all sorts of dignitaries. Ziryab merited that reception because of his culture, his gift for recital and his pre-eminence in the art which he cultivated..."¹³

Not only does this account show further evidence of the Amir encouraging artistic excellence through the medium of patronage, it also demonstrates conclusively the position of culture, and those who created art in the Andalusī *milieu*. It is also interesting to note that Ziryab evidently considered the Andalusī court one which would support his talent.

not only is it contextually sensitive, the *السحم، ال خسم* rhyming scheme is also continued.

⁹ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rih*. p.131

¹⁰ The influence of Ziryab is also discussed in E.Levi-Provençal *HEM* II pp. 316, 381, 418, 420, 425, 433, 438, 443, 449 and 489.

¹¹ The °Abbasid Caliph who ruled from 809-813 C.E.

¹² 813 - 833 C.E.

¹³ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rikh* p.131

The sources discussed, as yet, have demonstrated the internal regard with which the artist was held, yet it also becomes clear, that the poets themselves were considered to be an important visual demonstration of the prowess, sophistication and wealth of the State, demonstrated in the following account in al-Maqqarî

"...When the Christians saw °Abd al Raḥmân's repeated successes, they were filled with terror ; and all hastened to send ambassadors to him with a view to propitiate his good will. Accordingly in the year 336¹⁴ an Emperor arrived in Cordoba with presents from Constantine¹⁵ the Emperor of Constantinople...The ambassadors were then introduced to the Caliph and were struck with astonishment at the splendour and magnificence displayed before them...the Caliph commanded the learned men of his court to address the assembly in speeches in which they should commemorate the superiority of Islam...and [the learned men] were so overpowered by dread of the august assembly that they fixed their eyes on the ground, and kept silence...."¹⁶

It is important to note that this account is taken from the reign of °Abd al Raḥmân III, demonstrating the importance which culture held in his court, and therefore in *Madīnat al-Zahra*, the centre-piece of that court. It is also interesting to note that this demonstration of cultural superiority was in no way restricted to the Muslim world, but would also have been recognised by the Byzantine delegation as a demonstration of attainment, for, within their court system, artists were also feted, shown in the following letter to the twelfth

¹⁴ 947 / 948 C.E.

¹⁵ Constantine VII *Porphyrogenitos* C.E. 913-959

¹⁶ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.137

century poet, John Mesarites from his father a *protosekretis*¹⁷ in the time of Manuel I Komnenos¹⁸ --

" You will not have to hang around the doors of magnate houses, you will not receive silver from such hands. You will be fed generously from the imperial coffers, and from the imperial treasury you will be clad in silk...The Emperor will regard you as an intimate, and you will commit his pronouncements to writing, fashioning them elegantly with the hammer of rhetoric on the anvil of your mind...."¹⁹

Although less clear, it would also seem sensible to suggest that other members of the court patronised artists, wishing to be seen to emulate the Amir or Caliph in his efforts, although this patronage would almost certainly have been on a smaller scale.

If the poetry of the court was important in its time, it is also important for a historian of this period, providing, as it does, an intriguing and valuable source of information for the courtly *milieu* of al-Andalus. What becomes almost immediately obvious when a study of Andalusī courtly literature is undertaken is sheer diversity of the artform. Perhaps not surprisingly, poetry written about the Amir or Caliph appears to have been exceedingly laudatory, where an aspect of his character -- his piety, generosity or military brilliance -- is exalted. A fine example of this *genre* may be seen in the poem recorded by Ibn Idhârī in *Kitab al-bayân al-mughrib* in which °Abd al Raḥmân I's endowment of the Great Mosque in Cordoba is extolled --

¹⁷ The equivalent rank in Muslim Spain to the *Protosekretis* was arguably the *Qadi*.

¹⁸ 1143 - 1181 C.E.

¹⁹ Cited P.Magdalino *The Empire of Manuel Komnenos 1143-1180* (Cambridge 1993) p.343

" al-Baluti (God have mercy upon him) wrote the following about this --

The facade declaims eighty thousand gifts of silver and gold²⁰
Its endowment a pious example [of] the true religion of
the Prophet Muḥammad... "²¹⁺²²

Yet piety is not the only virtue extolled in the Amir, Ibn al-Qûṭīya notes in his *history* that a poem was written about °Abd al Raḥmân II, portraying him as a man of passion --

"...Concerning the Amirs return from his trip, Ibn al-Shamir wrote in a *qasidah* rhyming in *ba* and represented as the speech of °Abd al Raḥmân --

When the rising of the sun appeared to me,
it brought to mind Ṭarub,²³
a girl who appears with all the sparkle
of beauty, so the eye thinks her a tame gazelle.
I son of two Hishams out of Jalib
I light wars and I extinguish them !"²⁴

It also appears that some poetry, although unfortunately slightly later than the existence of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, was written describing the recreational life of

²⁰ There would appear to be a play on the word *وأبرز* (the facade) here is linked to

a synonym for pure Gold (*أبريز*)

²¹ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* vol.II p.230

²² و في ذلك يقول البلوي (رحمن الله) [طويل] --

وأبرز في الاله ووحده ثمانين الفا من لحين و عسجد

فانفقها في مسجد اسه التقى ومنهجه دين النبي محمد

²³ Ṭarub was the favourite concubine of °Abd al-Raḥmân II, and the instigator of one of many palace intrigues (see Chapter 1).

²⁴ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rikh* p.135

the court by the *Ta'ifa* poet Abû Ja'far --

" This has been a day spent in pleasure and sport ; a day in which the atmosphere shone brightly, charged with the amber of the clouds;...

After riding and sporting all the morning we perceived that the day was not entirely gone, and yet we were all fatigued and broken down by the jolting trot of our steeds...

So when the last rays of the sun began to spread a deep red tint over the horizon, and the fight between obscurity and light commenced, victory hanging for some time on caution --every man and steed belonging to our party had been assembled..." ²⁵

It also becomes clear the poetry was not only used to fulfil a purely aesthetic purpose, but was also used in the realms of diplomatic missives -- a potent demonstration of the symbiosis of art and politics. An example of such a poem is found in *Kitab al bayân al mughrîb* during the account of the reign of al-Ḥakam II ; it is interesting to consider how the elegant rhetoric of the following speech / poem complemented and was complemented by the court's aesthetic properties --

"....They also sought an assurance from him [in Arabic] which was so eloquent that the reached the very summit of poetry and writing. °Abd al Malik b. Şaïd recounted this speech, in the *qasidah* rhythm --

Marvellous King and Caliph, generous peacemaker, son of the lofty
Muslims, famous attacker of the despicable, through God's will

²⁵ al-Maqqarî *Nafh* p.164

extirpator of the Barbarians. Bringer of perfection, vanquisher of the flesh.

Therefore, O Amir, your servants offer you gifts for your protection and concern..."²⁶⁺²⁷

Although not as obvious in al-Andalus as in the °Abbasid East, poetry could also be used as a devastating propaganda tool, indeed, one of the means of spreading discontent with the Umayyad dynasty, which ultimately resulted in their overthrow by the °Abbasids was through the *genre* of political poetry²⁸, a further reminder of the importance of art in the Muslim world. Whilst al-Andalus appears to have lacked the vitriolic poetry of the East, most notably the proto-socialist writings of the *Qaramitah*,²⁹ some examples of poetry written to cause dissent can be found in *Ta'rih iftitâh al Andalus*, an example being found in the poetry of one Mu'min b. Şaîd, exposing Abu °Amr as an embezzler --

"..Upon my life ! Abu °Amr has discredited °Amr

The likes of Abu °Amr discrediting his father !

²⁶ Ibn Idhârî *Bayan* vol.II p.235

²⁷ و كان الفصحاء فى ذلك مقامات واشعار يطول الكتاب بذكرها فعن

قول عبد الملك بن سعيد من قصيده --

وسوده موصوله بتوالى	ملك الخلافه ايه الاقبال
والمشركون بذله وسفال	فالمسمون بعزه ويرفعه
متوقعين لصوله الرئبال	الفت بايديها الاعاجم نحوه
منه ا واصر نمة وحبل	هذ اميرهم اتاه اخذا

²⁸ see A.Rubinaci " Political Poetry" in *°Abbasid Belles Lettres* ed.Ashtiani (Cambridge 1990) p.190

²⁹ see *°Abbasid Belles Lettres* p.197

°Amr shined with his own light

but Abu °Amr appeared eclipsing the full moon ! "30

Evidently a vibrant cultural *milieu* existed during this time, in which professional poets and artists were feted and encouraged. It is also clear that the poetry they wrote played an important part in al-Andalus, from extolling the generosity of the Amir, to describing his amorous adventures, to seeking diplomatic assurances from him. It would appear infact, that it was used as a means of communication between the Amir and his subjects, emphasising the position of the Amir over those he ruled, by addressing him in this rhetorical manner. It is important to remember however, that all educated Arabs were expected both to appreciate and improvise poetry, an example of such a poet being seen in the *wazir* Tammâm b. °Alqama whose poetry supplied Ibn al-Qûṭīya with much of his information concerning the periods of the Muslim conquest of al Andalus. From this pool of educated beaurucrats, and undoubtedly from the *milieu* of *Madīnat al-Zahra* came one of the great figures of Andalusi literature -- Ibn Ḥazm³¹.

