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# An Islamicate History of the Alcazar of Seville: Mudejar Architecture and Andalusi Shared Culture (1252-1369 CE)

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AN ISLAMICATE HISTORY OF THE ALCAZAR OF SEVILLE:

MUDÉJAR ARCHITECTURE AND SHARED ANDALUSI CULTURE (1252-1369 CE)


by


JOHN F. SULLIVAN


Under the Direction of Allen Fromherz, PhD

ABSTRACT

At the height of the *Reconquista* c. 1340 CE, Christian King Alfonso XI of Castile-León constructed a new throne room to commemorate his victory over Muslim forces from neighboring Granada and North Africa. The throne room called the *Sala de la Justicia* (Hall of Justice) was built almost entirely in the Mudéjar style, a style that looked Islamic in nature and included inscriptions in Arabic, several referencing the Qur'an, but predominantly intended for non-Muslims. The construction of this throne room in the Alcazar of Seville, a palace built by the Muslims and later used as the royal residence for the conquering Christians, has puzzled scholars due to its clearly Islamicate design being used in a new construction by a Christian ruler against a backdrop of the Crusades and the *Reconquista* in Spain. Raising further questions was

the construction of the Alcazar's Mudéjar palace by Alfonso XI's son Pedro I between 1364-1366 CE.  This new construction mirrored designs in the neighboring Alhambra of Granada, a territory still controlled by Muslims, which even employed some of the same artisans. Attempts to interpret the Mudéjar designs utilized by Christians was further exacerbated by the same design style appearing in new buildings and additions by non-ruling Christians, Muslims, and Jews across al-Andalus, among them residential and religious buildings including churches and synagogues. This project re-examines these constructions through the lens of a cultural history reveal a shared culture and visual language that existed between the Castilian Christians, their Muslim antagonists and the minority populations of Christians, Muslims, and Jews living in al-Andalus over the course of several hundred years, reaching its apex in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.  Participation in this shared culture by members of the three confessional communities was enabled because it existed separately from any specific political or religious affiliations which would otherwise be prohibitive. In this proposed re-interpretation, a cosmopolitan Islamicate culture coexisted among residents in al-Andalus, including ruling Christians, minority Muslim or Jewish subjects, and neighboring political and religious antagonists.  Ultimately, it is this shared Islamicate culture that best explains the Christian constructions in the Alcazar of Seville.

INDEX WORDS: Islamicate, Cosmopolitanism, Alcazar, Seville, Mudéjar, al-Andalus

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## DEDICATION

To Marshall G. S. Hodgson, I couldn't have done it without you.

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# 1   INTRODUCTION

On November 23, 1248 CE, following a sixteen month siege, the Muslim-ruled city of

Seville capitulated to the forces of Fernando III of Castile and León.  A month later on December

22, Fernando and his son, who would become Alfonso X in less than four years, entered the city

in triumph and established themselves at the Alcazar of Seville, the palatial residence and former

capital of the Muslim Almohads.  With the capture of Seville, the Castilians secured a major port

city and trade hub, leaving only the kingdom of Granada for the Muslims who had ruled the

better part of the Iberian Peninsula from the eighth century.  The conquest of Seville and the

occupation of the Alcazar represented one of the greatest achievements of the so-called

*Reconquista*, the reconquest of Spain, and the focal point of a burgeoning cultural relationship

between the conquering Christians and their Muslim and Jewish subjects.  Despite a clear

Christian victory backed by Pope Innocent IV (c. 1195-1254 CE), the capture of Seville

intensified a growing shared culture that had already existed between the three confessional

communities in al-Andalus under Muslim rule and would continue to evolve as it incorporated

the new Christian rulers into it.

The Alcazar of Seville had served as the royal residence and seat of power for Muslim rulers

extending back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century.  In addition, the city was home to several distinctive buildings

constructed by the previous Muslim polities, but predominantly by the Almohads whose

architecture, already influenced by their tenure in al-Andalus, formed something of a signature

style or design for the region and would serve as the foundation for much of the material culture

constructed in the ensuing century and a half following their defeat.  These constructions and

their continued prominence within the city signify the presence of an architectural and cultural

relationship that crossed multiple boundaries.

While the religious and political distinctions between the Christians and Muslims were clear, their concurrent cultural interactions and building projects have confounded some.  In spite of their differences in other areas, the conquering Christians and their Muslim and Jewish populations continued to express themselves architecturally in a very similar way.  This architectural expression, which came to include other forms of material culture, was later termed "Mudéjar" and was reflected in projects across the conquered territory, as well as in Granada, Iberia's last remaining Muslim stronghold.  This design style, which appears Islamic in nature, was popular amongst these same communities during the period of Almohad rule and seems to have extended on an inspirational level back to earlier periods of Muslim rule on the peninsula as well as appearing in earlier Christian conquests in places like Toledo.  Despite associations with the Almohads and other Muslim polities, this Mudéjar style, or permutations of it, would continue for more than a century after these territories came under Christian rule.  These early constructions and their appreciation by the conquering Christians also continued in varying forms for many centuries as evidenced by an 18th century map of Seville (fig. 1) that still listed prominent Islamic architecture including the *Torre del Oro*, *Torre de la Plata*, the Alcazar and the Giralda among the featured elements of the city.  This appreciation for Islamic architecture and the power and grandeur it represented prompted the emulation and protection of these buildings by the early Christian rulers of Seville, beginning with Alfonso X *el Sabio* (r. 1252-1284 CE) and likely fueled their future adoption and patronage of Mudéjar designs and building projects.

*Figure 1: 18th Century Map of Seville*



The Mudéjar design aesthetic would eventually be applied to royal throne rooms, private residences, churches, synagogues, mosques, and palaces. These constructions occurred with such frequency among Christians that scholars have sought to explain the continued presence of the Mudéjar style and its prominent applications at the highest levels of society in light of its visual and epigraphic associations with Muslims and Islam. The conundrum later prompted noted art historian Oleg Grabar to comment that, "it is strange that a land which had invested so much physical and psychic energy in reclaiming from an allegedly alien power what was presumed to be its own would, for several centuries, maintain and carefully nurture the artistic forms of the enemy."[2] Grabar synthesized one of the key difficulties presented by Christians

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[1] Francesco Ambrosi, Map of Seville, originally published by Giovanni Remondini (1713-1773), Venice, Italy, 1780 CE. Image from Paulus Swaen ltd, http://www.swaen.com/item.php?id=14442, accessed 1/13/2018.

[2] Grabar described the interactions between the Christian Kings of Castile and Leon and Mudéjar culture as a paradox, as well as this particular question in Oleg Grabar, "Two Paradoxes in the Islamic Art of the Spanish Peninsula," in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain,* Salma Jayyusi ed. (Boston: Brill, 1994), 2: 589.

building in a seemingly Islamic style, but his presentation of the conundrum posed by Mudéjar aesthetics also contains the keys to solving it.

Art historians like Grabar, who make up the better part of the scholars analyzing the material and architectural history of Seville and al-Andalus, have tended to focus on Mudéjar expressions in places like the Alcazar, the Alhambra, the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* in Toledo, or the *Real Monasterio de Santa Clara* at Tordesillas as independent constructions.  This individualized approach could have been limiting as it may have led to interpretations made without closely examining the relational sociohistorical context of these constructions by considering them in concert.  The same model of independent analysis was also often applied to examinations of rulers and patrons of Mudéjar material like Alfonso X, Alfonso XI, Pedro I, Yusuf I, and Muhammad V, further setting up the perception of individual cases and eliding the potential cooperative aspects of the greater cultural milieu.  Alongside these potential interpretive challenges was the issue of associating particular design styles with individual groups and tying them in with social, political, and religious affiliations and influences that may or may not have held sway. The result, on one hand, was the perception that Mudéjar constructions and their patrons were often considered in isolation, rather than as part of a larger cultural expression, while on the other hand, Mudéjar designs and similar expressions were frequently viewed as the province of one particular group or other, rather than conjointly forming a shared visual language.

This project will seek to examine the Alcazar of Seville and several expressions of Mudéjar design in al-Andalus to argue that these architectural and material culture projects were part of an Islamicate shared culture and visual language that crossed confessional communities and existed separately from the political and religious affiliations of the patrons.  While theories have

been put forth to explain the seeming incongruity of these designs within a Christian framework, each attempt has provided an answer for some aspects of some of the constructions, however few have provided theories that could be applied to the majority, if not all of such manifestations in al-Andalus. In an effort to suggest such a theory, which will be built around the idea of a shared visual language and material culture, this project will explore prominent constructions by contemporary Christians, Muslims, and Jews who often experienced conflicting political and religious realities. Through this analysis, this dissertation will reveal an Islamicate shared culture in which each confessional community participated, but also made their own through patron choice and customization applied to shared foundational elements and a shared visual language.

The following chapters will discuss interpretations of key terminology like *Convivencia*, Islamicate, and Mudéjar before discussing shared culture as it occurred across al-Andalus to conclude that the Alcazar of Seville, and the Mudéjar designs contained within it, reflect the history of a shared culture, or an Islamicate history, that describes architecture and material culture that is neither Muslim, Christian, nor Jewish, but something unique to al-Andalus.

## 2    COMING TO TERMS

Any theory of shared culture in al-Andalus must allow for participation across confessional communities while also acknowledging that some theoretical construct existed that enabled participation in the shared culture while maintaining any existing political and religious affiliations. With this in mind, an Islamicate history would be predicated on two interpretive understandings.  The first would be the presence of a shared culture, along with some form of affiliative identity, which enabled a distinction between cultural identities and political, social, or religious identities.  Secondly, an Islamicate history would also describe an environment where those identities could coexist, even if they were in conflict.  To enable such explorations and interpretations, an Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville will therefore require the understanding and specific application of several key terms and ideas which historically have either been in dispute, or in some cases, rarely used.  Beyond comprehending the context and elucidation of the titular term Islamicate, several related terms such as *convivencia* and Mudéjar will also need definition and interpretation.  Before unpacking these terms and ideas however, an overarching concept, hereafter described as "monolithization," must be defined and addressed since it weighs heavily on interpretations of this history.

### 2.1    Monolithization

The concept of monolithization is evident in Oleg Graber's earlier quotation.  "It is strange that a land which had invested so much physical and psychic energy in reclaiming from an allegedly alien power what was presumed to be its own would, for several centuries, maintain and carefully nurture the artistic forms of the enemy."[3]  At the heart of Grabar's comment, and the perceived independence of groups and designs in medieval Iberia, is the spectre of

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[3] Grabar, "Two Paradoxes," 589.

monolithization.  Monolithization involves unintentionally creating a standardized or even normative amalgamation or conceptual formation that elides distinctions within the "monolith" that might be more historically or interpretively valuable.  Monolithization also frequently manifests as an exclusive affiliation or attribution of qualities to one group to the exclusion of others.  In this case, Grabar's attribution of the "artistic forms" to the "enemy," suggests that those forms were exclusive to that "enemy," which in this case would be the Muslims.  This monolithization therefore ascribes these forms as the province of the Muslims, tacitly suggesting that any flirtation with such forms creates an uncomfortable association with Islam, which would indeed have been a problem for a Christian ruler, and especially one financed by the Pope and under the larger umbrella of the Crusades and *Reconquista*.  The implicit difficulty therefore exists in needing to explain why a Christian is directly engaging with something Islamic, a predicament that several scholars, including Grabar, have found themselves addressing.

In contrast to this monolithic construct, this study will argue that Castilian engagement with what will be described as Islamicate (as opposed to Islamic) material and Mudéjar aesthetics was not the case of Christians adopting or participating in an exclusively Muslim or Islamic culture, but rather a case of the conquering Castilians gradually participating in an existing Andalusi culture of which they had then become part.  In this Andalusi context, cultural elements such as Mudéjar aesthetics, were already separate and distinct from religious or political affiliations.  In other words, the Castilians could participate in aspects of Islamicate/Mudéjar culture such as architecture, while maintaining their Catholicism and continuing to fight what amounts to a Crusade during the *Reconquista*.[4]  The Andalusi context of this cultural interaction is particularly

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[4] This is not to say that this affiliation with the Islamicate culture of Al-Andalus did not carry political or religious consequences.  In one particular example, Pedro's Trastámaran rival used his association with Pedro's diverse citizens and court to great effect in his criticism of Pedro as an "enobler of Jews and Moors" reflecting among others, Pedro's relationships with Muhammad V of Granada and his Jewish minister Samuel ha-Levi Abulafia.  See

important since the separation of the cultural aspects of Islamicate culture had already begun by virtue of the Jews and Christians participating in what was then Islamic culture as non-Muslims. This multicultural interaction then formed the basis for the Islamicate/Mudéjar culture that continued in the Castilian and Nasrid periods.[5] How Andalusi culture functioned and operated separately from the religious and political contexts of the early Castilian period is directly tied to the shared culture of al-Andalus being Islamicate. Furthermore, evidence from the Castilians' own chronicles suggests that the cultural/architectural elements of the conquered Muslim polities were already understood to be worthy of praise and likely represented a form of high culture, grandeur, and political power that the Castilians themselves wanted to reflect.

On the whole, scholarship on medieval al-Andalus has tended toward monolithization. From this perspective, discussions often involve monolithic entities such as "Jews," "Christians," and "Muslims," which are frequently presented as hegemonic categories and not as collections of people whose experiences, orientations and relationships changed depending on numerous variables in their specific contexts. A monolithic perspective also tends to discuss medieval periods, as well as rulers and dynasties, without specific distinctions. In this project, for example, there is a distinct difference between the orientations of the early rulers of Castile-León from those coming after the death of Pedro I in 1369 CE, as well as distinctions between the

Clara Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1350-1369*, The Medieval Mediterranean, v. 6 (Leiden ; New York: E.J. Brill, 1995), and Jerrilynn Denise Dodds, Maria Rosa Menocal, and Abigail Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 241-263.

[5] In one specific example, an analysis of ceramic production and consumption in Seville showed a surprising consistency in the material record from The Almoravid period through the conquest of 1248 and into late 13th century under Christian rule suggesting that despite the religious and political upheaval over an extended period of time, the interaction with this socio-cultural product remained consistent. See Rebecca Bridgman with Pina Lopez Torres and Manuel Vera Reina, "Crossing the Cultural Divide? Continuity in Ceramic Production and Consumption between the Almoravid and Mudéjar Periods in Seville," *Al-Masāq*, 21, no. 1 (2009): 13-29.

For additional examples see the Synagogue of Santa Maria la Blanca as well as the Illuminated Sephardic Bibles in Toledo (early 13th Century) in Dodds, "Mudéjar Tradition and the Synagogues of Medieval Spain: Cultural Identity and Cultural Hegemony," in *Convivencia*, 113-131 and Katrin Kogman- Appel, *Jewish Book Art Between Islam and Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

rulers of Castile-León and their contemporaries in Aragon and Navarre. Similar distinctions

would also hold true for Muslims in Granada and those in North Africa who frequently worked

both for and against each other depending on their interests and circumstances. Thus, any

discussion based on a coexistence or conflict between Christians, Muslims, or Jews without

indicating which ones, at what time, and in what context are potentially flawed. Fully

understanding medieval Seville is therefore impossible without recognizing the distinctiveness of

the populations involved and their changing orientations and affiliations. For example, those

studying relationships between Christians and Jews writ monolithically, might cite the dictates of

the Fourth Lateran Council (1213-1215 CE) as evidence of troubling, exclusivist relations

between those two confessional groups. Engaging this relationship from that perspective

however would hit a substantial roadblock when discussing Iberia, where all evidence points to

the Fourth Lateran Council being largely, if not wholly, ignored on the peninsula and at least

within the confines of Castilian-led al-Andalus.[6] Rather than serving as evidence of negative

relations between "Christians" and "Jews," the application of the Fourth Lateran Council canons,

or failure to do so in al-Andalus, is instead evidence of a distinction between one set of

Christians in a particular context operating differently from other Christians in a different

context. This distinction in turn holds true for their respective Jewish populations who also

responded differently. Thus, any discussion of what "Christians" or "Jews" writ monolithically

were doing in different places and times, or even concurrently, requires a discussion or at least

acknowledgement of those distinctions, especially if they yield a counter-narrative to the

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[6] The Fourth Lateran Council (1213-1215 CE) among other things requested the distinguishing and curtailment of Jews through clothing and restrictions in their participation in Christian society (see Canons 67-70 specifically). For manifestations of the Fourth Lateran Council dictates in Iberia (or lack thereof), see examples in Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christian-Jewish Relations* 1000-1300 (Harlow: Longman, 2011); David Nirenburg, *Communities of Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); Lucy Pick, *Conflict and Coexistence: Archbishop Rodrigo and the Muslims and Jews in Medieval Spain* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

generally accepted one, as is the case in medieval al-Andalus and Seville. By examining the people, communities, and material culture of Seville during the reign of the early Castilian Kings (c. 1248-1369 CE), one such distinction is revealed. It is in this and other distinctions and contextual varieties running in opposition to monolithization that expressions of an Islamicate shared culture reside.

Moving forward, one of the keys to understanding an Islamicate history is the ability to see cultural interactions at work despite their seeming contradiction with the religious and political sensibilities of the players involved; this includes a crusader king building an arguably Muslim throne room, a Jewish minister adorning his synagogue with Arabic alongside Hebrew and decorating it in a style contemporary with a Christian King and a Muslim Sultan. And finally, a Christian King building an entire palace and private residence featuring Arabic inscriptions, including the motto of a sometimes rival Muslim polity, featuring Islamic references, and sharing numerous design elements and with the same Muslim polity. Arguably the only way for any of this to make practical sense is if these constructions and designs were the product of a shared culture that was separate and distinct from any associations with the religious or political affiliations that their outward appearance and content might suggest, especially to a modern eye.

One of the consequences of monolithization is the imagination of a medieval Iberia as an idyllic time in which the three confessional communities lived and thrived together. Meanwhile others have looked at medieval Iberia and seen a time of continual conflict, punctuated by pogroms, crusades, conquests, palace intrigue, and murder. The reality is that elements of both of these perspectives were present in medieval Iberia. What made the region and period unique was the high level of tolerance and cooperation between communities coexisting alongside equally prominent levels of conflict. What this examination will reveal is that conflict and

cooperation often took place in different segments of society – in some cases having political and religious conflict while simultaneously cooperating in the context of culture.

What enabled such a society to function was largely due to a phenomenon that could be described as cosmopolitanism. Ultimately, an Islamicate history is a cosmopolitan history, as are gestures toward the Ibero-centric phenomenon of *convivencia* and the descriptive concept of Mudéjar. This cosmopolitanism will be described and analyzed as the foundation of these other terms and because of its own long and varied history as a term and concept has its own issues that stray beyond the boundaries of this project. Because the discussion will focus on other terms specifically relevant to cosmopolitan manifestations in al-Andalus and Iberia, those will be the primary terms discussed. As a general definition however, cosmopolitan and cosmopolitanism refers to those ideas and institutions that allow for cooperation in the face of conflict, often resulting from pluralism and diversity within a society. The ability to cooperate and coexist in the face of conflict is the definition of medieval Iberia and al-Andalus and the environment which enabled the development of a shared culture that manifested in a cosmopolitan Islamicate history.

## 2.2   Convivencia

More than other terms, *convivencia* rises above in notoriety and importance, but also serves as a cautionary discussion of the problem of monolithization. Perhaps no other term is more intrinsically linked to medieval Iberia and al-Andalus than *convivencia*. Nearly every discussion of the history of Spain, or al-Andalus in particular, invokes the term in their discussion of either the Islamic or the early post-*Reconquista* period. Typically, *convivencia* is referenced in discussions of a medieval Iberia in which the three confessional communities, Muslims,

Christians, and Jews managed to coexist.[7]  Once *convivencia* as a descriptive term is deployed

however, its definitions and applications begin to diverge, in some cases substantially.

   *Convivencia,* or as it is most commonly translated, "coexistence" or "living together" has

produced a plethora of discussions regarding its translation, its definition, and its application to

medieval Iberia and medieval Iberian history.  The term is most often used to describe and

explain the curious case of a multicultural al-Andalus in which there was a coexistence of the

three faiths, which might not otherwise have been able to coexist together due to a perceived

(usually modern) belief that those three faiths were ultimately incompatible.  Thus, the mere fact

of their living together for an extended period of time and seeming to flourish is interesting to

modern scholars and a frequent subject for analysis.  Why *convivencia* is important to the

discussion of Islamicate share culture rests in its role as a cosmopolitan institution.  Without

some form of cosmopolitanism, a shared culture could not have developed in the way that it had.

   The term *convivencia*, was originally coined by Spanish historian Ramón Menéndez Pidal

who used it as the Spanish word for "coexistence," but not in a manner related to its most

common usage.[8] *Convivencia* as a term applied to relations in medieval al-Andalus, was

ultimately developed by his student Américo Castro for a discussion about cultural interaction

and Spanish history.[9] Whereas Menéndez Pidal simply used the term to mean coexistence, what

Castro meant in relation to culture and history is of particular interest as it has become the

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[7] For an overview of positions on *convivencia* see Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain*, 1st Back Bay paperback ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 2002); Chris Lowney, *A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain*, 1. issued as paperback (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006); Vivian B. Mann *et al*., eds., *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain* (New York: G. Braziller in association with the Jewish Museum, 1992); Connie L Scarborough, *Revisiting convivencia in medieval and early modern Iberia* (Newark, Del.: Juan de la Cuesta, 2014).
[8] Originally used in the phrase "*convivencia de normas* (coexistence of norms)." See Ramon Menendez Pidal, *Origines del Espagnol: estado linguistico de la peninsula iberica hasta el siglo XI* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1972), 555 and Glick, *Convivencia*, 1.
[9] See Americo Castro, *Espana En Su Historia* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada S.A., 1948), 584.

modern standard usage of the term. Castro, like Menéndez Pidal, equated cultural change with contact and interaction between cultures, but the nature of that contact and the environment in which it occurred differed for Castro. For one, Castro conceived of *convivencia* as being less competitive in nature than Menéndez Pidal, imagining a far more idealistic and conceptual model which may not have been representative of its lived experience. Castro also viewed *convivencia* through a teleological lens, per Glick,[10] and for purposes of this project, also tended to view the three confessional communities with a degree of both fixity and monolithization. In his landmark text, *España en su Historia: Christianos, Moros y Judios* (translated as *The Spaniards* in English), Castro imagined Spain and the Spanish people as a product of extensive interaction between Muslims, Christians, and Jews over its long history. Castro has been frequently criticized for presenting an "idealized, romanticized, and idyllic" form of *convivencia*.[11] In contrast and opposition to Castro's imagination of Spain, Claudio Sanchez Albornoz countered in *Espana: Un Enigma Historico* that "Spain" and the Spanish people were instead a product of conflict between arguably incompatible and non-cooperative entities.[12] Whereas the context of Castro's *convivencia* is arguably too positive and broad, Albornoz's presentation and interpretation of *convivencia* is certainly agonistic, but closer to antagonistic, leading Thomas Glick to link it to "antibiosis."[13] It is interesting that later discussions of *convivencia* and Islamic and Islamicate history in Spain tended to follow a similar Castro/Albornoz binary debate. Moving from Menéndez Pidal, Castro, and Albornoz, most scholars conceive of *convivencia* in

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[10] As in a goal-oriented and achievable state. Glick, *Convivencia*, 2.

[11] Ibid.

[12] For a general overview of the debate see Thomas F. Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 6-13, also Henri Lepeyre, "Deux interprétations de l'histoire d'Espagne: Américo Castro et Claudio Sánchez Albornoz," Annales. *Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 1965, 1015-1037.

[13] Antibiosis is a biological term used to describe an antagonistic and usually detrimental interaction between two or more organisms. Glick is taking the term from Albornoz's own description. Glick, *Convivencia*, 7.

terms of "living together" – although how that conceptualization is interpreted has become contentious and challenging over time as well.

One of the difficulties with an interpretation of *convivencia* as "living together" or "coexistence" from an interpretive or analytical standpoint is that on their own, neither of these interpretations inherently leads to anything actionable or explanatory with regard to understanding the sociocultural context of *convivencia* in medieval al-Andalus. "Living together" or "coexisting" does not imply any necessary interaction between those living together or coexisting, nor does it convey the nature or tenor of that coexistence. However, it is precisely the context and spheres of interaction and the matrices of exchange that resulted from *convivencia* that needs to be explored.  As Thomas Glick pointed out, "in Castro's usage, *convivencia* became a catch-all mechanism used to explain all phenomena of cultural exchange contingent on the contact of cultures."[14] With such a broad-based understanding of *convivencia*, the possibility of contextual subtlety in its expression may be lost, and several intriguing analytical possibilities along with it.

*Convivencia* as an analytical term has two distinct challenges associated with it: the most prominent being its definition, but the more immediate being its translation. A common translator's trope, "every translation is an interpretation," would be particularly applicable here. Thus, how *convivencia* is translated can have a profound interpretive impact on how the concepts behind that term are understood, and how it manifested in an analysis of al-Andalus.  Also at stake is the criteria for determining how, when, and under what conditions a state of *convivencia* would be achieved.  As a Spanish term, the translation problems began almost immediately with Castro himself.  As Glick pointed out, "Castro's cultural terminology [namely *convivencia*],

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[14] Glick, *Islamic Spain*, 281.

which was not clearly defined in Spanish, became distorted in English.  In *The Spaniards*,

translated by Williard F. King and Selma Margaretten, *convivencia* was rendered as 'living

togetherness'."[15]  The difficulty in this translation of *convivencia* is that "living togetherness"

seems to suggest an overly rosy or largely positive state of coexistence; an orientation that would

eventually pose perception and historical difficulties for Castro and others who interpreted

*convivencia* in this way.  On this point, as Thomas Glick noted, "recent historians of ethnic

relations in medieval Spain have preferred the term 'coexistence', rather than *convivencia.*"[16]

That being said, the concept of *convivencia* as coexistence is likewise problematized by those

who would read coexistence as "peaceful" coexistence or something similar – a sentiment that

possibly motivated King and Margaretten in their translation of Castro.[17]

In *Communities of Violence,* David Niremberg instigated a necessary intervention into the

consideration of *convivencia* as "peaceful" coexistence or the idea that living togetherness or

tolerance implied only positive outcomes.  This is an important contrast to Castro and Maria

Rosa Menocal, author of *The Ornament of the World*, who tended to focus on either imaginary or

"golden age" type of experiences.[18]  While Niremburg provided a necessary correction to the

discussion about *convivencia*, he also described a cautionary example of the monolithization and

hegemonic thinking common to this discussion.  This Islamicate history of the Alcazar is

exploring *convivencia* and Islamicate shared culture in Seville, primarily in the 14th century.

While Niremberg operated in a similar time frame, his evidence is not the same.  Much of his

material evidence occurred outside of Castile-controlled al-Andalus and was instead set in places

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[15] Glick, *Convivencia*, n2, 8.

[16] Glick, *Convivencia*, 2.

[17] The "peaceful" aspect of coexistence vis-à-vis *convivencia* has been attributed to Castro's interpretation by several authors including Mark Meyerson (Muslims of Valencia, 1) and Castro's primary critic Claudio Sanchez Albornoz (in Novikoff, 23).  It is also reasonable to include Maria Rosa Menocal who based her "culture of tolerance" in part on Castro's interpretation of *convivencia*.

[18] See Kenneth Baxter Wolf, "*Convivencia* and the Ornament of the World" in Revisiting *Convivencia*, 41-61.

like Aragon and France. In some of his cases, events that occurred in Spain took place after the death of Pedro I of Castile in 1369 CE, which serves as a temporal bookend to the Islamicate history being discussed. Again, while there may be corollaries to the situation in al-Andalus, the particularities are different enough to be a separate consideration – i.e. what may have been the case in France was not necessarily the case in Seville. In much in the same way, as discussed earlier, the Fourth Lateran Council dictates held sway in many areas in Europe with regard to the minority Jewish population, but did not impact the Jewish population in Castile-controlled al-Andalus to the same extent, or at all. Thus, while examples of Jewish persecution abound in the same time frame and "general" area, they did not similarly impact al-Andalus – making a hegemonic presentation of "Jewish" persecution or the "Jewish" experience "under the crown" problematic and clearly reliant on which "crown" is under consideration and what "Jews" and in what context. As will become evident, the mitigating factor might not have been about religion, politics, or the law, but rather a shared culture present in Castilian-controlled al-Andalus that was not present in other locations and municipalities.

One of the more cogent descriptions of *convivencia* came from Lucy Pick, who contended that *convivencia* is a term "understood and used by historians [to] describe something far more problematic and interesting than simple tolerance between different groups sharing the same space."[19] She continued, "[*convivencia*] describes a cultural situation in which potential cooperation and interdependence in economic, social, cultural, and intellectual spheres coexist with the continual threat of conflict and violence."[20] What this description helps to illustrate is the idea that *convivencia* is neither descriptive of an exclusivity of peace and tolerance nor is it descriptive of a continuous state of violence and disharmony. Instead, *convivencia* describes a

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[19] Pick, *Conflict and Coexistence*, 1.
[20] Ibid.

scenario in which some form of cooperation existed amidst conflict – thereby making it a form of cosmopolitanism. As an expression of cosmopolitanism therefore, *convivencia* exists within a context of pluralism and diversity where multiple religions and multiple social, ethnic, cultural or other affiliations "coexist." While "ethnic" is a loaded term, in this context it is merely meant to describe forms of familial, ethno-racial, location, or origin-based affiliations that are not specifically social, vocational, political, or religious in nature.

The Castro/Albornoz spectrum of approaching *convivencia*, like many other aspects of the discussion surrounding of *convivencia* has tended toward a monolithic and in some cases hegemonic outlook on the term and the society that it reflects. While Glick and other current thinkers on *convivencia* acknowledge the limitations in both Castro and Albornoz's approaches, the reality is that *convivencia* is not in need of a more clarifying definition, but rather a re-imagination. Glick alludes to this re-imagination noting that *convivencia* as currently understood "carries connotations of mutual interpenetration and creative influence," seemingly coexisting with "mutual friction, rivalry and suspicion."[21] Glick also referenced Mark Meyerson's discussion of assimilation and integration,[22] and like Glick's own position with regard to acculturation, got closer to an actionable understanding of *convivencia*, but not necessarily a re-imagination. Being mindful of how minority groups and the dominant group interacted, and whether there was assimilation or integration, leaves open the question of what was being assimilated into or integrated. And again considering monolithization, Meyerson was discussing Valencia which was circumstantially different in enough ways to bother between the nature of

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[21] Glick, *Convivencia*, 1.
[22] See Mark Meyerson, *The Muslims of Valencia in the Age of Fernando and Isabel: Between Coexistence and Crusade* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1991).

assimilation, integration, interpenetration, and influence in that context as opposed to what might have been occurring in Seville at the same time.

Alex Novikoff provided an overview of the discussion about *convivencia* and its manifestation among historians and scholars of medieval Spain in "Beyond Tolerance and Intolerance in Medieval Spain: An Historical Enigma."[23]  In his article, Novikoff compared discussions by pairs of scholars from different time periods on the subject of tolerance and intolerance.  Novikoff rightly concluded that "the ambiguous and largely undefined categories of tolerance and intolerance have proved to be of little help in explaining the complexities of a historical period that has received such diverse appraisals from historians and literary scholars."[24]  The final scholarly pairing in his discussion was Menocal and Niremberg who appeared on opposite sides of the tolerance/intolerance divide.  As Novikoff pointed out, the presentation of medieval Spain from Menocal's perspective differed remarkably from that of Niremberg, and rightly so.  The problem of comparing these factors between scholars, and also between Américo Castro and Claudio Sanchez Albornoz and others, is that each pair was viewing tolerance and intolerance through different prisms.  Once again the difficulty that arises is a result of monolithization.  Tolerance and intolerance as monoliths are likely unusable as analytical categories in medieval Iberia due to the need for clarity and contextual separation and distinction between cultural, political, and religious categories.  In this way Menocal may have been presenting a solid argument in favor of "tolerance" from the perspective of culture, while Niremberg also had a viable argument in favor of "intolerance" from the perspective of religion. In both cases however, the distinctiveness of each respective case is key and any monolithic

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[23] Alex Novikoff, "Beyond Tolerance and Intolerance in Medieval Spain: An Historical Enigma." *Medieval Encounters* 11, 1-2 Brill 2005, 9-36.
[24] Novikoff, "Beyond tolerance," 34.

presentation of tolerance or intolerance would likely not apply in both cases or in other pairings

of scholars.  Also impacting the discussion are the geographical and temporal differences which

only add to the cornucopia of categories that could not really be made sense of entirely through

the lens of either tolerance or intolerance writ large.

In her introduction to *Revisiting Convivencia*, Connie Scarborough explained *convivencia* as

a term used "to specifically denote cultural exchanges that occurred between Christians,

Muslims, and Jews without any ethno-religious group assimilating the other but rather as a result

of living in an integrated fashion that allowed for reciprocal influence."[25]  While this

presentation of the term mirrors the cosmopolitan context for *convivencia* as it will be used

herein, her definition or application of *convivencia* is more useful because it is significantly more

specific and nuanced than merely "coexistence" or "living together."  The wide range of

definitions, interpretations, and applications of *convivencia* result from the fact that *convivencia*

is, in the end, not a term that specifically needs a definition, but rather recognition that

*convivencia* is merely a description of cosmopolitanism manifesting in a particular way at a

particular time among a particular diverse and pluralistic group in Iberia.  In each case,

*convivencia* ultimately describes societies that are experiencing a cosmopolitan flourishing. And

how that flourishing manifested is going to be determined by a host of factors which will differ

from case to case, time to time, and place to place.  Thus, any attempt to monolithicize

*convivencia* is likely doomed to failure and ultimately moves away from, rather than toward, any

descriptive or interpretive value associated with the term.  Without understanding the context and

particularities of each case of *convivencia*, it would be difficult to discern its value or its

interpretation and whether it is in line with Menocal or Castro's positive *convivencia*, Nirenberg

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[25] Scarborough, *Revisiting Convivencia*, 11.

or Albornoz's negative *convivencia* or a combination of those positions similar to that presented by Pick, Glick, and Scarborough.

