

The Córdoba Library of Caliph al-Hakam II  
and the Case for Interculturalism

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## The Córdoba Library of Caliph al-Hakam II

Glancing backward along the segmented timeline of Spain's rich history, an interested viewer might overlook the slim representation of al-Hakam II al-Mustansir's<sup>1</sup> brief reign were it not for the anomalous library he amassed in Córdoba, which to some highlights his sixteen-year caliphate as a "bibliophilic querk"<sup>2</sup> in a long dynasty of stable Muslim rule over the only Islamic cultural power center in Europe. Pausing to scrutinize this brief period, however, reveals more than a faint blip in the nearly eight hundred years of Islamic enculturation of southern Spain, or, more properly, al-Andalus. Such a deliberate look suggests that al-Hakam II had more than a mere personal interest in books, that under his stewardship the Caliphate of Córdoba shone brighter than ever before or after, and that his emphasis on books and education steered Western Europe toward the Renaissance and the invention of modern ideals of general and higher education.

The early fifth century in southern Spain brought Roman decline and the subsequent invasions of Visigothic raiders. The branch of Visigoths that settled in the south, the Vandals, crossed into Africa in 429. Later Arabs in North Africa referred to the place from which the raiders came by a distorted version of their tribal name, "Andalus."<sup>3</sup> Gothic rule in al-Andalus ended in 711 when Tariq ibn Ziyad invaded with a small Berber force and ousted the carnal Gothic king Roderic.<sup>4</sup> Forty plus years of tribal squabbling followed, but in 756 the young

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<sup>1</sup>Hereafter referred to as al-Hakam II. For the purposes of this paper, most diacritical marks in Arabic proper nouns will not appear.

<sup>2</sup>David Wasserstein, "The Library of al-Hakam II al-Mustansir and the Culture of Islamic Spain," *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 5 (1990-1991): 103.

<sup>3</sup>Mahmoud Makki, "The Political History of al-Andalus," in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. Salma Khadra Jayyusi (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1992). This etymology of "Andalus" (disputed by some scholars) and much of the overview of early Andalus history presented here comes from this introductory essay.

<sup>4</sup>History describes Roderic's demise as a coup engineered by a rival, Count Julian, who enlisted Muslim help to seek revenge on Roderic for having ravaged Julian's young daughter, Cava.

Umayyad prince Abd al-Rahman, fleeing his Damascus home after the Abbasid overthrow of his ruling family, found his way to Córdoba and began transforming it into a new Damascus. His defeat of Charlemagne at Roncesvalles in 778, preserved in the French *Chanson de Roland*, stabilized his rule and enabled him to continue the restoration of Córdoba begun by earlier Umayyad governors. Construction on Córdoba's Great Mosque began in 785 and continued throughout successive reigns of his Umayyad heirs. By the time of Abd al-Rahman II (822-852) al-Andalus had evolved into the Eastern-style cultural center that the displaced Umayyads hoped would rival their Syrian home.

Islamic culture in al-Andalus ascended during the fifty-year reign of Abd al-Rahman III (912-961), from whom other European royals, including Byzantine emperor Constantine and Otto, king of the Slavs and Germans, courted favor. Declaring himself Caliph in 929, Abd al-Rahman III established the Caliphate of Córdoba, the brief delineation of the golden age of Andalusí Islamic culture that reached its zenith under his son and heir, al-Hakam II, then unraveled after the turn of the eleventh century. Among the constellation of attributes that defined the height of Córdoba society, literacy shone the brightest. Nineteenth-century scholar Reinhart Dozy declared that during this time “nearly everyone could read and write . . . whilst in Christian Europe only the rudiments of learning were known, and that by the few, mostly clergy.”<sup>5</sup>

The city of Córdoba, on the northern bank of the Guadalquivir River in south-central Spain, is perfectly situated for use as a palatine city. A bridge from Córdoba's days as the capital of Roman Baetica marks the upper limit of navigation on the river, which flows toward the Atlantic to just north of the port city of Cadiz. When the sixth governor representing the

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<sup>5</sup>Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1964), 531.