Al-Maqqarī gives us the following appraisal of Ibn Ḥazm --

"....Canst thou bring forward in the science of traditions men like Abu Mohammed b. Ḥazm, who adhered strictly to his principles of austerity and devotion in the midst of honours and riches, and while fulfilling the high situation of *wazir*, and who showed himself more ambitious of literary fame than any other....."32

³⁰ Ibn al-Qûṭīyah *Ta'rikh* p.159

³¹ A considerable Bibliography exists for Ibn Hazm, see especially Encyclopedia of Islam (i) pp.384 - 386. Dozy's *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne* is especially recommended in the above entry.

³² al-Maqqarī *Nafh* p.37

A fitting tribute for a man, who was without doubt one of the great literary and intellectual figures of his age, and who lived through one of the most turbulent eras of al-Andalus, as Chejne remarks --

"..Ibn Ḥazm, who had been born in a golden age to a noble and affluent family, savoured some of the splendour and glory of tenth-century Muslim Spain as a child ; he came to witness the crumbling of that majestic civilisation when he was still in his teens....."³³

It becomes clear that Ibn Ḥazm was an exceedingly erudite man, having studied with acknowledged masters from the East such as Ibn al-Faradi,³⁴ with whom he studied literature and Ḥamam b. Ahmad with whom he studied religious law.³⁵ Ibn Ḥazm was also a conservative writer, who adopted a strict *zahirist*³⁶ doctrine, as al-Maqqarī notes, yet despite this intellectual and religious conservatism, he evidently absorbed much of the intellectual and cultural *milieu* into which he was born, his writings, most notably *Fada'il*³⁷ showing evidence of a voracious appetite for knowledge and quoting not only from Arabic sources, but also from sources in Syriac and Hebrew, which he acknowledges

³³ A. Chejne *Ibn Ḥazm* (New York 1992) p.1

³⁴ Abu'l-Walīd °Abd Allah b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Naṣr al-Azdī b. al-Faradi b.351/962 was a noted Andalusī scholar who studied in Cairo, Mecca and Medina. He was appointed *Qadi* of Valencia by the Marwanid Muhammad al-Mahdi (1008-1009) and died during the Berber uprising of 1013. His only complete extant work is his *Ta'rikh °Ulama' al-Andalus* (ed. Codera, Madrid 1891). See EI2 vol.II p.762.

³⁵ see Chejne p.38 onwards.

³⁶ Essentially a fundamentalist approach to Islam, based very much on the literal truth of the Qu'ran and shunning any form of interpretation or exegesis (*Tafsir*). It is probable that Ibn Ḥazm's embracing of *zahirism* was a reaction to the collapse of the Caliphate. It should however be noted that *zahirism* was not accompanied by an intellectual isolationism seen in the more rigorous approach of the Almoravids.

³⁷ See Chejne. *Fada'il* -- the plural of the word *Fadila*. According to the Encyclopedia of Islam, "*Fada'il* literature exposes the excellences of things, individuals, groups, places, regions and such for the purpose of *laudatio*. The polemical comparison or dialogue, characteristic of the "disputes for precedence", is lacking. (EI2 s.v. *Fada'il*)

descended from the same linguistic root as Arabic. Arguably his best known work to non-Arabists is the *Ring of the Dove*³⁸, credited by Garcia Gomez as the finest piece of Hispano-Andalusi literature³⁹, which is not only a fine piece of writing but also could be seen to evoke the intellectual and cultural *milieu* of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, concerning itself with the love lives of prominent Andalusi figures, and, as with his *Fada'il*, exhibiting a thirst for knowledge which bears testimony to the climate of learning fostered by both the bureaucratic and the cultural requirements of the Palace.

Although there are some similarities with Western treatises on love of the period, the *Ring* is far from an "instruction manual" -- it is a deeply philosophical discussion of the nature of love, spanning thirty of its most prominent manifestations. It is, furthermore, not only disturbingly trenchant at points, but also claims to be a specifically Andalusi piece of literature --

"...Spare me those talks of Bedouins, and of lovers long ago ! Their ways were not our ways, and the stories told of them are too numerous in any case..."⁴⁰

testimony to the existence of a native cultural movement in al-Andalus, which could not have existed without the nexus of *Madīnat al-Zahra*. This indication of the importance of the Palace is continued when one remembers that the *Ring* was commissioned by someone within the *Ta'ifa* court of Jativa -- possibly even a former resident of *Madīnat al-Zahra*⁴¹ --

"...You charged me -- may God exalt you ! -- to compose for you an essay describing love, wherein I should set forth its various meanings, its causes and

³⁸ See L.Giffen "Ibn Ḥazm and the Tawq al-Hamama" in *LMS* (pp.420-442)

³⁹ see Chejne

⁴⁰ Ibn Ḥazm trans. A.J. Arberry *The Ring of the Dove* (London 1953) p.18

⁴¹ Giffen suggests that this may well have been Ibn Shuhayd (382/992-426/1035) a poet and aristocrat.

accidents, and what happens in it and to it....⁴²

As well as giving the philosophy of love, the *Ring* also gives some fascinating viewpoints of the time in which Ibn Ḥazm was writing, and, some gossipy and quite amusing information on the habits of the Amirs --

".... All the Caliphs of the Banû Marwan⁴³ (God have mercy on all of their souls !) and especially the sons of *al-Nasir* were without variation or exception disposed by nature to prefer blondes...from the days of *al-Nasirs* reign down to the present day ; every one of them has been fair haired, taking after their mothers, so that this has become a hereditary trait with them...."⁴⁴

It is quite evident from this passage how widely the influence of *Madīnat al-Zahra* and its founders was felt, bearing testimony to the vital role it played not only as the point of genesis for much of the literature of al-Andalus, but also as a point of inspiration. Not all of Ibn Ḥazm's *Ring* is outstanding in its literary elegance however -- his poetry in particular, of which he is undoubtedly proud, lends a certain and, one imagines quite accidental sense of humour --

"...I knew a youth who loved a lass

Whose neck was short and somewhat stout ;

And now when long-necked maidens pass

He thinks them *jimns* without a doubt...."⁴⁵⁺⁴⁶

Undoubtedly one of the greatest benefits of the *Ring* is not infact its

⁴² Ibn Ḥazm *Ring* p.17

⁴³ This is the more common reference in Arabic sources for the Umayyads, after one of Umayyad's successors, Marwan b. al-Hakam, the founder of the dynasty which ruled the Islamic middle East and latterly al-Andalus.

⁴⁴ Ibn Ḥazm *Ring* p.61

⁴⁵ Ibn Ḥazm *Ring*. p.63

⁴⁶ It is interesting to note that in his preface to the *Ring* that Arberry makes the following remark about Ibn Ḥazm's poetry -- " The first thing to repeat -- and this is quite honestly not a case of an indifferent workman blaming his tools -- is that Ibn Ḥazm was not a great poet ; and as every translator is aware, there is no more

philosophy at all, but in its evocation of the *milieu* in which it was written, one particularly fascinating piece of information supplied being a description of the jobs held by women in al-Andalus --

"...I remember at Cordoba young women had been put on their guard against such types, whenever they might happen to see them. Women, plying a trade or profession which gives them access to people, are popular with lovers -- the lady doctor for instance, or the blood-letter, the peddler, the broker, the coiffeuse, the professional mourner, the singer, the soothsayer, the schoolmistress, the errand girl, the spinner, the weaver and the like..."⁴⁷

It would also appear that the *milieu* was rather more liberal than one might imagine, seen in Ibn Ḥazm's inclusion of an analysis of homosexual love in the *Ring*, with the following anecdote --

"...in this Mosque, Muqaddam b. al-Asfar was always seen to be hanging about during his salad days, because of a romantic attachment he formed for °Ajib, the page boy [of the *wazir*] Abu °Umar Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Hudair..."⁴⁸

It is faintly ironic that the literature inspired by the cultural *milieu* of *Madinat al-Zahra*, and the writers patronised by some of the former inhabitants of the Palace, should be able to impart so much information centuries after the building was destroyed. From the *Ring of the Dove* one can deduce further information about the cultural and intellectual climate of Umayyad al-Andalus, and see further evidence of its sophistication and liberalism. Similarly, the erudite and informed Ibn Ḥazm also bears testimony to this *milieu* -- in his reading and literary (although not poetic !) ability he shows

baffling labour than to endeavour to do justice to the mediocre..." (p.14)

⁴⁷ Ibn Ḥazm *Ring* p.74

⁴⁸ Ibn Ḥazm *Ring* p.90

both the intellectual stimulation and thirst for knowledge generated by the intellectual life of the Palace, whilst the fact of his patronage shows yet more evidence of the important and arguably vital role the Palace with its fiscal as well as intellectual roles played.