One way to move *convivencia* from coexistence to cosmopolitanism is to re-examine its origins. By walking *convivencia* back to its Latin roots in the word *conviventia,*[26] it may provide a helpful way forward. According to Latdict[27] *conviventia (conviventiae)* is defined as "1. Cooperation and 2. Living and working together."[28] This Latin root includes two additional perspectives that may provide that clarity – "working" and "cooperation." As a general rule, "coexisting" does not require any particular interaction, whereas working and cooperating do. There is nothing peaceful or pleasant implicit in cooperation, but rather those ideas suggest an affiliation or coming together for a joint purpose or shared endeavor. Other translations related to the Latin origins of *convivencia* echo this interpretation. The Spanish word *Convivencia* is often associated with the Latin words *convivium*, *convivo* and *convivor* – all of which describe "living with," which again feels somewhat more cooperative and intentional than simply living together. However, each of these terms also refers to "banquets," "feasts," and in the case of *convivor*, "to eat and drink in company."[29] These references associated with the Latin roots of *convivencia* all point to an experience in which participants come together, not simply to coexist, but to engage cooperatively, which in each case involves some form of sharing, compromise, or accommodation to be successful. Thus, the cooperation and affiliation associated with the Latin roots of *convivencia*, may lead to a more effective understanding of the term, and especially its link the larger concept of cosmopolitanism. It is this understanding of *convivencia* as

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[26] Edward A. Roberts, A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Spanish Language (Xlibris), 422.
[27] http://www.latin-dictionary.net/.
[28] (My emphasis). http://www.latin-dictionary.net/search/latin/conviventia.
[29] *Cassell's Latin-English, English-Latin dictionary*, D.P. Simpson, ed. (London, Cassell Publishers Ltd., 2007) 151.

cosmopolitanism that will enable these terms to be utilized analytically in the broader Islamicate

history being suggested.

Toward this interpretation Glick argued, "*Convivencia* under any kind of operational

definition, must encompass the ability of persons of different ethnic groups to step out of their

ethnically bound roles to interact on par with members of the competing group."[30]  In other

words, a matrix of exchange must exist in which members of these groups can interact with some

parity despite their competing categories of identity.  Glick went on to note that "the ability of

medieval people to assume [non-ethnically bound social roles] was limited.  Nonetheless one

person can play multiple roles, some of which are more ethnically bound than others."[31]  This

interpretation and understanding opens the possibility for separate categories or roles in which a

person might simultaneously hold one confessional identity while coexisting within a cultural

identity that was shared – even among those who may be competing or in conflict on a religious

level with other members of that cultural identity or affiliation.  Glick and others, in their

examination of minority groups in Iberia, however, continued to make these groups hegemonic –

i.e. Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Spain rather than recognizing them separately as Castilian,

Aragonian, or Valencian Christians and their respective minority populations.  Doing so once

again disallows the examination of these interactions within a smaller regional universe and thus

eliminates the key regional and temporal distinctions that might have existed between these

groups and their experiences.

In an effort to understand these regional particularities and distinctions it is essential to

understand the categorical or identity-based differences between these groups and regions.  First

among these distinctions is the separate consideration of the categories of culture, religion, and

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[30] Glick, *Convivencia*, 4.
[31] Ibid.

politics. Avoiding monolithization and accurately understanding medieval al-Andalus in context requires recognition that what might have occurred in the religious or political sphere may have been altogether different from what occurred in the cultural or social spheres. Further complicating these distinctions and their interpretation is the presence of religious and political rhetoric and its frequent contrast with social or cultural reality. In several cases language, rhetoric, and polemic may have been utilized for political, religious, or legal reasons with an eye toward public perception or the appeasement of outside interests like the Church. In a general example, what might be deemed Crusader rhetoric, reflective of the outward or projected desire to protect Iberia for Christianity by controlling or curtailing Muslims and Jews, abound in the contemporary laws, religion, and polemic literature. Based on the language of the laws, *cortes,* religious councils, and other public records, it is evident, at least outwardly, that the Christians and the *Reconquista* were tied to the ongoing Crusades taking place in Europe and the "Holy Land." While the direct links between the *Reconquista* and the Crusades were tenuous, potentially symbolic, and possibly politically or economically motivated, there was clearly some interest in presenting the *Reconquista* and other military, legal, and religious activities in a Christianity-favorable light. What stands in contrast are the interactions with and support for the cultural/architectural/economic enterprises of the Muslims as early as the 11th century conquest of Toledo and to a larger extent with the Castilians beginning with Fernando III/Alfonso X and clearly continuing through the reigns of Alfonso XI and Pedro I. In spite of any imagined or real conflict between Christians, Muslims, and Jews during the *Reconquista* period along political and religious lines, it is evident that the cultural and economic interactions between these same groups were operating within a separate framework or sphere, both conceptually and actually.

Glick recognized the possible distinction or separation of the political/religious and cultural/economic spheres suggesting, "in both al-Andalus and Christian Spain the dominant caste wanted to isolate minorities religiously but not economically, creating an inevitable tension in intergroup relations. This tension, however, opened up avenues for cultural interchange by making the market a place where ethnic distinctions mattered less than in other walks of life."[32] Here Glick was ultimately describing cosmopolitanism or its equivalent – i.e. a medium, "the market" that allowed for cooperation in the face of conflict. Inherent to this discussion is also the idea that there may have been distinct realities that existed outside the bounds of religion. In other words, there were likely religious realities that were "coexisting" with cultural, social, or political realties simultaneously. As Glick also noted with regard to Castro's presentation of *convivencia*, "He [Castro] conveys no sense of the social dynamics of contact and conflict among the three groups…and he fails to understand that those processes are shaped by a social dynamic."[33]

Recognizing that *convivencia* manifested in multiple spheres also supports the separate consideration of those spheres for the purpose of analysis. As an example, in *Conflict and Coexistence*, Lucy Pick focused on Archbishop Rodrigo of Toledo and his seemingly paradoxical relationship with the Jews of Toledo. Because hers was an examination of relationships between confessional communities, the religious sphere was understandably privileged in her discussion. But the questions she asked about these religious relationships, combined with her seemingly cosmopolitan understanding of *convivencia* is illuminating. As she questioned, "why would seemingly "tolerant" to local Jews [Archbishop Rodrigo], write a polemical text against their religion? Why bother to have the Qur'an translated when your goal

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[32] Glick, *Convivencia*, 5.
[33] Glick, *Convivencia*, 2.

is to place all of Spain under Christian rule?"[34]  Questions like these will occur repeatedly in the exploration of the Islamicate history of Seville and affect most rulers and populations accordingly.  Indeed many aspects of this history does indeed appear paradoxical when viewed from different viewpoints – especially those that are monolithic or hegemonic in nature and/or viewed from a *post facto* position through the lens of crusade, inquisition, or expulsion. In this way, historical analysis often proceeds from these end points and is arguably reverse engineered to explain the ultimate outcome.  Conversely, when religious, political, economic, or social spheres are considered separately and possibly independent of each other in context, then some of these paradoxes tend to dissipate.  Case in point, as Chapter 4 will make clear, the political, religious, and rhetorical realities of leaders like Archbishop Rodrigo in Toledo sat alongside a cosmopolitan and Islamicate cultural interaction in places like the church of *Cristo de la Luz* that make assigning a religious or political interpretation to those cultural exchanges incredibly difficult to square.

One key distinction, and one that speaks directly to the issue of separate spheres is the concept of association – i.e. what individuals and groups were "associated" with different conceptual identities or spheres in medieval Iberia and al-Andalus.  For example, was the Arabic language associated with the religion of Islam, Muslim political rule, or Arab culture? What constitutes the realm of culture and what constitutes the realms of religion or politics?  And what identities, affiliations, and associations derive from or point to one or more of these categories? The answers to these questions is going to dramatically impact those spheres and the interactions that occur within them.  Based on these distinctions, any "mis-association" can have challenging consequences for any potential interpretation.

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[34] Pick, *Conflict and Coexistence*, 7.

First and foremost among potential "mis-associations" is the privileging of religious identity. While it is certainly significant that the three confessional groups were able to coexist in the same space, the defining of these groups primarily by their religious affiliation creates a religion-first orientation which elides cultural and social affiliations which may have held equal influence. The religion-first perspective also presents the religious identity as the dominant identity, which may not have been the case. The secondary problem created is the idea that there were three distinctive religious communities that could be identified as such and given umbrella terms like Christian, Muslim, or Jewish and also possessed separate and distinct cultures, which were in turn somehow associated with their religious identity. The idea that cultural spaces that could be clearly and exclusively defined as Muslim, Christian, or Jewish is nearly impossible to imagine, based on the evidence – especially given the high amount of sharing that existed between these communities in the material cultural sphere. Any presumed exclusivity or distinctiveness between entities largely eliminates the possibility of a shared culture that was not only evident members of the three confessional groups but was collectively participated in and arguably built together. Likely at no point after the Muslims had established themselves in Iberia did the minority Jewish population exist as a separate and distinct cultural or social entity, but rather was a willing participant in a shared culture that grew from the interaction of these two groups. Just as whatever might be considered "Muslim" culture was likely itself a product of Arab, Persian, and even Byzantine elements, not to mention local influences upon their arrival in al-Andalus. Much in the same way, "Jewish" culture in Iberia, was comprised of Roman, earlier Jewish, and Visigothic/Germanic influences. Thus, it was not a case of one distinct thing meeting with another distinct thing and blending together, but rather was a case of one combination of elements joining another combination of elements and together creating the

foundation for something entirely new. As Glick noted, "Any notion that borrowing across cultural boundaries is merely superficial is wishful thinking. The image of a sealed pristine, pure and uncontaminated culture that ethnic groups typically ascribe to themselves is contrary not only to all the evidence but everyday experience. There are no cultural isolates, not in remote jungles, and much less in the cosmopolitan towns of Medieval Spain."[35] Thus, it is incumbent on scholars analyzing this material to locate and examine the cultural sphere and the possibility of a shared cosmopolitan space that existed independently from the religious or political spheres in which a cooperative and interactive culture could have flourished. It is this cooperative and interactive space and the culture that derived from it that is described as "Islamicate."

## 2.3    Islamicate

An Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville is the culmination of this project. And while exploring that Islamicate history will ultimately involve unpacking a cosmopolitan history and shared culture, the specific descriptive term used to reflect this culture and history is "Islamicate." In general, terms "Islamicate" and an "Islamicate history" are both references to a specific flourishing of a cosmopolitan culture as it occurred in al-Andalus. An Islamicate history is in part a cultural history, but its close association with cosmopolitanism and *convivencia* make it something more than that. Put simply, an Islamicate history examines the history of Islamicate culture that occurred in and around a particular place, material, or other cultural expression over a designated period of time. In this case, the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville will explore manifestations of Islamicate culture in and related to that building complex to describe its larger cultural/historical context. "Islamicate" will also be used to describe specific material and architecture associated with the shared culture which evolved in and around Seville and

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[35] Glick, *Convivencia*, 2.

greater al-Andalus following the Christian conquest of the region in the 13th-14th century. This shared culture that occurred specifically in al-Andalus will be later described as "Mudéjar." This particular exploration of Islamicate history in al-Andalus will occur across the next several chapters, but understanding "Islamicate" as a conceptual term is key to that exploration and must be engaged beforehand.

The term of "Islamicate" was coined by historian Marshall Hodgson and by his definition refers "not directly to the religion, Islam, itself, but to the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims."[36] One of the challenges in using a term like "Islamicate" is its relative obscurity and lack of wide adoption by scholars. There is a certain inherent understanding of "Islamicate" based on the components of the name, but wider hermeneutical usage has not occurred with enough regularity for the term to be recognized and understood *en todo* conceptually by the larger body of scholars. Part of the difficulty in establishing any widespread cognizance of something deemed "Islamicate" lies in the general misunderstanding of the term. Like *convivencia* and subsequently Mudéjar, "Islamicate" is an expression or manifestation of cosmopolitanism. In this case, the term reflects a shared culture and arguably a shared cultural identity for Andalusis, regardless of their political or religious affiliations. To a large extent, describing something as "Islamicate" is essentially describing something as cosmopolitan – in this regard, describing a cosmopolitanism that on some level incorporated a culture associated with Islam, where Islam is or had been dominant politically, religiously, or otherwise. The specificity provided by the term Islamicate, therefore, is meant to evoke a cosmopolitan flourishing that has associations with Islam rather than one that does not. Thus, cosmopolitanism

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[36] Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1977), 59.

can and has existed outside of any association with Islam, but "Islamicate" is the cosmopolitanism that includes it. As will be discussed later, some have used "Islamicate" to describe a cosmopolitanism among diverse Muslim communities typically to define something Muslim, but not specifically Arab, but this application has further added to the confusion with the term. What distinguishes the term Islamicate from Islam or Islamic is its specific separation from religion. In this way, aspects of culture can be Islamicate even if they do not possess an explicit association with the religion of Islam (as will be the case with Mudéjar architecture and material culture). This being said, there is no expression of Islamicate that is divorced from the sphere of culture, so culture is the key to understanding the term and any subsequent applications of it.

With this in mind, "Islamicate" describes the cultural by-products of a pluralistic and diverse society that incorporates elements from a predominantly Islamic society with cultural elements of minority populations that exist in a broader cosmopolitan matrix. From this collusion of cultures two things must remain relatively constant. First, the cultural aspect of the Islamicate culture must be perceived as separate from contemporary associations with religion or politics and second, the cultural amalgam described as Islamicate must be discernible to those who might choose to participate in it. Both of these aspects of Islamicate culture thereby allow it to be participated in or affiliated with by social members across other religious, political, or cultural spectrums. And due to its non-attachment to any particular political, cultural, or religious group, "Islamicate" culture could survive and continue beyond its initial context of a multicultural Islamic rule to, at least initially, a multicultural Christian-Spanish rule, particularly as found among the early Castilians in al-Andalus.

One of the difficulties in using a descriptor with limited understanding and an unclear definition is that it may be used in ways that muddy the waters and inhibit the ultimate value of the term. Unfortunately, this is a fate that has befallen "Islamicate." The term has received the widest and most prominent use among Art Historians, many of whom essentially captured the cultural and potentially cosmopolitan aspects of the term as it will be used in this project. From a historical perspective, and one that has been a theoretical and methodological challenge between the fields of history and art history, is the focus by art history predominantly on the art and less so on the broader historical and sociocultural context, placing many situated objects of material culture (like architecture) outside of their contextual environment.[37] Historians, conversely, when they have used "Islamicate" at all, have often laid aside the cultural associations that Hodgson intended and in some cases have used the term as an alternate for "Islamic" in an effort to mitigate the religious primacy of that term, but still utilizing "Islamicate" to refer to existing or historical Islamic communities (esp. the Ottoman Empire) as a differentiator from the West – i.e. The Western World vs. the Islamicate World.[38] For example, in his review of the works of three Muslim historians of religion, Judaic Studies scholar Steven Wasserstrom titled his combined review, "Islamicate History of Religion?"[39] Wasserstrom discusses the contribution of these Muslim historians of religion as part of the larger history of religion field, using the term "Islamicate" to designate scholars from the Islamic world rather than scholars from the "western" tradition. In this case, "Islamicate" was used as a classification denoting "not western," but still largely synonymous with Islamic. In another example,

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[37] This concern will be revisited in the discussion related to the "theory of styles" commentary on the term "Mudéjar" highlighted by Art Historian J.C. Ruiz Souza.

[38] This usage of Islamicate echoes Hodgson's own attempt to create a contrasting term pitting his neologism "Islamdom" against the western term "Christendom." Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, 57-60.

[39] The use of the term "Islamicate History" is likewise problematic as it will in no way mirror the application of this term in this dissertation. Wasserstrom, Steven M. "Islamicate History of Religions?" *History of Religions* 27, no. 4 (1988): 405-11.

Architect Noha Nasser in an article on historic cities of the Islamicate world, limited Hodgson's definition of the term to "the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and Muslims."[40] By excerpting the definition in a way that removes the non-religion and the non-Muslim components of Hodgson's definition, it is difficult to read or understand in any way other than as a synonym for "Islamic."

While "Islamicate" in the broadest sense is always associated with culture, its use is not always clearly applied in that context and has sometimes been deployed for political reasons as well. One such instance is when "Islamicate" is used in opposition to Orientalism or Orientalist thought.[41] Nasser likewise utilized "Islamicate" in this context[42] pitting the term against a typical Orientalist categorization of Islamic cities or urban environments, but also as an inclusive term intended to describe the multicultural (in this case not exclusively Arab) composition of the larger Islamic (or Islamicate) world. More recently D. Fairchild Ruggles and others in the Art History field have used "Islamicate" to describe material culture in al-Andalus, which they see as having developed in a multicultural and descriptively cosmopolitan hybrid culture in which Islam has been a participant. This is largely the specific context in which the term will be used in this project

Where "Islamicate" serves in the manner most in line with Hodgson's intent, and most closely resembles the application of the term used in this project, comes from the field of Religious Studies, where scholars like Bruce Lawrence have employed the appellation

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[40] Noha Nasser. "Cultural Continuity and Meaning of Place: Sustaining Historic Cities of the Islamicate World." *Journal of Architectural Conservation*, No. 1, March 2003, 88.

[41] For one example see Huri Islamoglu "Islamicate World Histories" in *A Companion to World History*, (Blackwell Publishing, 2012), 448.

[42] See Noha Nasser. "Islamicate Urbanism: The State of the Art." *Built Environment (1978-)* 28, no. 3 (2002): 172-86. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23288450, and "Cultural Continuity and Meaning of Place: Sustaining Historic Cities of the Islamicate World." Journal of Architectural Conservation, No. 1, March 2003.

successfully including its inherent cultural and cosmopolitan orientation.[43]  In their edited

volume, *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia*, David

Gilmartin and Bruce Lawrence utilize "Islamicate" as a cultural descriptor for the shared

experience of Hindus and Muslims in South Asia.  They specifically chose "Islamicate" for their

discussion about religious identity and culture due to the common belief in Islam and Hinduism

as "competitive and irreconcilable [religious worldviews]"[44]  By viewing societal diversity and

pluralism through the lens of shared experience and culture they were able to decentralize

religion as the primary interactive focus. They further noted that those who held this religious-

primary orientation may have "overweighted differences in belief as determinative of all other

patterns of exchange between Muslims and Hindus."[45]  They also warned that a religion-first

view tends to see "every instance of Muslim political rule or military victory or architectural

creation as evidence of a long struggle between fixed Muslim and Hindu groups."[46]  It seems

clear that Gilmartin and Lawrence observed the same situation occurring in perceptions and

interpretations of a cosmopolitan South Asia between Muslims and Hindus that will be

highlighted in medieval al-Andalus with Christians, Muslims, and Jews - including the

problematic aspects of identity and its association with shared culture and subsequent

architecture and material culture.

On some level, "Islamicate" may simply be the more broad term used to describe

cosmopolitanism in social and material culture that appears in an Islamic-affiliated or relational

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[43] Lawrence has also explored instances of Muslim cosmopolitanism in his work with Islamicate South Asia.  See "Muslim Cosmopolitanism," *Critical Muslim* No. 2 2011, 18-38 and "Rethinking Muslim Cosmopolitanism: Civilizational Moorings/Cosmopolitan Options," Plenary address from the British Association of Islamic Studies (BRAIS), April 10, 2014.

[44] David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence, eds., *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 1.

[45] Gilmartin and Lawrence *Turk and Hindu*, 1.

[46] This is not dissimilar to the presentation of Islamicate material in al-Andalus by Christians as an inverted expression of victory that will be discussed in Chapter 3. Gilmartin and Lawrence *Turk and Hindu*, 3.

context.  As these "Islamicate" occurrences would not be limited to al-Andalus but could occur in any multicultural context in which Islam has been or is currently involved (which is exactly the case of Muslims and Hindus described by Gilmartin and Lawrence), further terminological distinction for Islamicate material culture as it occurs in al-Andalus are necessary. Thus, for al-Andalus, the term which best describes this specific case is "Mudéjar."

## 2.4   Mudéjar

"Mudéjar," as it will be used in this exploration, is a subcategory of Islamicate and refers to the specific expression of cosmopolitan Islamicate culture (primarily in architecture and other material) that occurred in al-Andalus.  While designs and styles deemed Mudéjar will eventually spread beyond the boundaries of al-Andalus, even as far as the New World, what exactly constitutes a Mudéjar design or the Mudéjar style is subject to question and also a source of confusion and consternation for many wishing to discuss this cultural expression and its associated material.  The largest challenge associated with the term "Mudéjar" is its own historiography.  Whereas "Islamicate" exists as a term with a limited and unclear history, "Mudéjar" does not.  The term is older than "Islamicate," but as a result has also had more time to attract wider and varied definitions and applications which make its history as a term complicated and difficult to utilize without serious and careful consideration.  The application of the term "Mudéjar" has neither been consistent nor reflective over time, and is further complicated given that it was not a term used descriptively in an architectural or art historical context contemporarily in medieval al-Andalus at all.

"Mudéjar," as a descriptor for architecture or design, was first used by José Amador de los Ríos in his 1859 inaugural speech following his entry into the *Real Academia de las Tres Nobles*

*Artes de San Fernando*.[47] "Mudéjar" therefore is a comparatively modern term that has come to describe as Art Historian Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza notes, any design which "[has] a perceived 'Islamic influence'," or more simply "look[s] Islamic."[48] The application or use of the term "Mudéjar" has been viewed with some skepticism by scholars like Ruiz Souza and Cynthia Robinson who, among others, are concerned that the term is too loosely or indiscriminately applied – especially to visual culture that appears later (primarily in the 15th century and beyond), or has a very weak connection to a wide variety of Mudéjar elements.[49] One reason Ruiz Souza wanted to problematize the term Mudéjar was due to its frequently misleading and misapplied nature, or as part of what he refers to as the "theory of styles" approach to examining medieval Iberian material.[50] Ruiz Souza believed that scholars often mischaracterized things using the Mudéjar label assuming that it held some universally descriptive value, when arguably it does not – especially considering that the term has often been used to denote almost anything that is believed to have or express an "Islamic influence" of some sort.[51] As he stated, "the appearance of a single Muslim name among a list of artisans, the presence of a single decorative element traditionally associated with the memory of al-Andalus, or the use of wood, adobe, stucco, or brick is enough for a building to be labeled definitively as Mudéjar."[52] Ruiz Souza continued, "many specialists, particularly archaeologists, employ the term [Mudéjar] in a

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[47] The term first appears in the title of his presentation, "*El estilo mudéjar en la architectura*."

[48] J.C. Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages, Functions, and Spaces: The Crown of Castile and Al-Andalus," *Medieval Encounters*. 12, no. 3, (2006): 360, 364.

[49] Ruiz Souza suggests that the name of a single Muslim craftsman or use of wood or stucco has been enough to earn the label Mudéjar in some cases – Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 361.

[50] The "theory of styles" approach is one often applied by Art Historians and largely consists of examining material culture, architecture in particular, and discussing it comparatively based on its perceived style of design. In this way, it creates a categorization of material culture based on its perceived "style" of design. However, once that material is ascribed to that "style" it typically ceases to be examined for distinctions or differences. Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 361.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

temporal sense, simply to differentiate the period of Muslim hegemony in a particular region from a moment immediately following the Christian conquest when that region becomes Mudéjar."[53]  What Ruiz Souza was concerned with, especially considering his problematizing of the "theory of styles," was that the use of "Mudéjar" as a descriptive term created a bounded category – suggesting that a thing was Mudéjar either stylistically or temporally in comparison to something that was not.  In this way, Mudéjar would fall into similarly distinct categories like Islamic or Gothic, which also tended to situate architectural expressions in religious and politically associated contexts.  More troubling is that a descriptive term like "Mudéjar," which is bounded both as an expression and time, begs the question of when a thing ceased to be one expression, like Islamic, and began to become Mudéjar. Further complicating matters, the term "Mudéjar" has at least two definitions.  The first being a sociocultural category used to describe Muslims living under Christian rule (as in post-*Reconquista* al-Andalus and Seville) but also the term later adopted by Amador de los Ríos to describe a particular style of art and architecture. This later definition exacerbated the problem of the term Mudéjar due to its tacit support for the assumption that designs labelled Mudéjar were the work or conception of the Muslims living under Christian rule.  And while this was certainly the case in many instances, it elides, by the same assumption, any participation or use of the Mudéjar style by non-Mudéjars (i.e. something Islamicate).  As Ruiz Souza pointed out, just as the presence of one Muslim artisan's name does not equate the presence of a Mudéjar design, nor does the lack of a Muslim patron or artisan exclude it.[54]  As with any definition or categorization, the boundaries of the term often obscure

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[53] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 361.

[54] In some cases artisans of Muslim descent who converted to Christianity after staying would be termed *Moriscos*, but with the real possibility that some *Moriscos* were also "Mudéjar" artisans, it clouds the clarity of Mudéjar in the theory of styles even further. See Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages" and L. P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

key understandings which could be far more descriptive or illuminative. While these difficulties

do not induce a need to abandon the term Mudéjar, it does require some clear definition as to its

use. As this dissertation will argue, the term more accurately refers to a cultural expression and

is descriptive of a cultural engagement and application that is a specifically an Andalusi

manifestation of "Islamicate."

The term itself is no less complicated than its definition. "Mudéjar" was a largely created

word.[55] Most scholars agree that the term was a Spanish adoption of the Arabic term *mudajjan*,

which historian L.P. Harvey suggested derived from an Arabic phrase *ahl al-dajn* ("people who

stayed") with *mudajjan* having a roughly equivalent meaning.[56] Harvey also indicated that there

are some translations or permutations of *mudajjan* that suggest it is related to Arabic cognates

*mudajin* and *dawajin* which indicate concepts of "domestication" or "taming" which would have

a far more pejorative connotation than simply describing those who stayed after the Christian

conquest.[57] Harvey further suggested that this understanding of *mudajjan* likely derived from

other Muslims negatively referring to those who stayed behind.[58] It is likely, in the context of al-

Andalus, that a religious and political distinction would result in terms like Mudéjar in the same

way that terms like *Mozarab* (Christians living under Muslim rule) or *Morisco* (Christians who

converted to Islam) emerged during the Islamic period. Thus, a "Muslim" (or the equivalent)

would refer to someone of that faith and political affiliation that was not a subject of the

Christian ruler, whereas a "Mudéjar" would be a Muslim who was a political subject of the

Christian ruler – in this way, clear religious and political distinctions were made, something that

would have been important regardless of whatever cultural associations the term Mudéjar would

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[55] See Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 2–4.
[56] Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 4.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.

later include. It is the later inclusion of a cultural association, however, that is the definitional problem. If Mudéjar art and design are automatically associated with the religio-political definition of Mudéjar and its description of Muslims living under Christian rule, then assessing its value as a cultural descriptor and any attending shared cultural implications becomes problematic. If instead, the use of "Mudéjar" as an art historical term is understood to be an unfortunate appellation that bred religio-political assumptions about the nature and origin of material culture, then it clears the way for a re-imagination of the term. Thus, "Mudéjar" could be interpreted and understood in the art historical sense as describing an expression of Islamicate culture that is no more limited to Muslims living under Christian rule than it was to any other group living in a cosmopolitan al-Andalus both before and after the Christian conquest. In this way, "Mudéjar" can be used to describe the Islamicate shared culture present in al-Andalus that counted Muslims, Christians, and Jews among its artisans and patrons regardless of their religious or political affiliations.

It is also important to recognize that even though there was evidence of patron choice and a shared visual language present among the material and architecture described with this term, "Mudéjar," as a descriptor of the aesthetic was applied by modern art historians. Likely at no point did patrons think that they were choosing a design style associated with Muslims or the former Islamic polities in Iberia, but rather were choosing a style common to their home and region of al-Andalus. If, as this dissertation will argue, the visual language and aesthetic was shared across borders and intellectual, political, social, and religious boundaries it can only have existed conceptually as a shared, but otherwise unaffiliated style.

Armed with an understanding of cosmopolitanism and its manifestation in *convivencia* and specific expressions like Islamicate and Mudéjar this interpretive framework can be put to use in

analyzing specific cases in al-Andalus with an eye toward revealing a shared Islamicate culture which existed separately from the political or religious affiliations with the Muslim religion or rule.  To begin this exploration, a journey to the Alcazar of Seville and an examination of a descriptively Mudéjar construction that has been a focus of ongoing debate will be illuminative.

## 3    A STRANGE TRIUMPH

On the morning of October 30, 1340 CE, Alfonso XI (r. 1313-1350 CE) of Castile-Leon

engaged Marinid Sultan Abu 'l Hasan of Morocco (r.1331-1348 CE) and Nasrid Sultan Yusuf I

of Granada (r. 1333-1354 CE) at the battle of Rio Salado, northwest of Tarifa in southern Spain

(al-Andalus).  The battle was part of the ongoing *Reconquista* of Spain by the Christians.[59]  The

campaign against the Marinid Berber Dynasty of Morocco and other Muslims in al-Andalus,

were also part of a larger "Crusade" ultimately sanctioned by the Pope [Benedict XII] and joined

by Crusader knights as well as the king of Portugal, Alfonso IV.[60]  During the battle, cries of

"Santiago and Castile" were used by Alfonso XI to rally his troops during a particularly

treacherous advance.[61]  This cry was likely meant to reference either the prominent relic and

pilgrimage site of *Santiago de Compostela* or the sack of the shrine of the same name by

Muslims under Al Mansur in the 10th century, both symbols present in the crusader/*Reconquista*

sentimental imagination.

Upon securing victory and routing the Marinid and Nasrid (Granadan) forces, Alfonso

returned home in triumph carrying spoils of his victory, including one of the original Uthmani

Qur'ans, several banners, and a complement of prisoners, including the Marinid Emir's son.[62]

News of the victory was sent to the Pope along with a request for additional funds to carry on the

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[59] The term "*Reconquista*" has been problematized by several scholars and has an unclear meaning and usage.  The term itself has been continually evolving since at least the late 9th century and has been associated with a rhetorical or imagined history as opposed to a factual reflection.  In this project, "*Reconquista*" will refer to the concepts of reconquest and continuity with earlier rule in Iberia as they appear in the collective memory or collective imagination of the Christian Spanish.  See Joseph O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 1-22; Hamza Yusuf, "900 Years: Reviving the Spirit of Al-Andalus," Lecture Reviving the Islamic Spirit Conference, Toronto, December, 2005; Xenia Bonch-Bruevich, "Ideologies of the Spanish Reconquest and Isidore's Political Thought," *Mediterranean Studies* 17, no. 1 (2008): 27-45

[60] Joseph O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 413.

[61] Joseph O'Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 182.

[62] Ibid., 184-85.

Crusade to reclaim Algeciras (captured in 1344 CE) and ultimately Gibraltar and control of the Strait.[63]

Sometime after returning to Seville, Alfonso XI commissioned the construction of a throne room and salon, ostensibly to commemorate his victory at Rio Salado within his palace complex, the Alcazar in Seville – this was the result:

*Figure 2: The Sala de la Justicia*
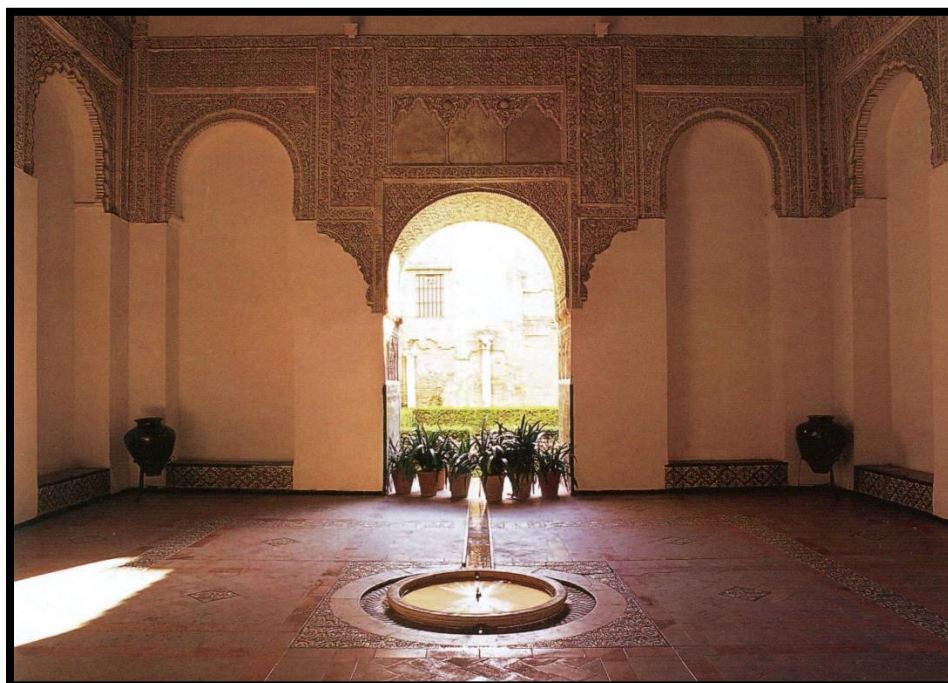


[64]

The *Sala de la Justicia* (Hall of Justice) served as a monument commemorating Alfonso's victory over the Muslims as part of the larger *Reconquista* and Crusade. The relationship between the victory at Rio Salado, the construction of the *Sala,* and the ongoing Crusade to reclaim Gibraltar and the Strait seems clear. The timing of the construction as well as the

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[63] Gibraltar was not successfully conquered by the Spanish until the mid-15th century. See O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*.

[64] *Sala de la Justicia* from Guerrero, Paloma De Los, and Jose Barea, *The Real Alcázar of Seville* (Madrid: Palacios Y Museos, 2011), 23.

inclusion of symbols of Castile and León and the crest of Alfonso's military order *La Banda*

suggest a direct connection between the construction of this room and his victories in the south.

*Figure 3: Ceiling detail, Sala de la Justicia*



[65]

Apart from the royal and military symbols, the entire salon was appointed and designed in

the Mudéjar style, a style comprised of seemingly Islamic forms.  The *Sala* was built on the

Islamic *qubba* (mausoleum) model, including arches, stucco *ataurique* scrollwork, a wooden

lattice ceiling.[66] and joined by a number of Arabic inscriptions, including "Allah is the refuge,"

"Bliss," "Happiness," "Continued Prosperity," "Praise to Allah for his Benefits" and the running

inscription "Praise exalt the noble Lord of this incomparable house."[67]  The construction of this

throne room where Alfonso would ultimately receive visitors, publicly rule, and stand as his

most prominent palatial construction in the Mudéjar style - a style still in use by the remaining

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[65] The symbols of Castile and Leon and *La Banda* repeat in the lower band of the upper register.  Courtesy of *Viajes Al Alcance* http://viajesalalcancedetodos.es/2014/11/28/el-real-alcazar-de-sevilla/.

[66] Juan Carlos Hernandez Nunez and Alfredo Morales, *The Royal Palace of Seville* (London: Scala Publishers, 1999), 14-18.

[67] Translated from the Spanish in Rodrigo Amador De Los Rios, *Inscripciones Árabes de Sevilla* (Madrid: T. Fortanet, 1875), 210-214.

Muslim stronghold in Granada seems a particularly odd choice – especially against the backdrop

of the *Reconquista* and the Crusades.

The paradox of Alfonso XI's construction of the *Sala de la Justicia* involves the rationale

behind a Christian Crusader-King commissioning and constructing his throne room in a clearly

Islamicate style which, after the fact, has been termed Mudéjar.  The difficulty associated with

this Mudéjar construction involves the timing of its construction (following the victory at Rio

Salado), the product and purpose of the construction (the King's throne room), the public

message a throne room in this particular style and decoration might convey, and the King's role

in the Crusades/*Reconquista* including his relationship to the Pope and the Catholic Church – all

of which complicate any easy explanation for the design and construction of this particular room

with this particular purpose in this particular context.  Art Historian D. Fairchild Ruggles would

pose a critical interpretive question in her own analysis of the *Sala de la Justicia* asking "why

would a Christian King choose an Islamicate Mudéjar style for [an] expression of self," an

expression of self that she noted "contained him, mirrored him, and served as the physical

extension of his body and his identity?"[68]  The short answer proposed here is that he would not.