Umayyads in Damascus made his seat there in 719, he began restoration of the bridge, built city walls, and installed water mills. The city quickly outgrew the walls and spread, forming suburbs outside the walls and south of the river.<sup>6</sup> Córdoba remained an important center of commerce, lying along the major road from Saragossa along the Ebro in the north through Toledo in the center to Seville and Cadiz in the south.<sup>7</sup> Abd al-Rahman II, when he was not taming border conflicts with Christians in the north, fostered such a culture of Islamic arts that critics claimed the Córdobaans “aped the fashions of Baghdad,”<sup>8</sup> which had become the center of Islamic rule in the East. To complete his creation of a Baghdad of the West, he lured the poet Ziryab to take up residence there. Ziryab captured the imagination of the Córdobaans, influencing not only what and how people read, but also their fashion in clothes and their hairstyles. Under Abd al-Rahman II architecture advanced: Expansion of the Great Mosque included the engineering of the famed double arches.

During the ascension of the Caliphate, streams of Sudanese gold supplied stock for *dinars*, which were minted there, and provided for caliphate luxuries, continuation of the great building projects, and patronage of the arts.<sup>9</sup> The Caliphate “called on men of letters, wits, musicians, poets, scientists, and lawyers from the East, and offered them places at court coupled with fat stipends.”<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the earliest conveyance of Arabic sciences northward across the Alps occurred in 953 when John of Gorze, on a diplomatic mission to Córdoba from Otto the

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<sup>6</sup>Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, trans. Joan Spencer (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1975), 140-5.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 81.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 81.

Great, fell in with the caliph's physician and counselor Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, studied there three years, then left for his return trip with "a horseload" of Arabic books.<sup>11</sup>

Under Abd al-Rahman III Córdoba likely had the largest fleet in the world and sat on a bank of twenty million gold pieces.<sup>12</sup> According to Ibn Said, the thirteenth-century historian, the Córdovans were the cleanest people on earth with respect to their person, dress, beds, and interior of their houses.<sup>13</sup> They enjoyed well-paved and lighted streets, tiled roofs, and running water via aqueducts throughout a city that comprised an area twenty-four by six miles and held at its most populous a quarter of a million inhabitants or more.<sup>14</sup> Córdoba boasted 1600 mosques; 900 public baths; 213,077 homes for ordinary people; 60,300 mansions for notables; and 80,455 shops. Water wheels and water mills in the Guadalquivir irrigated fields cultivated with crops from the east, such as oranges, watermelons, and dates.<sup>15</sup> But above all, Córdoba was an intellectual center, and no more so than under al-Hakam II, son and heir to Abd al-Rahman III.

When al-Hakam II assumed the title of caliph in 961, he was forty-six years old. As prince and heir, he had throughout many years enjoyed the best teachers and access to the royal library begun by Muhammad I a hundred years before. He began to collect books before his teens and patronized the copying and composition of books in his twenties.<sup>16</sup> Once he undertook stewardship of the Caliphate, al-Hakam's love of books became the cultural fascination of all al-Andalus. During his reign al-Andalus had seventy libraries. Public libraries and private

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<sup>11</sup>S. K. Padover, "Muslim Libraries," in *The Medieval Library*, ed. James Westfall Thompson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939), 363.

<sup>12</sup>Robert Hillenbrand, "'The Ornament of the World': Medieval Cordoba as a Cultural Centre," in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. Salma Khadra Jayyusi (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1992), 117.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup>Wasserstein, 101.

collections sprang up all over as those seeking the caliph's favor sought to emulate his patronage of learning.<sup>17</sup> According to Ibn Said,

Córdoba held more books than any other city in al-Andalus, and its inhabitants were the most enthusiastic in caring for their libraries; such collections were regarded as symbols of status and social leadership. Men who had no knowledge whatsoever would make it their business to have a library in their homes; they would be selective in their acquisitions, so that they might boast of possessing unica, or copies in the handwriting of a particular calligrapher.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the many libraries and collections, al-Hakam II provided for twenty-seven free schools for the poor.<sup>19</sup> Three were in the neighborhood of the Great Mosque, and twenty-four were in the suburbs. He also provided academies for the rich and nourished the University of Córdoba by appointing his brother Mundhir general supervisor of learning. Under him the university flourished, attracting students -- Christians, Jews, and Muslims alike -- from Spain, other parts of Europe, Africa and Asia.<sup>20</sup> In Imamuddin's estimation, Córdoba was "the same to Europe as the head to the body and what Europeans learnt was mostly from Córdoba. Hakam raised the level of civilization in Spain to such a height that Córdoba served as a beacon in the darkness which then prevailed in Europe."<sup>21</sup>

Of all al-Hakam's accomplishments, none compares with his amassing the great collection that was his own caliphal library. Scattering throughout the eastern cities of Alexandria, Baghdad, and Damascus, his agents bought, copied, or otherwise acquired thousands of manuscripts. At home copyists, illuminators, bookbinders, fact checkers, and librarians -- over five hundred in all -- aided him in swelling the collection to over 400,000 volumes.<sup>22</sup> The catalog

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<sup>17</sup>Fred Lerner, *The Story of Libraries: From the Invention of Writing to the Computer Age* (New York: Continuum, 2002), 71.