Having surveyed the nature of Andalusī literature, and the position held by poets within that society, it is important to review the use of that literature in the palace of *Madīnat al-Zahra* using al-Râzī's chronicle of Palace life, the *Anales Palatinos*.⁴⁹ It becomes clear even from a brief analysis of the chronicle of al-Râzī that poetry played an important part in the milieu of courtly life in *Madīnat al-Zahra*. Indeed, it could be said that poetry punctuated the major ceremonies of the year such as the breaking of the fast after Ramadan and the feast of the new year.⁵⁰ It is however also worth mentioning that it often served, as already suggested, as a cultural indicator at diplomatic functions, seen in the improvisation of the treasurer of *Madīnat al-Zahra*, Ahmad b. Ibrahim, at the reception of Bon Filio, the ambassador of of Borell of Barcelona.⁵¹ Perhaps not surprisingly, poetry was also used to commemorate important events in the life of the palace, an example being seen in the recuperation of the Caliph from a long illness in 364/974-975.⁵² There were also different types of poetry involved, with either one poet improvising a substantial work, or many poets being called upon to improvise components of a poem of epic proportions a fine example being seen in the improvisation of four poets for the feast of the new moon in 363 / 973-974.⁵³ Given the cultural

⁴⁹ For Bibliographic information, see the Introduction.

⁵⁰ See especially *Anales* pp.47, 105, 117 and 152.

⁵¹ *Anales* p.46

⁵² *Anales* p.251

⁵³ *Anales* pp.198-206

cache of 'possessing' poets and orators, it is perhaps not entirely surprising that the latter was the preferred mode of improvisation. It would seem that the main audience for these poetic feats was the court, and its visitors, although it is not entirely unlikely that they were recorded for posterity and relayed beyond the confines of the palace. As to the identity of the poets, it is unclear whether they were educated bureaucrats serving a ceremonial function, such as Aḥmad b. Ibrahim or professional poets or orators, making their living by entertaining not only the Caliph, but the many courtiers who would undoubtedly have wanted to follow the Caliph's example in his patronage of the arts, thus possibly gaining his favour. What we can be certain of is that certain names are particularly common in the context of ceremonial poetry, in particular Tahir b. °Ali al-Baghdadi, Muḥammad b. Hasan al-Tubni and Muḥammad b. Sujays⁵⁴, which would seem to indicate that there were at least some professional poets present in the palace. Since professional poets had been retained since the days of °Abd al-Raḥmân I, it is unlikely that °Abd al-Raḥmân III and al-Ḥakam would not have followed his example, particularly in the highly visual milieu of *Madīnat al-Zahra*. The idea of a professional corps of poets in *Madīnat al-Zahra* is also supported by al-Râzî, who frequently records that "the orators and poets" improvised following a ceremony, seen in his account of the relaxation of the feast of sacrifices⁵⁵ in 361/971-972 --

"...This coincided with the new moon of Shawwal, on the 16th of July in the Christian calendar. The Caliph al-Mustaṣir bi-Allah ascended the throne in a manner according to tradition. Those before him were ranked in strict order...

⁵⁴ No further information about these poets is available.

⁵⁵ It is interesting to note the many similarities between this account and the ceremony described in Chapter 3.

Abû al-Asbagh presented himself on the [Caliph's] right, followed by Abû al-Qasim al-Asbagh who stood on the left [of the Caliph]. They were then followed by the *wazirs*, the ministers of the Caliphate and the Prefect of the City of Cordoba, Ja'far b.Uthmân. The middle ranking Prefect of the police Muḥammad b. Ṣa'îd followed, then the lower ranking Prefect Muḥammad b. °Abd Allah b. Abî °Âmir. They were then followed by members of Quraysh, the *muwali*, the ministers, the Qadi's of the courts, the faqihs⁵⁶ and those learned in jurisprudence and the important inhabitants of Cordoba...The solemnities were full of splendour and the orators and poets improvised poems. At this occasion Muḥammad b.Hasan al-Tubni improvised a large *qasidah*.⁵⁷ It would appear, as with this example that the poems were usually recited and improvised at the end of the ceremony, suggesting that they were intended to record a historical record as well as complimenting the splendour of the ceremony.

To suggest that the sole form of art present in *Madīnat al-Zahra* was literary would be however, to make a serious mistake, for visual art also played an important role in the Palace ; as already suggested in chapter two, it emphasised the orthodoxy of the Umayyad Caliphate by displaying archetypal Islamic conventions which acted very much in the same way that the presence of poets affirmed orthodoxy to visitors from the East. Yet again, the patronage of the Palace is demonstrated, for, not only did the Amirs fill their Palace with poets and literati, they also patronised the art which decorated it, testimony of which is visible in the inscriptions on the extant columns of the *Majlis* --

⁵⁶ Religious scholars

⁵⁷ *Analos* p.105

"..In the name of God, may God bless his *Imam al-Naṣir li din Allah* °Abd al Raḥmān, the Amir of the faithful -- may God continue his reign for ever -- executed by his servant °Abd Allah Badr in the year 345 [956/957]..."⁵⁸

Not only did the art indirectly proclaim the patronage of the Caliph, but the inscriptions proclaimed to all the vital role played by him and therefore indirectly the Palace of engendering the artistic movement in al-Andalus. The fundamental importance of *Madinat al-Zahra* in this regard must not be underestimated.⁵⁹

It becomes clear that the relationship between the Palace and the literary and visual iconography it possessed was very much a reciprocal one -- without the art, the Palace would have lacked considerable diplomatic influence, and one imagines over its inhabitants, who, as already discussed in previous chapters had to be lulled by its beauty and the indolence of its lifestyle, away from their powerbases. However, without the Palace and the patronage which came within, the wealth of cultural talent would assuredly have not existed to the same extent, and arguably at all. As a product of the *milieu*, the poetry and art were not the only indicator of the importance of the Palace and its patronage, for figures such as Ibn Ḥazm also bear testimony to

⁵⁸ cited *Madina al-Zahra El Salon Rico de °Abd al Rahman III* p.117.

بسم الله بركة من الله الامم النصر لدين الله عبد الرحمن
امير المومنين اطل الله بقاءه ما امر بعمله فتم يعون الله في سنه
حصر واربعين و ثلث مائة عل يدي عبد الله بن بدر

⁵⁹ Architectural art was of course not the only *genre* commissioned. Personal possessions, were also procured -- see picture of Ivory box on p.124. For a further discussion see M.Jenkins " Islamic Spain al-Andalus -- crucible of the West" in *The Art of Medieval Spain A.D. 500-1200* (New York 1993) pp.72-109

the role of the Palace as a genesis point for culture, and of the effect of the Palace in disseminating culture throughout al-Andalus.

Chapter 4 (ii)

Sephardic Literature and the Mosabh in Cordoba.



Mazzah --detail from 14th Century Barcelona *Haggadah*.¹

" The Jew possessed the kind of astuteness and diplomacy which were consonant with the times in which they lived and the people intriguing against them. Badis therefore employed Abu Ibrahim because of his utter lack of confidence in anyone else and the hostility of his kinsmen. Abu Ibrahim was a Jewish *dhimmi* who could not lust after power. Nor was he an Andalusian against whom he needed to be on his guard lest he scheme with non-Berber princes....." ²

It could be contended that the relationship between Muslim and Jew described by °Abd Allah was a consequence of the fragmentation of Umayyad al-Andalus into the *Ta'ifa* states, following the Berber uprising of 1013. This

¹ Taken from *The Sephardim* Gubbay and Levi Carnell 1992.