Explaining why he would not and re-contextualizing the *Sala de la Justicia* in a way that makes

sense of the Mudéjar design while still reflecting a victorious ruler who is involved in

*Reconquista* and Crusade has bothered scholars for some time.  By reimagining the *Sala de la*

*Justicia* as a product of a shared culture that existed in al-Andalus between the three confessional

communities of Christians, Muslims, and Jews and understanding the *Sala* within its

contemporary, traditional, and historical milieu, an interpretation of Alfonso XI's throne room

that better reflects that ruler's social, political and cultural context can be gleaned.

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[68] D. Fairchild Ruggles, "The Alcazar of Seville and Mudéjar Architecture," *Gesta*, 23, no. 2, (2004): 90.

Relatively little interpretive work has been done on the Alcazar of Seville or the *Sala de la Justicia*. The most prominent rationale for Alfonso XI's construction in the existing literature is triumphalism – clearly referencing the King's victory at Rio Salado. While the construction is certainly meant to commemorate Alfonso's triumph, the ensuing interpretation is heavily complicated by a host of conflicting contemporary and modern definitions and understandings. The nature of the triumphalism proposed for Alfonso XI and the *Sala de la Justicia* by some scholars is largely based on expressions of identity that may be anachronistic, chief among them interpretations related to concepts of *Reconquista* and Crusade. The exploration of these two ideas and their potential influence on Alfonso and the larger religious, socio-cultural, and political environments in which the *Sala de la Justicia* would exist are critical and go beyond the form of "triumphalism" proposed by scholars. Modern conceptions of identity and the subsequent identity-based interpretations of the *Reconquista* and Crusades are not adequate to examine these concepts, their influence, and their interpretive value. These interpretations tend to place too much emphasis on religious difference, conflict, and identity which can occlude alternative interpretations.

### 3.1   *Reconquista* **and Crusade**

One of the keys to understanding and eventually interpreting the predominance of Mudéjar design in the *Sala de la Justicia* is Alfonso XI's association with the so-called *Reconquista* and the Crusades. How his association with these two conceptual ideas and events is understood will greatly influence the interpretation of the *Sala* and any affiliation that its design may have had with any contemporary political and religious context. There were a number of actual and metaphorical conflicts transpiring during the period influencing the *Sala*'s construction beginning with the Christian expansion from the Kingdom of Asturias in the eighth century to

the mid-14$^{th}$ century. The reality and rhetoric surrounding these conflicts likely influenced Alfonso, but may not have done so in an expected or arguably identity-based "modern" way.[69] How these conceptual conflicts affected Alfonso's decision making vis-à-vis the *Sala de la Justicia* depend largely on how they were imagined by him and his contemporaries. As it stands, both "*Reconquista*" and "Crusade" are nebulous terms that have a long history of debate over their meaning and conceptual reality, but both concepts, regardless of any associated rhetoric, ultimately reflect and represent a struggle between Christians and Muslims over territorial control.

The Crusades are often understood as a series of conflicts between several European monarchies and various Muslim-led armies over control of the Holy Land and, in particular, the city of Jerusalem.[70] For the monarchs of Iberia, however, the activities in the Holy Land were far less immediate than the "Muslim" threat within their own borders. The conflict between the northern Christian Spanish and the Muslims in al-Andalus had been ongoing for more than two centuries before Pope Urban II's speech at Clermont in 1095 CE, the seminal event that is considered to be the call and justification for war that led to the First Crusade and the capture of the city of Jerusalem c. 1099 CE. For the Christians of Spain, the military activities within their territory were often imagined as a *Reconquista*. The context of this reconquest, and the consideration of territory that needed to be "re-conquered," relied on a perceived connection between the current Christian rulers in Asturias and the Visigoths who had previously held power in Iberia prior to the Muslim invasion following the raid by Tariq ibn Ziyad in 711 CE.

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[69] This is meant to counter "modern" identity-based conceptions of *Reconquista* or Crusade that echo a monolithicized Christianity vs. Islam or other version of the "clash of civilizations" orientation. See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon & Schuster hardcover ed (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011).

[70] The "Holy Land" is typically considered to be the city of Jerusalem and the surrounding territory, but due to various crusader activities also came to include large portions of the Levant.

Thus, the *Reconquista* was meant to restore the Visigothic kingdom to its rightful inheritors, the kingdom of Asturias.[71]  As such, for Alfonso XI and the Christian Spanish, the Crusades and what came to be known as the *Reconquista* were initially two separate events, with one occurring in the Levant (the Crusades) and one occurring on the Iberian Peninsula (the *Reconquista*).  Once the last Crusader kingdom in the Holy Land fell c. 1291 CE and the papal schism which sent the Pope to Avignon from 1309 to 1377[72] had occurred, the Crusades and crusaders would turn their attention to Spain where the concept and understanding of the Crusades and the *Reconquista* took on new significance.  It is at this stage that the two events became mixed and the distinction between Crusade and reconquest became muddy.  The reality is that any activity could be classified as either Crusade or reconquest depending on the perspective and intent of the participants.  For example, a crusader knight fighting alongside Alfonso XI could believe they were part of a Crusade, as would the Pope who provided financing and indulgences for the battle or campaign.  At the same time, Alfonso and his Spanish contemporaries may have believed that they were engaged in a continuation of the *Reconquista* but were happy to call it a Crusade in exchange for soldiers and funding.  Determining which activities constituted Crusade and which constituted reconquest may have been a matter of practicality more than anything else, especially where financing and military and political support were concerned.  Where this distinction between *Reconquista* and Crusade takes on special significance is in its possible effect on the design of the *Sala de la Justicia* and any subsequent interpretation of that construction.  If

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[71] The connection between Asturias and the Visigoths is arguably imaginary, but the claim and any attendant activities associated with it were very real. See Xenia Bonch-Bruevich, "Ideologies of the Spanish Reconquest and Isidore's Political Thought." *Mediterranean Studies* 17 (January 1, 2008): 27–45.

[72] The Avignon Papacy, 1309-1377 involved the relocation of the Papacy from Rome to Avignon (now in France) beginning with Pope Clement V and concluding with Pope Gregory XI who returned the papacy to Rome, but which also coincided with the so-called Western Schism in 1378 and created a conflict within the Catholic church among different factions and papal claimants that lasted until 1417.  The Iberians largely supported the Avignon popes and their leadership of the Church covered the majority of the reigns of both Alfonso XI and Pedro I.  See Peter Linehan, *The Spanish Church and the Papacy in the Thirteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Alfonso XI believed he was fighting a holy crusade on behalf of Christianity or the Church and was commemorating a victory over the enemies of Christendom, an interpretation of the dominant presence of Mudéjar designs, Arabic inscriptions, and a complete lack of Christian symbols in the *Sala* is critical and highly problematic.  If on the other hand, Alfonso was celebrating a victory of conquest and reclamation against a territorial rival, then a greater meaning of the Mudéjar designs and the symbols of *La Banda* and Castile-Leon heraldry that are not specifically religious would make much more sense.

There is some evidence to suggest the latter interpretation, based not only on the design of the *Sala de la Justicia* itself, but also the discussion of Alfonso XI in the 14th century chronicles of his reign. While *Reconquista* and Crusade were a large part of the conceptual back story of Alfonso XI and the *Sala*, the terms and concepts do not appear to have been in widespread use at the time.  They belong within the province of historians, not necessarily chroniclers.  It may be that Alfonso was operating within the conceptual framework of *Reconquista* or Crusade depending on his audience, but these appear to have been largely practical considerations rather than ideological positions.  In the *Crónica de D. Alfonso el Onceno* for example, the term "*Reconquista*" does not appear.[73]  As Historian Teofilo Ruiz noted, conflicts like the *Reconquista* were often characterized as "*ida contra los Moros*."[74]  Indeed most of the activities discussed in the Crónica de Alfonso el Onceno were described as "*contra los Moros"* or simply as "*conquista*."  This interpretation of Alfonso's military activities will go a long way toward presenting the *Sala de la Justicia* as a commemorative construction similar to a Roman Triumph

[73] Juan Núñez de Villaizan, *Cronica de D. Alfonso el Onceno de este nombre, de los reyes que raynaron en Castilla y en Leon. 2. ed. conforme a un antiguo Ms. de la Real Biblioteca del Escorial, y otro de la Mayansiana: e ilustrada con apendices y varios documentos* (Madrid Impr. de A. de Sancha, 1787), http://archive.org/details/cronicadedalfons00n.

[74] Teofilo F. Ruiz, "Towards a Symbolic History of Alfonso XI of Castile: Power, Ceremony, and Triumph," in *The Emergence of León-Castile, c. 1065-1500: Essays Presented to J.F. O'Callaghan* (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2015), 98.

rather than the "triumphalism" interpretation offered by some scholars, which was ultimately

influenced by modern post-colonial and anti-orientalist thinking rather than a contextually

appropriate and situated construction. And, while Alfonso clearly utilized the rhetoric and

justification associated with the *Reconquista* or Crusades, it may have been for practical

purposes more than ideology, especially in light of the *Sala* and its Islamicate design.

The association between the Crusades and religion is clear, even if that association was not

always the focus of all of its participants. Crusades Historian Thomas Asbridge noted, "the

Latins' southward expansion [following the capture of Toledo in 1085 CE] seems to have been

driven by political and economic stimuli and not religious ideology."[75] That the religious aspects

of the Crusades played a dominant rhetorical role, however, is not in doubt and was present in

each related papal request for war, even if a portion of the Crusaders responding to requests for

aid heard "gold" and stopped listening after that. The symbolic and rhetorical context of the

Crusades and its associations with holy war and apocalypse were clearly understood, however

the same could not be said for the concept of *Reconquista* and what symbolic or rhetorical

elements were at work in any of its associated activities.

The concept of *Reconquista* is as much about an early modern (emerging) Spanish identity as

it is anything else – and perhaps more so if the concept of reconquest is little more than a trope or

mythic history that imagined a restoration of the Visigothic lands by their Christian Spanish

descendants. "The notion of continuity existing between the new kingdom of Asturias and the

old Visigothic kingdom, whether actual or imagined, had a major influence on subsequent

development of the idea of reconquest."[76] In this way, the concept of a reconquest or restoration

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[75] Ample evidence suggests that many "Crusaders" were far more interested in plunder and fighting than in operating as holy warriors on behalf of the faith. See Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins, 2011), 27.
[76] O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, 6.

of an imagined "Spain" could be galvanizing for those living in an Iberia largely controlled

Muslim conquerors.   Likewise, the casting of any potential conflict or expansion in terms of a

restoration of previously rightly-held lands would have the effect of legitimizing any territorial

expansion by Asturias while eliminating individual claim conflicts between Spanish kingdoms,

especially if Asturias was understood to be representing "Spain" at the time.  In this way, the

Christian Spanish could utilize Visigothic history, and their claim to it, to justify and endorse

their military activities, even if such claims and connections might be seen as opportunistic or

even spurious.  What's more, Spanish historians, and later religious figures, could then mold the

Visigothic history and their affiliation with it to serve the aspirations and activities of the Spanish

rulers as needed.  Or, as Medieval Historian Peter Linehan put it, "by adjusting the history of the

peninsula's [Iberia's] changing circumstances, members of Spain's literate minority… responded

to and articulated the dimly perceived needs of successive generations, continually reconcile[ed]

the present to the past for the benefit of society at large."[77]  With the "society at large" in this

case being an emerging "Spain" and whomever assumed its mantle, which began with Asturias,

but shifted to several different rulers and kingdoms in the ensuing centuries.

It is important to note that while the concept of *Reconquista* may have been constructed or

fabricated, and arguably served as pretense for various military activities, it was largely a

contemporary concept which began c. 880 CE according to Linehan.[78]  Thus, whatever the

reality of the reconquest or its history, many rulers and kingdoms believed in their connection

with the Visigoths and the formerly held territory.  As O'Callaghan noted, "in time, the kings of

Asturias-León-Castile, as the self-proclaimed heirs of the Visigoths, came to believe it was their

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[77] Utilizing Visigothic history in the service of Spanish territorial activities would continue well into the future and long past any effect it might have on Alfonso XI and the Sala de la Justicia. Peter Linehan, *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 3.
[78] Linehan, *History and the Historians*, 103.

responsibility to recover all the land that had once belonged to the Visigothic kingdom."[79]  Thus,

if the concept of *Reconquista* was active in the imaginations of the Christian Spanish since the

late 9th century it would have been firmly entrenched and influential long before any Crusader

rhetoric entered the discussion.  Interestingly, the adoption of this constructed history and

context of the *Reconquista* seems to have been largely successful on the peninsula for both

parties (Christians and Muslims) as this is also the same term the Muslims used to describe the

ongoing conflict.  According to Alan Verskin the term *Reconquista* in Arabic is *istirdād* which

he noted is a direct translation of "*Reconquista*."[80]

What impact the rhetorical history of the *Reconquista* had on Alfonso XI and the *Sala de la*

*Justicia* in contrast with that of the Crusades could radically alter the interpretation of that

construction.  For Alfonso XI and the Christians in Spain, the Crusades were a relatively new

addition to their world.  The pinnacle conflicts of the Crusades had already come and gone by the

time Fernando III captured Seville in 1248 CE.  And during the loss of the Kingdom of

Jerusalem to the forces under Saladin in 1187 CE, the Christians in Spain were still struggling

against Muslim forces in al-Andalus, then under control of the Almohads and still a generation

before their historic victory at Las Navas de Toloso in 1212 CE.  In the end, Spain was not a

Crusader state at any point during the Crusader period in the Holy Land, and since the conflict in

Iberia had been ongoing for centuries, it is likely that any conflict would have been cast in terms

of *Reconquista* rather than Crusade.  Thus, the idea of a restoration of the Visigothic kingdom

and a reconquest of rightfully "Spanish" territory was the likely mindset of the Kingdom of

Asturias and the several inheritors of this mandate leading up to Alfonso XI and the Kingdom of

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[79] O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, 3.
[80] Alan Verskin, *Islamic Law and the Crisis of the Reconquista: The Debate on the Status of Muslim Communities in Christendom*, Studies in Islamic Law and Society, volume 39 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2015), 1.

Castile-León, rather than a holy war attempting eradicate some cosmic other. And while the

*Reconquista* may have been the reality for Christians in Spain, the Crusades remained the

preferred orientation of the Church and many of the other European monarchies.

A closer examination of Alfonso XI and his orientation towards his military activities

suggests that they were indeed more in line with the concept of *Reconquista* than that of

Crusade. As O'Callaghan pointed out, "Alfonso XI (1312-1350), repeating the language of the

canonist Alvaro Pelayo, laid claim to the Canary Islands because, as part of Africa, the lands

were said to have once been subject to Gothic dominion."[81] Not only were the lands supposedly

part of the territories requiring restoration, but Alfonso XI himself could claim some ancestral

sovereignty going back to Fernando el Magno (Fernando I, Count of Castile and King of Leon r.

1035-1065).[82] The assertion of both territorial and sovereign claim to these lands along with the

reference to Alvaro Pelayo (who was a close associate of the Pope in Avignon) could be meant

to justify military action, much in the same way Pope Urban II's speech at Clermont in 1095 CE

sought to justify military action to recapture the Holy Land from the Muslims more than 450

years after the fact.[83] Regardless of any relative reality or veracity to these claims, it is clear that

the concept of *Reconquista*, and its attendant justification, was at least rhetorically in play for

Alfonso XI, but also likely left open the possibility for it to be interpreted as part of a sanctioned

crusade if that suited someone's purposes. The distinction between a reference to reconquest or

crusade might have varied depending on whom the rhetorical target may have been; clearly

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[81] O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, 4.

[82] The sovereign kinship extends back to the kingdom of Galicia recently ruled by the Visigoths, but before that by the *Seuvi* and prior to that the Hispano-Romans per the history outlined in the *Primiera Cronica General de Espana,* 2:494, *Capitolo* 813.

[83] Which of course had historically been in Byzantine (and therefore Roman) hands prior to the Muslim Conquest. As in Spain, the gesture to historic sovereignty was likely just as much a pretext for military action in the Holy Land as it was for the Christian Spanish in Iberia. See also Bonch-Bruevich, "Ideologies of the Spanish Reconquest."

*Reconquista* rhetoric resonated with the Christian Spanish whereas Crusader rhetoric was more favored by the Pope, the Catholic Church and several other European monarchies.

Despite the fall of the last crusader state, the reduced Kingdom of Jerusalem in Acre c. 1291, O'Callaghan indicated that the Pope "persistently attempted to convince western European rulers to liberate the Holy Land."[84]  In response to papal requests for Crusade, the Castilian kings contended that their activities on the peninsula were a more immediate threat which precluded their participation in any Crusades, but as O'Callaghan mentioned, "the kings of Castile suggested that, once they had overthrown peninsular Islam and gained a base in Morocco, they could participate in a general European crusade to rescue the Holy Land."[85]  Thus, while the Christian kingdoms in Spain essentially bypassed the actual Crusades in the Holy Land, the concept of Crusade may have moved to Spain and the surrounding territories, once operations in the Holy Land came to a close.  This action thereby left Spain as a potential site for the re-ignition of the Crusader conflict, at least from the perspective of the Church, which likely saw the conflict as a rivalry between Christianity and Islam that could be exploited, especially after the papal relocation to Avignon and their close association with Castile-Leon put European concerns at the forefront.  Crusader rhetoric and papal involvement may have ramped up in Iberia thanks to the availability of papal financing and Crusader knights who could aid in the fight.  Crusader rhetoric on the peninsula gained a focal point (like Jerusalem had done for the Holy Land) with a locally recognizable rallying cry around *Santiago de Compostela*,[86] which

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[84] O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*, 1.

[85] Ibid.

[86] The pilgrimage route, *Camino de Santiago* (way of St. James) from France to Spain had been a Christian pilgrimage journey since the early days of the Kingdom of Asturias when relics attributed to St. James were claimed to have been discovered at the site.  The route and the site took on rhetorical significance first after the Cathedral of Santiago was sacked by al-Mansur of Córdoba c. 997 and also in the continued struggles in the Holy Land, which increased the popularity of the European-based pilgrims' route which could be better protected. See O'Callaghan, *History of Medieval Spain*.

would add rhetorical elements of the Christian/Muslim antagonism from the Crusades to the ongoing *Reconquista* in Spain. This rhetoric surrounding *Santiago de Compostela* did play a role for fighters in Spain up to, and including Alfonso XI's victory at Rio Salado.[87]

The connection between battle at Rio Salado and *Santiago de Compostela* also presents an interesting segue in to the later discussion of the *Sala de la Justicia*. As Thomas Asbridge noted, the planned 12th century renovation of the Holy Sepulcher by the rulers of Outremer was meant to reflect the "western European 'Romanesque' style, which was also found in "Latin pilgrim churches in the West, including *Santiago de Compostela*."[88] While this may have been the case in Crusader-held Jerusalem, it was not the case in Spain. In the next chapter, an examination of the Islamicate constructions in Toledo, which Asbridge already cited as an early highlight of the burgeoning *Reconquista* in Iberia, included those by Crusaders such as the Knights Hospitaller, which did not conform to the Romanesque style. This point is especially interesting given that *Santiago de Compostela* was used specifically as a rallying cry for fighters at Rio Salado. The religious connection between *Santiago de Compostela* and the Holy Sepulchre did not seem to follow for the *Sala*, despite the historical connection between that church and the peninsula, which may further suggest a disconnect between the religious sphere and the cultural sphere which influenced Alfonso XI's Mudéjar throne room.

If the opportunity to move the Crusader conflict from the Holy Land to Spain benefitted the Church, it also benefitted the monarchs of the *Reconquista*, including Alfonso XI. As part of his ongoing military campaign against the Muslims, Alfonso was in constant need of funds and soldiers to continue his campaign. Case in point, even after his victory at Rio Salado, Alfonso

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[87] O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*, 182.
[88] Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 185.

XI was forced to halt his advance on Algeciras due to a lack of sufficient resources.[89]  Thus, anything that would enable Alfonso to have continued his various campaigns would be of interest, and indeed the Crusades and the Church had enabled him to continue the *Reconquista*, resulting in his victory at Rio Salado in the first place.

   The Pope (then based in Avignon, France) had supported the Christian-Spanish rulers in the past as part of an ongoing struggle with Islam, beginning with the first Avignon pope Clement V, who granted crusader indulgences, or "bull of the Crusade" which typically involved religious exceptions for most sins and Church requirements while the knight was fighting on behalf of the Church.   It had also previously included *decima* and *tercias* financing[90] to Alfonso XI's father Fernando IV.  As Alfonso embarked on his own campaigns he likewise turned to the Pope (John XXII) for indulgences and financing for himself and his knights.  The Pope ultimately refused the request citing previous rulers in Spain who had used papal financing for "other purposes."[91] But, after infighting between Christian Spanish rulers threatened to weaken Spain, opening the possibility of a Muslim resurgence, Pope John XXII acquiesced and granted the request.[92] Armed with papal support, Alfonso XI was also able to recruit Crusader knights and nobles from the French and German territories.[93]

   Beginning c. 1330 CE, Alfonso resumed the *Reconquista*/Crusade thanks to a treaty with his frequent antagonist Juan Manuel, assistance from Afonso IV of Portugal, and additional crusader knights including a handful from Scotland who were originally headed to the Holy Land.[94]  As

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[89] O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*, 183.

[90] The *decima* was "a tenth of the ecclesiastical revenues," and the *tercias* consisted of a "third of the tithe, of the archdioceses of Seville and *Compostela* [which] could be used to finance the crusade." In O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*, 40, 15.

[91] Which might call those rulers and Alfonso's motivations and dedication to Crusade into question.  O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*, 151.

[92] O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade* 153.

[93] O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*, 155-56.

[94] Ibid.

the conquest/crusade continued, Alfonso XI's forces repeatedly stopped to secure booty from the victories as well as solidify control of the newly acquired territories.[95] These activities seem to suggest a conqueror concerned with acquiring territory and control more than a holy warrior bent on eradication of an enemy.  But the need for treasure was constant and ultimately resulted in a peace treaty between Alfonso XI and the Muslim-led Kingdom of Granada, which included vassalage and the accompanying payments from Granada.[96]  In all regards, Alfonso XI seemed to be prosecuting a campaign of conquest (or reconquest), including the establishment of his military order *La Banda*.[97]  As O'Callaghan noted, *La Banda* was "an Order of Chivalry, quite distinct from the older Military Religious Orders,"[98] like the Knights Hospitaller or the Knights Templar.  This distinctiveness from typical Crusader orders may again suggest a greater association with conquest than Crusade, which is significant given that it was heraldry for *La Banda* which was prominently featured in the *Sala de la Justicia* along with the royal heraldry of Castile-León.

Whether Alfonso XI was on a Crusade or a reconquest may have had as much to do with to whom he was speaking and the context of his interests.  Indeed, Alfonso may have been driven far more by practicality than by anything else.  In this way, if being a Crusader netted him funding, support, and indulgences from the Pope, then he might have chosen to be, or portrayed himself as a Crusader – but all of this sits precariously against the interpretive lens of the Spanish themselves who had a vested interest in characterizing their activities in terms of restoration and reconquest.  The assertion of reconquest had appeal not only to the contemporary Spanish actors,

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[95] O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade,* 158-59.
[96] O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*, 160.
[97] "The Band" or "The Scarf," but most likely something akin to "The Sash" as the group was emblemized by a sash worn across their garments.  O'Callaghan, *Gibraltar Crusade*, 161.
[98] Ibid.

but also served later Spanish historians and rhetoricians intent on framing Spanish history in a particular way.[99]  The frame of this history ultimately justified and authorized military activity in the name of restoration and sovereignty associated with the Christian Spanish and their Visigothic ancestors.  The connection also had the rhetorical impact of disconnecting the Christian Spanish from any association with their Muslim invaders and linked them traditionally and historically to the pre-Muslim in habitants of the peninsula. One possible consequence of gestures to a Visigothic heritage and the *Reconquista* is the link that it created between the Christian Spanish and Rome; not only to the Catholic Church, but the Roman Empire and its history of which the Visigoths (along with the earlier hispano-Romans) were inextricably linked. One of the likely consequences of that link, beyond the political and religious connections to the Romans, was a connection to certain sociocultural aspects of Roman imperial history that may have ultimately been behind Alfonso XI's design of the Mudéjar *Sala de la Justicia* as his throne room.  It is likely that the influence of an imperial Roman connection, especially as it related to Roman generals and conquerors, had an effect on Alfonso XI and his construction of the *Sala de la Justicia* and also how claims of "triumphalism" that are frequently presented as an explanation for its Mudéjar design are understood and interpreted.  These claims of triumphalism as commonly presented, may ultimately depend on what manner of triumph is believed to have occurred and how it might be framed in the mind of the ruler, the subjects and any potential visitors.  As will become clear, while celebratory triumphalism in an imperial Roman context may indeed have been at play, triumphalism as an identity-based form of appropriation or

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[99] This is of course not to mention any justification-based motivations to cover various military actions and activities. See also Bonch-Bruevich, "Ideologies of the Spanish Reconquest."

inversion, as some will assert, may not have influenced the Mudéjar designed throne room or served as its intended purpose.[100]

## 3.2  Triumphalism and the Battle of Rio Salado (1340 CE)

As the foundational victory for which the *Sala de la Justicia* was likely constructed, understanding this battle and its place in the larger political and military state of affairs in Iberia and Al-Andalus is a necessity.  As questions rise about the status of Alfonso XI as a Crusader as opposed to a conqueror, the context of his signature military victory will likely dictate the interpretive reality of the *Sala de la Justicia* and the implications and explanations for its Mudéjar design, inscriptions, decorations, and any inclusions or omissions associated with it.

Despite the complications presented by the many Islamicate aspects of the *Sala*, its construction, and its context, the accepted scholarly interpretation for the Mudéjar designs in Alfonso XI's throne room is triumphalism.  While "triumphalism" may seem like a reasonable explanation for a throne room commemorating a triumph, what "triumphalism" as a concept might mean to a modern scholar, may be very different from what it might have meant to Alfonso XI or his contemporaries.  From the Oxford Dictionaries, "triumphalism" is defined as "excessive exultation over one's success or achievements (used especially in a political context)."[101]  A review of several modern definitions of the term in reference sources reveal it is predominantly considered a pejorative term and meant to reflect celebration that is disproportionate, excessive, and prideful with regard to others.  How the triumphalism of

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[100] In part, identity-based activities such as those suggested for the *Sala*, rely heavily on a perceived separation of Muslim things from Christian or Jewish things and monolithic conceptions therein – which do not appear to be the case – thus, the inverted triumphalism suggested by Jerrilynn Dodds would likely not have made sense to any of them at the time. See Jerrilynn Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology in Early Medieval Spain*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990.

[101] Oxford dictionaries, s.v. "triumphalism," accessed January 7, 2017, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/triumphalism.

Alfonso XI is presented by scholars in their discussions of the *Sala de la Justicia* is certainly

reflective of this definition.

The most prominent proponent of the "triumphalism" interpretation for the *Sala* comes from

renowned art historian, Jerrilynn Dodds, who describes and interprets several Mudéjar-designed

structures that developed in post-*Reconquista* cities like Toledo and Seville as examples of

triumphalism and triumphal construction.  Dodds has historically presented the paradoxical use

of clearly Islamic material culture, typically associated with the Umayyad rule in al-Andalus, by

Christians and the Catholic Church as triumphalism.  Discussing the presence of Caliph Hisham

II's (r. 976-1013 CE) silver casket in the treasury of the Girona Cathedral, for example, Dodds

suggested that it "surely became a symbol of Christian victory over Islam."[102]  Indeed, Hisham's

casket along with other Islamic material culture that was later used in Christian contexts, for

Dodds, represented "the victory of the faith and [an] appropriation of what is most precious of al-

Andalus."[103]  Whether or not Dodds's interpretation of the material in the Islamic and pre-

*Reconquista* period is more or less likely, neither necessarily informs the interpretation of

Mudéjar designs, such as those found in the *Sala de la Justicia* and the Alcazar of Seville.  There

is a clear distinction between the appropriation, use, or display of existing Islamic material

culture by a conqueror and that which was commissioned and constructed by a non-Muslim,

which describes the majority of the Mudéjar-designed material.  As Ruggles noted,

"triumphalism does not explain the phenomenon of the Mudéjar style, in which Christian patrons

did not simply appropriate and convert existing Islamic objects, but actually commissioned new

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[102] The casket may have made its way to the treasury of Girona by way of Catalan mercenaries fighting in Córdoba as part of an internal power struggle between Muslims who took the casket as part of their spoils (a concept to be explored shortly). Jerrilynn Dodds, "Islam, Christianity, and the Problem of Religious Art." In *The Art of Medieval Spain a.d. 500-1200*, 73–109. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993.

[103] Ibid.

art in the Islamic style."[104]  For Dodds, however, the context of appropriation as victory

undergirds the majority of her interpretations of Islamic and Mudéjar material culture.  As she

indicated, "the case of Mudéjar art is interesting, for it represents a moment of Christian control:

Islamic culture no longer posed a threat to Christian identity and existence."[105]  She continued,

"the word Mudéjar suggests an art of subjected Muslims… [and] a relaxation of the cultural

defensiveness which had characterized the Christian attitude towards Islamic arts in the earlier

period."[106]  Dodds continued in her assessment of the *Bab al-Mardum* mosque in Toledo,

converted to the Church of *Cristo de la Luz* in Toledo noting the Christians' "desire to

appropriate some of the power and validity of the indigenous tradition established during

Toledo's Muslim domination."[107]  And finally, "it was the dilemma of a new Christian

hegemony which [found] itself ruling a population including strong vestiges of an enemy culture

which the Christians nevertheless held in some awe."[108]  What is interesting to note, and where

this characterization of styles will ultimately problematize triumphalism, is the language that

Dodds uses to describe the activities of the Christians.  By gesturing to ideas like "Christian

identity," "cultural defensiveness," "enemy culture," "Christian hegemony," "appropriation,"

and multiple references to "domination," be they suggestions of Muslim domination or Christian

domination, the Christian/Muslim binary and the likely anachronistic presentation of monolithic

categories of identity propose a polarized socio-cultural climate that either may not have existed

or was not as clearly imagined or understood at the time as it is presented.

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[104] Ruggles, "The Alcazar of Seville," 90.

[105] Jerrilynn Dodds, "The Mudéjar Tradition in Architecture." In Jayyusi, *Legacy of Muslim Spain*, 592.

[106] The earlier period Dodds is referring to likely involves the post-conquest Christians living under Muslim rule (Mozarabs) and their resistance to all things Islamic – but this "cultural defensiveness" may not have been shared by all subjugated populations. Ibid.

[107] While there is disagreement with the context and characterization Dodds was using here, the sentiment of evoking (perhaps rather than appropriating) the previous Muslim rulers' "power and validity" is important, especially in the broader discussion of post-*Reconquista* cities and towns. Dodds, "Mudéjar Tradition," 593.

[108] Ibid.

Following the logic of the triumphalism theory, Ruggles indicated that triumphalism as an interpretation for Alfonso XI's *Sala de la Justicia* would suggest that Alfonso "chose the Mudéjar style for his victory monument because it allowed him seize and appropriate Islamic culture in much the same way as he had seized and appropriated Islamic territory."[109]  While triumphalism can have a number of meanings, to describe or interpret the *Sala* or any other constructions closely associated with a military victory as "a victory monument" or anything similar could be potentially misleading and problematic depending on the manner in which such a description was presented.  The difficulty with phrases like "victory monument" or any similar characterization is that they evoke or elicit a particular understanding from the modern perspective that may not have been present in medieval al-Andalus.  Hearkening back to the grand melee that ensued over the proposed Park 51 Complex[110] in New York City, the language of "victory monument" was used in clear identity-based arguments that cast the proposed Islamic community center as the "Ground Zero Mosque" and cited crusader history as evidence.[111]  This particular characterization, placed within a "clash of civilizations"[112] context has a very specific imaginary history.  Thus, to present the *Sala,* or indeed any monumental architecture from the medieval period in such a context, runs the risk of being at least anachronistic or at most offers a distorted view of the likely rationale and intent of the constructions.  Unfortunately this context of presentation for the *Sala de la Justicia* is exacerbated in Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale's *The*

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[109] Ruggles, "Alcazar of Seville," 90.
[110] Originally named Córdoba House and intended to reflect peaceful coexistence or *convivencia* post-9/11 by invoking the cooperation and cosmopolitanism of medieval Córdoba. http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/cordoba-house-mosque-ground-zero-slaps-new-park51-article-1.201064.
[111] See Karam Pasha, "The Mosque by Ground Zero." Huffington Post, 5/17/2010, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kamran-pasha/the-mosque-by-ground-zero_b_578146.html; Rep. Ted Poe, "Ground Zero Mosque or Monument?" Human Events, 9/3/2010, http://humanevents.com/2010/09/03/ground-zero-mosque-or-monument/; Larry Klayman, "Ground Zero Mosque: Time to Draw a Line in the Sand," WorldNetDaily.com, 11/27/2010, http://www.wnd.com/2010/11/233125/.
[112] Referring to the general concept that the confessional communities of Christianity and Islam or "western" and "eastern" cultures are unable to coexist due to systemic differences. See Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations.*

*Arts of Intimacy*, where they argued that "Alfonso XI had appropriated and inverted the forms of

Muhammad [V]'s father Yusuf I [then King of Granada] into a victory celebration in the Alcazar

of Seville.[113]  Part of the challenge that this characterization of the *Sala* presents is the distorted

picture of the society of 14th century Seville.  Because the language used to describe and interpret

the history surrounding these constructions seems to be focused on a post-enlightenment

conception of identity, complete with language typical of post-colonial analysis, when combined

with the monolithization already discussed, leaves little room for alternative analysis.  To

solidify this trajectory of analysis, Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale describe the intent behind

Muhammad V's (King of Granada and associate of Alfonso XI's son Pedro I of Castile) when

building his own throne room in the *Palacio de Commares* in the Alhambra as likewise being

constructed as a victory monument meant to recall his victory at Algeciras which they argued

was "represent[ed] in cosmic terms…[and] was thus transformed into the eternal battle between

the faithful and the infidel, precisely the thematic structure in which the battle of Salado had

been advertised, and fought by Alfonso XI."[114]  Here again the clash of civilizations and "cosmic

war"[115] presentations are straight out of modern religious identity politics and rhetoric.  Such a

perspective seems perfectly reasonable in modern sociopolitical parlance, but dubious in a

medieval context such that it is doubtful that a similar sentiment or personal or global conception

existed as such for anyone at that time.  Thus, an effort to re-interpret the *Sala de la Justicia,*

which would also affect interpretations for the majority post-Islamic Mudéjar constructions,

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[113] Jerrilynn Denise Dodds, Maria Rosa Menocal, and Abigail Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 253.
[114] Part of the analysis of the *Sala* will involve unpacking Alfonso XI's "advertisement" for the battle, which was directed at the Pope who ultimately provided funding and crusader indulgences for the campaign. Dodds, Menocal, Balbale, *Arts of Intimacy*, 253.
[115] "Cosmic War" is a term coined by Mark Juergensmeyer in *Terror in the Mind of God*, to describe the eternal cosmic struggle between Islam and Christianity. Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*. (Berkeley, California University Press, 2003).

requires a lens and interpretation that enables Seville and Granada to be viewed from a

perspective that also understands cultural developments as separate and distinct from religious or

political considerations.  In this way, what a particular ruler's religious or political orientation

may have been, did not always intersect with their cultural orientations, especially in

cosmopolitan environments like those found in al-Andalus.