<sup>18</sup>Hillenbrand, 120.

<sup>19</sup>S. M. Imamuddin, *Political History of Muslim Spain* (Dacca, Pakistan: Najmah Sons, 1969), 176.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>Lerner, 71.

alone filled forty-four books of twenty pages each, more books than could be found in many northern European libraries at the time. The Córdoba Library of al-Hakam II likely housed as many books “as all Christian Europe combined, shelving among its treasures long-lost Western wisdom and exotic new ideas from the East. Where Europe’s scribes had been reduced to copying and recopying the few classical texts that survived barbarian pillage, Islam’s scholars now introduced Europeans to Hindu-Arabic numerals, higher mathematics, new medical techniques, and fresh approaches to philosophy.”<sup>23</sup>

Not a mere collector of books, Al-Hakam II was a renowned scholar reputed to have known the contents of all the books in his collection: “Thus he increased his learning considerably and surpassed the learned men of his time in the knowledge of history, biography and genealogy. He was a historian of approved merit and an impartial critic. His historical information was so accurate and his judgment so profound that his opinions were hardly ever questioned by the great scholars of the Muslim world.”<sup>24</sup> He was known to have made copious notes in the flyleaves of his books,<sup>25</sup> which included summaries in Arabic of non-Islamic religious texts, histories of Islamic Spain, poetry, and Greek scientific writings in Arabic.<sup>26</sup> The presence of his marginal notes in books from the caliphal collection increased their value to later scholars.<sup>27</sup> The only surviving manuscript of Hakam’s library, dated 970, is a copy of a work on religious law discovered in a mosque library in Fez by Levi-Provençal in 1934 with a note saying it was copied for Hakam II.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Chris Lowney, *A Vanished World: Medieval Spain’s Golden Age of Enlightenment* (New York: Free Press, 2005), 5.

<sup>24</sup>Imamuddin, 182.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>Wasserstein, 99 & 101.

<sup>27</sup>Lerner, 71.

<sup>28</sup>Imamuddin, 182 and Wasserstein, 99.

Of the library itself history reveals just comments from librarians who had worked there. At one time the chief librarian was a eunuch named Tālid: “The bookcases were made of polished and perfumed wood. Golden inscriptions indicated the contents of the shelves and several rooms in the palace were set apart for the work of copying, illuminating, gilding, and binding books for which the most skillful persons of both sexes were employed.”<sup>29</sup> And from the eunuch Bakiya, at some time in charge of the library, via Ibn Hazm, came this note, that like the Great Mosque, the library was constantly outgrowing its accommodations. On one occasion it took five days to move the poetry collection alone from one place to another, likely within the Alcázar, or palace, of al-Hakam II.<sup>30</sup>

The result of al-Hakam’s bibliomania was that Córdoba became a great book market “where the literary productions of every country were available for sale.”<sup>31</sup> Copy shops, which often employed women, and bookshops enjoyed more business than jewellery traders and silk shops. Such patronage attracted “large numbers of learned men, including physicians, philosophers, historians, geographers, astronomers and mathematicians to live in Cordova.”<sup>32</sup> One advantage the Andalusis had in the book trades was an abundance of cheap flax-based paper. Rather than the parchment or papyrus of the Romans, or the vellum of northern Europe, the Spanish Muslims produced their books in paper, which may explain the loss of so many of them. However, their use of cheap paper likely contributed to the inarguable disparity between the book trades of al-Andalus and the rest of Europe. When al-Hakam II was taxing the shelves of the Alcázar with his 400,000 *mujallad*, or volumes, the “major” library at St. Gall in

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<sup>29</sup>Imamuddin, 179.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*



Switzerland could list only six hundred works.<sup>33</sup> The fact that the Islamic schools employed women as copyists, which allowed for a greater production of materials, contributed to the spread of literacy in al-Andalus,<sup>34</sup> as did the lack of political assemblies and theatres in the Muslim culture, making books almost the sole means of acquiring knowledge.<sup>35</sup> Under al-Hakam II, no town in al-Andalus was without its schools, and all the principal cities -- Seville, Malaga, Saragossa, and Jaen -- had institutes of higher learning modeled after the university in Córdoba, and all would later distinguish themselves.<sup>36</sup>