² °Abd Allah b. Buluggin (trans. Tibi) *The Tiblyan* p.56 E.J.Brill 1986.

suggestion seems untenable however, for, it becomes clear from the sources that this relationship -- one of mutual convenience -- was one which existed even during the zenith of Umayyad al-Andalus, and one which would have been present within *Madīnat al-Zahra* itself. Indeed it would appear that by the time of °Abd al Raḥmān *al-Naṣir*³, the Jewish communities were firmly established⁴, indeed, their position was continually improving, for, not only were they middle class administrators and officials, but, the reign of *al-Naṣir* saw a new and lucrative demand being formed -- that of the *Ṣaqaliba*, Slavs imported to form the Caliph's new model army⁵ -- who were bought and exported to al-Andalus by Jewish traders from the slave emporium at Verdun.

It is during the reign of *al-Naṣir* that the Jewish community also sees one of its most illustrious sons emerge -- Hasdai b. Shaprut, whose influence would be hard to over estimate. It appears⁶ that Hasdai lived between 910 and 975 and occupied a moderately high administrative position in *Madīnat al-Zahra*, his major strength appears to have been linguistic, and according to Ashtor⁷ was involved in the negotiations between *al-Naṣir* and John of Gorze, the ambassador of Otto I. Although one can not be absolutely certain, it

³ see Ashtor, *Korot ha-yehudim bi sefarad ha muslimit* available in English translation as *The Jews of Moslem Spain* (Jewish Publication Society of America 1973) for a discussion of the early history of the Sephardim.

⁴ A discussion of the place of Judaism in the milieu of Umayyad al-Andalus may be found in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (ed. Jayussi E.J.Brill pp.188-201) by Raymond Scheindlin.

⁵ see Kennedy *Muslim Spain and Portugal* for a discussion of the *Seqaliba*.

⁶ Not surprisingly, Hasdai b. Shaprut has occupied the attention of many historians of Medieval Judaism -- the following entries provide the fullest discussions of his life : p.172 *Who's Who in Jewish History* (ed.Cohn-Sherbock),p.533 Vol.8 *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, p.947 *New Standard Jewish Encyclopaedia* (ed.Wisgooder). It is interesting to note that whilst there is little doubt about his importance, some notable contradictions are present with regard to discussions about his precise role in the Caliphate.

⁷ see Ashtor *Korot*. Ashtor is not alone in suggesting this, see especially *Who's Who in Jewish History* (ed. Cohn-Sherbock)

appears⁸ that *al-Naṣir* viewed Hasdai as a representative of his Jewish subjects, indeed, it seems tenable to suggest that he may have been a *Kitab al dh-dhimam*, an office described in the following terms by al-Maqqari --

"...The second was called *Kitabatu-dh-dhimam* (office of protection), and corresponded to that of the *Katibu-al-jihbadheh* in the East : the person entrusted with this office had, as its name sufficiently indicates, to attend to the protection and security of the Christians and Jews ; and it may be said without exaggeration, that so long as this office subsisted in al-Andalus and the Maghreb no Christian or Jew ever needed the protection and assistance of the great and powerful....."⁹

Even if Hasdai was not the official head of the Sephardic community, there can be little doubt that he conducted himself as if he had been, for he established his own court in Cordoba, known as the *Mosabh*, a Hebrew equivalent of the Arabic *Majlis*. As with the Arabic literature of the Court in *Madīnat al-Zahra*, the patronage of the *Mosabh* proved invaluable.

The culture generated by the *Mosabh* appears to have been notably fecund, indeed, this fecundity may be seen in the fact that all 'oriental' Jews are known in Hebrew as *Sephardim* i.e. those who come from Spain. In order to assess this material, it is necessary to discuss a selection of the work of the *Mosabh* poets¹⁰ and to assess what evidence this work provides for the *milieu* within the Jewish community. The most obvious poet with which to begin such

⁸ Ashtor claims that this was undoubtedly the case, although source evidence would not appear to suggest such a definite statement.

⁹ al-Maqqari *Naḥḥ* p.103

¹⁰ An article in Hebrew on the technical aspects of *Mosabh* poetry by Mirsky entitled "Foundations of Hebrew poetry in Spain," is reproduced in *The Sephardi* ed. Barnett, Mitchell 1971

a survey is Menahim b.Suruk¹¹, born in Tortosa in 950, who was ostensibly employed as the secretary of Hasdai b.Shaprut. It would appear that Hasdai used his literary talents to begin the transformation which saw Hebrew gaining a secular dimension. His most famous poem, " I shall state my case,"¹² is written in an epistolary style to Hasdai b.Shaprut, begging him to release him from imprisonment (presumably for a charge of heresy). This would appear to suggest that the Jewish community could enact its own justice on members of the community, although whether this is similar to the *Ashkenaz Beth Din*¹³, one can not be certain. The first stanza of the English version of the poem reads --

I shall state my case, and I know that I
shall be acquitted. This is what you
wrote in reply to my letter, this is what
you dispatched to me : " If you have
sinned, I have already repaid you as
you merit ; but if you have not sinned,
I have made you merit life in
the world beyond." Do you consider
this a judgement ? Do you think such

¹¹ One should be aware that certain authors in the earlier part of the century were unaware of the existence of poetry by Menahim b.Suruk, indeed, it would appear that they considered him to be a grammarian. As a result, Dunash b.Labrat is often cited as the first *Mosabh* poet. In one particularly surprising example, Samuel ha-Nagid (993-1056), a *Tai'fa* poet, is cited as the earliest known Hebrew poet, which is patently incorrect.

¹² אני אערך משפט

¹³ *Beth Din* may be translated as " Place [of] Judgement," It was infact an autonomous group drawn from within the Jewish community which regulated the affairs of the community according to *Kashrut* and *Halakah*, the Jewish laws of purity taught in the *Talmud*. Generally *Beth Din* were authorised in order to provide an incentive for Jewish communities to settle in a City, thus enhancing its economic profile.

words are proof enough ? Will not God
 find this out ? He that planted the ear,
 will He not see ? Will you muzzle
 my mouth with an east wind, and
 silence my tongue with taunting lies ?
 Is not my dust the same as yours, and
 your God mine -- He who searches out
 all secrets and delves into man's
 in most being ?¹⁴⁺¹⁵

It is interesting to note that in this stanza, Menahim makes specific reference to Hasdai, suggesting that he the ultimate say in his fate. It is also interesting to note that the last section of the poem makes reference to his service to Hasdai b. Shaprut --

Though I am still speaking, stringing
 words together, it is not to rebuke you.
 Though I recall days gone by, it is not
 to profit by them.¹⁶ But now my spirit
 constrains me to say : Arise, my Lord,
 and behold, listen to the suppliants cry.
 You will make the sad heart sing
 for joy if you do not cover your face
 with clouds. I ask nothing but an

¹⁴ Karmi ed. *The Penguin book of Hebrew poetry* pp.276-279 Penguin 1981

¹⁵ from *אני אערך משפט* to *כל חדרי בטן* in the Hebrew text.

¹⁶ *ואזפיר קדמוניות לא להועיל*

an attentive ear. If a man of your rank
 were to turn to the likes of me, none
 would wonder. And if you were to
 bend down to me and heed my prayer,
 your glory would not be diminished,
 Nor your eminence lessened. I shall
 awaken memories of the past in which
 my righteousness is manifest. If you
 choose the path of truth, you will thank
 me for having done so !¹⁷

The use of the poetic form as a political device was evidently an accepted literary practice, a fact which is emphasised when one remembers Mu'min b. Šaid's poem, already discussed, which makes an accusation of embezzlement.¹⁸ Menahim b. Suruk was however not the only poet which the *Mosabh* produced, indeed, his technical skill was much less than that of Dunuash b. Labrat, who had been educated in a *Yeshiva* in Baghdad by the legendary Saada Gaon¹⁹. After travelling to Cordoba to work as the *Chazan*²⁰ in the Synagogue, he was taken into the *Mosabh*. Unlike Menahim b. Suruk, who used classical Hebrew metre, Dunash b. Labrat attempted to use the Arabic *qasida*, which elucidated the criticism that he was destroying the holy language. It is arguable because of this criticism that his poetry continually evokes the notion of *Eretz Yisroel* -- the promised land of the faithful --

¹⁷ from עוֹד אֲנִי מְדַבֵּר to תּוֹרָה לִי עֲלֵיהֶם in the Hebrew text.