Circumstantially, a triumphalism interpretation for the *Sala de la Justicia* is expected, and

from one perspective it seems valid.  As Ruggles noted, "the triumphalist explanation works

perfectly well for Alfonso XI and the Hall of Justice [*Sala de la Justicia*]."[116] The

commissioning and construction of the *Sala de la Justicia* seems directly related to Alfonso's

victory at Rio Salado and the presence of the Castilian heraldry and the symbols of a military

order (*La Banda*) do suggest a connection.  And in truth, the timing and historical context of the

*Sala*'s construction leaves little doubt that the victory at Rio Salado did influence and/or inspire

the construction of the *Sala de la Justicia*; and considering the prominent presence of the

heraldry of Castile-Leon and *La Banda*, a military victory likewise seems clear.[117]

One of the core challenges to the "triumphalism" theory or any similar interpretation is

intention, and by extension, reception.  If Alfonso XI commissioned the *Sala* in the Mudéjar

style for the purposes of triumphalism as previously described, then he would have needed the

intention to do so and also the expectation that his triumphalist construction would be recognized

as such with the corresponding impact on his subjects and his enemies.  Thus, for Alfonso's

proposed triumphalism to have any viability, it must have been reflected and experienced by

court members and visitors alike, since the *Sala de la Justicia* served as Alfonso XI's throne

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[116] Ruggles, "Alcazar of Seville," 90.

[117] However, the presence and specific relativity of Castilian heraldry and military symbols are yet again complicated by their prominent use by Pedro I in his very public façade (among other places) of his own construction of the later Mudéjar Palace inside the Alcazar complex, See Chapter 5, this document.

room and court reception space for visitors and dignitaries including, presumably visitors from Granada or other Muslim polities. An interpretation the *Sala de la Justicia* as a triumphalist victory monument should therefore be determinable; unfortunately, there does not seem to be any corroboration for this from contemporary sources.

One of the most glaring counter arguments to the triumphalism theory is the lack of mention, discussion, or reaction to the *Sala*'s design by visitors who would be in the best position to respond to it, comment on it, or in some way recognize the inverted form of triumph as such. Likewise, the message presented by the throne room and its decoration would, regardless of reception, reflect some form of visual language and such language would be expected to "speak" on behalf of or for the ruler it represented. It then follows that one of the important aspects of triumphalism is the message that it disseminated. Presumably, any impact a triumphal monument or other commemorative architecture conveyed would be recognizable and understood as such to potential viewers/visitors. It is likely for this reason that so many triumphal constructions are accompanied by inscriptions and other symbolic material. If anyone was the intended target of a triumphal construction, especially one believed to be a product of an inverted form of the conquered enemy, it would be those associated with the conquered enemy – either other Muslim dignitaries or those affiliated with the Marinids or other North African polities. Thus, if any visitor to the *Sala* would be most impacted by the triumphal aspects of Alfonso XI's throne room, it would be the Muslim, North African Historian and Statesman Ibn Khaldun.

Ibn Khaldun represents an interesting interlude in the larger discussion of the Alcazar of Seville, and to a lesser extent, the *Sala de al Justicia*. Ibn Khaldun's family, originally from

Seville themselves, left when the city fell to Fernando III in 1248 CE.[118]  Ibn Khaldun also

served both the Marinid Dynasty in North Africa and the Nasrid Dynasty in Granada, both of

whom were opposing combatants in the Battle of Rio Salado in which Alfonso XI was the victor

and the very victory for which the *Sala de la Justicia* was built.  Therefore, Ibn Khaldun's

knowledge of the history of these groups would put him in the best position to comment or

reflect on them, but oddly he did not.

In 1363 CE, Ibn Khaldun was sent as ambassador by Muhammad V of Granada to Pedro I in

Seville.  While the ties between Muhammad V and Pedro I are well established, this particular

visit by Ibn Khaldun is significant on two levels; namely his experiences in Seville and the

Alcazar as well as the larger context and interpretation of his visit.[119]  Ibn Khaldun's visit is a

minor occurrence in the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville, but it directly speaks to the

presentation of the *Sala* as a triumphalism born of inversion.  More than many visitors to Pedro

I's court, Ibn Khaldun was not only in a position to be intimately familiar with the architecture in

question, having spent significant time within it, but also the nature of his visit and failure to

discuss the triumphalism of the *Sala* suggests an orientation toward Mudéjar architecture that

will figure prominently in the contextuality of the *Sala* and the Christian constructions in the

Alcazar as a whole.

When Ibn Khaldun was in Seville as a guest of Pedro I in 1363, Pedro's Mudéjar Palace was

still under construction.[120]  During this period, Pedro would have held court in the existing

Alcazar complex, which included the *Sala de la Justicia*.[121] Despite his extended exposure to the

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[118] Syed Farid Alatas, *Ibn Khaldun*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2.

[119] For biographical context related to Ibn Khaldun's visit to Seville see Allen Fromherz, *Ibn Khaldun Life & Times* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010) and Syed Farid Alatas, *Ibn Khaldun* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[120] Dodds, Menocal, Balbale, *Arts of Intimacy*, 254.

[121] This is also a likely meeting area for Pedro and his court when Muhammad V was living in Seville during his exile from Granada. Dodds, Menocal, Balbale, *Arts of Intimacy*, 253.

Mudéjar architecture in the Alcazar (and presumably that currently under construction at the time

of his visit), Ibn Khaldun did not seem to remark upon it, certainly failing to acknowledge the

inversion of Islamic architecture or the triumphalism, which is surprising given his knowledge of

history and his own family history in the region, suggesting that the Mudéjar constructions may

have had a different contemporary interpretation.  In addition, Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale

suggested that the *Sala de la Justicia* may have inspired Muhammad V in his own constructions

in the Alhambra.[122] Muhammad V's throne room in the Alhambra (the *Cuarto Dorado*) may

have been influenced by both the *Sala de la Justicia* and the façade of Pedro's Mudéjar

Palace.[123]  If true, neither Muhammad V nor Ibn Khaldun seemed to have been impacted by

Alfonso's purported triumphalism, which suggests either that he was unsuccessful in

communicating it, or that there was an entirely different interpretation and understanding of the

construction that did not trigger any identity-based conflict or response.

Both Ibn Khaldun's and Muhammad V's relationship to Castile and the Christians may be

instructive in the interpretation of the Alcazar and its reception.  As Ibn Khaldun had worked

with various rulers and courts in both North Africa and al-Andalus and Muhammad V and the

Nasrids were likewise both a friend and an antagonist with Seville, it seems that all of their

interactions and contact were largely political.  In this way, each of these groups, along with any

shifting alliances tended to fracture along political lines.  Likewise any conflict, *Reconquista* or

otherwise, were likely cast in political terms as well (at least from the perspective of the

Andalusis and North Africans).  Thus outside of the church, conflicts in al-Andalus and North

Africa were largely considered in the political realm and arguably understood as such.

Therefore, it might be inappropriate to consider Mudéjar architecture in the realm of religion as

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[122] Dodds, Menocal, Balbale, *Arts of Intimacy*, 253.
[123] Ruggles, "Alcazar of Seville," 92.

facts on the ground seem to dispute that, especially in the discussion of shared culture that will come in the next chapter.

If triumphalism through inversion is the less likely interpretation of the *Sala de la Justicia* it remains to understand this construction in relationship to the battle at Rio Salado and the celebration or commemoration of the victory by Alfonso XI. Given the dominant presence of Mudéjar designs, it is possible that Alfonso was utilizing an Islamic style of victory commemoration. In his analysis of Medieval Islamic "victory monuments," Thomas Leisten indicated "the idea of commemorating historical or military events can be found in all kinds of structures or objects, but they all employed a system for conveying information that everyone could understand."[124] He further asserted that these commemorated victories involved "celebrating the king and his victory over the enemy by a combination of a narrative depiction and explanatory inscription."[125] Unfortunately, no sense of a narrative depiction or explanatory inscription is present in the *Sala*'s design or decoration and is limited to heraldry of the crown and military order combined with generic Arabic/Qur'anic phrases and a general blessing for Alfonso. Leisten also offered that "another kind of victory memorial served purposes of propaganda…by summarizing and celebrating the achievements of the ruler in a report of activities…set up in a place that would be seen by many people."[126] The *Sala* likewise does not follow this model either. Using Leisten as a guide, the *Sala de la Justicia* does not seem to follow the accepted historical patterns for Islamic "victory monuments." Furthermore, none of the Islamic examples seem to have included any form of inversion of the enemies' material culture as an element. The closest possible example of enemy material culture used in

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[124] Thomas Leisten, "Mashad Al-Nasr: Monuments of War and Victory in Medieval Islamic Art." *Muqarnas*, vol. 13, pp.7-26, 1996, 8.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.

decoration would be the depiction of "artistic allusions to Byzantine and Sassanian jewelry and crowns" in the interior decoration of the Dome of the Rock (*Qubbat al-Sakhrah)* in Jerusalem built by Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malik.[127] As far as this being an inversion, it does not seem appropriate since it was intended to represent actual material related to the conquered enemies, the originals of which Leisten indicated were likely displayed in the Ka'ba in Mecca.[128] Leisten also pointed out that if the Dome of the Rock had been intended as a victory monument the message was likely "too complex" to be "readily understood by the beholder."[129] As this project will suggest, the form of decoration found in the Dome of the Rock is actually indicative of another form of celebration and commemoration, and one that is likely similar to that of Alfonso XI in his decoration of the *Sala de la Justicia.*

The situation that Leisten described for victory monuments in a medieval Islamic context is directly relevant to the *Sala de la Justicia* on a number of levels. If the *Sala* was meant as an inversion of something Islamic, then some precedent among Muslim victory celebrations would need to be present. Leisten does suggest that the *qubba* model, the same model on which the *Sala de la Justicia* is built, had been used to commemorate Muslim victories, however those victories or events were typically commemorated on the sites of their occurrence.[130] It is not readily knowable if Alfonso XI would have enough familiarity with Muslim commemoration to have used such a design for such a purpose, and given that the only matching element was the general design model and nothing else, it seems more likely that this was simply an iconic style

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[127] Leisten, "Mashad Al-Nasr," 15.

[128] In this case the artistic representations might reflect something more akin to spoils or trophies from the victory, much in the same way Caliph Hisham's casket was kept in Girona Cathedral. Likewise, the depiction of victory spoils is a form also known from Roman Triumphs and may be indicative of that form of commemoration. Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Leisten, "Mashad Al-Nasr," 19-20.

choice – especially considering other elements of the *Sala* do not match such commemorations in other ways.

If the *Sala de la Justicia* was meant to, at least partially, celebrate or commemorate the victory at Rio Salado, but a modern identity-based explanation of triumphalism or the earlier Islamic model seem unlikely, then how is this triumph being celebrated or represented in a context that fits Alfonso XI historically?  Fortunately, there is a form of "triumphalism" that suits a conqueror or *Reconquista* king celebrating a military victory and one that is not anachronistic for a 14th century Christian monarch.  A monument-based form of triumphal celebration already existed in the minds and reality of medieval Europeans in the form of the Roman Triumph.  The Romans, whose history and architecture were well known had popularized the monumental military victory celebration in several forms, from columns and arches to buildings and complexes.  Monumental forms of triumph typically followed the official granting of a Triumph or celebratory procession.  The Roman "Triumph," was granted to successful military commanders as a way to commemorate and celebrate their victories.  As noted Roman historian Mary Beard indicated, "To be awarded a triumph was the most outstanding honor a Roman General could hope for."[131]  Beard described the victorious General returning in triumph to Rome "accompanied by the booty he had won, the prisoners he had taken captive, and his no doubt rowdy and raucous troops in their battle gear."[132]  It is this Roman form of triumph that was more likely being reflected in the *Sala de la Justicia*.

The Roman Triumph was a prominent celebratory feature for much of the early Imperial period (c. 27 CE – 395 CE), but continued sporadically in different forms until the so-named last Roman Triumph c. 534 CE when General Belisarius was granted a triumph during the reign of

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[131] Mary Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2007), 1.
[132] Ibid.

Justinian in Constantinople after his victory over the Vandals in North Africa.[133]  Based on a

report from 6th century Roman historian Procopius, Beard noted the many differences between

the traditional Triumphs of Rome at its height and this much later Triumph in Constantinople,

however the general content and processional format remained consistent.  It is likely that this

later period Roman triumphal model was known to residents of Iberia, given their early

connections to the Romans and continued connections, be they imagined or otherwise, to the

Visigoths.  As Beard noted, "Roman triumphs have provided a model for the celebration of

military successes for centuries.  Through the last two millennia, there has been hardly a

monarch, dynast, or autocrat in the West who has not looked back to Rome for a lesson in how to

mark victory in war and to assert his own personal power."[134]

While it is unclear if Alfonso XI was overtly and intentionally gesturing to Roman tradition

or if it was simply a tradition familiar to Iberians, it is clear that he and others were

knowledgeable of the symbolism and representation associated with these forms and gestures to

suggest that they were an ingrained and recognizable expression of power and grandeur.  By way

of example, Alfonso XI's initial entry into the city of Seville as King in 1327 CE bore many of

the hallmarks of the Roman triumphal procession and spectacle, including a ceremonial route

with trumpets and other instruments, accompanied by knights and nobles clothed in gold and

silver and personally accompanied by a retinue of Moorish knights.[135]  Alongside the route, ships

in the Guadalquivir offered a mock battle re-enacting the 1248 conquest of the city, another

common feature of Roman triumphal celebration.[136]

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[133] Beard, *Roman Triumph*, 318-319.
[134] Beard, *Roman Triumph*, 2.
[135] Cayetano Rosell *et al*., *Crónicas de los reyes de Castilla.* (Madrid: Atlas, 1953), 204.
[136] Ruiz, "Towards a Symbolic History of Alfonso XI of Castile: Power, Ceremony, and Triumph," 99.

If Alfonso XI was familiar with the Roman Triumph, which presumably he was based on his celebratory activities following his victory, then he was at least marginally familiar with its form. Historically, many Roman Triumphs (the procession) were followed by commemorative construction projects, often arches, but also other building projects such as temples and monuments, and in the early days of Imperial Rome, entire forums. Given the predominance of Roman monumental architecture extant in Spain and surrounding areas, Alfonso XI must have been familiar with this material and its history. One of the most well-known Triumphs was granted to General Titus Flavius Vespasianus (later Emperor, r. 79-81 CE) after his victory in Judea and the successful repression of the revolt and subsequent siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Upon his return, Titus was granted a Triumph and his triumphal procession was commemorated on the Arch of Titus constructed and dedicated by his brother Domitian c. 82 CE.

*Figure 4: Arch of Titus*



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While the *Sala de la Justicia* arguably reflected the monumental construction related to

Roman-style Triumph, an analysis of the Arch of Titus will be instructive in disassociating the

*Sala* from modern identity-based conceptions of triumphalism and specifically the suggestion of

inversion. The Arch of Titus, neither in the general view depicted above nor in the detail images

below, features the culture or architectural style of the conquered Jews depicted or utilized in any

way other than the specific representation of spoils which were intended to record actual

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[137] *Arch of Titus; General View*, 81AD, concrete and white marble, height 50 feet (15 m.), 81AD,
http://library.artstor.org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/library/secure/ViewImages?id=%2FThWdC8hIywtPygxFTx5TnQkVnoseg
%3D%3D&userId=gDhPej0l&zoomparams=&fs=true.

events.[138] The images depicted below show two reliefs located on the Arch of Titus intended to commemorate his triumphal procession following his victory.

*Figure 5: Arch of Titus, North side inner face*



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*Figure 6: Arch of Titus, South side inner face*



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    As is clear, the depictions reflect the actual triumphal procession with the victorious general and his soldiers followed by prominent captured combatants, representative banners and

emblems of the enemy, and spoils taken after the victory, which in this case included religious

material, such as a menorah and the temple's Torah.  The commemoration of the Triumph of

Titus as depicted on the arch, bears striking resemblance to the procession and material that was

included in Alfonso XI's display for Pope Benedict XIII following his victory at Rio Salado.

Both as a result of triumphal depictions such as this Arch and the well-known tradition of the

Roman Triumph, the form and function of such celebratory events and their symbolism were

known both traditionally and historically.  Therefore, putting Alfonso XI's victory activities into

this context may offer a more comprehensive framework for the interpretation of the *Sala de la*

*Justicia*.

    Alfonso XI engaged in a Roman-style triumphal procession following his victory at Rio

Salado featuring all the typical trappings of such an event, as noted above.  Because this battle

was fought as part of a Crusade, at least superficially, the procession was for the church rather

than the senate and the people of Rome.  "On their return [from Rio Salado] the kings of Castile

and Portugal made a pilgrimage to El Puerto de Santa Maria.  The [Muslim military] banners

seized in that [battle] were carried into the city on the necks of captured Moors.  Among the most

precious items was a copy of the Koran written by Caliph 'Uthman b. Affan (644-56 CE).

Bound with ropes and penned in a corral near the Alcazar of Seville were many captives from

the Marinid royal house, including the emir's son…many captured banners were placed in the

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[138] The representation of actual captured material on this arch may be similar to representations of the actual material featured in the reliefs inside the Dome of the Rock mentioned previously – suggesting at least a conceptual connection in form or depiction. See Leisten, "Mashad Al-Nasr: Monuments of War and Victory in Medieval Islamic Art."

[139] *Arch of Titus: "Triumph of the Emperor Titus," Detail of Relief from Inner Face of Arch on North Side*, ca. 81, marble, http://library.artstor.org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/library/secure/ViewImages?id=8DlKaF4jKzQ3KA%3D%3D&userId=gDhPej0l&zoomparams=&fs=true.

[140] *"Spoils of the Temple in Jerusalem," Relief Panel from Inner Facing of the Arch of Titus, Rome*, 81, 81, http://library.artstor.org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/library/secure/ViewImages?id=8DlKaF0jKDQyLw%3D%3D&userId=gDhPej0l&zoomparams=&fs=true.

cathedral of Seville [then still a converted mosque] where they remained for many years."[141] This procession, featuring spoils, booty, banners, and captives is typical of a Roman Triumph and mirrors the Triumph of Titus in a nearly textbook fashion, arguably confirming that Roman-style triumphalism was known to Alfonso and his contemporaries. To further cement the comparison, "news of the victory had…been sent to the pope [Benedict XIII in Avignon, who] established a liturgical commemoration of the victory…[followed by] another procession celebrat[ing] the Christian triumph."[142] The Christian Triumph followed the typical pattern of the Roman Triumph in both form and function and in a manner similar to Belisarius's presentation to Justinian.[143]

Sometime concurrent with or following Alfonso XI's triumphal processions the *Sala de la Justicia* was commissioned and constructed. Here again, following a triumphal procession with a commemorative construction was typical for a triumphant Roman general and Alfonso seems to have followed a similar model. Commemorative monumental constructions associated with the Triumph were predominantly public structures that could be viewed by visitors. While Alfonso XI's throne room is not necessarily public in the same way that an arch might be, it was public enough to be seen by visitors, courtiers, and subjects alike. The images (both literal and figurative) that were projected by the monuments were meaningful and specific. As Maggie Popkin noted in her recent examination of the Roman Triumph, "because the triumph was such a quintessential Roman institution…the monuments…invited shared remembering, [and] it seems almost inevitable that a relationship would exist between triumphs, monuments, memories and

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[141] O'Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade*, 184.
[142] O'Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade*, 185.
[143] Beard, *Roman Triumph*, 318-321.

Roman identities."[144]  She continued, "the [triumphal] monuments…shaped how Romans

remembered [the triumph, and] played a critical role in forming the collective memories that

served as a basis for the self-identity of the group."[145]  In al-Andalus, the context and meaning of

any form of triumph would likely differ from that of the Romans, but if the Roman model was

the inspiration for future celebrations, some similarity would need to be present or the

established model would be unrecognizable and as such lose its intended purpose.  Inversion is

not really a known form of triumphalism in the Roman context.  At no point did Roman generals

or Emperors create their triumphal monuments in the style of the conquered group.[146]  This is

especially true in an ancient or medieval context and assertions to the contrary may reflect a

misunderstanding of medieval forms of identity.  To use inversion, as has been suggested for the

triumphalism associated with the *Sala de la Justicia*, several concepts and ideas would need to

have been in place.  Most prominent among these concepts would be the context in which a

relationship between the Mudéjar style and the people of al-Andalus was contemporarily

understood.  Specifically, the Mudéjar style used by Alfonso XI in the *Sala de la Justicia* could

only be used as inversion if the Mudéjar style was commonly known as exclusive to the Muslims

– otherwise what exactly would be inverted?  Oddly, Dodds indicated that Christians as early as

10th century Northern Spain exhibited "a marked taste for certain characteristically Islamic forms

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[144] Maggie L. Popkin, *The Architecture of the Roman Triumph: Monuments, Memory, and Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 18.

[145] Popkin, *Architecture of the Roman Triumph*, 19.

[146] There is an influence of Greek architectural style and design on many triumphal constructions, and the Greeks were conquered by the Romans in 146 BCE, however the presence of a Hellenic design style in Roman monumental architecture had been an ongoing aspect of the larger Hellenization of the Empire and culture of the Romans that influenced all aspects of society and is not linked to any event or battle in a way that would mirror the assertion for Alfonso XI's construction of the *Sala.* Over time, Hellenic style commingled so frequently with Roman style that a new hybrid style could be said to have emerged from the combination. See J. R. W. Prag, and Josephine Crawley Quinn, eds. *The Hellenistic West: Rethinking the Ancient Mediterranean* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

of articulation and ornamentation in church building."[147]  While it is clear that nothing in the

Mudéjar style would be so prominent at the time as it would be in 14th century Seville, it does

suggests that there was already a separation between architectural or cultural elements and those

directly associated with the religion of Islam – especially if those designs were being used in a

religious context such as church decoration.  Architectural evidence from Seville and other

communities confirmed that the use of Mudéjar designs in religious settings was in no way

limited or isolated as several contemporary church buildings as well as several Jewish

synagogues were similarly constructed during the same period. Thus, if there had been dabbling

in Islamicate forms as early as the 10th century and such practices continued for the intervening

centuries in al-Andalus, it doesn't seem possible that triumphalism as inversion would have been

a visual language intelligible to any intended audience.  If the triumphal monument had any

connection to Castilian or even Andalusi identity, as Popkin suggested for the Romans,[148] then

the Islamicate design choices would on some level be reflective of the identity of the patron

(Alfonso XI) whose identity in turn would be reflected in his construction and design choices

and likewise understood by subjects and potential visitors.  As it stands, the recognition of the

*Sala de la Justicia* as any form of modern identity-based triumphalism seems to have escaped the

notice of the entirety of Alfonso's contemporaries and future visitors.  Considering both Ibn

Khaldun and Muhammad V failed to notice the inversion, and as the *Sala de la Justicia* seems to

have been more successful at inspiring other constructions, the inversion explanation doesn't feel

contextually appropriate.

   One of the difficulties in processing the distinctions related to the discussion of Triumphs and

"triumphalism" is the similarity of terms but with a significant divergence of definition.  Why the

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[147] Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology in Early Medieval Spain*, 84.
[148] Popkin, *Roman Triumph*, 18.

triumphalism explanation presented by Dodds and others is problematic is that it grants a particular interpretation of the *Sala de la Justicia* and Alfonso XI's motivation which was arguably not present. Alfonso, both in his procession into the city in 1327 CE and his subsequent triumphalism following the victory at Rio Salado are evident and in not in dispute. What will ultimately differentiate Alfonso's proposed form of triumphalism however, is its similarity to known Roman and later Iberian forms and representations of triumph that are more aptly described in terms of celebration and commemoration. The triumphalism of inversion presented by Dodds and others suggests not only an overarching intention to slight the Muslims but also one that is subject to the same problems of monolithization already discussed. Furthermore, since Alfonso XI may have been mirroring known Roman commemoration models with the various triumphal processions that would follow his victory, it is more likely that he would then follow similar inspirations and models in his commemorative constructions. Also, given the widespread familiarity of the population with what would become Mudéjar aesthetics, it is equally unlikely that a triumphalism of inversion would actually convey any the message Dodds is intending to attribute to such a move. Thus, it is far more likely that the inclusion of Mudéjar aesthetics in the *Sala* would not be seen as an inversion by anyone, but rather an expression of a style already familiar to the population from generations of exposure under the previous Muslim rulers and abundantly extant in Seville and the surrounding communities in al-Andalus.

Speaking directly to the use of Mudéjar design elements, the tradition of the Roman Triumph helps to explain the decoration of the *Sala de la Justicia*. According Spanish art historian Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, "it was common to place explanatory inscriptions on the façades and entrances of buildings, religious and civil, as had been the custom in the Roman world."[149]  Ruiz

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[149] Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages, Functions, and Spaces: The Crown of Castile and Al-Andalus." *Medieval Encounters,* 12,3; 2006, 368.

Souza suggested that Muslims and Christians alike were well familiar with this Roman tradition which had been adopted by the Ummayads and other Muslim polities in al-Andalus.[150] He also indicated that "beginning in the fourteenth century, heraldry faithfully accompanied façade inscriptions."[151] Ruiz Souza also noted that this practice was common among both Muslim and Christian rulers in the 14th century, specifically with Alfonso XI, Yusuf I, Pedro I and Muhammad V before becoming more widespread in Spain in the 15th century.[152] As he suggested, "In almost all cases, the primary goal [of the inscriptions and heraldry] was to leave evidence of their fame in the inscriptions placed on the entrances of emblematic buildings, as though they were ancient triumphal arches."[153] Though, a similar frame will be part of the discussion for Pedro's Mudéjar Palace as well as the constructions by Nasrid Muslim leaders Yusuf I and Muhammad V of Granada, this explanation would seem to contextualize Alfonso's inclusion of the Castile-León coat of arms and emblem of *La Banda* in the *Sala de la Justicia*. Rather than being evidence of triumphalism in the modern identity-based context, the inclusion of these symbols, along with the accompanying inscriptions would seem to signify a Roman-style triumphal construction more than anything else. The rationale for Alfonso's choice to construct his throne room using the Mudéjar style is not necessarily explained by the *Sala*'s connection to the Roman-style Triumph, however, and requires some further investigation.

It is clear from Ruiz Souza's observations that Alfonso XI and his contemporaries in Al-Andalus were familiar with and had some understanding of Roman Triumphs and monumental architecture along with their intended purpose and value. The oddity with the *Sala de la Justicia*

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[150] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 368.

[151] Ibid.

[152] All of Ruiz Souza's patrons are the very same ones who feature prominently either directly or indirectly in the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville, and who likewise influenced each other. It is also noteworthy that the progression of material culture and its role in Andalusi society would follow a similar progression from the 14th Century to the 15th as will be clear in Chapter 4. Ibid.

[153] Ibid.

is the presence of predominantly Mudéjar designs and the almost exclusively Islamicate model of the throne room. Even if the premise that the *Sala de la Justicia* was intended as a non-religious celebration or Triumph to honor Alfonso XI and commemorate his victory at Rio Salado is accepted, it still leaves the curious predominance of Mudéjar architecture and design as the primary decorative style of the *Sala*. As both throne room and Triumph, the *Sala de la Justicia* remains a representation and embodiment of Alfonso XI, his victory, and his reign and must be interpreted as such.

If the room's decoration suggests something akin to the Roman Triumph rather than a modern identity-based form of inversion as has been suggested, the rationale behind the design choice remains unclear. This interpretation therefore argues that Alfonso XI's design choices in the *Sala de la Justicia* were never meant to promote Christianity, the Crusades, or any religious connection, including Islam. Evidence suggests that the Mudéjar design along with any Islamicate material culture used in the *Sala de la Justicia,* in conjunction with any associated visual language were instead part of a shared culture that existed between Christians, Muslims, and Jews in al-Andalus and that this shared culture was not bound by modern categories of identity and operated independently from the political or religious affiliations of those who employed it. In this way, Alfonso was not deploying an Islamic style, nor was he conspicuously ignoring Christianity, but instead was utilizing an Andalusi style (a shared cultural and visual language) to reflect and represent his victory and majesty, both publicly and privately on display. Thus, visitors and the King alike would recognize the design as part of an Islamicate Andalusi culture, a culture that had been in place in Seville and elsewhere in al-Andalus for more than 200 years before Alfonso's victory at Rio Salado. While this theory will be examined in detail in the next chapter, some visual clues are already present in the *Sala* and point to such an idea.

While the early Castilian rulers have a history of interacting with and utilizing Islamicate culture extending back to Alfonso X *el Sabio*, The *Sala* contains some additional design aspects that further suggest this cultural connection.

*Figure 7: Sala de la Justicia*
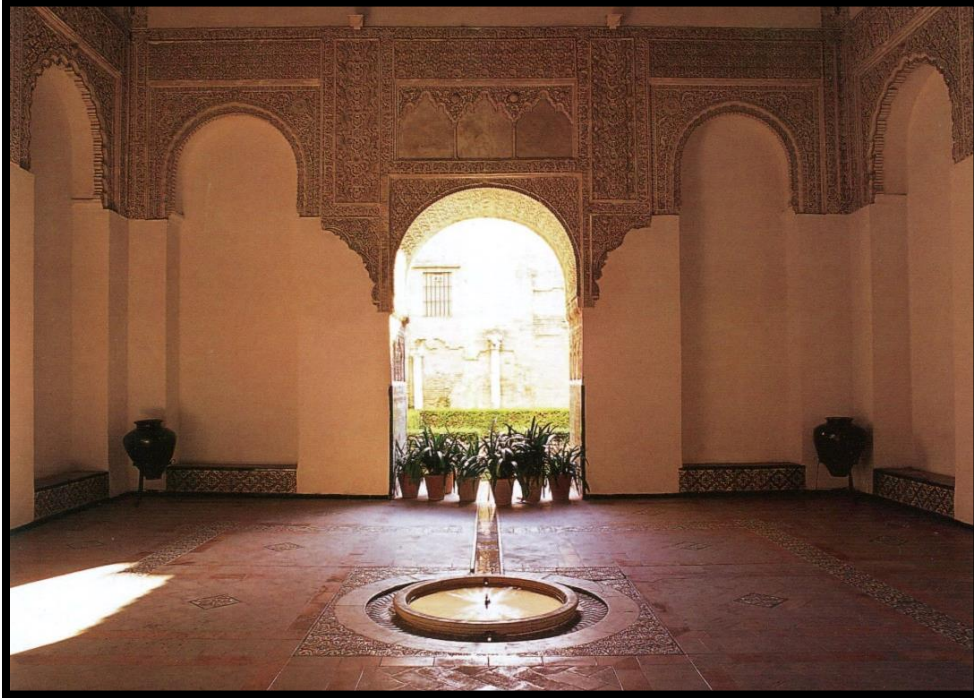


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The *Sala de la Justicia* features a prominent central fountain. While this is yet another feature common to Islamicate design, its prominent central location and connection to the adjacent room are significant features.

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[154] *Sala de la Justicia* from Guerrero, Paloma De Los, and Jose Barea. *The Real Alcázar of Seville*. (Madrid: Palacios Y Museos, 2011), 23.

*Figure 8: Central fountain and channel, Sala de la Justicia*



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*Figure 9: Framing arches, Sala de la Justicia*



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As Ruggles pointed out, "the fountain's intricate stucco with vegetal (*ataurique*) motifs (fig. 8) and the arrangement of three arches framed by bands of Arabic inscriptions (fig. 9) were clearly drawn from an Islamicate repertoire and would have been read as such by all who visited Alfonso in his throne room."[157]  The lack of mention by previous visitors like Ibn Khaldun and the inspiration provided to Muhammad V of Granada would seem to confirm Ruggles's point. The fountain feature of the *Sala de la Justicia* is even more curious in its specific connection to the adjacent *Patio del Yeso*.  How this connection is understood is critical to interpreting the Mudéjar designs in the *Sala*, especially given that the *Patio del Yeso*, at least in the period after the construction of the Mudéjar Palace by Pedro I, was the only remaining construction in the

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[155] Central Fountain Basin and Channel, *Sala de la Justicia*, Alcazar of Seville, J. F. Sullivan, own work, 5/2016.

[156] Framing Arches, *Sala de la Justicia*, Alcazar of Seville, J. F. Sullivan, own work, 5/2016.

[157] Ruggles, "Alcazar of Seville," 89.

Alcazar attributed to the Almohads. This connection, which must be intentional, could signal both a symbolic and physical connection to the previous rulers of Seville and provide crucial context for interpreting the *Sala* beyond a triumphalism of inversion or even a triumphalism of celebration and commemoration.

*Figure 10: Central fountain and basin, Sala de la Justicia*



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*Figure 11: Pool of the Patio del Yeso*



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The rivulet of the fountain and its water flow directly from the *Sala de la Justicia* into the pool of the *Patio del Yeso* (figs. 10 & 11). The water connection joins these two chambers both

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158 The central fountain of the *Sala de la Justicia* with basin and channel. Alcazar of Seville, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 5/2014.

159 The pool of the *Patio del Yeso* fed by the connecting channel from the *Sala*. Alcazar of Seville, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 5/2016

physically and figuratively.  In addition, the symbolic characteristics of water and its connections would be familiar to visitors, offering some intriguing interpretive information.

Fountains and water features are common elements in Islamic architecture, and it is not surprising that such a feature turns up in the *Sala de la Justicia*.  The implications of this design element however, does pose a new set of questions given that the *Patio del Yeso* was originally constructed by the Almohads (whom the Castilians had displaced upon conquering the city in 1248 CE).  In this case, water connects a central feature of Alfonso's throne room to a larger pool within the adjacent Almohad construction.