After Al-Hakam II succumbed to a stroke on October 1, 976, the fate of the Caliphate fell to his young son Hisham II, who ruled in name only. Ibn abi-Amir, known as al-Mansur, *hajib* to Hisham II, positioned himself as a virtual dictator, establishing an administration of religious and intellectual intolerance. Al-Mansur wooed the clergy by waging war against the Christians in the north and burning the “heretical” scientific and philosophical books in the royal library.<sup>37</sup> The Caliphate did not survive al-Mansur’s harsh rule. All the libraries, public and private, including the great caliphal library of Córdoba, suffered in the subsequent civil conflicts and wars with Christians in the north. As for the books, one Arab historian noted, “Some were taken to Seville, some to Granada, some to Almeira and to other provincial cities. I myself met with many in this city (Toledo) that were saved from ruin.”<sup>38</sup> The dispersal of the great caliphal library under al-Mansur indicates to some degree its importance, as many of the books there challenged orthodox views. One can imagine the efforts by scholars and wealthy nobles to salvage what they could from al-Mansur’s fires in an effort to preserve the vast store of knowledge contained therein, the

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<sup>33</sup>Hillenbrand, 121.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup>Hitt, 563.

<sup>36</sup>Imamuddin, 176-7.

<sup>37</sup>Lerner, 71.

<sup>38</sup>Padover, 362.

access to which had been not a luxury but a common right. The world-changing effects of the library had already begun, however, and al-Mansur's twenty-six-year reign was not enough to stop it.

The rise of scientific activity in tenth-century al-Andalus -- that is, the revival of classical Greek texts and the origination of new ideas in astronomy, medicine, and logic -- resulted from the lack of orthodox rigidity that prevailed in the Christian north. Muslim tolerance of Christians and Jews living in al-Andalus, combined with an explosive rate of conversion to Islam among the inhabitants fascinated by Arab culture and motivated by economic incentives, created the "necessary demographic weight" required for a vast division of labor, highly specialized individuals within the learned class, and the institutionalization of the educational system.<sup>39</sup> The rapid movement of ideas between cultures is evident in the "heavily Arabicized scientific miscellany" of the monastery of Ripoll (in the eastern Pyrenees) dating to the mid-tenth century. Ripoll was the site of the first attempts in the West to synthesize the "Arabo-Greek corpus" in Latin. Among them is a treatise on the quadrant translated into Latin from a contemporaneous Arabic manuscript based on older non-Arabic source,<sup>40</sup> and a manuscript of Boethius on arithmetic, with notes in Arabic. Through this active center of learning passed the young Gerbert of Aurillac, later Pope Sylvester II, on his way to Catalonia and, perhaps, to Córdoba in the 960s.<sup>41</sup>

By the eleventh century al-Andalus formed the nexus linking the ancient and modern worlds of letters. Their schools and academies "were the shrines at which the barbarized nations

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<sup>39</sup>Thomas F. Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 250.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*

of the West rekindled the torch of science and philosophy.”<sup>42</sup> Knut (Canute) the Danish king, after conquering England in the early part of the century, imported Lotharingian and Flemish churchmen to replace the Anglo-Saxon monks, whom he did not trust. Robert de Losinga of Hereford, a center of Arabic studies, particularly astrology, served the Danish king, as did Guibert de Nogent, a French abbot who penned a tribute to the value of Arabic astronomy. Constantinus Africanus, the Christian-born Carthaginian and Muslim subject, translated at Monte Cassino Arabic works of science that deeply influenced study in southern Italy.<sup>43</sup> Toledo, recovered by Christians in 1085, became the center for scientific learning, with a wealth of books, many likely from Córdoba, and Mozarab (Arabicized Christians) and Jewish scholars in the schools of translation.<sup>44</sup>

Christian Toledo in the twelfth century was reminiscent of al-Andalus in its golden age, as it was “crawling with every conceivable ethnic and religious permutation.”<sup>45</sup> New arrivals to the city found no shortage of language instructors to help them master the “alien Arabic texts.”<sup>46</sup> Archbishop Raymond of Toledo provided the final ingredient in the “cultural explosion” when he sponsored retranslations into Latin of Arabic translations of Greek classics by Aristotle, Galen, and others.<sup>47</sup> Twelfth-century translators in Toledo were mostly English. Among them were Adelard of Bath, Roger of Hereford, Daniel of Morley, Alfred of Sareshal, Alexander Nequam, and Walcher of Malvern. The Slav Hermann the Dalmatian settled in Spain’s northeast

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<sup>42</sup>Andrew Crichton, *History of Arabia and its People* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1852), 436.