¹⁸ Ibn al-Qūṭīyah *Ta'rih* p.159

¹⁹ see *Encyclopaedia Judaica et al.*

²⁰ Cantor.

presumably for the benefit of those in the community who saw their servitude under the Muslims as indication of punishment. Such a statement would however have been dangerous -- to criticise ones beneficent rulers when one is so heavily outnumbered would have been exceedingly unwise, even in a language which was known to only a few academics outwith the *Sephardim* -- as a result his poetry is a masterpiece of ambiguity, particularly in the second stanza of " the poet refuses a drink " ²¹--

But I reproached him thus : " Silence !
How dare you -- when the Holy House,
the footstool of God, is in the hands of
the gentiles. You have spoken foolishly,
you have chosen sloth, you have
uttered nonsense, like the mockers and
fools. You have forsaken the study of
the supreme God's law. Even as you
rejoice, jackals run wild in Zion. Then
how could we drink wine, how even
raise our eyes -- when we are loathed
and abhorred and less than nothing ?²²⁺²³

Undoubtedly the line --

"....How dare you -- when the Holy House,
the footstool of God, is in the hands of

²¹ ואומר : אל תישן

²² Karmi *Anthology* p.280

²³ from מאוסים וגעולים to גערתיהו : דם דם עלי זאת איך in the Hebrew text.

the gentiles....."²⁴

presents the greatest ambiguity, an ambiguity which becomes only apparent if the Hebrew text is consulted, for, as with most languages, nuances are only truly obvious in the original --

עלי זאת איך תקדם--.....

ובית קדש והדום אלהים לערלים !

The ambiguity is centred on the word *Bayt* which like the Arabic *Bayt*²⁵ can present a very wide variety of readings²⁶ -- it could mean literally the Holy Place, possibly Jerusalem or indeed *Eretz Yisroel*, on the other hand it could mean the Holy people -- the Jews. Whether this poem is a criticism of the occupiers of Jerusalem (which would have been eminently palatable in Cordoba) or a bemoaning of Jewish servitude under the Umayyads in al-Andalus (which would undoubtedly have been less palatable) is essentially an unsolveable dilemma, and a quite deliberate one at that. The evocation of *Eretz Yisroel* and the need to attain *Akeda* or re-atonement through suffering²⁷ is also continued in the work of Joseph b. Abitur, engaged as a philologist in the *Mosabh*, who fled to Iraq, where, according to Benjamin of Tudela a large Jewish community existed, following a failed attempt to gain the headship of the *Yeshiva* in Cordoba. Whilst Joseph's work undoubtedly provides an

²⁴ Karmi *Anthology* p.280

²⁵ In Hebrew, בית, in Arabic, بيت

²⁶ see *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (ed. Brown et al) p.108 Oxford.

²⁷ This was a common theme in Medieval Hebrew poetry, the concept being taken from the story of Abraham and Isaac (*Genesis* 22). It is also seen in Ashkenazian writing, and re-emerged in modern day Hebrew literature in the poetry of the Holocaust.

outstanding example, indeed one might say the apogee, of tenth century Sephardic poetry, it is not typical of the *Mosabh* or the secularisation of Hebrew which it appeared to encourage -- it is however interesting to reflect on the diversity of Hasdai b. Shaprut's patronage. There can be little doubt that the finest examples of *Mosabh* poetry are seen in the work of Isaac b.Khalfun, a Cordoban poet who appears to have been the first entirely professional poet, earning his living composing eoniums for wealthy Jews. What makes his poetry so interesting and important when one assesses the effectiveness of *Mosabh* literature in secularising Hebrew is his use of Arabic cultural icons and Arabic metre. One of his finest poems is " The Retreat,"²⁸ written in the *qasidah* metre --

When desire arouses me, I leap like a
 deer to see my lady's eyes. But when I
 come, I find her mother there -- and her
 father and her brother and her uncle !
 I look at her, then quickly turn away,
 as though I were not her beloved. I am
 afraid of them, and my heart mourns
 for her like the heart of a woman bereft
 of her only son²⁹⁺³⁰

Isaac b.Khalfun's use of the Arabic love-icon, the gazelle (in this particular

²⁸ בעת חשק

²⁹ Karmi ibid. p.283

³⁰ from כלב אשה משפלת יחידה to בעת חשק יערני אדלג in the Hebrew text.

case, a deer³¹) is striking, and, whilst this is undoubtedly one of the earliest examples of Hebrew gazelle literature, it certainly is not the last, a fine example being seen in the Homo-erotic poetry of Moses b. Ezra, the twelfth century Granadan poet -- a potent indication of the cultural importance of Isaac's work and indirectly of the importance of the *Mosabh* and of the patronage of Hasdai b. Shaprut.

Even this brief survey of the poetry of *Mosabh* literature shows its diversity and its fecundity. It also acts as an important comparison with the Arab *milieu* and indicates the importance of a focal point of genesis -- in the case of the Arab literature, the court of *Madinat al-Zahra* and in the case of the Hebrew literature, the *Mosabh* of Hasdai b. Shaprut. It also acts as a further indication of the fertility of the *milieu* and of the remarkable tolerance of the Muslims towards the practice of Judaism within their territories, and in return, of the appreciation and admiration of the Jews of the culture which surrounded them.

³¹ It would appear that in Hebrew love poetry, as with this case, animals similar to gazelles could also be used, as in **תאורא לבבי** by Moses b. Ezra, in which the subject is a fawn (**צב**).

Conclusion

" Whatever his [°Abd al-Raḥmân's] grandfather's other failings (and there were many), his choice of his young grandson to succeed him could not be faulted..."¹

As already suggested, it would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of °Abd al-Raḥmân al-Naṣir to the history of Umayyad al-Andalus, indeed, one might even argue that he was responsible for its salvation, albeit a temporary one. It is into this context -- of revival and revitalisation that the City Palace of Madīnat al-Zahra must be placed, for, whatever the precise motivation behind its elevation² from *Munyat* to the power centre of the Umayyad state it is undoubtedly within this framework that it fits. The mechanisms employed in this revival were many, and effective. In the construction of Madīnat al-Zahra, al-Naṣir was fulfilling a requirement placed upon any Amir, namely that of building, a feature seen in the reigns of his more successful ancestors³, particularly °Abd al-Raḥmân I and °Abd al-Raḥmân II. This statement was made all the more effectively by the magnificence of the Palace and the costly materials used in its construction.⁴ It is also important to remember that whilst the Palace was a physical structure, it

¹ Kennedy *Muslim Spain and Portugal* Longman 1996 p.82

² see discussion in Chapter 2.

³ see Chapter 1.

⁴ see Chapter 2.

fulfilled an extremely important psychological purpose, a feature which was enhanced by the ritual and ceremonial which occurred within it, and which, as discussed previously, helped to maintain the state hierarchy as well as integrating potentially rebellious elements into that hierarchy.⁵ There were, of course, factors other than political stability created by the Palace, and the ritual and ceremonial within it, most notably the presence of an exceedingly vibrant cultural milieu⁶ created by the patronage of the Palace, although it is exceedingly important to remember that this was as vital to the 'iconography' of the Palace as the *majlis* itself. The attractiveness and sophistication of this milieu is borne testimony to in the emulation of it by the Sephardim, with their *Mosabh* poetry⁷.

Madīnat al-Zahra was not only a building, it was a multi-faceted experience, many elements of which are discussed in this thesis, but many more of which must have been visible only when the Palace was functioning at the centre of the Umayyad state. To discuss them individually is, perhaps, to give a false impression, for whilst they undoubtedly are separable, in reality they functioned together as an integrated entity, in what might be termed as the "Iconography of the Palace."

⁵ see Chapter 3.

⁶ see Chapter 4.

⁷ see Chapter 4 (ii).

Chronological table of construction under *al Naşir.*

From *al-Muqtabis V.*¹

913- Construction of *Hişn* in Cabra

914- Construction of *Hişn* in Espera

919- refortification of *Sajrat ʿIsam*

920- Construction of *Hişn* in Viguera area.

920- refortification of Coin

922- fortification of Bobastro - also construction of siege camp

929- Caliphal Proclamation

936- reconstruction of Mosque of Abû Harûn (destroyed in fire on
12th July 936)

936- reconstruction of *Şûq* destroyed in same fire.

936 - construction begins of *Madînat al-Zahra*.