Traditionally, water had a host of different practical and symbolic meanings ranging from the functional (irrigation, ablution, drinking) to the symbolic.  Since the purpose of the fountain in the *Sala* and the adjacent pool in the *Patio del Yeso* are not functional for the purposes of drinking, ablution, or irrigation, the intention appears largely symbolic.  Fountains, basins, and flowing water can symbolize distinction or separation, power (control of the environment, design excellence), as well as provide aesthetic value via pleasing sounds and visual movement.  Above all, flowing water and channels can provide connections: between humans and the Divine (the source of water), inside to outside or simply room to room   The water, in this case, bubbles from the basin in the center of the *Sala de la Justicia* and flows through a channel to the *Patio del Yeso* where it empties into a large pool.  This linkage forever connects the *Sala de la Justicia* to the adjacent *Patio del Yeso* and symbolically connects its leader (Alfonso XI) with the previous Muslim rulers.  As historian of Islamic Art and Architecture Yasser Tabbaa indicated in his study of water in Islamic courtyards and gardens, fountains with channels ending in pools had become "by the twelfth century a common feature in the courtyards of medieval palaces."[160]  The

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[160] Yasser Tabbaa, "Towards an Interpretation of the Use of Water in Islamic Courtyards and Courtyard Gardens," *Journal of Garden History* 7, no. 3 (1987): 212.

fountain in the *Sala de la Justicia* may also have reflected a much larger tradition.  Tabbaa

suggested that such fountain features, especially in palaces, could be read as part of a "princely

aesthetic, a common language of forms which…designated its users as men of eminence and

taste."[161]  Tabbaa specifically cited Palermo, Sicily as an example "where numerous Islamic

forms, including the [fountain], were used by Christian dynasts."[162]  Tabbaa also offered that

borrowing such forms as "fountains or *muqarnas* domes [were little] more than the desire among

newly established dynasties to emulate the forms of the capital."[163]  Tabbaa concluded,

suggesting that "since no liturgical function was attached to the [fountain] it could therefore be

used in both secular and religious contexts."[164]  He also noted, that when such features appeared

in palaces, they were likely meant for aesthetic reasons.[165]

While Tabbaa's assessment was likely reflective of much of the motivation behind many of

the features or overall design aesthetic in the *Sala de la Justicia*, it arguably downplays any

specific intentionality on the part of the patron, in this case Alfonso XI.  While there is ample

evidence to suggest that the *Sala* was a product of a common visual language and shared culture,

it was also likely the product of several meaningful choices that potentially carried much more

profound symbolism than simply familiarity and aesthetics.   The channel connecting the *Sala

de la Justicia* with the Almohad *Patio del Yeso* is important on many levels, however an

additional architectural aspect of this connection may also be symbolic.  Tabbaa indicated that

the flow of water from a fountain through a channel and into a connecting pool was often, as is

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[161] This is likely a similar motivation to that of Alfonso XI, which is supported by orientation toward Islamic architecture noted in the *Primera Cronica General de España*. Tabbaa, "Islamic Courtyards," 217.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Tabbaa is referring to new Islamic dynasties emulating Baghdad, but given the long history of emulation in Seville to the architecture and culture in Baghdad, Damascus and *Medinat al-Zahara* outside Córdoba, such emulation could be seen as part of the aesthetic language of al-Andalus, and likely shared by the three confessional communities, as we will see. Ibid.

[164] Tabbaa, "Islamic Courtyards," 218.

[165] Ibid.

the case of the fountain in the Courtyard of the Lions at the Alhambra, fed back to the source

fountain.[166]  Symbolically, this water loop would provide a continuous flow, maintaining the

aesthetically pleasing aspects of the water, but in the specific case of the *Sala de la Justicia* and

the *Patio del Yeso*, it would continually connect and intermingle the reigns of Alfonso XI and the

Almohads, who were well represented architecturally throughout Seville.[167]  This connection

would suggest, not one of dominance or triumph, but rather connection and sharing.  Certainly it

could be seen as a ruler emulating the culture and taste of a regarded predecessor, but given the

clear connections between this style and several other architectural features in al-Andalus and

especially with those in the Alhambra, the connection appears intentional.

Art historian Jonas Lehrman argued that "water is employed as an element of continuity."[168]

He noted, "frequently, a channel of water forms a string on which tanks, fountains and platforms

are strung like beads [with] a long straight channel of water in the Islamic context possibly

symbolizing infinity."[169]  This interpretation would suggest both a figurative and literal

connection between the Almohads (or Muslims in general) and the rule of Alfonso XI and the

Castilians.  On the one hand, it could suggest a continuity between Muslim and Christian rule

with a shared reflection of excellence, grandeur, and high culture; on the other hand, it could

suggest an exchange or flow between the two cultures across time and space, feeding each other.

And, depending on the water source for the basin and fountain in the *Sala* and the pool in the

Patio, the flow might be thought to originate with God and flow through each. There is no doubt

that whatever symbolism the basin, channel, and pool held for Muslims, it would be recognizable

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[166] Tabbaa, "Islamic Courtyards," 211.

[167] Most notably the *Torre del Oro* and the Giralda, both prominent and extant Almohad constructions in Seville.

[168] Jonas Lehrman, *Earthly paradise: Garden and Courtyard in Islam*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1980), 59.

[169] Ibid.

as such by both the builders and any potential visitors to the Alcazar of Seville – including

dignitaries like Muhammad V and Ibn Khaldun.  Cynthia Robinson suggested that the

connection between the channel, fountain, and pool may have held some symbolic significance

for Jews as well, indicating the Kabbalistic imagery of pool and flowing water reflecting a

connection to the divine.[170]  Robinson and Ruiz Souza noted that similar water features occurred

both at Santa Clara de Tordesillas (archaeologically)[171] and the Alhambra, indicating the pool,

basin, channel, and their inherent connection were part of a common visual and design language,

likely recognizable to members of each confessional community.[172]  But more importantly, these

features and connections were not linked to religion and were instead part of a shared visual

language and culture.  If true, this evidence further supports the lack of commentary on the

Castilian use of Islamicate designs by contemporary visitors and would also allow the *Sala de la

Justicia* to serve as inspiration for future constructions, even among Andalusi Muslims in

Granada or the Jews in Seville, Toledo, or Córdoba without any modern identity-based conflict.

   If the *Sala de la Justicia* was not an example of a triumphalism of inversion and was instead

the representative product of a shared culture with connections across the three confessional

communities, possibly extending back to the Almohads and earlier, then a full interpretation of

the *Sala* cannot end with an understanding of the context and likely motivation behind the

construction of this one throne room, but is instead likely part of a far more expansive corpus of

material across multiple regions, periods, and polities.  As such, the *Sala* can only be properly

contextualized by placing it within the Islamicate history of the Alcazar, which is in turn part of a

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[170] Cynthia Robinson, "Mudéjar Revisited: A Prologoména to the Reconstruction of Perception, Devotion, and Experience at the Mudéjar Convent of Clarisas, Tordesillas, Spain (Fourteenth Century A.D.)," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 43 (2003), 65.

[171] This feature is not presently visible, but it was noted in archaeological analyses of the structure. See Tabales, *El Alcazar de Sevilla*.

[172] See Ruiz Souza "*El Patio del Vergel*" and Robinson, "Mudéjar Revisited," 65.

cosmopolitan shared culture in al-Andalus that provided a common visual language that came to be called Mudéjar, but which crossed political and religious boundaries because it existed separately and distinctly from such ideological confines or affiliations.  It is only by examining this shared culture as it occurred across these ideological boundaries that the Islamicate context of the Alcazar of Seville and any related material can be fully understood.

If the *Sala de la Justicia* was meant to serve as a symbolic representation of power and grandeur for its patron Alfonso XI, connected both to the previous Almohad rulers as well as a shared visual language and shared culture of al-Andalus, then it was also an important waypoint in the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville.  Moving forward, the shared culture and visual language that appears to be present in the *Sala*, also occurred across confessional communities and the region of al-Andalus in other forms of architecture and material culture.   An examination of the widespread presence of the shared visual language and culture in al-Andalus will help to contextualize the *Sala de la Justicia* as well as set the stage for the continued examination of the Alcazar of Seville and the broader Islamicate history of the region.

### 3.3    The Curious Case of Santa Clara de Tordesillas

*Figure 12: Entrance, Real Convento de Santa Clara*



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The Palace at Tordesillas (Valladolid) later converted to the *Real Convento de Santa Clara*

under Pedro I presents an interesting case that may bear on the larger interpretation of the *Sala*

*de la Justicia* and the suggestion of a shared culture operating in al-Andalus and the Castilian

controlled territory.  Based on several inscriptions that appear on or near the Palace's entrance,

the Palace at Tordesillas is typically attributed to Alfonso XI, also credited as a commemoration

for his victory at Rio Salado.[174] While the subsequent renovation by Pedro I will serve as a much

more prominent example of Islamicate shared culture and discussed in Chapter 5, the connection

between the early Palace and Alfonso XI poses some interesting possibilities.  Historian Carmen

Checa acknowledged that there is some question about the attribution of the palace to Alfonso

XI, despite the evidence presented by the stone inscriptions, suggesting that "the absence of any

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[173] Entry arch to *Real Convento de Santa Clara*, *Patrimonio Nacional*,
http://www.tordesillas.net/webs/inicio.php?cat=1&cont=3&id=623&orden=0&cat_ref=0&cont_ref=1&id_ref=11&lang=eng.
[174] Carmen Garcia-Frias Checa, *The Royal Convent of Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, Madrid, *Patrimonio National*,
2003, 7.

documented connection with [Alfonso XI] means that it is possible that these commemorative stones may have been placed here during the major alterations to the building carried out by…Pedro I, with the intention of honouring his father."[175]  While there is nothing documentary apart from the stones to corroborate an attribution to Alfonso XI, there is also nothing specifically disputing it.  Tordesillas was "part of the patrimony of Leonor de Guzman,"[176] Alfonso XI's mistress, giving it a preferential status for Alfonso, but some architectural elements resent in the Palace also suggest a connection to Alfonso, which follow a similar logic as the *Sala de la Justicia* and the preservation of and connection to the *Patio del Yeso*.

The only remaining remnant of the original palace (prior to Pedro's renovation) is the present room known as the Gilded Chapel.

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[175] Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 7.
[176] Ibid.

*Figure 13: Gilded Chapel with wall detail*



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*Figure 14: Ceiling detail, Gilded Chapel*
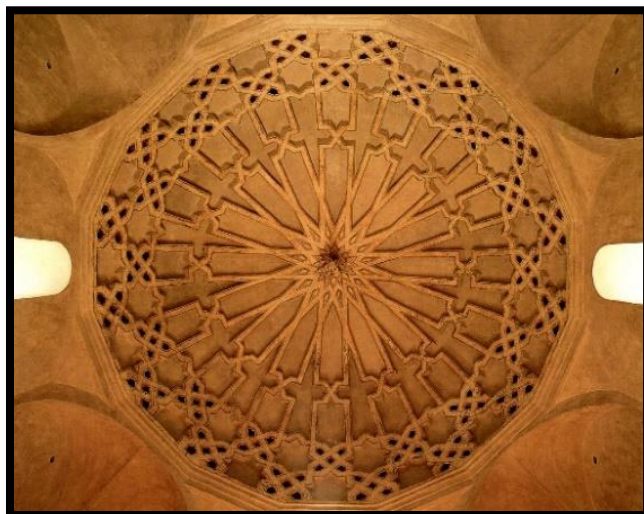


178

The original chapel is a 12th century Almohad design, which may have been directly constructed

by the Almohads or inspired by Almohad designs.[179] The chapel and its decoration were retained

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[177] *Gilded Chapel with wall detail*, *Patrimonio Nacional*,
http://www.tordesillas.net/webs/inicio.php?cat=1&cont=3&id=627&orden=0&cat_ref=0&cont_ref=1&id_ref=11&lang=eng.
[178] Ceiling detail, Gilded Chapel, Patrimonio Nacional. Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas,* 26.
[179] Like the entry stones suggesting the Palace construction for Alfonso, the Gilded Chapel's original design is indeterminate between it being an Almohad construction or Almohad-inspired. Checa notes that the design and features of the original structure also appear in two Sevillian Mudéjar chapels, Saint Pablo and Saint Marina, along with another structure in Valladolid, suggesting that either the Gilded Chapel itself or a shared Islamicate style influenced other area constructions.  Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 27-28.

even after Pedro I's renovations, and were clearly in place throughout the reign of Alfonso XI

and the tenure of Leonor de Guzman.  Like the *Patio del Yeso* and the Giralda in Seville, the

retention of the Almohad chamber may further reflect the desire for a connection between the

reigning Castilians and their Almohad predecessors.  Whether *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*

represents a construction by Alfonso remains unclear, but given its connection to Leonor de

Guzman it is likely that he spent time in Tordesillas and the palace influenced similar

constructions in the same way the *Sala de la Justicia* had also served as inspiration.  While this

dissertation will argue that both Pedro I's Mudéjar Palace constructed in the Alcazar of Seville,

and his renovation of *Santa Clara de Tordesillas* are clear examples of a shared Islamicate

culture present in al-Andalus, it will also argue that while Pedro, along with Muhammad V in

Granada and Samuel ha-Levi in Toledo are the pinnacle of Islamicate shared culture in al-

Andalus, the development and participation in this shared culture can be seen much earlier, likely

extending back to the Almohads themselves and certainly through the Castilians in the

*Reconquista* and Alfonso XI.  If the Palace at Tordesillas was indeed part of the patronage of

Alfonso XI, then the connections between this construction, the Almohads, and Islamicate shared

culture seem even that much more likely, especially given the clear connections it will later

produce as part of a larger case study during the reigns of Pedro I and Muhammad V.  Since

Islamicate shared culture and visual language is the foundation of the Islamicate history of the

Alcazar of Seville, an examination of the breadth and history of this shared culture in al-Andalus

and the Castilian territory is critical.

# 4    TOWARD A SHARED CULTURE

The historical mystery of the Islamicate designs in Alfonso XI's *Sala de la Justicia* results from a lack of clarity regarding the context and milieu in which it was commissioned and built to reside.  Understanding that context and milieu involves tracing their development to the point where the seeming contradictions and their explanations not only make sense for the throne room itself, but also for a multitude of similarly confusing and boundary-crossing constructions and creations that would surface across al-Andalus nearly from the moment the *Reconquista* began. What answers the questions and solves the mysteries related to the "paradox of Islamic art in Spain" as described earlier by Oleg Grabar, is the presence of some form of shared culture in which members of all three confessional communities, Christians, Muslims, and Jews, could participate, but also a culture that could exist separately and distinctly from any conflicting affiliations in political, religious, or social realms which might otherwise prevent such cosmopolitan cooperation.  It is this cosmopolitan cooperation in the form of shared culture that is being described as Islamicate.

The shared Islamicate culture relied upon an understanding of the city of Seville and the region of al-Andalus as a cosmopolitan realm in which members of different confessional communities cooperated and coexisted despite their differences. However, the true nature of Islamicate society must extend beyond tolerance, coexistence, or *convivencia*, and instead involve active and intentional participation in cultural aspects of society that are shared, hybrid, or "built together," such that something different is created that is not associated with any specific group, but rather represents a shared experience and dynamic in which all social members not only participate, but actively innovate and grow within.[180]  In this context, if the

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[180] Despite not being directly associated with the religion of Islam, the shared culture is still considered Islamicate with regard to its origins in the shared cultural space which developed under Muslim rule in al-Andalus, but also due

Islamicate culture of al-Andalus, and Seville in particular, is understood as being part of a shared

experience that existed from the period of Islamic rule, but which continued in varying degrees

and manifestations through the *Reconquista* and the subsequent period of Christian rule in the

region, then this Islamicate culture should be traceable.  And in fact, it is.

One of the difficulties in recognizing, let alone understanding, the concept of the shared

culture being proposed lies in a predisposition toward binary thinking and a hegemonic concept

of culture vs. one that has multiple facets that may have been operating independently or at least

separately from each other.[181]  In her contribution to Jeffrey Cohen's *The Postcolonial Middle

Ages*, Suzanne Conklin Akbari argued that the modern conceptual binary between East and West

or Occident and Orient as she classified it began to fracture or at least decay when viewed in a

medieval context.[182]  Where there did appear to be some binary polarization was between

Christians and Muslims that appeared in the form of polemic and other writings by church

figures, and some Muslim writers as well, especially during the Crusader period of 11th-14th

centuries.[183]  As discussed previously, religious distinction and religious polemic abound, but in

the face of cosmopolitanism and separation between the realms of religion, politics, and culture,

conflict and binary thinking in the religious realm does not equate with positions in the cultural

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to material appearances and aesthetics that likewise developed under Muslim rule and continued to reflect Islamic material influence, resulting in non-Muslim design styles like Mudéjar. See Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol. 1 and Ruiz Souza "Architectural Languages."

[181] This is largely referring to the idea that cultural elements and ideas may have been understood separately from social, religious, or political elements as described by Glick in *Convivencia* and Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale in *Arts of Intimacy* as well as Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

[182] Which stems from the same binary orientation that likely produced Huntington's clash of civilizations hypothesis. See Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations. Suzanne Conklin Akbari, "From Due East to True North: Orientalism and Orientation," in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 19–34.

[183] Akbari, "From Due East to True North," 20.

realm. Or as Akbari noted, "it would be a mistake to…conflate a binary overtly based on religious difference with the binary of Orient and Occident."[184]

What stems from Akbari's comment is the critical interpretive understanding of the nature of the religious and/or political differences as they existed in the context of medieval Seville or Andalusi society in general. The interpretation that is proposed in this dissertation is that realms of religion and religious commentary existed as separate and distinct from realms of culture, especially with regard to architecture and material culture. This distinction is necessary to understand and square many of the contradictory aspects of Andalusi material cultural and architectural history. As was the case with Alfonso XI's throne room, it would seem inconceivable in a binary-oriented or monolithicized system for Alfonso XI to have constructed such a room in the Mudéjar style if that style had any recognized association with Islam. This is the imperative second aspect of the separation of culture and religion; without the religious affiliation, Islamicate cultural elements, which would include anything designated as Mudéjar, could exist in a separate cognitive space where they were not understood to be religious in nature.

## 4.1 "Mudéjar" and *Mudéjarismo* (Mudéjarism)

One of the most vexing terminological challenges in this analysis is associated with the term "Mudéjar." Because "Mudéjar" appears repeatedly throughout this Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville, recognizing it in its proper context and milieu is equally vital. As discussed in the last chapter, incorporating both demographic and material cultural definitions of the term is consistently required. Much of the Islamicate history of Seville is rooted in this concept and

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[184] Where Orient and Occident in this case represent hegemonic concepts of reality and unity like those seen in binaries like the clash of civilizations. Akbari, "From Due East to True North," 20.

both of its attendant definitions, the material culture definition in particular, however the

demographic descriptor is also centrally important.  The simple fact of Muslims living under

Christian (or any non-Muslim rule) is significant.  The historian L.P. Harvey is clear to point out

that for whatever their reasons, Mudéjars living under Christian rule in Toledo, Córdoba, Seville

or elsewhere in al-Andalus in the post-conquest period, largely did so by choice.  "The essence

of Mudéjarism was that the subject Muslim *accepted* non-Muslim rule."[185]  This choice to stay

under non-Muslim rule was considered by Muslims outside al-Andalus to be extremely

inappropriate and disdainful.  Harvey cites Ibn Khaldun and "the disdain he felt for his co-

religionists when he met them in Peter the Cruel's Seville."[186]  Harvey notes that Ibn Khaldun's

comment on the Mudéjars of Seville "is rather an exception in that he mentions the Mudéjars at

all: for most Muslims authors the Mudéjars were an embarrassing anomaly, to be passed over

with tactful silence."[187]  Harvey was quick to point out however, that the Mudéjars likely did not

stay in al-Andalus due to any decline or abandonment of Islam or religiosity.  On the contrary, he

indicated that they remained highly dedicated and involved in their religion.[188]  That said,

Jocelyn Hendrickson's analysis of *fatwās* issued by jurists regarding trade or other mercantile

interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims in contested territories, is clearly prohibited by

multiple *fatwās* and precedents.[189]  From this perspective, Mudéjars in Christian al-Andalus,

regardless of their situation, would be in violation of Islamic law despite the circumstances or

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[185] In other words, these are not captives or people living in occupied territory, but rather chose to stay on after the Christian conquest for some reason or other. L. P. Harvey, "The Mudéjars," in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, vol. 1, Salma Jayyusi ed. (Leiden u.a.: Brill, 1994), 176.
[186] This is particularly interesting and poignant given that Ibn Khaldun's own ancestors had left Seville themselves following the conquest of the city by Fernando III in 1248 CE. Harvey, "The Mudéjars," 177.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Harvey, "The Mudéjars," 177–79.
[189] The contested territories Hendrickson notes through the *fatwās* are specifically post-conquest Christian Sicily and possible trade between Granada and Christian al-Andalus. Jocelyn Hendrickson, "Is Al-Andalus Different?: Continuity as Contested, Constructed, and Performed across Three Mālikī Fatwās," *Islamic Law and Society* 20, no. 4 (January 1, 2013): 371–424.

particularities, including necessity.[190] Hendrickson does concede that these *fatwas*, while

establishing a long-standing precedent were not definitive in that other jurists within the Maliki

*madhab*, which predominated in Islamic al-Andalus would typically allow such transactions

based on necessity.[191]

 Despite reactions from external jurists or general perceptions or disdain held by non-

Andalusi Muslims, the Mudéjars of al-Andalus, and especially those in Castilian territory, did

experience a different relationship with the Christian rulers than that of Muslims living in

Muslim controlled territories like Granada. Muslims living under Christian rule in Castilian

territory held a "protected tributary status (*dajn*)" or *ahl al-dajn*.[192]  Harvey noted that "there is

an obvious close resemblance between the status of the *ahl al-dajn* within Christian society and

that of the *ahl al-dhimma* [*dhimmi*], or protected peoples, Jewish and Christian, within Islam."[193]

The fact that the conquering Christians continued what seems like a version of the Islamic

*dhimmi/jizya* system is particularly telling and might suggest a rationale for why many Muslims

remained under Christian rule despite the negative reaction of other Muslims.  Harvey indicated

that "the Muslims whom Christians encountered on a daily basis were their Mudéjar neighbors:

cultivators, craftsmen, a skilled farrier perhaps, or a trusted doctor."[194]  In short, the Mudéjars

were a part of Andalusi society.  And, in consideration of the contribution and participation of

Mudéjars in the cultural and material cultural realms within Andalusi society, it may be that they

identified as both Muslims and Andalusis and their role in an Islamicate society, in which the

Christians and Jews were also participating, was their shared cultural experience. And more to

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[190] Hendrickson cites Granadan jurist al-Shatibi's fatwa on selling weapons to non-Muslims, even out of necessity
for food. Violations of Islamic law based on necessity (typically for survival) are frequently deemed allowable if
there is no other recompense. Hendrickson, "Is Al-Andalus Different?" 382–83.
[191] Hendrickson, "Is Al-Andalus Different?" 382.
[192] Harvey, "The Mudéjars," 178.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.

the point, al-Andalus was their home suggesting that it could be re-imagined as a *dar al-ta'awun* (abode of cooperation)[195] as opposed to the traditional *dar al-Islam/dar al-harb* (abode of Islam or peace/abode of war or conflict) paradigm, from the perspective of these residents.[196] Extending back to Hendrickson, it is possible that because of their Andalusi connection and being outside the *dar al-Islam* proper, Mudéjars may have seen themselves as having a different relationship to Islamic law than their coreligionists in the *dar al-Islam*, even if they continued to practice their religion in the same way.

If the challenge of assessing the social context of Mudéjars is problematic, the cultural context of Mudéjars and Mudéjar designs or material culture is even more so.  One of the most difficult impediments to assessing a design as "Mudéjar," as with many other aspects of this study, is the tendency to monolithicize that term, but also to make it exclusive.  As Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza noted previously, "the appearance of a single Muslim name among a list of artisans…is enough for a building to be definitively labelled as Mudéjar."[197]  While his is a warning about being too quick to assert a Mudéjar designation to some objects of material culture, it also indicates the tendency to understand something Mudéjar as particularly associated with Muslims rather than a manifestation of a broader Islamicate culture in al-Andalus.  The entire purpose of the shared culture hypothesis is that Mudéjar designs or other Islamicate manifestations were not limited to a particular group, and the creation and decoration of such manifestations could be patronized or realized by any combination of artisans who happened to

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[195] The Arabic term *ta'awun* (cooperation) is being used here to reflect the possibility of a shared culture from the Muslim perspective. Munīr Baʿlabakkī and Rūḥī Baʿlabakkī, *al-Mawrid dictionary: English-Arabic, Arabic-English* (Beirut: Dar el-Ilm lil-Malayēn, 2007), 216.

[196] The *dar al-Islam/dar al-harb* paradigm is often considered along the same lines as the clash of civilizations perspective, but while the translated terminology does suggest such a dichotomy, the concept in general refers to areas under Islamic rule (and by extension Islamic law) and areas which are under non-Muslim rule – which would include al-Andalus in the post-*Reconquista* period.

[197] Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages, Functions, and Spaces: The Crown of Castile and Al-Andalus," *Medieval Encounters* 12, no. 3 (2006): 361.

specialize in the requested design. As Ruiz Souza indicated, "specialization was an…important component of the construction industry throughout the Iberian Peninsula."[198] He continued, "rich documentary sources point to a hierarchization and specialization of labor in all phases of a building's conception and construction. These include planning, stone quarrying, terrain preparation, construction, revetment, ornamentation, the addition of stairs or walkways or other points of access, and even specialization according to the building materials to be employed for a particular task."[199] Thus, any suggestion that a patron of a building, room, or *objet d'art* was merely employing the convenient local artisans is likely unrealistic and contraindicated by the far more likely careful selection and choice involved in all aspects of these projects. In this way, the *Sala de la Justicia*, or any other Mudéjar or Islamicate designed structure, looks the way it does by design, not by chance or convenience. As Ruiz Souza confirmed, "the ethnic origin of the workforce cannot be a determining factor in the appearance of a finished product, since artisans of different religions worked on the same construction site."[200] Furthermore, he suggested that with regard to the Mudéjar style being the product of Muslim artisans and craftspeople, "it also appears highly unlikely that the contribution of a clearly marginal segment of the population established the aesthetic criteria for all of Iberia during the entire later Middle Ages."[201] From this perspective, it must be concluded that other motivations and interests influenced the use Mudéjar designs which appear in al-Andalus. Furthermore, it seems imperative that the term "Mudéjar" be recognized as something of a misnomer and again should be understood as

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[198] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 362, n.4.
[199] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 363.
[200] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 364.
[201] Here Ruiz Souza is referring the prolific and widespread use of "Mudéjar" designs across Al-Andalus and beyond by all three confessional communities over the course of several hundred years. Ibid.

referring to something Islamicate and not something Muslim, especially as it often refers to the cultural products created by or patronized by non-Muslims.

With regard to the idea of shared culture in Seville and al-Andalus, Ruiz Souza offered support for such a concept found in contemporary sources. "Christian literary sources always use the term *Morisco* to classify everything related to al-Andalus, as is the case with textiles, musical instruments, painted scrollwork, *muqarnas*, domes and so on. [Noting that] certain decorative elements, such as the horseshoe or polylobed arch, were commonly used in Christian buildings [even outside al-Andalus] as a result of their popularity in al-Andalus."[202] If Ruiz Souza's suggestion of Mudéjar designs being widely employed by non-Muslims is correct, and ample evidence confirms that they were, then it may precipitate a need to re-evaluate the use of the term Mudéjar and its implications. Based on multicultural participation in what appears to be an Islamicate shared culture, it may be necessary to reconsider the concept of Mudéjar, not as exclusively referring to a style of art and design or a particular group of people, but rather may indicate a reflection or manifestation of this shared culture. Thus, the appellation of "Mudéjar" may better serve as a signal for a likely manifestation of Islamicate shared culture rather than simply a definitional catchall for things that "look Islamic." In this way, noting Ruiz Souza's concern that the mere presence of a Muslim name on a list could signal something Mudéjar (referring to material culture or people), "Mudéjar" might instead be seen as a marker for some sort of Andalusi connection, either through artisans or patrons as well as other social, political, or cultural affiliations.

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[202] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 364.

### 4.2    Religion, Law, and Shared Culture in al-Andalus

The essence of cosmopolitanism reflected in this study involves cooperation in the face of conflict, where the conflict on various fronts was often defined by religious affiliation and practice. Religion, as it turns out, was indeed an interactive realm with clear lines and orientations, especially after the dictates of the Fourth Lateran Council were issued and released in 1215 CE.[203] This council, along with various contemporary papal decrees and positions, established clear theological lines between the Christians and their minority populations, the Jews and Muslims. The curious case of religion and culture in Seville and al-Andalus is that frequently these religious positions were in conflict with sociocultural positions, establishing other lines and break points which seemed to have operated differently in Spain than in other parts of Christendom. The likely mitigating factor that created the difference is that the shared culture in al-Andalus was already established under the previous period of Muslim rule and already held sway over the populations in the territories that would eventually be captured by the Castilians and other Spanish Christian kingdoms. As a result, the Castilians in particular, were inserting themselves into an environment that was already participating in a shared culture where the religious and cultural lines may have already been separated and in which the Castilians may have been predisposed to participate, especially under the rule of Alfonso X *el Sabio* who may have been most keenly instrumental in the continuation of the shared culture and the inclusion of the Castilians into it.

In the Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 CE, Saracens (Muslims) and Jews in particular, were singled out, predominantly in Canons 67-70.[204] The Fourth Lateran Council attempted to restrict or curtail certain business and commercial practices between Jews and

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[203] H. J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1937).
[204] Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils*, 289–96.

Christians; designated specifically identifiable dress for Jews and Saracens, presumably in the hope of curtailing relations between these groups and Christians, and also sought to curtail participation in public offices, especially by Jews, where they might hold positions of authority over Christians.  Muslims received little mention, likely due to their general lack of presence outside of Iberia.  While similar rules appeared in other Spanish legal documents, likely as a gesture to the Church, all evidence indicates that these dictates were not put into practice. Clearly these Church Canons were created to address an ongoing situation across Christendom, but the cooperation between Jews, Muslims, and Christians was nowhere more frequent and pronounced than in al-Andalus, which may have directly impacted their application and use in that territory.  Not only were Christians, Muslims, and Jews involved in cooperative commercial and mercantile ventures, but Jews in particular held various roles of prominence and power throughout the period of early Castilian rule in Seville and al-Andalus.[205]  Or, as Chris Lowney observed, the acceptance of this diversity was largely out of practicality where Jews and Muslims reflected a sizable portion of the population of al-Andalus.   In contrast, "England and France could better afford to pin badges on Jews, [who were] tiny minorities bearing scant impact on their overall economies."[206] As such, there were stark differences between the acceptance of Jews and Muslims within the Christian communities in Spain and the dictates of legal and ecumenical councils.[207]  As the scholar J.N. Hillgarth noted "none of these decrees was

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[205] Alfonso X, Alfonso XI and Pedro I in particular all had Jewish advisors, officials and administrators in their court.  In addition all appear to have employed Muslim workers, craftspeople and artisans for various projects – indicating that the three confessional communities were interwoven to a significant degree. See Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages" and Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*.

[206] Chris Lowney, *A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain*, 1. issued as paperback (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 201.

[207] Specifically in the legal context of the *Siete Partidas* legal code and the dictates of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 which had stark prescriptions for minority religious community members living under Christian rule, especially Jews. See Scott *et al.*, *Las Siete Partidas* and Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees*.

strictly enforced in Spain."[208]  The rationale for failing to implement church decrees in Spain was arguably a result of a shared society and shared culture.  The context of such a shared society and culture, especially if the Castilians and other polities in al-Andalus would have varying degrees of participation in it, would create certain problems or roadblocks for the implementation of laws that would impact a large segment of the population as well as numerous critical or popular industries and institutions within it.  In 1219, "Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, archbishop of Toledo and primate of Spain…had [the Church's] decrees suspended as regarded the Jews of Castile since they provided the greater part of the royal revenue."[209]  Hillgarth also indicated that "the Fourth Council's decrees were also suspended in Aragon at the request of Jaume I."[210]  Hillgarth also noted that "Royalty set the example in disregarding the decrees of Cortes and church councils."[211] And, "many Jews connected with the court received exemptions."[212] While the legal context and penalties outlined in the *Siete Partidas,* a foundational legal code promulgated by Alfonso X, did seem to reflect the Fourth Lateran Council in many ways, it is unclear what the intent of the legal code may have been since it appears not to have been enforced in any demonstrable way.  As L.P. Harvey noted, "As is well known, the *Partidas* were not a code actually in force either in Alfonso's day or later; rather they were an ideal compilation of laws Alfonso would have liked to see in existence, so the code had an exhortatory function."[213] Harvey also warned, "we must not fall into the trap of supposing that Alfonso's ideas were put into practice…[noting] some mosques continued to exist in Castilian towns in spite of the [legal] ban on them."[214]  Other political and cultural realities in place in al-Andalus at the time would

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[208] J. N. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms, 1250-1516* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 167.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms,* 169.
[212] Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms,* 168.
[213] L. P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 67.
[214] Ibid.

likely push Harvey's interpretation even further. In the early days of his reign, Alfonso X

pursued the position and title of Holy Roman Emperor. Given the clear affiliation between this

position and the Church and Bishop of Rome, the appearance of compliance with canon law

seems obvious. Thus, presenting legal codes that were similar to legal proscriptions proposed by

papal councils, even if they were never implemented, would likely serve this function. Based on

material that appears in the *cortes* and *fueros* of the time, it appears that this may have been the

case.[215] If Alfonso X's legal presentations occurred or were perceived in a manner similar to his

requests for crusader funding from the Church,[216] then it may be that the legal, religious, and

political contexts of Castilian-led al-Andalus existed in one perceived reality for the Pope and the

Church, while an entirely different reality occurred between the Castilians and their minority

populations on the ground, especially in the realm of culture and *convivencia*.