<sup>43</sup>Padover, 364..

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup>Lowney, 149.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

to complete the first translation of the Quran into a European language.<sup>48</sup> The Italians Plato of Tivoli and Gerard of Cremona also worked in Toledo.<sup>49</sup>

Gerard of Cremona arrived in Toledo “destined to unlock a treasure trove of Greco-Arabic medical knowledge for fellow Europeans.”<sup>50</sup> Of all the scholars who translated in the schools at Toledo, none was more prolific than Gerard, whose translated works number greater than seventy. Gerard’s colleagues said of their mentor’s love of books that he worked like a “wise man who, wandering through a green field, links up a crown of flowers, made from not just any, but from the prettiest.”<sup>51</sup> Gerard found medicine “prettiest.” He translated Ibn Sina’s (Avicenna’s) *Canon of Medicine*, the most famous teaching text in medical history in the first centuries of the European universities. The *Canon*, which Ibn Sina based on Galen, was reproduced in thirty editions over five centuries. Gerard also translated Abu-l-Qasim’s (Abulcasis’s) *The Recourse of Him Who Cannot Compose (a Medical Treatise on His Own)*, a much more hands-on guide to surgery than Avicenna’s text.<sup>52</sup>

Along with Abu-l-Qasim, the renowned Jewish scholar Maimonides and the Islamic scholar Ibn Rushd (Averroes) were children of Córdoba. Maimonides and Ibn Rushd represent in their respective religious faiths and to Christianity the struggle to reconcile faith and reason, theology and philosophy, modernism and orthodoxy,<sup>53</sup> the struggle that would give rise to the modern university model and ultimately the Renaissance. Ibn Rushd served as assistant to Ibn Tufayl, the sultan’s physician, and later succeeded him. Inspired by Ibn Tufayl’s allegorical tale *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* criticizing the outward posturing of pious Islamics over the inward experience

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<sup>48</sup>Lowney, 149.

<sup>49</sup>Padover, 365.

<sup>50</sup>Lowney, 149.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 163.

of religious faith, Ibn Rushd develops the idea into his *Harmony of Religion and Philosophy*, which expounds the importance of human reason in light of faith. He advocated for women and generally criticized dynastic rule, which put him at odds with Islamic orthodoxy but inspired his Christian admirers, including Thomas Aquinas, Siger of Brabant, Boethius of Sweden, Goswin La Chapelle, and Bernier of Novelle – all scholars at the University of Paris.<sup>54</sup> They referred to Ibn Rushd as “the Commentator” because of his translations of and commentaries on Aristotle, whom they referred to as “the Philosopher.”<sup>55</sup> Ibn Rushd’s effect cannot be overstated. His efforts prompted the West’s rediscovery of Aristotelian logic and directed modern Western thought, liberating scientific reasoning from theological dogmatism.<sup>56</sup>

By the middle of the thirteenth century most valuable material in Islamic libraries had gone to European scholarship by way of translation. The passing back to the West of its lost intellectual heritage and of the new Arabic mathematics, sciences, and poetics came just in time, as the expulsion of the Muslims from Spain in 1492 accompanied a holocaust of Arab books. The few that were saved went to Fez and Tunis; in Tunis in 1536 Charles V burned all remaining Arab books.<sup>57</sup> In describing the demise of the Arabic flowering of learned culture in Spain, Padover writes that

when Philip II founded the Escorial [1563], no Arabic manuscripts could be found in the kingdom. Fortunately, the capture of a Moroccan galley in which a considerable number of Arabic books and manuscripts was found relieved the royal librarian’s embarrassment. But in June, 1674, fire broke out in the Escorial and destroyed 8,000 Arabic books. A century later, when Michael Casiri began to catalogue the Arabic collection in the Escorial, he found only 1,824 manuscripts – forlorn survivors, perhaps, of the once great libraries of Cordova.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup>Wajih Ibrahim Saadeh, *Arab Enlightenment and European Renaissance* (Jerusalem: The Arab Study Society, 1985), 24.

<sup>57</sup>Padover, 368.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 368.

While we may long to thumb the *mujallad* of al-Hakam's great Córdovan library, we must settle for no less a significant artifact of al-Hakam's collection, the state-sponsored institution of higher learning.