938- paving of the royal pavement

939- Battle of *al khandaq*

" Disgusted (at the defeat), and confused at the injustice, he (*al-Naşir*)
found a pre-occupation with the construction. He applied and
absorbed himself in *Madînat al-Zahra* outside Cordoba..."²

942- Construction of paved avenue in *Madînat al-Zahra*

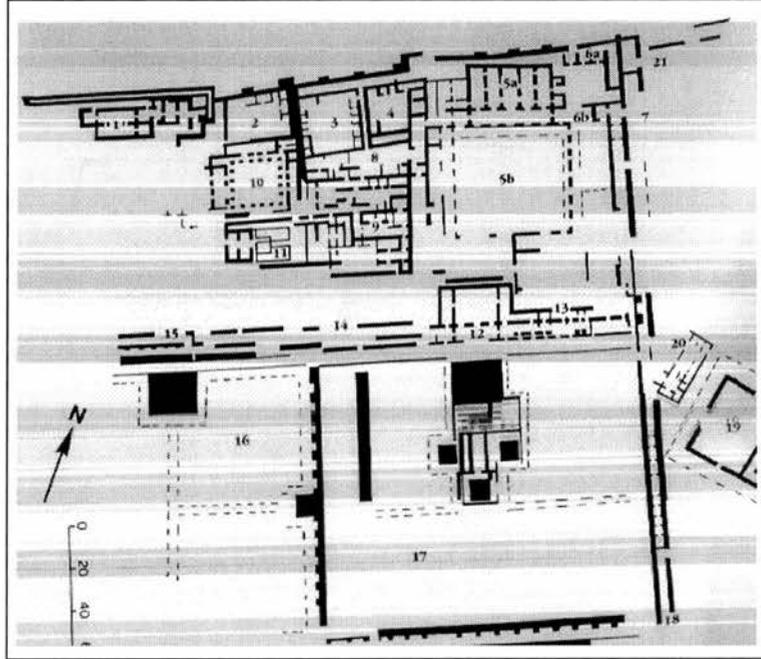
943- Construction of Palaces for the sons of the Caliph.

943- Construction of Minaret for Grand Mosque in Cordoba (finishes
in 946).

¹ Based on information from *Obras Constructivas en al-Andalus durante el gobierno de ʿAbd al Raḥmān III Segun el Volumen V del Muqtabis de Ibn Hayyan* by Sauto in *Qurtaba* 1 (1996).

² Sauto *ibid.* p.195

Picture and Plan Appendix.

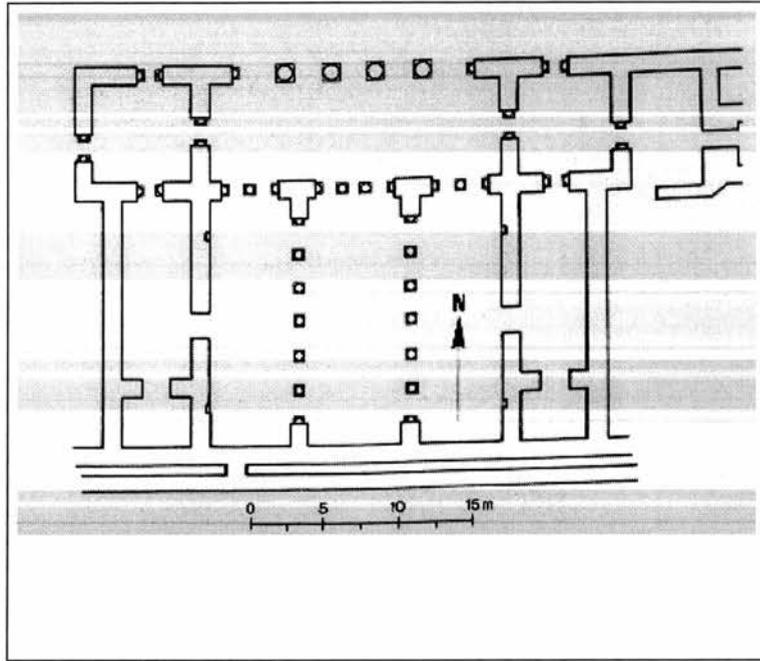


Plan of the Palace Complex after López-Cuervo¹ showing positioning of buildings.

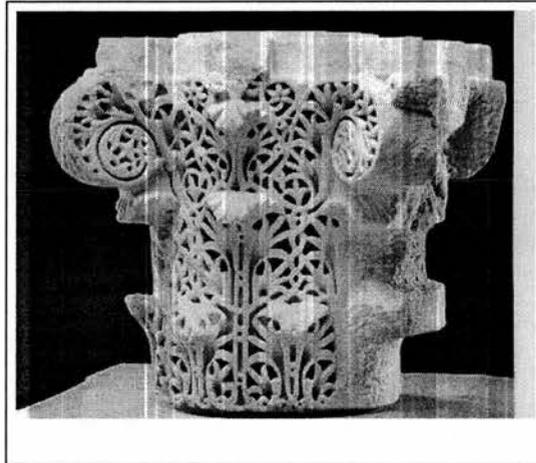
- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| (1) Caliph's Palace | (2) Residential Complex | (3)+(4) Esplanades |
| (5) <i>Dâr al-Jûnd</i> | (6) Dwelling House | (7) Arcade |
| (8) Guardroom | (9) House of Ja'afar | (10) Colonnades |
| (11) Prince's house | (12) <i>Majlis</i> | (13) Royal baths |
| (14) Military Passage | (15) Military Passage | (16) Gardens. |

The lower residential levels have only been partially excavated.

¹ Barrucand and Badnorz *Moorish Architecture* Taschen 1992 p.64



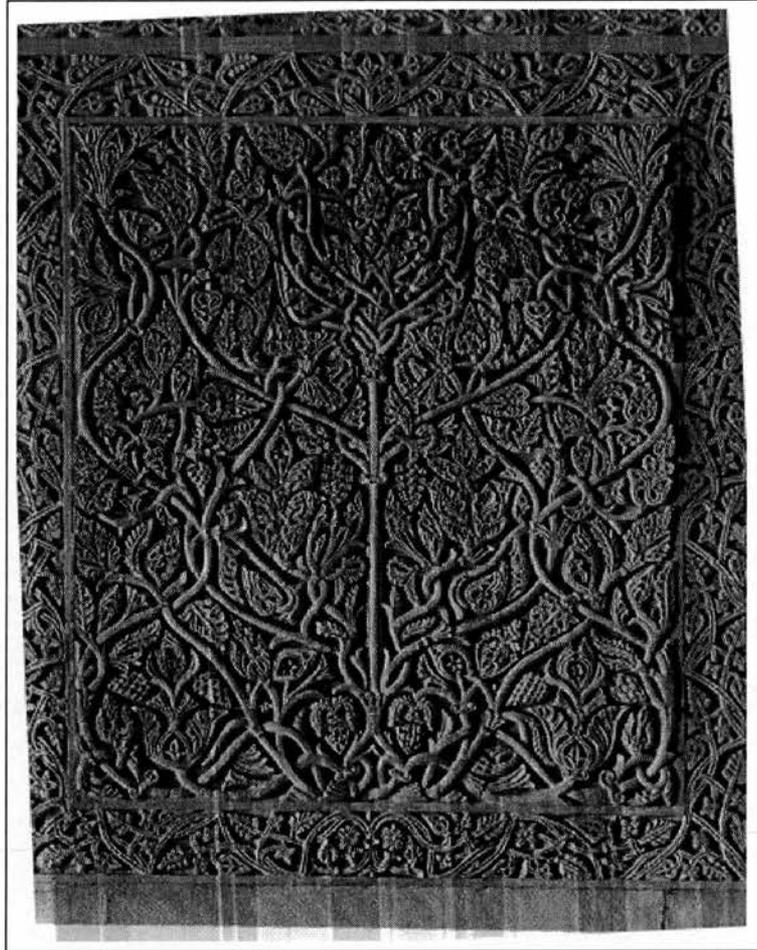
Ground Plan of the *Majlis*² after Castejón and de-Arizala. The Caliph's throne would have been positioned between the central pillars on the Southern wall. Courtiers would have been ranked, as discussed in Chapter 3 along the pillars.