The presence of a Muslim community and its relationship to the post-conquest economy can

be seen in Brian Catlos's extensive research on the Crown of Aragon. Catlos spent considerable

time studying Christian and Muslim relations and interactions in the medieval Kingdom of

Aragon. While his observations on intercultural relations during conquest (or reconquest) and

rule during the thirteenth century and beyond do not directly translate to similar experiences

between Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Castilian-ruled al-Andalus, they nonetheless provide

some correlative support for similar interactions in that polity. Some key differences did exist

between the Crown of Aragon and Castile, at least from a cultural perspective, which specifically

included a lack of Almoravid and Almohad influenced developments. Also, the Ebro Valley,

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[215] Specifically the *Especulo* and *Fuero Real* that appear in the Cortes of Toledo (1254), which helped to form the later *Siete Partidas* compilation along with subsequent legal writing over several years were composed during the period Alfonso X sought the Imperium. S. P. Scott, Robert Ignatius Burns, and Alfonso, eds., *Las Siete Partidas*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), xxxiii–xxxv.
[216] See discussion in Chapter 3 of this document.

while clearly home to a defined and active Muslim community was nonetheless not equivalent to cultural centers and capitals in Córdoba and Seville from which Muslim and Jewish populations in the later Christian Castilian kingdom emerged. The milieu of cultural interaction in both Aragon and Castile were similar in some ways. Both polities included Christians ruling over a previously Muslim-ruled populace, while some of the cultural interactions, especially regarding material culture, were also similar. In each case, the conquering Christians and pre-existing Muslim and Jewish populations coexisted within the new Christian controlled territory, however there was not an imposition or eradication of the conquered people or culture in either case. As Catlos indicated, "the Islamic society of the region [Ebro Valley] was not destroyed by the conquest, but had re-emerged as a *mudéjar* society by the thirteenth century."[217] One of the key factors that Catlos considered is the established culture that already existed in areas captured during the *Reconquista,* which led to certain interactive realities during the period of initial conquest and rule. As he observed, despite the seeming incompatibilities that existed between the ruling Christian culture and the social-political system and that was previously controlled by the Muslims, compromise took place.[218] Catlos argued that on one hand, "the stable socio-economic situation of the Muslims encouraged certain compromises on the part of the conquerors."[219] On the other, he suggested that the now subject Muslim population, which comprised the Mudéjar population, "may have enjoyed an early advantage due to the Christians' relative underdevelopment."[220] In this context, while clearly under Christian domination and

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[217] Brian A. Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished: Christians and Muslims of Catalonia and Aragon, 1050-1300*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 390.

[218] Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished*, 390–91.

[219] Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished*, 391.

[220] The Aragonian conquest of the Ebro valley, like the Castilian conquest of Toledo both occurred in their early histories after their development in the early 11th century. In both cases, these recently autonomous kingdoms were relatively new and still removed from the cooperative period that would lead to the combined military victory at *Las Navas de Toloso* in the 13th century. Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished*, 391.

rule, the Mudéjar community not only survived but thrived.  As Catlos described it, "The process

of social, cultural, and institutional (in effect, ethnic) evolution from which the *mudéjar* society

of the thirteenth-century Ebro emerged was stable and self-perpetuating: stable because of

reposturing and negotiation between the victors and the vanquished was ongoing and did not

provoke extra-institutional reactions (rebellions or pogroms), and self-perpetuating because the

social and administrative institutions were self-reinforcing and able to 'mold the behaviour of

[their] members.'"[221]  Catlos concluded, "Mudéjar institutions ranged from adopted or imposed

Christian structures, through hybrids, to surviving Islamic ones.  Maintaining their own culture

and identity, Ebro *mudéjares* can be described as a distinct ethnic group."[222]  Gestures toward

ethnicity in this medieval context may be more reflective of distinctiveness vs. the identity-

centered ethnicity of the modern understanding.  As Catlos indicated, the distinctiveness between

the Ebro *mudéjares* and the dominant Christian society was predominantly along religious lines,

but did not create "absolutely insurmountable barriers to mutually profitable interaction."[223]

Thus, in the context of the Ebro Mudéjar community under Aragonian rule, the interaction

between the conquering Christians and the established Islamicate population resulted in a

cooperative culture that on some level was co-built or shared.  As a result, Catlos' argument for

Mudéjar ethnicity even further complicates that term by adding a third possible categorical

definition alongside the social/demographic and material cultural options. While Catlos' primary

interest is in economic and administrative interactions and does not focus on the cultural

interactions or sharing very much, it is still suggestive of a cooperative endeavor.  Catlos

discussed multi-lingual administration and documentation that occurred within the society along

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[221] Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished*, 405.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished*, 406.

with active roles for Jews as royal scribes and Muslims as notaries, roles that were both previously held under the former Islamic rule.[224] With institutions and practices flowing from Christian, Jewish, and Muslim sources and the hybrid systems that likely developed from these interactions, it is clear that a shared economic and administrative culture existed in the diverse and plural regions of Aragon in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

Catlos also identified another point of comparison between the realities of multicultural Aragon and neighboring Castile, namely the dictates of the Fourth Lateran Council. In the Crown of Aragon, the "sumptuary or vestimentary laws for minorities…do not seem to have been brought into practice with any degree of uniformity in the thirteenth century."[225] Catlos indicated that on the occasions where any gestures to the canons of Lateran IV were present, they were most likely directed at Jews, but even in these cases the concerns were largely documentary, i.e. appearing in pronouncements or ordinances, but likely with little enforcement.[226] As Catlos noted, "there are no records of violations of such laws in the thirteenth century."[227] He also indicated that it is not until the late 14th century that complaints about enforcement began to arise.[228]

The reality of the multicultural and pluralistic populations and societies that existed in areas of Aragon and Castile which led to the general abandonment of dictates like Lateran IV, the cosmopolitan nature of these societies also challenged marital relations, which in turn likely influenced cross-cultural adoptions along with the development of hybrid cultural practices including the broader Islamicate shared culture proposed for Seville and the Alcazar. Given the

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[224] Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished*, 239–47.
[225] Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished*, 300.
[226] Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished*, 301.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Catlos noted complaints by Mudéjars in Tortosa in the 1380s. This time frame also coincides with similar social changes in interfaith relations that occurred across Iberia in the Trastamaran period (post-1369 CE) in Castile along with the incidents detailed in David Niremberg's *Communities of Violence*. Ibid.

demographics, residents of cosmopolitan centers in al-Andalus were the most likely to become

involved in interfaith relationships. These "relations" between Christians, Muslims, and Jews, as

with the evolving shared culture, had been ongoing since the early Muslim conquest period.

According to the Qur'an and Shari'a law, Muslim men may marry virtuous Muslim women and

virtuous women from the *ahl al-kitab* (People of the Book – Muslims, Christians, and Jews).[229]

As a result, children of Muslim fathers and Christian or Jewish mothers would have been fairly

common and acceptable during the period of Islamic rule in Spain. Thus, generations of

interfaith children being raised in interfaith environments and an interfaith culture carried on for

several hundred years prior to the Christian reconquest. In her article "Mothers of a Hybrid

Dynasty," D. Fairchild Ruggles argued that acculturation among Muslims in al-Andalus was the

product of the multi-ethnic mothers of the children of the Umayyads who were themselves of

multiple confessional origins and ethnicities – Berbers, Basques, Hispano-Romans etc.[230] As a

result, "the presence of women whose ethnic difference introduced alternative cultural habits,

[which] manifested in religion, speech, music, dress, and a wide spectrum of social

behaviors."[231] The resultant culture produced by these hybrid families, as Ruggles suggested,

was "neither Muslim nor Christian, Arab nor Basque, male nor female."[232] Due to its hybrid

origins and development, such a culture existed alongside the religious, ethnic, familial, social,

or political affiliations of the family members, even if there would be potential conflicts between

them otherwise. If such a hybrid culture was developing and operating under Umayyad rule in

al-Andalus, then it had multiple generations to germinate throughout the Muslims' tenure in the

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[229] *Sura al-Mai'dah*, Qur'an 5:5.
[230] D. Fairchild Ruggles, "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty: Race, Geneology, and Acculturation in Al-Andalus," *Journal of Medeival and Early Modern Studies* 34, no. 1 (2004): 65–94.
[231] Ruggles, "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty," 66.
[232] Ruggles, "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty," 87–88.

region.  As such, any likely acculturation would involve this hybrid culture to the extent that it would be well established and in place long before Las Navas de Toloso and the *Reconquista* brought dynamic change to the peninsula.  As Ruggles noted, "just as goods and practices arrived in Al-Andalus from elsewhere, Andalusian art and cultural practices also went northward."[233]  As a result, Andalusi influences, especially in the cultural realm, preceded the Christian conquests in the South and likely produced early appreciation for this hybrid culture, now being described as Islamicate (developed cooperatively, but not necessarily religiously).  Thus, when the Christians captured Toledo from the Muslims in 1085 CE, they were already familiar with and likely peripherally participating in or engaging with the hybrid Islamicate culture they found there.

As Brian Catlos argued, it was the fact of Christian conquest and dominance over a Muslim population that gave rise to *mudejarismo*.  At the same time, the change from dominance during Islamic rule to subordination under Christian rule suggests that whatever cultural elements were present for the Muslim community while in control, likely continued, albeit in an altered form under subjugation.  It is also likely the case that the same pre-existing socio-cultural milieu that gave rise to the Mudéjars was also a component of Jewish culture, as well as Mozarabs and other Christians living under Islamic rule.  In this way, it is imperative to examine Mudéjar culture as an Islamicate culture and not simply as an ethnicity *per se* or a descriptor of Muslims living under Christian rule.  If it is the case that the shared culture, which this study argues was instrumental in the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville, began to develop from the beginning of the *Reconquista* and the control of previously held Muslim territory and formerly

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[233] By "northward," Ruggles is referring to Asturias and other northern regions that were not conquered by Muslims. Ruggles, "Mothers of a Hybrid Dynasty," 86.

Muslim dominated populations in al-Andalus, then some evidence of this should appear in one of the first major Castilian conquests, the city of Toledo in 1085 CE.

### 4.3    Toledo and the Beginning of Shared Islamicate Culture

In May of 1085 CE, after an extended siege and blockade, Emir Yahya al-Qadir surrendered the city and *ta'ifa* of Toledo to Alfonso VI of Castile, ending a more than 350-year period of Islamic rule.  The capture of Toledo, while not the first Christian success against the Muslims in Iberia, was the first major city that was captured and held.  While the military advantages and optics of such a victory would play a major role in the ongoing *Reconquista*, the capture of Toledo also marks the first instance where the Christians found themselves in command of a diverse and pluralistic population which had lived under Muslim rule for an extended period of time.  The population of Toledo, which included Muslims, Mozarabs, and Jews along with the incoming Castilians and the new influx of outside settlers and visitors, represented a new sociocultural dynamic for the conquering Christians and one that would ultimately establish an early interactive matrix between the Christian rulers and their multicultural subject populations, which in turn would define Islamicate culture in the centuries to come.

In the period of Islamic rule in Toledo, which fell to the Muslims during Tariq ibn Ziyad's initial conquest of Visigothic Iberia in the early years of the 8th century, the new Muslim rulers would eventually establish the *dhimmi/jizya* construct for the non-Muslims in Toledo, namely the Mozarab and Jewish populations.  After the Christian conquest, Alfonso VI implemented a similar system.  "The Muslims who remained in [Toledo] were granted the right to worship freely and to retain possession of the chief mosque."[234]  O'Callaghan indicated that Alfonso's

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[234] Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 1st pr, Cornell Paperbacks (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Pr, 1983), 206.

Queen, Costanza, and the newly installed archbishop of Toledo, Bernard de Sauvetot, both of whom were French Catholics, seized the Mosque and consecrated it as a cathedral. In turn, Alfonso VI who had been out of the city at the time, was outraged at the breaking of his promise to the resident Muslim population.[235] Olivia Constable suggested that this story and Alfonso's outrage were probably fictional, given that it would be unlikely that the Queen and Archbishop could have accomplished this without the knowledge of the King and especially given that the consecration of the central Mosque as a cathedral became a regular practice in subsequent conquests of Muslim territory.[236] O'Callaghan proffered that it was the local Muslim population itself that convinced Alfonso not to take action against the Queen and Archbishop for their transgression, lest the Muslims suffer consequences in the future.[237] Either way, the interaction between the resident Muslim population and the ruling Christians over the mosque would be only one of many such architectural interactions in the new mutli-confessional community in Toledo which would play a highly influential role not only in the future of Islamicate/Mudéjar culture and design, but also likely influenced Alfonso VI's descendent, Alfonso X *el Sabio*, who would himself play a key role in the ongoing Islamicate history of the region.

Regardless of the relative veracity of the Toledo mosque controversy, that architectural interaction between the ruling Christians and these buildings was largely one of conversion. In most cases, the "new" cathedral was not constructed on top of the mosque, rather the mosque was simply repurposed and consecrated for Christianity. The repurposing of former Muslim-built structures would become the standard for the *Reconquista* as conversion without reconstruction (but possibly addition) occurred in both Córdoba and Seville. For example, while

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[235] O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 206.
[236] Olivia Remie Constable and Damian Zurro, eds., *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 134.
[237] O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain*, 206.

the great mosque in Seville was eventually replaced by the newly constructed Cathedral of Seville, except for the Giralda and some other features like the *Puerta del Lagarto* (Lizard Door), the commissioning of that project did not occur until the early 15th century, a generation after the death of Pedro I and the beginning of the Trastamaran dynasty.[238]  For the entirety of the period encompassing the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville, the Cathedral, including the former minaret, was a repurposed mosque.

As the examination of the *Sala de la Justicia* made clear, it is one thing to repurpose a structure, it is another thing entirely to construct something new.  New constructions (including new additions) are significant because they are typically commissioned and patronized by clients who request or suggest particular features, materials, or designs. Thus, any new constructions or additions that took place in post-*Reconquista* Toledo, especially those involving the Christians, would be significant.

## 4.4    Cristo de la Luz

One of the many Toledo precedents for the Islamicate architecture seen in the Alcazar of Seville was the basilican church of Santa Cruz. The basilican church of Santa Cruz or *Mezquita Cristo de la Luz* in Toledo, Spain was formerly known as the *Bab al-Mardum* Mosque due to its proximity to the *Bab al-Mardum* Gate (fig. 15).

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[238] See Luis Martínez Montiel and Alfredo José Morales, *The Cathedral of Seville* (London: Scala Publishers in association with Aldeasa S.A, 1999).

*Figure 15: Bab al-Mardum*



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*Figure 16: Exterior, Cristo de la Luz*



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[239] *Bab al-Mardum,* Toledo, Spain. J. F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[240] Left side detail of *Cristo de la Luz,* Toledo, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 17: Front face, Cristo de la Luz*
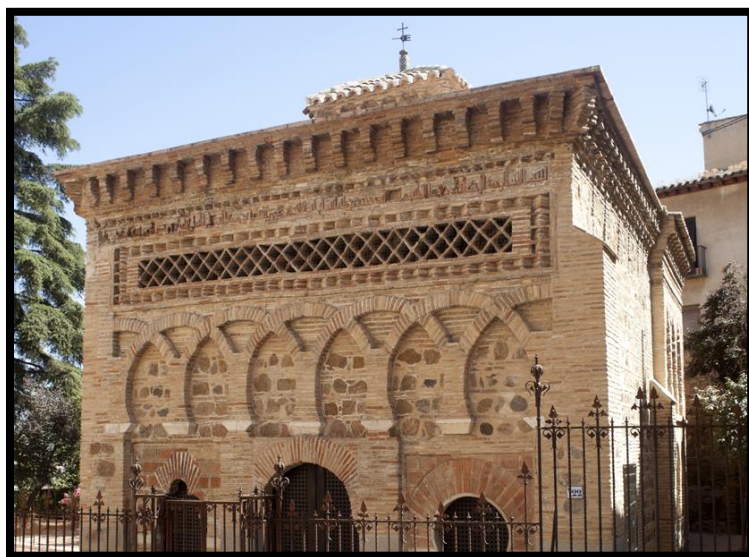


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Jerrilynn Dodds noted, "Although religious difference was often galvanized by political difference in the Middle Ages, religious ideology did not control all aspects of cultural interaction, attitude and production in Spain."[242] As such, *Cristo de la Luz* represents one of the first examples of Islamicate architecture that was commissioned by Christians in al-Andalus. This Islamicate style would go on to be part of the corpus of architecture and material culture commonly referred to as Mudéjar. What is intriguing about *Cristo de la Luz* is that it resides in Toledo, which, in 1085 CE, was one of the first Muslim cities to fall to the Christians during the *Reconquista*.[243] The original mosque is believed to have been constructed c. 999 CE in what was then Muslim-controlled Toledo.[244] About one hundred years after the conquest, the *Bab al-Mardum* mosque was put under the control of Knights Hospitaller[245] and dedicated to Santa Cruz

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[241] Front face of *Cristo de la Luz,* Toledo, Spain. PMR Maeyaert, own work, creative commons 3.0 license.

[242] Jerrilynn Dodds, "Islam Christianity and the Problem of Religious Art." *The Art of Medieval Spain a.d. 500-1200* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993), 27.

[243] David Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," *Gesta* 38, no. 2 (1999): 128, https://doi.org/10.2307/767185.

[244] Originally under the control of the Umayyads of al-Andalus, the city fell to the Christians during the *ta'ifa* period and more than 150 years before the capture of Seville in 1248 CE. Ibid.

[245] The Knights Hospitaller or Order of Knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem were a Catholic military order active during the Crusades, based initially in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, but relocated largely to Malta after

in 1186 CE.[246]  Subsequent to this dedication, a semicircular apse was added to the building and

decorated with frescos.

*Figure 18: Interior Apse, Cristo de la Luz*



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*Figure 19: Fresco detail, Cristo de la Luz*



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the loss of the Kingdom in 1187 CE. See O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade* and Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades: The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York: Harper Collins, 2011).

[246] Raizman, David Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 128.

[247] Detail of semicircular apse featuring matching brick and stone work, *Mezquita del Cristo de la Luz*, Toledo, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

[248] Fresco detail of semicircular apse, *Mezquita del Cristo de la Luz*, Toledo, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

The addition was constructed following the design aesthetic of the original mosque and became an early example of Islamicate architecture constructed during the period of Christian rule. Apart from the art historical origins that *Cristo de la Luz* may represent in terms of Mudéjar architecture, the Islamicate designs stand out for another reason. This addition, with the new Islamicate designs, was installed in a converted Christian church following the Christian capture of the city and under the watch of an order of crusader knights with the blessing of Archbishop González Pérez.[249] What's more, the remainder of al-Andalus was still under the control of the Muslims, including the city of Córdoba, the great mosque of which was the inspiration for aspects of the original *Bab al-Mardum* mosque. Also still under Islamic rule was Seville, where the Almohads had recently completed the Giralda, originally the minaret of the Great Mosque of Seville, which would go on to inspire several other Mudéjar constructions in the future.

David Raizman indicated that the existing *Bab al-Mardum* mosque and the newly constructed apse were intended to provide a seamless experience for the viewer despite being "separated by more than two centuries, [which] are unified by construction materials, [and] by the decorative vocabulary of the architecture."[250] He also observed that several new constructions in post-conquest Toledo mirrored the shared visual language found in *Cristo de la Luz*, which he noted "reveal a similar mingling and integration of Islamic and Christian artistic traditions."[251] Raizman was careful to point out that the newly constructed Islamicate material in other constructions in Toledo "is not based upon the copying of any particular precedent, but upon extrapolation from the decorative vocabulary seen at *Bab al-Mardum* [mosque]." In

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[249] Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 128.
[250] Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 133.
[251] Ibid.

essence, the Islamicate Mudéjar design aesthetic had to have been understood in such a way that it was a living style that could be molded and adapted to various constructions. In addition, it must also have been a part of a shared visual language that was acceptable and employed by members of all three confessional communities to the extent that it represented a characteristic Andalusi style and culture.[252]

"The basilican church of Santa Cruz shows visual continuity with Islamic urban architecture from before 1085. Conspicuous in Toledo is the persistence of the local traditions of brick building established in the time of the caliphate, and the ease with which they adapted to the liturgical requirements of a large and diverse Christian population."[253]  Raizman also noted that "in Toledo…[the use of] brick marked a continuity with the existing Islamic architecture seen not only in the *Bab al-Mardum* mosque, but also in such civil and military structures as towers, gates, walls, and baths."[254]  In Santa Cruz, as well as in these other iterations mentioned above, the employment of previously Islamic materials and design aesthetics in not only civil, but religious architecture by Christians seems to substantiate the idea that however Islamicate or Mudéjar designs were considered by the patrons, builders, or intended consumers, they were likely not understood in terms of religion.  Further, the affiliation with Islamicate material by the Christians seems to likewise confirm the medieval understanding of identity, especially if the Islamicate designs were more seen as representative of culture.  As Raizman noted, "new structures created an apparently seamless visual transition in the city, despite dramatic changes in

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[252] The situation that Raizman describes for Toledo is similar to that of Seville as reported in the *Primera Cronica de España* for stylistic appreciation of Almohad architecture and construction, which would likewise be reflected in new constructions by that city's residents following the conquest. Raizman, 133 and Ramon Menendez Pidal, *Primera Cronica General de Espana*, vol. 2 (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1955), *Capitulo* 1128, pp. 768-769; Pidal, *Primera Cronica General de España*.
[253] Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 129.
[254] Ibid.

the demography as well as in religious and political hierarchies after 1086."[255]  Raizmen pointed

out that these were new constructions, much in the same way that the Alcazar of Seville's *Sala*

*de la Justicia* and Mudéjar Palace, the *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* and Santa Clara de Tordesillas

were all new constructions completed by Christians or Jews in the Islamicate Mudéjar style.

Raizman also suggested that "[*Cristo de la Luz*] and other post-conquest Christian buildings

presented an architectural aesthetic characterized by the integration or modification of materials

and techniques of Islamic art in the construction of churches and basilican plans.  This unique

and hybrid architecture…and the incorporation or integration of Islamic forms could be seen as

the visible counterpart to the image of a cosmopolitan Christian capital."[256]  Raizman's

understanding of Islamicate architecture in post-conquest Toledo is in line with similar

experiences seen in later post-*Reconquista* cities in al-Andalus.  Two ideas emerge from

Raizman's exploration: first the clear presence and wide participation in an emerging Islamicate

visual culture in a Christian, post-conquest context, and second, the idea of a cosmopolitan

capital or the relationship between the Islamic culture and the identity of the ruler and their

subjects.  Or more directly, that the idea for a cosmopolitan capital had to come from somewhere

and it increasingly appears to have come from the appreciation and interpretation of Islamic

courtly culture and aesthetics that can be seen across Spain and Europe.  Also, while culturally

the *Reconquista* Christians and their subjects appear to have been participating in the shared

Islamicate culture with regard to material and design, language usage and legal codes, which

may have been more reflective of religious affiliation, the Christians may have been operating

along different lines.  It is likely that language usage, especially among Christians and Mozarabs,

may have been more keenly tied to religious identity than any cultural affiliations.  As such,

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[255] Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 129.
[256] Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 138.

distinctions between language, religion, and culture would further suggest a cognitive differentiation between these spheres. While languages such as Arabic, Latin, or Hebrew may have been more linked to religion, given the association of those languages with their respective sacred texts, there may have been a shared language of culture that served all three confessional communities in a way that could be collectively communicated and understood. That said, *Cristo de la Luz*, like many Mudéjar constructions that would follow, also employed some Arabic inscriptions that further complicate its interpretation. A painted inscription in Arabic (below) was included on the apsidal arch, which reads "Allah. There is no god but he, the eternal, the self-subsistent."[257]

*Figure 20: Arabic inscription, Cristo de la Luz*



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[257] From the Qur'an, *Sura al-Baqara*, 255. Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 130.

[258] Segment of Arabic inscription on the apsical arch, *Mezquita del Cristo de la Luz*, Toledo, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 21: Exterior detail, Cristo de la Luz*
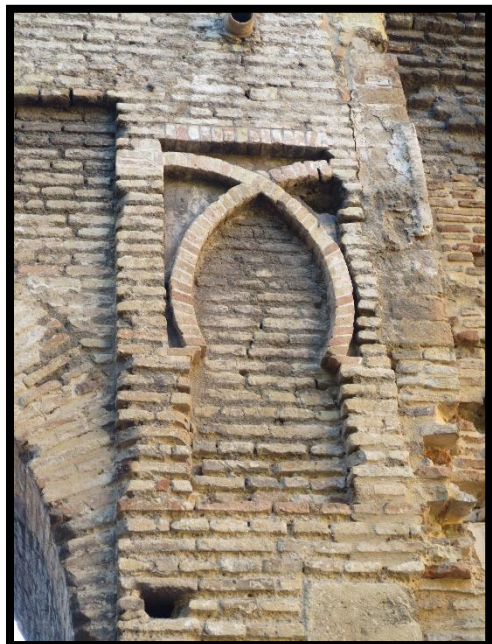


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The inclusion of the Arabic inscription troubled Raizman, who pondered if it was included as a form of triumphalism similar to what Jerrilynn Dodds would suggest or if it was "intended as an effort to convert Muslims."[260]  Counter to these suggestions, it is more likely that the inscription followed a pattern that would occur in numerous Mudéjar constructions serving as part of a shared Islamicate visual language and culture.  In addition to inscriptions, many other design features would be seen in al-Andalus that were prominent in Toledo, including brickwork as well as design features like the interlocking arch decoration (fig. 21) seen here at the Alcazar of Seville, but featured prominently on buildings in Seville.

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[259] Exterior wall decoration from the Alcazar of Seville featuring the same interlocking arch feature as seen on both the *Bab al-Mardum* gate and mosque (aka *Cristo de la Luz*), Seville Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.
[260] Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 139, n.12.

**4.5    Shared Visual Language and Shared Culture**

Mudéjar design and decoration is often described as being part of a shared visual language. As with the *Sala de la Justicia* in the Alcazar of Seville, the idea or presence of any form of visual language in design or architecture, must communicate something and must be received by someone who is presumably able to understand or comprehend the message that the language is communicating.  In the case that such a visual language is shared, especially when it is shared across political and religious lines, the presumption is that the language is such that it "speaks" to the recipients outside of those contexts.  Cultural products like architecture and other material, while reflective of the milieu at the time of their construction, historically tend to include models and influences from earlier periods or groups, which are presumed to be part of a visual language that would be understood by multiple individuals and communities.  Much in the same way that Alfonso XI seems to have incorporated concepts and ideas from both the Romans and the previously ruling Muslims in the construction of his throne room, the patrons and "communicators" of post-conquest Toledo may have conceptually done the same.

Since visual language is used to communicate, what exactly is being communicated? Traditionally, language can confer information, tell stories and histories, and inspire thoughts and feelings and a host of other ideas.  Mudéjar designs and decoration, along with any attendant communication, ultimately developed within the cosmopolitan matrix of al-Andalus across three confessional communities and two religiously-affiliated polities over time, or more if the previous Visigothic and Roman sociocultural complexes are also considered.  Thus, the visual communication associated with material culture, despite patronage by various religious groups, social groups, or political entities, involves a language that could be understood by residents and visitors to 12th century Toledo, 13th and 14th century Seville and 13th and 14th century Granada.

Up to this point there have been multiple clues for what this shared visual language was communicating and the message was largely one of grandeur, power, success, and high culture. The shared visual language arguably began communicating on a wide scale during the period of Almohad rule in al-Andalus (12th Century CE), but likely drew on numerous influences extending back to the early Muslim conquest period.[261] While Christians had been in control of formerly Muslim-controlled Toledo for roughly a century before the first noteworthy examples of Islamicate designs which would be come to be described as Mudéjar emerged,[262] the Mudéjar designs, specifically those created by Muslims and non-Muslims, seem to have been most prominent in the late 12th century, which is concurrent with new Almohad constructions in Seville. These new constructions followed the conquest of the Almoravids in Spain by the Almohads who in turn relocated their Andalusi capitol from Córdoba, which had also been the capitol under the Umayyads until the 10th century, to Seville.

It is likely that residents of al-Andalus began interacting with Islamic culture on some level almost immediately after the initial conquests on the peninsula in the eighth century. It was not only the conquering Christians in Toledo and other places that reflected Islamicate culture in their designs and building projects. These constructions were largely the result of the culture that was already present there. Regarding the Mozarabs of Toledo, those remnants of Christians from the Visigoths and Hispano-Romans who lived under Muslim rule from the 8th century conquest and subsequent Umayyad and later *ta'ifa* leadership, Margarita López-Gómez argued that "one cannot posit a generally homogeneous character for the community [of Arabized Christians]known as Mozarabs. Although they preserved their Hispano-Gothic roots on the

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[261] The 10th century palace *Medinat al-Zahra*, for example, seems to have been one prominent source of inspiration for Muslim artisans that continued to influence Mudéjar, Jewish, and Christian artisans going forward. See Dodds, Mencocal and Balabale, *Arts of Initmacy*.

[262] See Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo."

ritual and institutional level, the circumstances under which they lived differed, and [involved] distinct social and even cultural traditions."[263] López-Gómez discussed the Mozarabic use of "Islamic" design and architectural elements in buildings, manuscripts and material culture,[264] and suggested that the "syncretism" present was the result of Mozarabs being part of a "frontier culture" which she also compares to later Mudéjar culture.[265] The concept of "frontier culture" would involve any circumstance where participants were in a mixed cultural milieu that was also further away from the prominent cultural centers of the participants, resulting in a blending or cosmopolitan amalgam likely due to the diversity and pluralism of the participants combined with the lack of a regulating authority to require adherence to any particular meta culture.[266] The point at which Islamicate culture moved from being a foreign culture associated with a foreign power and religion to something shared is a bit harder to pinpoint. At some point, likely in a slow organic process over an extended period of time, the foreign Islamic culture, which included art and design, influenced and to some extent melded with other aspects of local culture to become something Islamicate that became a shared cultural experience for all residents regardless of their religious, social or political affiliations.

Jerrilynn Dodds alluded to what might have been the conceptual inspiration behind the Mudéjar constructions in the Alcazar in a discussion about the Visigoths and their early tenure in Spain. "When the Visigoths began their rule of a large Hispano-Roman population on the Iberian Peninsula, these new minority [architectural] patrons reached far afield for grandiose symbols of sovereignty and religion."[267] What this conceptual idea suggests is that a ruler and patron might

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[263] Margarita Lopez-Gomez, "The Mozarabs: Worthy Bearers of Islamic Culture," in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, vol. 1, Salma Jayyusi ed. (Leiden u.a.: Brill, 1994), 173.
[264] Lopez-Gomez, "The Mozarabs," 171–73.
[265] Lopez-Gomez, "The Mozarabs," 173.
[266] See also Oleg Grabar, "Two Paradoxes," 583–91.
[267] Dodds, *Art of Islamic Spain*, 28.

select a design style that they felt reflected the idea of sovereignty and religion, even if that

representation was drawn from another source.  As Raizman pointed out, per Archbishop

Jimenez de Rada in the *Historia de rebus Hispanie*, Alfonso VI "occupied the residence of the

city's [*tai'fal*] ruler, [which included] a palace and garden celebrated in Muslim sources for their

luxury and magnificence."[268]  This orientation is important in that it establishes an orientation

toward the grandeur and authority associated with the formerly Islamic architecture and culture.

Raizman confirms this orientation having suggested, "the splendor of [Toledo's] Muslim palaces

and their courts was a fitting projection of royal authority, and this made their appropriation

seem both practical and politically advantageous."[269] Seemingly confirming the association of

Islamic culture and society with high culture and grandeur Raizman noted, "the occupation of

existing architecture resembles the display of Reconquest booty or *spolia*, visible expressions of

the power and wealth of victorious rulers which confer upon their new possessors princely

status."[270]  The architectural interactions and associations in Toledo likely foreshadowed similar

associations and constructions in Seville and al-Andalus as Raizman also noted, "It is not

surprising that later Castilian kings and nobles continued to model their residences on Muslim

palaces, for example at Tordesillas and in Seville."[271]  It stands to reason that over time the

commingling or *convivencia* of styles and visual language would not only be understood by the

populace collectively, but may also have been transformed and personalized in a way that

created a new visual language from the combination.  As Dodds pointed out, "When speaking

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[268] Raizman, "The Church of Santa Cruz and the Beginnings of Mudéjar Architecture in Toledo," 138.

[269] While Raizman's use of "appropriation" bears the same triumphalist orientation as that which Dodds suggested, it also alludes to a similar orientation described in the *Primera Cronica General de España* which reflected Fernando III's occupation of Seville and the Alcazar. Ibid.

[270] While the distinction between *spolia*, repurposed architecture, and new constructions will be problematized in the next section, the association with previous polity's status and majesty seems clear. Ibid.

[271] While there is some monolithization present in this characterization, it helps to establish the constructions in Seville as a continuation of a practice which arguably began in Toledo. Ibid.

about cultural interaction, there is always a coexistence of an official cultural attitude and the kind of contact that grows from more habitual social interaction."[272]  It is this form of shared culture that likely developed in al-Andalus.

The Islamicate Mudéjar culture, and whatever shared Andalusi culture was imagined to be, was ultimately not a product of the Christian conquest of Muslim lands, but rather that which developed under prior Islamic rule on the peninsula and then continued in a different form under the Christians.  For example, the *Bab al-Mardum* gate and accompanying mosque were constructed by the Umayyads during their tenure in Toledo and reflected some of the early cultural cooperation between conqueror and conquered.  Of this early cultural interaction Dodds argued, "[The Umayyad's] reuse [of ] native [Andalusi] traditions and indigenous architectural morphemes carried no other meaning than necessity and the Muslims' desire to be integrated into the life and culture of the rich frontier peninsula they had appropriated."[273]  In this case the pre-existing culture was that of the Visigoths which was itself a conglomeration of Gothic, Roman, Greek, Carthaginian, and indigenous Iberian cultures.

The interaction between the Muslims and their subordinate populations created an environment where the shared intellectual, cultural and religious spaces were occupied by members of differing backgrounds, religions, ethnicities, cultures, and politics but needed to mitigate these differences in order to build a successful society.  It is the same scenario in which the Christians found themselves after taking Toledo in 1085.  For the Umayyads, they eventually implemented the *dhimmi/jizya* system allowing for some form religious coexistence. This tenuous coexistence also afforded other realms of cultural cooperation, however contentious, still enabled a degree of cosmopolitanism.  As Dodds pointed out, "it is important to remember that

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[272] Dodds, *Art of Islamic Spain*, 28.
[273] Ibid.

while Christians were voicing antagonism toward Muslims [during the Umayyad period in Spain] as representatives of an opposing political power, they could still admire and feel comfortable with the material and literary culture of al-Andalus."[274] Dodds is essentially calling for a separate consideration of the cultural sphere from the conflictual religious and political spheres. Thus, the sphere of cultural cosmopolitanism was operating independently from the religious or political spheres, which themselves led to years of polemical bickering, all while a shared culture was emerging.