In "debating the fictions derived from the tendency of institutions to legitimize themselves by asserting an origin in antiquity," Walter Rüegg writes, "It seems more plausible to derive the organizational pattern of the medieval university from the Islamic schools of learning. British Islamic scholars give an affirmative answer to the question: 'Did the Arabs invent the university?'"<sup>59</sup> George Makdisi would argue the point: In his estimation Western universities like those in Paris and Bologna are products of Western Christendom, but they are rooted in the scholastic guilds of early Islam. The defining elements of the institute of higher learning, a social form of organization (the guild) and a professional license to teach (the doctorate), found their way to the Islamic and Christian West, but no direct evidence links them. "Sufficient evidence," however, demonstrates the link. Both followed three stages of development: the translation of foreign books; guilds of higher learning; and a scholastic "method of disputation" for teaching and learning.<sup>60</sup> These elements are evident in the rise and demise of the Caliphate of Córdoba. As a natural scholar, and guided by a sense of intellectual democracy, al-Hakam II enjoyed forty-six years of observation and freedom from obligation under his father's fifty-year reign. Once he assumed his place as caliph, he was able to steward an intellectual center for all the world, gathering foreign manuscripts for translation and reproduction, creating schools for every stratum of Córdovan society, and paying the best scholars of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity to teach. Though his reign was brief, his work helped reopen the West to unfettered reason and

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<sup>59</sup>Hilda de Ridder-Symoens, *A History of the University in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 7-8.

<sup>60</sup>George Makdisi, "Universities: Past and Present," in *Culture and Memory in Medieval Islam: Essays in Honor of Wilfred Madelung*, eds. Farhad Daftary and Josef W. Meri (London: I. B. Taurus, 2003), 43-63.

thought in the middle ages, which, ultimately, led to the rebirth of Europe and the advance of the modern age.

#### Bibliographic Note:

The most focused and useful journal article on al-Hakam II and his influence on culture in Muslim Spain comes from David Wasserstein, "The Library of al-Hakam II al-Mustansir and the Culture of Islamic Spain," *Manuscripts of the Middle East*, (5), 1993. S. K. Padover's chapter, "Muslim Libraries," in J. W. Thompson's *The Medieval Library* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939) provides one of the best brief overviews of the importance and lasting impact of the Muslim world of books in the Middle Ages. Chris Lowney's recent *A Vanished World: Medieval Spain's Golden Age of Enlightenment* (New York: Free Press, 2005) frames the history of Muslim Spain within the confrontations of the three vying monotheistic religions rooted in Abraham -- Christianity, Islam, and Judaism -- and proved uniquely useful. Some useful information came from Fred Lerner's *The Story of Libraries: From the Invention of Writing to the Computer Age* (New York: Continuum, 2002), which provides concise overviews of important libraries.

A critical analysis (rather than an historic survey) of central issues and phenomena that contributed to the formation of Islamic Spain and the interactions among cultures there comprises Thomas F. Glick's *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979). For an immense collection of essays marking the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of Islamic rule in al-Andalus, see Salma Khadra Jayyusi's *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1992). Jayyusi's collection includes sections on history, language and literature, music, art and architecture, social history and lifestyle,

economic history, philosophy, religious studies, and science, technology and agriculture. Philip K. Hitti's early (1937) thorough accounting of Arab history and contributions, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present* can be found in its 8<sup>th</sup> edition (London: Macmillan & Co., 1964). Maurice Lombard provides a detailed accounting of Islamic economics and trade in *The Golden Age of Islam* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1975), translated by Joan Spencer. Certainly one of the oldest (1832) surveys of the Arabic peoples and their contributions can be found in *History of Arabia and its People*, by Andrew Crichton (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1852). Crichton's book is worth a look for the tissue-covered plates of Arab scenes.

For the decidedly Arab perspective, see S. M. Imamuddin's *Political History of Muslim Spain*, the revised and enlarged edition (Dacca, Pakistan: Najmah Sons, 1969). A thin useful treatise on the transmission of culture during the era of Arab enlightenment, also from the Arab perspective, is Wajih Ibrahim Saadeh's *Arab Enlightenment and European Renaissance* (Jerusalem: The Arab Studies Society, 1985). Finally, two works provide some insight into the rise of the university system in Europe and its possible origins in the Arab world. One is *A History of the University in Europe*, Volume 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), edited by Hilda de Ridder-Symoens. The other, more recent piece comes from George Makdisi, "Universities: Past and Present," in Farhad Daftary and Josef W. Meri's *Culture and Memory in Medieval Islam: Essays in Honor of Wilfred Madelung* (London: I. B. Taurus, 2003).