A Capital from the *Majlis*.³

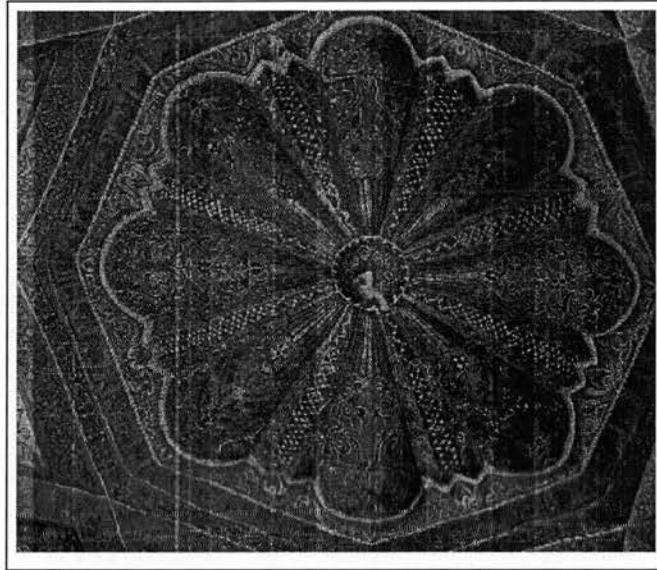
² Barrucand and Badnorz *ibid.* p.68

³ *El Salon de °Abd al-Raḥmân III* Cordoba 1995 p.84 A Capital attributed to the Palace is held by the Victoria and Albert Museum (Collection no. A.10 1922-?)

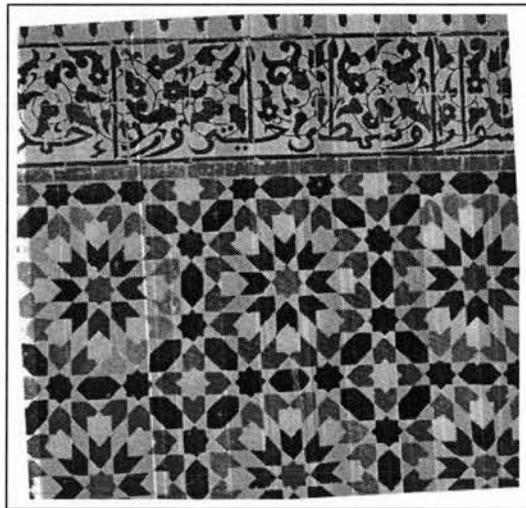


Part of the Vegetal decoration from the *Majlis*⁴ see especially the different " cells " of decoration and the folding and unfolding of the decoration (see Chapter 4).

⁴ Barrucand and Badnorz ibid. p.67



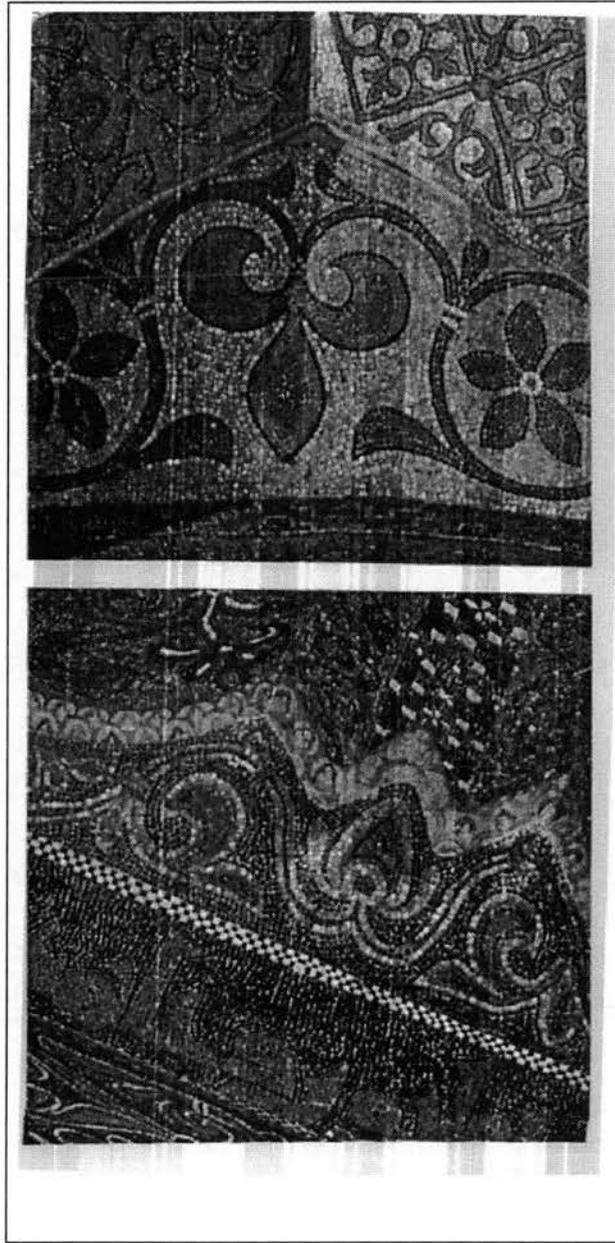
The dome above the mihrab in the Mosque⁵. It is not inconceivable that the ceiling of the *Majlis* was decorated in much the same manner.



A fragment of an 18th Century faïence mosaic⁶ from North Africa, showing the 'geometrical' aegis (see Chapter 4). The *Majlis* flooring could well have been similar.

⁵ Barrucand and Badnorz *ibid.* p.77

⁶ Barrucand and Badnorz *ibid.* p.148



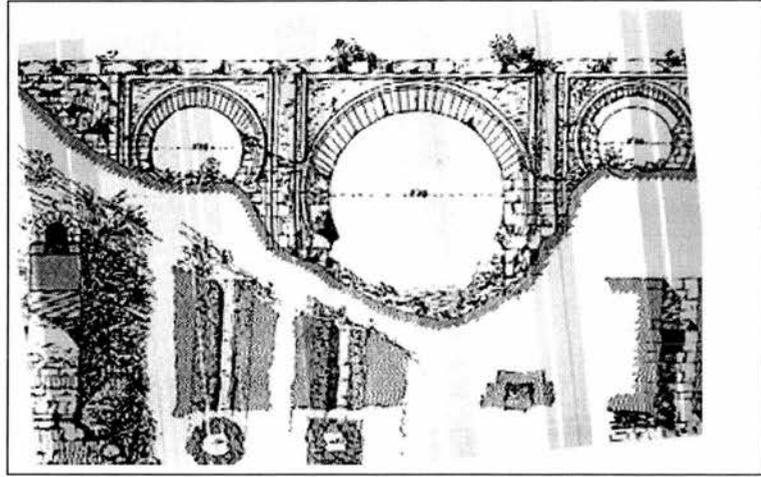
Two examples of mosaic decoration taken from the Mosque in Cordoba⁷. Byzantine artistry is quite clear in the execution, although the vegetal decoration is quintessentially Muslim. The mosaics in the Palace would undoubtedly have been of this quality.

⁷ Barrucand and Badnorz *ibid.* p.81

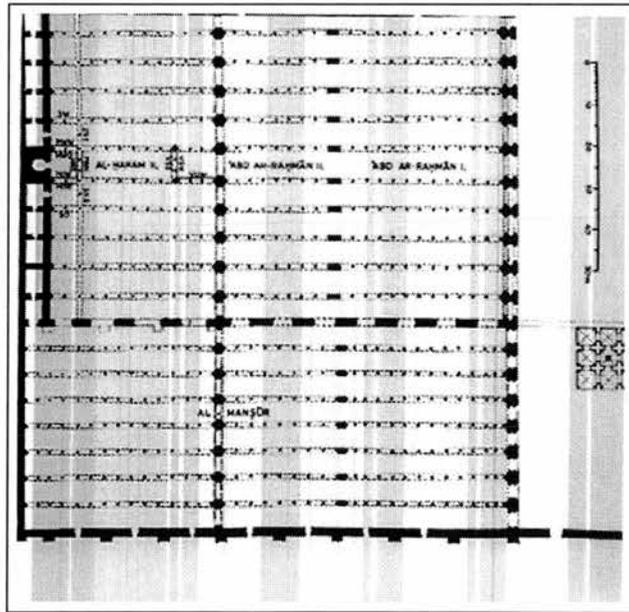


The Ivory Casket⁸ mentioned in Chapter 4. This piece may be seen in the Louvre. A similar piece, made for Ziyad b.Afflah, a Prefect of the Police in Cordoba during the reign of al-Ḥakam is displayed in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Collection no.368-1880). Two other rectangular caskets made from Ivory and attributed to the *milieu* are also displayed there (Collection nos. 217-1865 and 1057-1855)

⁸ Barrucand and Badnorz p.105



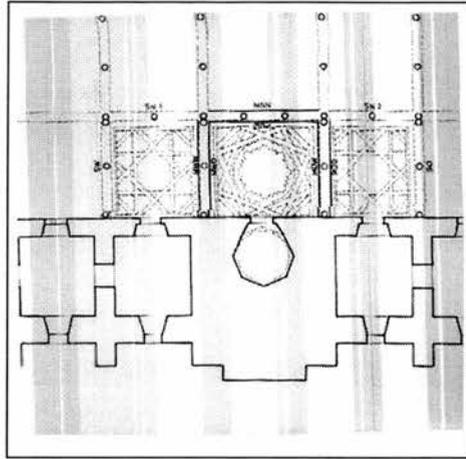
An illustration of the Aqueduct⁹ which brought water from the Sierra de Cordoba to the *taqsim* after Gómez-Moreno. The efficiency of the irrigation system may be seen in the desertification of the area following the destruction of the Palace in 1013.