The nascent shared culture likely flourished by incorporating themes and concepts that were already familiar in some form and spoke to the members of the community regardless of their other affiliations. It is important to recognize, however, that such a shared culture could not develop if the cultural products were considered exclusively representative of one particular group. One example of this shared material culture involves decorative boxes, which in turn also serves to establish a perception about Islamic and later Islamicate/Mudéjar material culture that helps to explain many of the seeming contradictions and strange relationships between Christian rulers and Mudéjar art. Jerrilynn Dodds indicates that "the Umayyads of al-Andalus used precious boxes of ivory and silver to create an image of themselves as a refined and prosperous elite."[275] While the intent might have been for the public representation of power and wealth for the Muslim elite, these *objet d'art* found their way into northern church treasuries and in the Christian Spanish courtly culture as highly prized gifts.[276] As she stated, "while church chronicles posited a deep alienation between Christian and Muslim populations, church treasuries reveal admiration for and understanding of Islamic artistic culture."[277] "Admiration"

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[274] Dodds, *Art of Islamic Spain*, 30.
[275] Ibid.
[276] Dodds, *Art of Islamic Spain*, 30-31.
[277] Dodds, *Art of Islamic Spain*, 31

may not adequately describe the situation however, as these treasures were not only appreciated

for their luxury but held enough perceived quality to be used as reliquaries to hold sacred

Christian religious material.  The placement of sacred Christian material inside an Islamic

designed box suggests either a complete separation of culture from religion or a vastly different

concept of religious identity than is presently understood, especially given the antagonistic and

polemical religious relationships that already existed between Christians and Muslims in this

early period.  It could be argued that by their use as reliquaries or treasured objects by the

church, it cannot be that these boxes held any perceived connection to Islam, but instead likely

reflected a form of power and representative grandeur that the box owners could display and

which would grant them a certain majesty and high cultural status.[278] Or as Dodds observed, "It

appears that, for many northern Christians, the sumptuous quality of the material culture of al-

Andalus supersed[ed] any undermining political or religious associations with Islam."[279]  Apart

from the separation aspect, the fact that these boxes were prominent courtly gifts and were

renowned for their luxury and elegance bolsters the idea that whatever their religion or politics,

the Muslims were seen as possessors of high culture and luxury; something for Christians to

acquire, likely for the same reasons as their original constructions, which were meant to reflect

opulence, elitism, and power for the Muslims themselves.  Thus, the possession of such objects

seems to indicate that the owner would be granted a certain amount of perceivable benefit.  If

that message was understood across religious and political lines, it again suggests the presence of

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[278] This scenario and perception is not without precedent – the Roman interaction and incorporation of Greek culture is one such example. The relationship between the perceived Greek high culture and Symbols of power extended through the Christian control of the Empire to the Vatican which for hundreds of years held one of the largest collections of Greek and Roman non-Christian religious monumental architecture and statuary. Louis A. Ruprecht, *Winckelmann and the Vatican's First Profane Museum* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
[279] Dodds, *Art of Islamic Spain*, 32.

a shared visual language that could certainly be applied to architecture and other expressions of material culture that would continue to develop.

The appreciation for Islamicate material culture by northern Christians extended beyond ivory and silver boxes, however, and also included architecture.  Regarding Islamicate constructions in the city of Sahagún in the province of León, Dodds posits the question, "why…at the height of the development of the Romanesque style in the Christian north, would the important churches of Sahagún be constructed entirely in an imported, brick-based Mudéjar style?"[280]  Dodds's question about the churches of Sahagún echoes Ruggles question about Alfonso XI and the *Sala de la Justicia*.  Dodds herself seems to struggle with the implications suggesting that "the position of [the Mudéjar] style, and its subordination to Christian projects, might have been coded reference to the progress of the Reconquest."[281]  As discussed previously, the key to unraveling these paradoxes is in recognizing that their strangeness or difficulty is a result of their presentation and imagination.  If Toledo, Sahagún, or Seville are imagined as locations involving monolithic Christians and monolithic Muslims each in possession of a separate and distinct style exclusive to them as part of an equally monolithic identity that combined the social, political, religious and cultural categories, then indeed these paradoxes would be confounding and strange. As a result, the explanation that Dodds presents above is reasonable and more likely.  Such a monolithic interpretation would also have made her interpretation of the *Sala de la Justicia* as an inverted victory monument more reasonable on the surface, which ultimately seems less likely after the closer analysis in the previous chapter.  At the same time, if the monolithic forms of identity and their respective social, political, religious

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[280] Dodds in Jayyusi, *Legacy of Muslim Spain*, 593.
[281] Ibid.

and cultural subcategories are uncoupled from their monolithic presentation, then the alternative shared cultural interpretation takes shape and is one that Dodds herself suggested.

Considering the construction of Christian churches like *Cristo de la Luz* and San Roman in Toledo, Dodds noted their seemingly comfortable blend of Mudéjar and Islamicate elements including Arabic inscriptions and decorative elements like red and white voussoirs[282] that evoke constructions like the Mezquita (Great Mosque) in Córdoba, which to Dodds indicated "a deeper connection between the builders and users of the church and their context."[283]  Of this connection she argued that "there is a suggestion here of a shared culture: certainly…a shared spoken or written language by means of which the city [Toledo] had been administered for years, and a shared language of forms which saw much that began as identifiably Islamic becoming part of a local visual culture, a decoration that witnessed a history and culture belonging to all Toledans."[284] To this Dodds also indicated that Jews, including their own synagogue designs, were likewise participating in this culture by including Mudéjar material and construction as well.[285]  As will be suggested, Dodds's suggestion of a shared culture reflects an interpretation that this dissertation will argue applies to the entirety of al-Andalus and is the very context that properly situates the three confessional communities, their representative religious structures, and their respective rulers and community leaders as participants in a shared culture. Furthermore, this shared culture was separate and distinct from associations with religious or political affiliations that provides a cosmopolitan interpretive framework for Andalusis, Mudéjar designs, and Islamicate culture to coexist.  Case in point, Dodds suggested that the cross-cultural appreciation deteriorated in the North in the 11th and 12th centuries CE, especially with the rise of

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[282] Dodds in Jayyusi, *Legacy of Muslim Spain*, 594.
[283] Ibid.
[284] Dodds in Jayyusi, *Legacy of Muslim Spain*, 594-595.
[285] Dodds in Jayyusi, *Legacy of Muslim Spain*, 595.

the Crusades and the veneration of *Santiago de Compostela* and *Santiago Matamoros*. She, however, does not indicate that these changes and shifts were felt in al-Andalus proper, which was still being ruled by Muslims and had been participants in the shared culture uninterrupted. *Cristo de la Luz* also seems to stand as a testament to this, as its dominant addition, the Mudéjar apse, was built by Crusaders (The Knights Hospitaller) in 1186, while the Christians still held Jerusalem. It is also likely that the cosmopolitan culture in Toledo was more diverse and pluralistic than in the North as the legal and polemical situation previously discussed seems to corroborate.

## 4.6    The Conquest of Seville and Alfonso X

On November 23, 1248, after an extended siege, Seville capitulated to the Castilians who moved into the city and immediately occupied the Alcazar.[286]  Over the next month, Muslims left the city for refuge in Morocco, Granada, Tunis, and other parts of al-Andalus.  In December of 1248, Fernando III entered Seville and began the process of converting it to a Castilian city, installing a new bishop in the recently consecrated cathedral (formerly the central Mosque) and beginning the *repartimiento* which would alter the population and demographics of the city.  The capture of Seville, while not the completion of the *Reconquista*, was nonetheless essential to the progress of the campaign, but more importantly represented a key port connected to the Mediterranean as well as the political and cultural capital of the Almohads and by extension, al-Andalus.  By capturing Seville, the Castilians also took control of the populations and culture of the bulk of al-Andalus outside of Granadan control.  The interactions between the Castilian Christians and the post-conquest minority Muslim and Jewish populations would be a cultural

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[286] Pidal, *Primera Cronica General de España*, 2:Capitulos 1122-1123, pp. 766–67.

turning point for the region and the subsequent Islamicate history of the city and its central

facility and royal residence, the Alcazar.

It is evident that Seville already possessed a shared culture when the Castilians arrived, and it

was likely down to Alfonso X for the Castilians' inclusion in this shared culture. Islamicate

Andalusi shared culture likely represented a form of high culture for the Castilians, and to some

extent was also considered a "royal" culture that the Castilians already had an appreciation for

and desired to be seen on a similar level. There is perhaps no better support for both the positive

perception of Islamicate culture and the distinction between the realm of culture and the realm of

politics and religion than the author's commentary on Fernando III's conquest of Seville in 1248

CE found in the Castilian's own chronicle of the Conquest.[287]

> The blessed King Fernando had the noble city of Seville besieged for sixteen
> months, and he did not do so for any other reason than to strive hard for it, for it
> was noble. It is a greater city besieged than any other to be found or seen this side
> of the ocean or overseas, since it is so harmonious…even the Tower of Gold
> [*Torre del Oro*], how it was built in the sea and so evenly constructed and by hard
> work made so delicate and so marvelous. Then all the glories of the Tower of St.
> Mary [The Giralda], and how great are its beauty and height and nobility…on top
> of this there are four spheres placed one on top of the other; they are made so
> large and with such great labor and with such great nobility that in the whole
> world there cannot be any so noble, or any equal. It [Seville] has many other
> great splendors, quite apart from those we have mentioned; there is no such well-
> situated and harmonious city in the world. For how can a city so finished and so
> complete, and which has such an abundance of goods, as there are here, not be
> very fine and very precious?[288]

Much of the above language is reminiscent of Hroswitha von Gandersheim's exhortation on

Córdoba as the "Ornament of the World."[289] The idea that Christians, even in far off places,

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[287] See 1128: *Capitulo de quanto tienpo Seuilla estudo cerada, et de los apostamientos de las noblezas della*. In Pidal, 2:768.

[288] Pidal, *Primera Cronica General de España*, 2:*Capitulo* 1128, pgs. 768-769. Translated from the Castilian by Simon Doubleday in Olivia Remie Constable and Damian Zurro, eds., *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 288.

[289] Maria Menocal attributes the phrase "ornament of the world" and the title of her work on cosmopolitan al-Andalus to 10th Century Saxon nun, Hroswitha von Gandersheim who used the phrase to describe the then Muslim

considered a Muslim city in this way suggests an intellectual orientation toward Islamicate

culture that places it in the category of high culture.  Thus, even in Hroswitha's 10th century

consideration of Córdoba, which occurred prior the conquest of Toledo, and long before the

conquest of Seville and the composition of the *Primera Crónica*, a catholic nun was describing a

Muslim capitol with admiration.  In a similar fashion, the *Crónica*'s author, despite writing on

behalf of the Christian conquerors, repeatedly refers to Seville as harmonious and well put

together and references the nobility and excellence of the architecture, including specific

references to the *Torre del Oro* and *La Giralda* (*al Alminar*), both of which were creations of the

previous Muslim Almohad regime.   In all likelihood, much of the architecture and organization

that the Castilians would have been familiar with upon taking the city were Almohad creations or

those influenced by their style in the various quarters of the city including the Alcazar in the city

center, which Fernando immediately occupied, along with other constructions and designs in the

*Juderia* and surrounding community.  What remains clear is that in both cases, Islamicate

architecture and culture held a particular status outside of the Islamic dominion and seems to

have been held in such regard for significant amount of time.

Fernando III died just a few years later in 1252 turning Seville and the burgeoning Castilian

Empire over to his son Alfonso X, who would come to be known as *el Sabio* or "the Wise or

Learned."  It is difficult to assess the extent to which the continuation of Islamicate culture in

Seville and the Castilian kingdom was influenced by Fernando III, as the chronicle of his

conquest (featured in the *Primera Crónica de España* noted above) was written during the reign

of Alfonso X and Fernando's relationship to or perception of the culture of al-Andalus is unclear.

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capital of al-Andalus, Córdoba. Hroswitha does not appear to have ever visited Córdoba and reportedly sourced her knowledge of the city from Mozarabic bishop Racemundo (Recemundus) of Elvira. Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2002), 12.

It is worth noting that upon his death, Fernando III was buried in a cloak "woven of silk and gold-thread by Mudéjar workmen."[290] It might be tempting to assume that since the adornment was post-mortem it would be Alfonso who made this burial choice, however it may also have been a recent royal custom that corroborates the status of Islamicate culture as a royal or "high" culture prior to the capture of Seville. Contextualizing Fernando III's burial cloak, his sister, Leonor of Aragon (d. 1244) and his mother, Queen Berenguela (d. 1246) both "reposed on cushions covered with Islamic invocations."[291]  These burial and display elements for three members of the Castilian royal family are indicative of the perceived luxury or "royalty" of these designs and material. It seems clear that the application of Islamicate material and designs were included for their luxury and a presentation preferred by the royal family, but clearly they were not seen as religious, despite their Islamicate context, as it would certainly have been a significant problem – especially for someone laid to rest in a cathedral.  While his participation or support for Islamicate shared culture may be indeterminate, it seems likely that Islamicate material writ large already held an elevated position in the eyes of the Castilians and might help to explain Alfonso X's easy adoption of the shared culture. Fernando III was also a patron of learning, a trait that his son would share in abundance.  Fernando III supported both "the Universities of Salamanca and Palencia and encouraged the use of Castilian, rather than Latin, as the official language of government and administration."[292]  How the multicultural and cosmopolitan society of Seville may have developed had Fernando lived remains unknown, but given Alfonso X's near immediate participation in the shared culture in Seville, it suggests he

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[290] Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms, 1250-1516*, 169.

[291] Ibid.

[292] Castilian Spanish, as a Latin and Romance derivative, has a sizable inclusion of words from Arabic and Mozarabic adding to the multi-lingual quality of Medieval Iberia and al-Andalus in particular which already featured conglomerations of Arabic, Hebrew, and Latin Vulgate. Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1983), 354.

was already predisposed toward it. Additional intercultural relations in al-Andalus further support these pre-existing shared cultural leanings.

Responding to a series of papal *decretals* and their commentators beginning with Johannes Teutonicus (c. 1217) and his discussion of the decrees of Gratian and Innocent III, Spanish canonist Vincentius Hispanus began reacting to a growing sense of Germanic exceptionalism and sovereignty by countering with praise for the uniqueness of Spain.[293] Vincentius noted that Spain would be exempt from these German assertions of exceptionalism by virtue of the peninsula's own inherent excellence and superiority. While this exchange between a Spanish canonist and his counterparts in Germany is interesting, his commentary contains a sentiment and language that is germane to the discussion about shared culture. In singing the praises of Spain, Vincentius not only invoked the Visigoths and the Spanish connection them,[294] but went on to praise the virtues of Spain and its culture indicating, "The Spanish alone have, by their valor, obtained an [empire].[295] Vincentius went on to suggest that the glory of Spain was recognized "in France, in England, in Germany and in Constantinople."[296] He concluded his response by asking "Who indeed, Spain, can recon thy glories? – Spain, wealthy in horses, celebrated for food and shining with gold; steadfast and wise, the envy of all; skilled in the laws and standing high on sublime pillars."[297] It is worth noting that Vincentius was celebrating elements of "Spain" typically associated with Islamicate culture, and also curiously similar to the comments

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[293] Vincentius took exception to assertions by the Popes and their commentators which suggested that Germanic virtues and exceptionalism were responsible for their empire and victory as well as their purported inheritance of the glory of the Roman Empire. Gaines Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought: Public Law and the State, 1100-1322.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 486–88.

[294] Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*, 489.

[295] In contrast to the Germans who Vincentius suggests gained theirs through non-virtuous means and subsequently lost it due to their own stupidity (he is writing after the original German comments and also after the excommunication of Frederick II [1239 CE]). Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*, 489.

[296] Ibid.

[297] Vincentius would seem to be echoing sentiments similar to Hroswitha and those which would later appear in the *Primera Crónica*. Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*, 490.

about Seville made in the *Primera Crónica*, even though Vincentius is certainly writing prior to the 1248 capture of that city.[298]  The last line "standing high on sublime pillars" also gives the sense of something being built upon some other foundation.[299]  While it might be presumed that the foundation to which Vincentius is referring is the Visigoths, the referencing of Islamicate sociocultural elements makes it less clear.

Further clouding the interpretation, similar imagery is presented in the famous lament by al-Rundi[300] regarding the Muslim loss of Seville and other cities in al-Andalus to the Christians.

> Therefore ask Valencia what is the state of Murcia; and where is Játiva, and
> where is Jaén?
> Where is Córdoba, the home of the sciences, and many a scholar whose rank was
> lofty in it?
> Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains, as well as its sweet river
> overflowing and brimming full?
> [They are] capitals which were the pillars of the land, yet when the pillars are
> gone it may no longer endure![301]

The references to 'pillars' by both Vincentius and al-Rundi is intriguing. The Arabic reference by al-Rundi appears in the past tense, while the Christian reference is in the present tense – possibly suggesting a connectivity between the sentiments.  It is doubtful that al-Rundi is referencing Vincentius, but rather employing a common metaphor.[302]

The source of this reference aside, the sentiment does seem to suggest a form of inheritance and connection between the two groups and their respective ownership of these cities.  If al-Rundi is referencing Islamic capitals and their culture as the pillars of the land, while Vincentius

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[298] Post believes this was written prior to 1245. Vincentius died in 1248. Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*, 489 n.185.

[299] Post suggests this a quote from verse, but it would also likely be understood as an architectural metaphor given the Spanish familiarity with Greco-Roman architecture. Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*, 490 n.190.

[300] Al-Rundi (ar-Rundi), Salih Abu l-Baqa ash-Sharif was an Andalusi poet writing around the time of the *Reconquista*. James T. Monroe, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry: A Student Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), xvii.

[301] From the Arabic/English parallel text. Monroe, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry*, 334.

[302] It is possible that al-Rundi is using the same source as Vincentius. Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*, 490 n.190.

is suggesting the newly won Christian cities are built on similar pillars, might these pillars (i.e. the cities and culture of Islamicate al-Andalus) be one and the same?  In any event, the theme of inheritance and connection between Islamicate and Christian societies echoes a similar suggestion made for Alfonso XI in the *Sala de la Justicia* regarding the incorporation of shared elements and connections between the *Sala* and the Almohad *Patio del Yeso*.[303] A similar theme of inheritance, connection, and high culture will also arise in the relations between Islamicate and Christian culture in Seville under Alfonso X *el Sabio*. On another level, Vincentius and Johannes Teutonicus also propose a consideration of "Spain" which includes these Islamicate elements as part.  Such inclusion might indicate a perception of "Spain" as being comprised of these elements, and if those elements had been in place for some time, it would go a long way toward contextualizing the strange cultural interplay between Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the midst of the *Reconquista*.

As with virtually every other change in ownership between the conquering Christians and the former Muslim owners, there does not seem to have been any real intention or orientation on behalf of the early Castilians toward the eradication or elimination of anything associated with the previous rulers or groups. In fact, those elements may have been intentionally retained to paint the new owners in a favorable light, both with their new subjects and also with the perception of high culture and authority that was previously held by the Muslims.  Case in point, after successfully capturing Seville, Fernando and Alfonso were faced with a diverse and pluralistic population that would need to be incorporated into the new Castilian Empire.  L.P. Harvey noted that during the reign of Alfonso X, "For Christians…there was no theoretical presumption that a Christian state ought to be exclusively Christian or Christian-dominated."[304]

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[303] See discussion of *Sala de la Justicia's* Almohad/Christian connectivity in Chapter 3 of this document.
[304] Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500*, 64.

He went on to remark that there was neither a gospel nor a successful legal model for dealing with non-Christians under Christian rule.[305]  Harvey, however, pointed out that "there were considerable variations between one Christian kingdom and another where the treatment of subject Muslims was concerned."[306]  Harvey cited a particular case involving the Muslim residents of Morón, who were relocated to Siliébar following the conquest of the city by the Castilians under Alfonso X.[307]  With regard to this relocation, Harvey indicated that "Royal permission is given for the construction in the new village [Siliébar] of baths, shops, bakehouses, mills, and merchants' quarters, all 'according to the custom of the Moors,' and this grant is made 'for all time.'"[308]  Harvey suggested that there was an "acceptance of cultural and religious differences as a permanent feature of the new society."[309]  Arguably, this acceptance or lack thereof would also vary from kingdom to kingdom, manifesting in different ways depending on the rulers and legal systems of each.  Other factors would likely include minority population density as well as prior multicultural interaction and exposure.  It is these differences that likely account for the wide variability between kingdoms like Valencia, Aragon, and Castile, which each had distinct experiences with their respective Muslim and Jewish populations.  In Seville and the Kingdom of Castile and León, the predominant manager of this transition to Christian rule was Alfonso X *el Sabio*.

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[305] Harvey indicates that the issue of Jews living under Christian rule had never been completely sorted out either legally or ecumenically so there wasn't a clear means for managing the Jewish or Muslim minority populations in *Reconquista* Spain. Ibid.

[306] Harvey's suggestion is that the Castilians, who ruled Toledo, Córdoba and Seville may have approached their minority populations differently and this seems to be borne out by the evidence. Ibid.

[307] It seems that Alfonso X is following a similar program to his father who initially expelled or relocated Muslims following the initial conquest, although many eventually returned in various capacities. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500,* 65.

[308] Ibid.

[309] Ibid.

### 4.7   Alfonso X *el Sabio***: Patron of Shared Culture**

Alfonso X *el Sabio* was born in 1221 CE in post-*Reconquista* Toledo.  Like his descendants Alfonso XI and Pedro I, his upbringing in al-Andalus may have influenced his orientation toward and participation in Islamicate culture.  Alfonso X grew up amidst the conquest of the Almohads and al-Andalus including several prominent Islamicate cities like Córdoba and ultimately Seville where he would ascend to the throne after the death of Fernando III in 1252 CE.

Dodds, Menocal and Balbale suggest that Alfonso X was born in a palace belonging to al-Mamun, ruler of the *ta'ifa* of Toledo.[310]  Given the clear influence the former Islamicate culture had on the development of Toldeo's architecture and material culture, it is likely that Alfonso X was exposed to this same culture over time, a culture which would have been well established by the time of his birth in 1221 CE (more than 125 years past the city's conquest in 1085 CE and at least a generation removed from the prominent Islamicate constructions in *Cristo de la Luz* and other buildings).  Alfonso X *el Sabio* is also named after Alfonso VIII of Castile and Toledo, a hero from the battle of Las Navas de Toloso and "the founder of several of Castile's most prominent cultural institutions," including the convent of Las Huelgas[311] and the University of Palencia, the same university later patronized by Alfonso's father.[312]

It is unclear how much time Alfonso X spent in Toledo between his birth and his ascent to the throne following the capture of the Almohad capitol, *Ishbiliya* (Seville) in 1248 CE.  But given that Fernando III's campaigns took him throughout al-Andalus, especially in the later years when he would have been of an age able to participate, it is likely that Alfonso X was consistently exposed to the shared Islamicate culture already present in much of the region.  It is

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[310] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 191.
[311] The Islamicate associations of Las Huelgas will be discussed in Chapter 5.
[312] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 192.

therefore not at all surprising that he would embrace this culture in a familiar way and foreshadow some of his later descendants like Alfonso XI and especially Pedro I who would be its greatest proponent.

Alfonso X's cultural interaction with Islamicate Seville cannot be overstated. Almost from the beginning, his cosmopolitan orientation toward the city and its people is evident. In an early example, Fernando III was entombed, not in Castile, but in Seville, inside the Mosque of Seville, recently consecrated as a cathedral.[313] The sepulcher includes an epitaph for Fernando III with four separate inscriptions: Latin, Arabic, Hebrew, and Castilian.[314] The inclusion of the four languages is significant in itself, given the inclusiveness that such a gesture suggests, but the truly cosmopolitan aspects of the epitaphs are reflected in the language used for each. The four epitaphs include language and phrasing that is common to each community, including "may Allah be pleased with him," and other common honorifics, along with the place name for the region used by each language group, *Hispanie*, al-Andalus, *Sepharad*, and España respectively.[315] The epitaphs also include the calendric date related to each community, such as First Rabia of the year 550 of the Hijra included on the Arabic inscription.[316] By choosing these inscriptions Alfonso X is not only recognizing the language of the different communities under his rule, but also their dominant religion. It is an astonishing gesture from a conqueror to his new subjects, however, this was only one of several inclusive cultural gestures that Alfonso X would engage in.

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[313] Consecrated, but not rebuilt. The great Cathedral of Seville would not be constructed for another 150 years and not completed until 1506, so during the lifetimes of the early Castilian monarchs, through Pedro I, the cathedral remained a converted Mosque. Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 196.
[314] Ibid.
[315] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 200–201.
[316] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 199–201.

The first point of multicultural contact in Seville would be with the architecture, much as it had been in Toledo. Upon their initial capture of the city, Fernando III established himself at the Alcazar, the palace complex that was the seat of power for the Almohads who made Seville their capital and would serve as the residence for the new Castilian rulers, including Alfonso XI and Pedro I, whose constructions inside the palace complex are the focus of this study. The Alcazar would be home to Alfonso X and remains an active residence for the Spanish royal family to this day. That the Castilians adopted, maintained, and built within the formerly Muslim ruling palace can be seen as purposeful, especially in light of other interactions between the early Castilian rulers and the Islamicate architecture present in the city.

As previously mentioned, the Mosque of Seville continued to stand and remained largely a Mosque (aesthetically) for the entirety of the early Castilians' reign, right down to the minaret known as the *Alminar* or *la Giralda*. As Dodds *et al.* noted, "the Castilians had particular admiration for the minaret of the Great Mosque [*la Giralda*], which 'could not be matched in all the world'."[317] Specifically, "Alfonso [X] so valued it that he threatened with death anyone who would destroy 'even one brick'."[318] While there is more than likely some hyperbole involved in these statements, they echo an appreciation for Almohad architecture and culture in a way similar to that seen in the *Primera Crónica*, which, while a history of Castilian rulers up to Fernando III was most assuredly composed during the reign of Alfonso X and likely reflects his views more than Fernando III's.[319] Alfonso X's support and appreciation for the cultural

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[317] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 196.
[318] Ibid.
[319] It is worth noting that this history was likely composed as an homage or tribute to his father, the form of which could also be construed as a form of triumphal monument to his father, again echoing a Roman practice of a new Emperor honoring his predecessor as seen with the Arch of Titus discussed in Chapter 3.

products of Muslims and Jews was significant, even if the same could not be said for their respective religions.

In her study centered on the *Mezquita de la Juderia*, Heather Ecker noted that in 1252, following the conquest of Seville and subsequent death of Fernando III, Alfonso X designated "all of the urban mosques [in Seville, which] were given as an endowment to the church, apart from a few notable exceptions, [which included] the donation of three mosques to be converted into the synagogues of the newly established Juderia."[320] As mentioned previously, the relationship between the minority Jewish and Muslim populations under Castilian rule in Seville and greater al-Andalus was ongoing and symbiotic. Just as later rulers continued to rely on Jewish merchants and specialists to perform numerous mercantile and courtly functions, so too were Muslims relied upon for other specialty contributions to both craftsmanship and culture. In essence, the Castilians and their minority populations existed within a matrix of exchange or a cosmopolitan milieu in which cooperation and coexistence operated alongside political and religious bickering, which from all appearances occupied different cognitive and social spaces from each other.

To typify the nature of cultural support versus religious support, in her art historical study of Jews in post-*Reconquista* Spain, Pamela Patton shares a quotation from a poem by Castilian poet Gonzalo de Berceo:

> A little Jewish boy, native of the town, came for the pleasure of playing with the children; the others welcomed him, they caused him no grief; they all took delight in playing with him.[321]

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[320] The *Juderia* of Seville remained a part of *Sevillano* culture and politics for almost 150 years until its fall in 1391. Heather L. Ecker, "The Conversion of Mosques to Synagogues in Seville: The Case of the Mezquita de La Judería," *Gesta* 36, no. 2 (1997): 190.

[321] From the poem "A Little Jewish Boy" composed by Gonzalo de Berceo. Pamela Anne Patton, *Art of Estrangement: Redefining Jews in Reconquest Spain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), 1.

As Patton noted, de Berceo's depiction of Jewish and Christian children playing together

seemingly without the issue of religious conflict "depended on a social factor that was far more

concrete: the willingness of a medieval Iberian audience to accept the boy's carefree disregard

for religious and cultural difference as not merely possible, but normative."[322]  At the same time,

the poem goes on to see the Jewish boy taking communion and becoming enamored with St.

Mary. After returning home he is confronted by his father, who in a fit of rage throws him in the

oven, Mary protects the boy and when the townspeople, Jews and Christians, arrive to help the

boy, who is miraculously uninjured, they in turn throw the father, who is referred to as

"treacherous dog," "false disbeliever," and "false disloyal one," into the oven and kill him

instead.[323]  The poem is an exemplar of the odd sociocultural landscape of medieval Spain. On

the one hand, as Patton indicates, the interaction between Jews and Christians, especially in

cosmopolitan environs like al-Andalus was a fact of life. On the other hand, the polemical

sniping between religious communities was also a constant factor of medieval Spanish society.

The clear animosity toward non-Christian religions, at least in a polemical context, would seem

to disqualify any hint of such religions from the Christian purview – again bolstering the

assertion that Islamicate material culture could not have been understood contemporarily as

having anything to do with the religions of Islam or Judaism despites its influences, origins, or

employment by members of those communities.  Patton detailed other "moments of cultural

porousness" in literary materials such as Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa Maria*.[324]  She noted

that in addition to their literary interactions, "actual Jews and Christians in medieval Iberia found

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[322] Patton, *Art of Estrangement*, 2
[323] The poem comes from a collection recounting the miracles of St. Mary. Gonzalo de Berceo, Richard Terry Mount, and Annette Grant Cash, *Miracles of Our Lady* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 77–80.
[324] To this I would also add Alfonso's *Libro de Ajedrez, Dados, y Tablas*, which likewise features a cooperative multicultural and pluralistic society. Patton, *Art of Estrangement*, 2.

abundant and varied opportunities for interaction in nearly every sphere of medieval life, from agriculture and business deals to festivals and folk dancing."[325]

In a counterpoint to Gonzalo de Berceo's poem, Patton offers a quote from Vincent Ferrar, "He who is neighbor to a Jew will never be a good Christian."[326]  While likely intended to reflect an opposing viewpoint to the *convivencia* of de Berceo's poem, it is arguably far more telling. Ferrar's quote derives from "a sermon delivered in the Valencian town of Onda on 6 May 1416."[327]  Whether Ferrar's sermon serves as exhortation or polemic, the context of it reveals much about the nature of medieval Iberian society.  The distinction between de Berceo and Ferrar highlights the Islamicate history of early Castilian Seville in comparison to other polities in Spain.  First among these distinctions is geographic – de Berceo is Castilian, writing during the *Reconquista* period and likely continuing to do so under the reign of Alfonso X *el Sabio*.[328] He was also educated at the *Estudio General de Palencia*, the same university supported by Fernando III,[329] and likely subject to the same cultural influences as those described in the *Primera Crónica General de España*.  Another important factor distinguishing these two quotations is temporal.  De Bracero is likely writing c. mid-13th century, whereas Ferrar is writing in the early 15th century, which is significant in that the cosmopolitan kings of Castile and Leon were replaced by the exclusivist Trastamarans after the 1369 murder of Pedro I. Additionally, in the intervening years between de Berceo and Ferrar, significant changes in Jewish/Christian relations occurred following the outbreak of the Black Death in the mid-14th

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[325] Patton, *Art of Estrangement*, 2

[326] Patton, Patton, *Art of Estrangement*, 1.

[327] Patton, Patton, *Art of Estrangement*, 2.

[328] De Bercero's dates are not fully known, but a contemporary mention of him in 1264 and the generally accepted consensus puts his death between 1252 and 1264 placing his later years within the reign of Alfonso X. Berceo, Mount, and Cash, *Miracles of Our Lady*, 3.

[329] De Bracero supposedly attended Palencia between 1223 and 1236. Ibid.

century and the subsequent anti-Jewish violence that occurred in 1391 and beyond.[330]  Not only

does the Ferrar quotation reflect the social, religious, and political changes that occurred in the

post-Pedro I (or Trastamaran) period, but also differentiates cosmopolitan Castile and Leon from

other areas in al-Andalus.

   Alfonso X *el Sabio*'s cultural engagement is widely known and a hallmark of his reign. Some

of his efforts included the patronage of art and cultural projects, among them a substantial

translation program based in Toledo and built on previous translation projects taking place in that

city following the Castilian conquest.[331]  As Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale noted, "for Alfonso

[X]…cultural projects were not about integrating knowledge but about creating a culture of

empire, language and literature as the handmaiden of a political idea."[332]  This comment is

significant in that it puts Alfonso's cultural projects into a particular context.  If the bulk of his

cultural projects were meant to project a culture of empire, then it seems likely that the intended

projection, much in the same way that there was an intentional public projection of the *Sala de la*

*Justicia* under Alfonso XI, had an intended audience and an intended message that in turn could

be readily understood.  Taking the cultural milieu of Alfonso X *el Sabio* into consideration, and

noting the numerous attitudes and interactions between Alfonso and the shared Islamicate culture

in al-Andalus, it is likely that Alfonso was incorporating the already accepted high culture and

majesty fomented under the Almohads into his own public image.  Alfonso's participation in the

shared culture, which now incorporated the Castilians as partners and participants, absorbed

aspects of Islamicate culture but also expanded it by adding Castilian elements including the

emerging Castilian language to the polyglot pool that already existed in al-Andalus.

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[330] Which included the destruction of the *Juderia* in Seville. Also see David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).
[331] See Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 202–28.
[332] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 229.

One of the specific Castilian institutions and contributions developed by Alfonso X which bears all the hallmarks of their inclusion into the larger Islamicate shared culture is the "school" translators that emerged during his reign. The *Escuela de Traductores de Toledo* (Toledo School of Translators) had existed in various forms prior to Alfonso's reign. The primary focus of the group was to translate Arabic texts into Latin. The school had been established and patronized by the Archbishops of Toledo. L.P. Harvey indicated that Alfonso attempted to establish a similar school in Seville which failed, likely due to the strength of the Toledo school.[333] Alfonso then moved in a different direction, translating Arabic texts into Castilian rather than Latin. This move would have the unintended consequence of establishing and promulgating Castilian as a major language, but the need for Arabic/Castilian translators would also plug the school into Islamicate shared culture both in terms of the professionals needed and also in the texts chosen to translate. As Robert Burns noted, Alfonso X's cultural activities, including the Castilian translation project, were intended "to reshape society, to bring Castile itself into the mainstream of high civilization and to set afoot a process that would produce a united, educated, artistic, and religious people."[334] He continued, "Alfonso did see the need to create and stimulate high culture for his newly aggrandized people, to elevate them as proper colleagues for their Mediterranean Christian neighbors. And from a long tradition he appreciated both the necessity of some borrowing from the Islamic high culture at hand and the special opportunity of doing so at this moment of conquest-conjecture."[335]

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[333] L. P. Harvey, "The Alfonsine School of Translators: Translations from Arabic into Castilian Produced under the Patronage of Alfonso the Wise of Castile (1221-1252-1284)," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1, no. 1 (1977): 111.

[334] Robert Ignatius Burns, ed., *Emperor of Culture: Alfonso X the Learned of Castile and His Thirteenth-Century Renaissance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 5–6.

[335] Burns, *Emperor of Culture*, 12.