A Ground plan of the Friday Mosque in Cordoba after Ewert¹⁰, showing the various stages in the development.

⁹ Barrucand and Badnorz p.69

¹⁰ Barrucand and Badnorz p.41



A plan of al-Hakam's *Maqsûra* after Ewert¹¹. Ibn Idhârî's account of its construction has been translated in Chapter 1. Note the geometrical proportioning in the *Maqsûra* area (see discussion in Chapter 2).

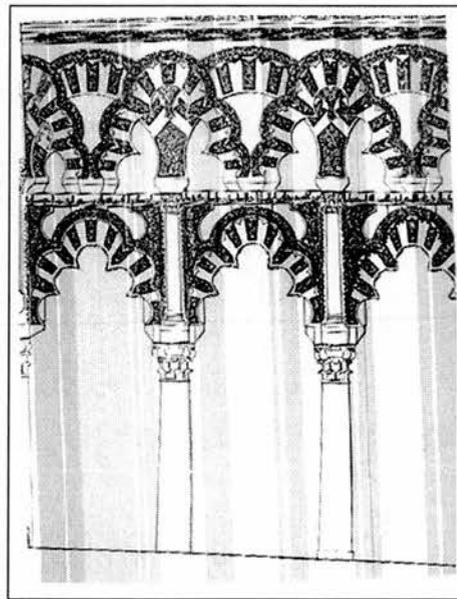
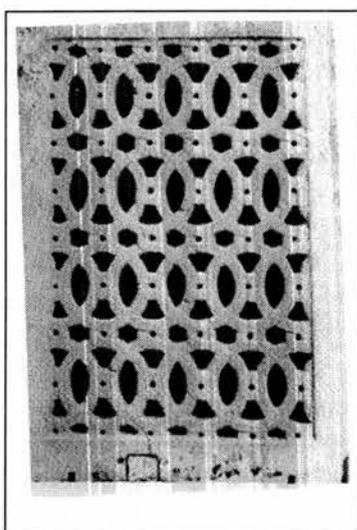


Illustration showing the Arches in the Friday Mosque after Cresswell.¹²

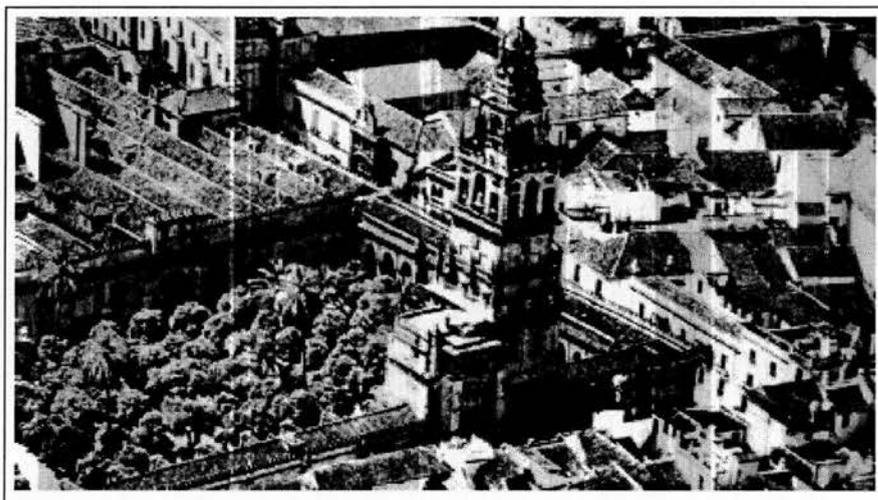
Although not specifically recorded, it is not entirely unlikely that the *Majlis* roof was supported by such columns.

¹¹ Barrucand and Badnorz p.75

¹² Barrucand and Badnorz ibid. p.73



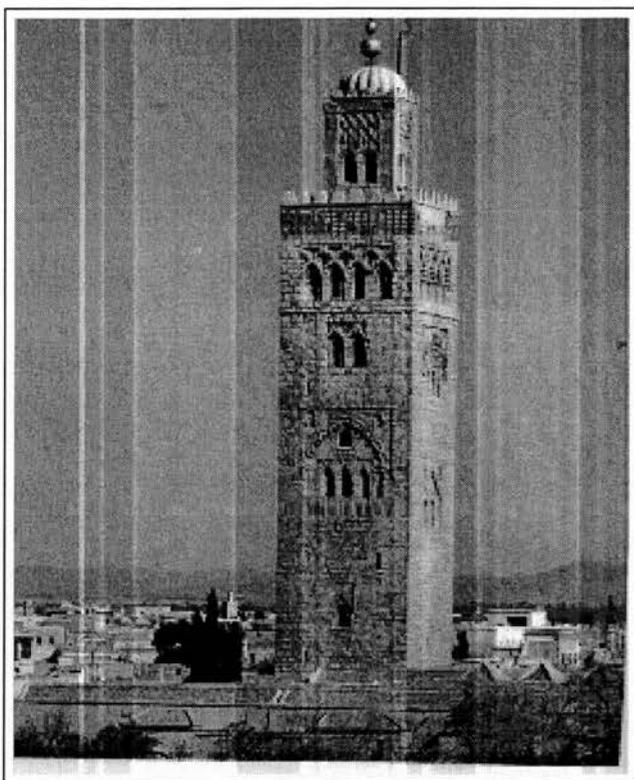
A Window grill from the Friday Mosque.¹³



The minaret of the Friday Mosque in Cordoba, encased in a baroque shell (See Chapter 1).¹⁴

¹³ Barrucand and Badnorz *ibid.* p.45

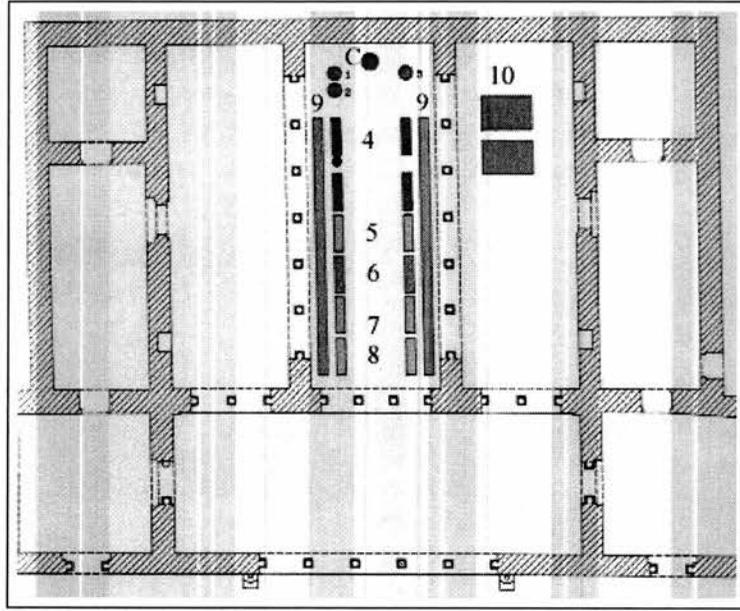
¹⁴ Barrucand and Badnorz p.41



The Kutabiyya minaret in Marrakesh¹⁵, the earliest Almohad minaret.

The minaret in Cordoba could well have been constructed to a similar plan.

¹⁵ Barrucand and Badnorz p. 153



Distribution of dignitaries during ʿĪd al-Fitr ceremony 360/ 970¹⁶

Key :

C= Caliph (al-Ḥakam)

1 = Âbû al-Asbagh

2 = Âbû al-Muṭarîf

3 = Âbû al-Qasim al-Asbagh

4 = Wazirs / *Wizarah*

5 = Prefects of the Police / *Sâhib al-Shurtu*

6 = Prefects of Cities / *Ashab al-Mudun*

7 = *Juzzun*

8 = *Urrad*

9 = Servants / *Fityân* 10 = Quraysh

¹⁶ Based on diagram from *El Salon Rico* p.160

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