Burns's commentary on Alfonso's interaction with high culture comes across as perhaps too intentional compared to the more likely reality that Alfonso sought to join an existing shared culture and fold the Castilians into it, rather than forging something new with any type of strategic optics, other than presenting a regal appearance and trading off of the existing perceptions already present, both in al-Andalus and among the "Mediterranean Christian neighbors." A brief examination of Alfonso's school of translation would seem to corroborate a Castilian inclusion into an existing multicultural matrix. Burns indicated that the staff of Alfonso's school of translation were "largely trilingual Jews," a fact that would support the idea that the Jews of al-Andalus were already involved in a multi-cultural and multi-lingual capacity within the region.[336] Dodds *et al*. indicated that the first book translated by Alfonso X into Castilian was the *kitab al-jawarih*, a well-known book on falconry.[337] Anna Akasoy indicated that the *kitab al-jawarih* incorporates material from the long tradition of Arab falconry including seminal texts from "the work of Adham and Ghitrif" as well as the *kitab al-mutawakkili*, "dedicated to Abbasid Caliph Mutawakkil (r. 847-861)."[338] As with other high cultural and "royal" traditions, falconry has long been associated with monarchs and princes, especially among the Arabs, and became a part of medieval courts throughout Europe.[339] That Alfonso X chose this as his first translation suggests that this Arab cultural practice, which could be

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[336] Burns, *Emperor of Culture*, 8.

[337] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 230.

[338] Anna Akasoy, James E. Montgomery, and Peter E. Pormann, *Islamic Crosspollinations: Interactions in the Medieval Middle East* ([Cambridge, U.K.]: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2007), 56, http://ezproxy.gsu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=699984&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

[339] Frederick II (r. 1220-1250 CE), Holy Roman Emperor and King of Sicily (formerly under Islamic Rule until the late 11th century) himself composed a Latin treatise on falconry, *De arte venandi cum avibus* (the art of hunting with birds), which itself was based earlier Arab falconry texts, which along with the Arab cultural influences in Sicily helped inspire his own association with Falconry and aided its adoption into Medieval European courts. Akasoy, *Islamic Crosspollinations,* 55.

construed as Islamicate given its feature in the Qur'an,[340] was held in high regard, but was also a practice associated with rulers, and Islamic rulers in particular, that Alfonso wanted to emulate. Much like his inclusion of architecture and the trappings of royal and high culture, falconry was just one more way that Alfonso and the Castilians were assuming the mantle of the great Muslim rulers that preceded them. As the first translation, it seems to suggest the importance of projecting a recognizable regal persona, and by choosing a known Islamicate practice like falconry, Alfonso is using a practice that would be understood and recognized by his subject population. Again, it is unclear, and likely unknowable whether Alfonso's decision to translate the *kitab al-jawarih* was part of some grand strategy, as Burns suggested, or simply a reflection of the Islamicate courtly culture that Alfonso wanted to be part of. Some of his other Islamicate cultural interactions suggest the latter. Alfonso's *Escuela de Traductores* also translated Islamic scientific works, especially astronomy and astrology, but also various literary works and an Islamic devotional work, *Kitab al-Miraj* (about Muhammad's night journey, sometimes referred to as *Muhammad's Ladder*).[341]

Alfonso X's incorporation and adoption of the practices and culture of Islamic rulers was not limited to falconry, great learning, translation, and architecture; Alfonso X also engaged in the composition of poetry and the playing of games like chess (another Islamicate courtly import). Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale indicated that Christian participation in the cultural products of the previously Muslim rulers, like falconry, was a manifestation of the Arabic concept of *adab*. Given its Arabic root, *adab* in some form deals with culture, refinement, and education.[342] Dodds

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[340] See Qur'an, *Sura al-Ma'ida* 5:4.

[341] Harvey also notes that one text that was not translated was the Qur'an, which he suggests may have been intentional on the part of Spanish Muslims, but also suggests that there was indeed a distinction between the realms of religion and culture. Harvey, "The Alfonsine School of Translators," 114.

[342] Ba'labakkī, *al-Mawrid*, 64.

*et al.* described it as "a term meaning, in both the heathen and the Islamic times, the noble and humane tendency of the character and its manifestation in the conduct of life and social intercourse."[343]  Dodds *et al.* pointed out that "*adab* was not a meditation between two essentially alien cultures but rather between already overlapping and entangled peoples."[344] They continued, "this kind of cultural traffic marks moments of historical passages, when one empire aspires to replace another, in part through the naturalization of older communities, and of at least some parts of their cultures."[345]  While this interpretation of *adab* and its manifestation in Alfonso X's al-Andalus is both instructive and important, the characterization still reflects a monolithization of categories and may likely elide aspects of culture that were co-built or developed organically between participants.  For example, Marshall Hodgson in his landmark work the *Venture of Islam*, suggested that the Persian influence on the early Muslim empire was so significant that what might be imagined as an Arab empire, would better be understood as "Irano-Semitic"[346]  In this context, the influence of the Persians, in this case the conquered people and culture, inspired their conquerors on many societal levels including arts and culture. In describing the process of adoption in the cultural aspects of such a pairing, Hodgson indicated, "At first, the life patterns of the less cultivated classes, the folk traditions of [the] area, were the immediate source of the learned high traditions of the Irano-Semitic culture, which were scarcely to be distinguished from them.  As [their sphere of control] expanded, high-cultural traditions were carried widely from [the point of contact and combined with influences] stemming from distant origins, notably from the northern shores of the Mediterranean, [which] were

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[343] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 229.
[344] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 231.
[345] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 231–32.
[346] In other words reflecting a combination of Persian and Arabic influences. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam,* Vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 70.

incorporated in the high traditions. What is more, these traditions came to be shared among people of diverse local conditions [in which] all these peoples contributed to the further development of the traditions."[347] Hodgson concluded, suggesting that these new cultural forms became less and less identifiable with their Persian origins and more reflective of the now merged and shared society.[348] In fact, the concept of *adab* and its relationship to high culture has overlap with Persian culture, which itself influenced the Muslims, but also incorporated them *a la* Hodgson's Irano-Semitic shared culture. "Persian influence on *adab* is reflected in the following maxim of the vizier al-Hasan b. Sahl: 'The arts (*al-adab*) belonging to fine culture are ten: Three *Shahradjanic* (playing lute, chess, and with the javelin), three *Nushirwanic* (medicine, mathematics and equestrian art), three Arabic (poetry, genealogy and knowledge of history); but the tenth excels all: the knowledge of the stories which people put forward in friendly gatherings."[349] As al-Hasan suggests, conceptually *adab* can manifest as anything from falconry and chess to poetry and knowledge of history.

In essence, *adab* reflects courtly culture or high culture of the variety that Castilian aristocrats were trying to attain in emulation of those qualities in Islamic society. Near the end of his reign and life, in 1283, Alfonso X commissioned a book of games, *Libro de Ajedrez, Dados, y Tablas* (Book of Chess, Dice, and Tables).[350] Not only did the book feature popular courtly games such as chess and backgammon, but also presented the images of the games being played by Christians, Muslims, Jews, men, and women, and featured depictions of Arabic and Hebrew manuscripts that were consulted by players. Alfonso's Book of Games, as it is also

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[347] Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, 70–71.
[348] Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, 71.
[349] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 229.
[350] The translation of these Arabic and Hebrew texts likely occurring at the *Escuela de Traductores de Toledo*. Patton, *Art of Estrangement*, 3.

called, embodied many aspects of al-Hasan's commentary on *adab* and signals the Castilians adoption of it and to some extent incorporation into it. The book also featured visual representations of falconry, food and drink (and their accoutrements) along with other aspects of Islamicate shared culture.
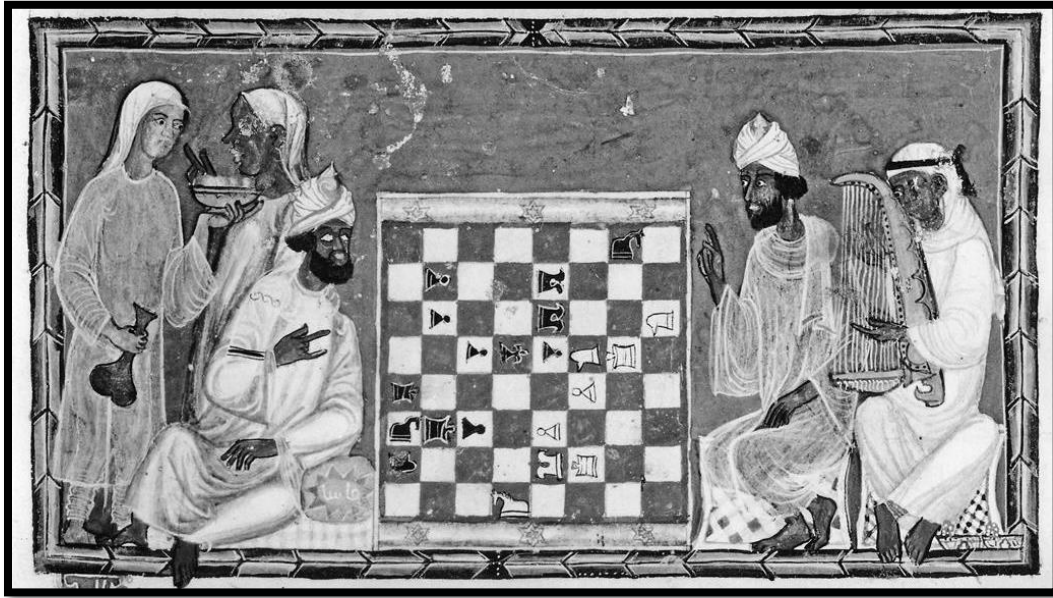
*Figure 22: Chess players from the Book of Chess, Dice, and Tables*



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[351] Alfonso X el Sabio, *Libro de Ajedrez, Dados y Tablas (Book of Chess, Dice, and Tables)* (El Escorial, Madrid, 1283).

*Figure 23: Muslim chess players from the Book of Chess, Dice, and Tables*



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*Figure 24: Female chess players from the Book of Chess, Dice, and Tables*



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[352] Alfonso X, *Libro de Ajedrez, Dados y Tablas.*
[353] Ibid.

Alfonso X *el Sabio's* interactions with Islamicate culture over the course of his reign were so

substantial that Mirabel Fierro pondered the question of Alfonso being imagined as the last

Almohad caliph.[354]  What is interesting about Fierro's question is that while it clearly derived

from Alfonso's extensive interaction with what she termed "Almohad culture," it also

presupposes some clear distinction between what is Almohad and what is not with enough clarity

to pose the question.  There is indeed evidence of ample cultural interaction between the

Castilians and their subject populations and the reign of Alfonso X *el Sabio* is likely the

watershed moment.  However the framing of Fierro's question, while appropriate and relevant in

its scope, reinforces a monolithic consideration of culture that is problematic. For example, when

Fierro referred to "Almohad culture," what does she mean?  Is it some culture distinct from other

forms of culture, Islamic or otherwise, or is it another means of describing Islamicate culture that

occurs within the period of Almohad rule?

Fierro argued that the influence of Almohad culture on the 12th century Andalusi philosopher

Ibn Rushd (Averroes) (1126-1198 CE) is plainly evident, but that scholars tend to overlook any

Almohad contribution in favor of the earlier culture seen under the Umayyad caliphate in al-

Andalus.[355]  In light of this observation, Fierro noted, "The disregard for the Almohad context

seems to be symptomatic of the ignorance mentioned above, for the intellectual work of

Averroes can only be explained within the framework of the cultural and religious policies

promoted by the Almohad caliphs."[356] By consistently referencing "Almohad culture" however,

it gives the impression that there is some distinctive culture within Islam that was identifiable as

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[354] Maribel Fierro, "Alfonso X 'The Wise': The Last Almohad Caliph?," *Medieval Encounters* 15, nos. 2–4 (2009): 175–98.

[355] Fierro suggests that the references to and the lauding of Andalusi culture is typically that of the Umayyads, specifically that which produced references to Córdoba, the Umayyad capitol as the "ornament of the world" similar to Menocal. Fierro, "Alfonso X 'The Wise'," 177.

[356] Ibid.

such and not a permutation or expression of the existing Islamicate culture already present in al-Andalus or itself already a conglomerate as seen in Hodgson's Irano-Semitic culture.

Ultimately, Fierro's is a bizarre analysis. On the one hand she recognized Alfonso X *el Sabio* as existing within an Islamicate framework, but at the same time seems to have placed modern identity categorization within that framework, suggesting that Almohad culture was something specific, as was Christian culture, and also cast these as monolithic entities rather than delineating them as separate cultural and religious products. Overall, Fierro seems to suggest that Alfonso X was following a "political and cultural program" inspired by the Almohads. While there are parallels and similarities to be sure, it is unclear if Alfonso X was making an intellectual differentiation between "Almohad culture," "Almoravid culture," or "Umayyad culture" to the extent that he would have preferred one to the other. If, on the other hand, Islamicate culture was understood as a form of high culture that was worthy of emulation, then it could arguably have inspired Alfonso's program. Judging by the presentation of Islamic culture and constructions in the *Primera Crónica General de España*, no mention is made of Almohads or any other specific Muslim polity, in fact Muslims don't appear to be named at all in this section, merely referenced with regard to the qualities of the various constructions. It is in this context that one could ask how aware Alfonso X was of any philosophical, political, or cultural provenance related to these ideas and orientations.[357] Coming from Toledo, where an Islamicate program was already well established culturally, even at the highest levels (religion and art), and having worked with Jews, Muslims, and Christians, would those distinctions be understood? As

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[357] L.P. Harvey notes that several references to Islam, mostly to Muhammad specifically do occur within the *Primera Crónica*, however, they almost exclusively reflect the typical Christian polemical material promoted by the Church. The inclusion of this material may again reflect a distinction between the realms of religion and culture, but also likely occurs in a manner similar to the *Siete Partidas* or other gestures to church positions which may be influenced by Alfonso's interest in the Holy Roman Emperorship. Harvey, "The Alfonsine School of Translators," 114–17.

will be clear, shared Islamicate culture pervaded the material cultural realm, but could the same be said for the intellectual realm?

Fierro commented on the commingling of ideas, indicating "It has been said that natural philosophy offered an intellectual meeting point, a safe haven where Jews, Muslims, and Christians could interact and work together. An example is the translation enterprise in Alfonso's court, with Jews and Christians working side by side."[358] As previously discussed, Alfonso X's *Escuela de Traductores* was indeed an institution for shared intellectual collaboration. The "cultural synthesis" and collaboration with Jews and Muslims did not go unnoticed however, and garnered some pushback from the Church in which Fierro reported that Castilian bishops had sent to the Pope "a list of complaints against the king's numerous violations of ecclesiastical rights. Among the allegations was that the presence of a group of natural philosophers in Alfonso's court…[who] preferred to concern themselves with the physical rather than the spiritual world."[359] What is both interesting and ironic is that a similar disquiet with philosophical and cultural interaction was problematized by 11th century Muslim philosopher Abu Hamid al-Ghazali in his landmark work *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* or *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* and the subsequent rebuttal by Ibn Rushd (Averroes), himself a philosopher under the Almohads, in his own work *Tahāfut al-tahāfut* or *The Incoherence of the Incoherence.* Also interesting is that al-Ghazali's concern is the result of translations of Greek philosophical texts and their use by Islamic philosophers. Given the similar issues that arose between the Almohad cultural program that Fierro describes and similar manifestation of the issue in Alfonso X's cultural program in Seville, the issue may be one of location and context, specifically al-

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[358] Here Fierro is referring to the *Escuela de Troductores* in Toledo. Fierro, "Alfonso X 'The Wise'," 188.
[359] It is worth noting that the bishops were not from al-Andalus, but Castile, where Islamicate culture did not have the same demographic or historical influence. Fierro, "Alfonso X 'The Wise'," 191.

Andalus. It seems likely that the cosmopolitan nature of al-Andalus and its population, along with the influence of the shared Islamicate culture that existed there was the likely source of the cultural and religious entanglements that vexed those outside of this context. This may be a result of the "frontier" nature of al-Andalus or the diverse and pluralistic population that resided there, but arguably it was due to the matrix of exchange fostered by shared culture that provided both the environment and impetus for such interactions. While Fierro may not have addressed shared culture or problematized the monolithization of cultures, she clearly recognized the unique environment that existed in Castilian-led al-Andalus under Alfonso X *el Sabio*. Fierro concluded her study by suggesting that scholars who "express their surprise or amazement at many of [Alfonso X's] cultural or religious policies" need to recognize that "if Alfonso's works are looked at from the Islamicate point of view, most of his policies are not surprising."[360] Here, this study will stand in agreement and also ultimately confirm that it was the result of shared culture, both intellectual and material, that was at the heart of these policies and manifestations among the three confessional communities in al-Andalus. Going forward, nowhere can shared Islamicate culture be better seen and examined than in the form of material culture, which in turn would include architecture and the structures and designs found in the Alcazar of Seville.

## 4.8 Islamicate Material Culture, Shared Culture, and Monolithization

As has already been discussed, one of the primary interpretive challenges to examining culture in medieval al-Andalus, and especially the suggestions of shared culture being argued, is monolithization. Monolithization, as a form of modern identity-based exclusivity, typically involves conceiving segments of culture as specifically and singularly Christian, Muslim, Arab, and Jewish, which then interact with other separate and distinct monolithic cultures. In this

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[360] Fierro, "Alfonso X 'The Wise'," 193.

monolithic context, hybridization or other forms of co-built, shared cultures become difficult to

imagine and describe, especially with regard to attributions, influences, and origins.  In another

cultural example, ethnomusicologist Dwight Reynolds argued that Andalusian music was not the

product of "unidirectional transmission from the ancients to the Arabs and then from the Arabs

to Western Europe."[361]  This view of Andalusian music, which might extend to discussions of

culture and monolithization in general, tend to ignore or downplay "independent developments,

cultural interactions, mutual influences, hybridization, and many other nonlinear processes."[362]

The extraordinary difficulty attached to any gesture toward cultural monolithization is that it is

unlikely to apply to any group in Iberia regardless of their religious, political, or sociocultural

affiliations.  "Iberia" itself is one of the most profoundly cosmopolitan places extending back to

the classical period.  Whatever indigenous Iberians may have existed on the peninsula quickly

coexisted with Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, and Jews before a series of Germanic

groups ranging from the Alans, Seuvi, and Vandals to the later Visigothic rulers combined with a

mixture of Basques and Hiberno-Saxons (Celts), and likely the remnants of Justinian's abortive

Byzantine reconquest, who all shared the peninsula and al-Andalus before the Muslims arrived in

the 8th century.  The Muslims themselves were a diverse combination of groups from across the

growing Islamic empire.  Thus, any cultural development would have an overwhelming number

of possible influences and connections to ever claim any form of monolithization or cultural

exclusivity.  It was the combining of the Iberian context with the Islamic context that likely

birthed the cosmopolitan Islamicate culture that developed among the three confessional groups

on the peninsula.  Much like the cosmopolitan sociocultural, economic, and political interactions

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[361] Dwight F. Reynolds, "Jews, Muslims, and Christians and the Formation of Medieval Andalusian Music," in *Musical Exodus* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 2.
[362] Reynolds, *Musical Exodus*, 1.

that took place in al-Andalus, which caused such consternation for the Church on other

occasions, seems to have held true for musical interactions as well.  Reynolds noted that during

the reign of Sancho IV of Castile (r. 1284-1295 CE), the King (who was the son of Alfonso X *el*

*Sabio*) employed "13 Arab musicians [likely Muslim vs. ethnically Arab *per se*] and one Jewish

musician…among the twenty-seven [total] musicians in the household of [Sancho IV]."[363]

Reynolds concluded therefore, "more than half of the court's professional musicians were

Andalusians presumably paid to perform Andalusian music."[364]  Reynolds reported that Andalusi

musicians were in widespread use across al-Andalus and in the North including the royal courts

and even within local church ceremonies where professional musicians including Muslims and

Jews would perform.[365]  The practice was extensive enough to warrant a condemnation from the

Council of Valladolid in 1322.[366]  The presence of Andalusi musicians including Muslims and

Jews would continue well into the 15th century and remain part of ceremonies involving

Christian royalty from several regions.[367]  Reynolds stated, "Over a period of nine centuries,

from 711 to 1610, there is evidence of professional musicians from a variety of different ethnic,

religious, and regional origins performing diverse musical traditions before patrons and

audiences of diverse backgrounds."[368] In addition, "There is also good evidence for

understanding the music itself (and not just the music makers) as a very cosmopolitan tradition

that incorporated influences from multiple sources and developed innovative new forms by

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[363] Reynolds, *Musical Exodus*, 19.

[364] Ibid.

[365] Ibid.

[366] A curious irony given that Tordesillas, a province of Valladolid, would house the Islamicate palace that would become the Real Monasterio de Santa Clara. Reynolds, *Musical Exodus*, 20.

[367] Ibid.

[368] The time frame Reynolds suggests would support other cultural traditions and the presence of shared culture as these temporal bookends incorporate the Islamic conquest period, the Andalusi Umayyad Caliphate, the *ta'ifa* period, the *Reconquista* period and emerging national and imperial periods. For a cultural tradition to continue through so many political and religious periods, it could not have been explicitly affiliated with any one of them. Reynolds, *Musical Exodus*, 21.

combining and hybridizing traditions."[369] As with many forms of Islamicate culture, it is clear

that music and musical culture, were likewise considered in the realm of culture and thus

separate and distinct from religious or political considerations, such that it could be included in

religious, civil, and courtly ceremonies despite its multicultural players and Islamicate heritage,

even if that distinction was not as clear or viable to the Church.

In a more direct comparative context to the Islamicate history of the Alcazar, a discussion

regarding Mudéjar architecture in Seville given by Diego Angulo Iñiguez in 1932 and 1933

typifies the problem of monolithization and a failure to recognize hybridity and shared culture.[370]

In his study, focused primarily on local churches and parishes in Seville from the 13th -15th

centuries, Iñiguez struggled to account for the variety of design elements present in these

religious constructions.  Iñiguez identifies three styles of architecture and design present during

this time period in Seville, which he defines as: Almohad (stemming from the original rulers of

Seville prior to the *Reconquista*), Granadan (in which he includes both the Alcazar of Seville and

Alhambra), and the influence of the Marinids of Morocco.[371]  Alongside these three primary

influences, Iñiguez also suggested Toledan *Mudejarismo* and Northern Gothic architecture,

especially in churches, that also impacted the umbrella of Mudéjar design in Seville.  He went so

far as to proclaim Mudéjar architecture in Seville as the child of two styles: Gothic and

Almohad.[372]  By identifying at least five different influential styles that Iñiguez seems to have

imagined as distinct, he may have overlooked the possibility that it was this combination of

influences and their permutations that actually reflect Islamicate shared culture rather than a

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[369] This comment is largely in response to those who imagine any form of cultural exclusivity or monolithization among any group in Al-Andalus. Reynolds, *Musical Exodus*, 21–22.

[370] Diego Angulo Íñiguez and Universidad de Sevilla, *Arquitectura mudéjar sevillana de los siglos XIII, XIV y XV: discurso inaugural del año académico de 1932 a 1933* (Valladolid: Maxtor, 2006).

[371] Angulo Íñiguez and Universidad de Sevilla, *Arquitectura mudéjar sevillana de los siglos XIII, XIV y XV*, 5–6.

[372] "*El mudéjar sevillano es hijo de dos estilos: el gótico, importando por los castellanos y el almohade, vigoroso todavia entre los vencidos al tiempo de la Conquista.*" Ibid.

hodge-podge of independent and exclusive styles. Either way, the continual appearance of

Islamicate designs in religious structures like local churches, parishes, or convents, whether they

stem from Almohad, Marinid, Toledan, or Granadan influences, further solidifies the assertion

that these styles, whatever their origin or influence, were not associated with religion specifically

and existed within larger hybrid cultural matrix.

Outside of shared participation in Islamicate architecture and design, several examples of

regional participation in other forms of Islamicate material culture provide further evidence of a

shared culture that was active across confessional communities in Seville and greater al-Andalus,

including the then extant Muslim-controlled region of Granada.

*Figure 25: Toledan dinar issued by Alfonso VIII*


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[373] Dinar or Maravedi issued in Toledo by Alfonso VIII (dated 1251 (Castilian Calendar)).
http://www.baldwin.co.uk/spain-alfonso-viii-gold-dinar-or-maravedi.html.

*Figure 26: Toledan dinar c. 1213 CE*



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Among the numerous examples of shared culture in Castilian al-Andalus and the surrounding territory is a coin from the reign of Alfonso VIII of Castile (fig. 25).[375] The stamped date is 1251 of the Castilian Calendar, likely placing its issue as sometime before 1212 CE. Another Gold Dinar/Maravedi issued in Toledo in 1213 CE (fig. 26) reads in Arabic, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit," and which Dodds *et al.* suggested was meant to mirror the Muslim *bismillah*.[376] The text in between the central cross and the "ALF" inscription also identifies "the pope as the 'imam' of the Christian church."[377] In a seeming precursor to Alfonso X's multicultural inscriptions for the tomb of Fernando III, Alfonso VIII also used the dominant language of the Toledan population as well as religio-cultural references to Islam, which on the one hand suggest a familiarity and intentional gesture toward a population and culture that were

[374] This example of a Toldedan dinar/maravedi is attributed to Alfonso X, but given the date, 1213 CE and the clear similarity to the earlier sample, this is likely from the reign of Alfonso VIII of Castile and Toledo as well. Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 190.

[375] That Alfonso X was Alfonso VII's namesake is an intriguing coincidence. Ibid.

[376] The invocation, *bismillah al-rahman al-rahim* (In the name of God, the beneficent, the merciful) appears at the opening of nearly every surah of the Qur'an (all but the ninth). Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, 191.

[377] Ibid.

still extant in Toledo, but also the commingling of Christianity and Islam in the numismatic context was clearly not problematic in either realm.[378]

## 4.9   Ceramic Shared Culture

In addition to coins, Islamicate shared culture can be seen in numerous examples of ceramics which were produced in Seville (Triana) as well as in workshops across the region of al-Andalus. In her study of *ataifor* ceramic bowls produced in Seville between the late 12th century, during the Almoravid period, through the Almohad period, and into the *Reconquista* period, Rebecca Bridgeman, found compelling evidence that despite the significant socio-political upheaval, there was "a degree of continuity in society in Seville [which] may have resulted in the relatively limited variation in pottery forms and fabrics."[379]

*Figure 27: Tin-glazed Mudéjar bowl*



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[378] Much like Alfonso XI's throne room, coins also serve as an extension of imperial identity and power, a sentiment which had been in practice since the classical period and certainly well-known and understood in the former Roman province of *Hispanie*. See discussion in Chapter 3 of this document.

[379] In this case the continuity refers to a cultural continuity which remained relatively stable in the case of these ceramic bowls across confessional communities despite the changes in political power. Rebecca Bridgman, Pina López Torres, and Manuel Vera Reina, "Crossing the Cultural Divide? Continuity in Ceramic Production and Consumption between the Almoravid and Mudéjar Periods in Seville," *Al-Masaq* 21, no. 1 (2009): 28.

[380] Unknown, *Tin-Glazed Eathenware Bowl (Mudéjar),* Seville, Spain, c. 1470-1500, Victoria & Albert Museum.

*Figure 28: 15th century glazed bowl from Granada*



[381]

As Bridgeman suggested, large *ataifor* bowls were typically used for shared table meals and "would have been particularly susceptible to any change in dining habits."[382]  As evidenced by the two contemporary ceramics from Seville (fig. 27) and Granada (fig. 28) depicted above, there appears to have been some consistency between dining materials in the Christian and Muslim territories in al-Andalus.  The continuity that Bridgeman observed may again serve as evidence of a shared culture that pervaded in the region and was not particularly susceptible to changes in form, production, or use, even if there may have been changes in decoration.

### 4.9.1   Valencia: A Corollary Context

Due to the wealth of material cultural and other archaeological evidence, Valencia has been studied extensively and offers a window into the possibility of a shared culture that was part of the same one likely operating in Seville.  Captured in 1238 CE from the Almohads by Jaume (James) I of Aragon, Valencia represents a similar scenario to Seville given its cosmopolitan population consisting of Mudéjars, Jews, and descendants of Romans and Goths.  Several studies

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[381] *Bowl with a Vegetal Árabesques*, likely 15th century, ceramic, ceramic glaze, likely 15th century, Granada, Museo Nacional de Arte Hispanomusulmán, http://library.artstor.org.ezproxy.gsu.edu/library/secure/ViewImages?id=%2BCtfeTkiICgoKjNUej5wRHEqWHQn&userId=gDhPej0l&zoomparams=&fs=true.
[382] Bridgman, Torres, and Reina, "Crossing the Cultural Divide?," 17.

of the craft and use of pottery by the residents of Valencia help to illustrate the shared cultural context of the diverse region in a fashion similar to what would have been present in Seville.

Anna McSweeney observed that the Paterna region (Valencia, Spain) followed a similar pattern of production and use that highlights the ongoing interaction with Islamicate or Mudéjar designs and incorporated some similar elements. In these cases, the combination of Islamic and Christian forms, especially with regard to incorporating Christian or royal Christian themes into Islamicate or Mudéjar designs, were similar to those which appeared in the Alcazar of Seville and other examples of Andalusi architecture.

*Figure 29: 14th century Paternaware bowl*



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383 14th century Paterna plate featuring the common Christian visual theme of fish combined with some Islamicate stylistics. Anna McSweeney, "Crossing Borders: Paterna Ceramics in Mudéjar Spain," in *Islamic Art, Architecture and Material Culture* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2012), 59.

*Figure 30: 14th century Paternaware bowl with stylized Kufic*
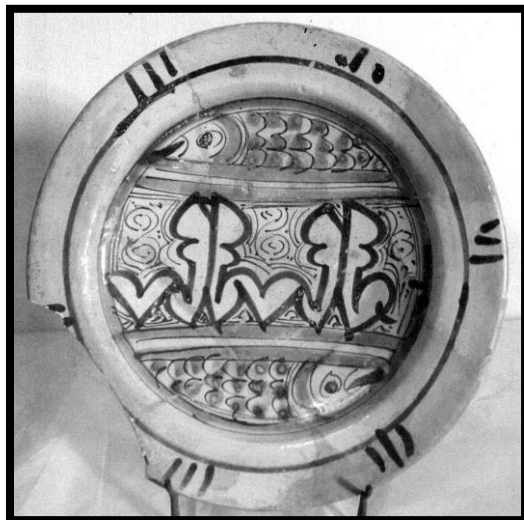


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"In Paterna, the Mudéjar potters decorated their ceramics with a lively mixture of figurative, epigraphic, vegetal and geometric motifs in a style that can be described as neither entirely Islamic nor entirely Christian."[385] What McSweeney described was Islamicate design – of which Mudéjar art is an exemplar.  In this case, as in many others, the Islamicate Mudéjar design grew out of a pre-existing Islamic style that had developed over time and culminated in the post-*Reconquista* manifestation as a seeming hybrid of Islamic and Christian material culture and design.  With regard to shared culture, the Paterna ceramics reflected a cultural form that was not specifically religious and thus could have included forms that were pleasing to commissioners. These forms may have included Islamic or Christian referential material (along with political or military symbolism in the case of both Pedro I and Alfonso XI) to suit the patron, but since they were not specifically religious in nature they would not cross any imagined boundaries and could have survived in various forms, despite a specifically religious conflict in the Crusades or

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[384] 14th century Paterna plate. This more explicit example of shared culture on a contemporary plate from the region also featured the Christian fish theme along with the central stylized *Kufic* decoration that would typify Islamicate Mudéjar designs, especially those coming out of studios in Valencia like Paterna and Manises. McSweeney, "Crossing Borders: Paterna Ceramics in Mudéjar Spain," 60.

[385] McSweeney, "Crossing Borders: Paterna Ceramics in Mudéjar Spain," 53.

*Reconquista*, and alongside the ongoing agonistic environment of religious polemic and law. As McSweeney suggested, Muslims in Valencia who became Mudéjars, were often craftspeople and thus highly valued by the conquering Christians and invited by King Jaume I of Aragon in a 1267 edict to "remain under his protection and practice their crafts."[386] Indeed, documentary evidence suggests that Mudéjar potters in Valencia were independent and maintained an industry for the production of Paternaware within the kingdom.[387]

While of a somewhat different nature due to a combination of economics, taste, and access to resources, Paterna pottery had been produced during the caliphal and *ta'ifa* periods but took on a far larger role in the post-conquest period – again likely due to expanded taste (which might suggest an increased appreciation for Islamicate material due to its perceived association with the high culture of the previous Muslim rulers). Also, increased trade with other Christian lands who produced some of the raw materials like tin from England, provided larger and more consistent access which led to a marked increase in production and demand that expanded beyond Valencia. On this point, according to McSweeney, the Paternaware was part of an Andalusi tradition of decorated tin-glazed open forms that bears hallmarks of similar materials found at *Madinat al-Zahra*.[388] This style of pottery, including the early Islamic motifs, originated in al-Andalus and were influenced by pre-existing models that appeared throughout the Mediterranean and are believed to have originated in Islamic polities like North Africa, Spain, and the Near East.[389] "Unlike the Christian motifs used in ceramics made in Italy and southern France, Paternaware used Islamic images, mixing them with Christian themes, to create

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[386] McSweeney, "Crossing Borders: Paterna Ceramics in Mudéjar Spain," 53.

[387] McSweeney cites contracts from the period in which Muslim (Mudéjar) potters signed their own contracts – suggesting their independence of operation from a Christian patron who would have contracted on their behalf if that had been the situation. McSweeney, "Crossing Borders: Paterna Ceramics in Mudéjar Spain," 55.

[388] In particular, the copper green and manganese brown glazes used for decoration. McSweeney, "Crossing Borders: Paterna Ceramics in Mudéjar Spain," 58.

[389] Ibid.

a uniquely hybrid style of ceramic decoration."[390]  As McSweeney indicated, "the documentary evidence clearly shows that [the ceramics industry in Paterna] was an industry created and run by Mudéjar potters who worked with Christian merchants to market their lively ceramics."[391]  McSweeney also noted that the techniques used by the potters of Paterna "were inherited directly from the Islamic world," in a lineage that "reaches back through *ta'ifa* and caliphal al-Andalus."[392]  And while the lineage may extend to the Islamic period in al-Andalus, the market and designs continued to evolve for the patrons over time and through changes in political and religious rule from the caliphal period, through the Almoravids and Almohads, to the Christians. The seemingly smooth cultural transition between those periods of upheaval suggests the material products of the region were able to maintain their desirability despite the parties in power as the markets likely remained consistent.  That the new Christian patrons continued to want the same ceramics with the same style of designs suggests a similar appreciation that does not seem to be tied to the artisans that produced them or their cultural origins.

In the case of the pottery industry coming out of Manises in another region of Valencia, Spain, the relationship between Christians and Mudéjars may have been less cooperative and symbiotic, but no less reflective of shared Islamicate culture than in Paterna.

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[390] The blending of Mudéjar designs with Christian and/or Gothic thematic elements appears throughout al-Andalus, up to and including both the *Sala de la Justicia* and the Mudéjar Palace in the Alcazar of Seville. McSweeney, "Crossing Borders: Paterna Ceramics in Mudéjar Spain," 61.
[391] Ibid.
[392] Ibid.

*Figure 31: Valencian Bracero dish*



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*Figure 32: Valencian Brasero dish, side view*



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The *Brasero* (Dish) depicted above is of the same use and manner as the *ataifor*, a serving plate meant for shared meals. The design is representative of the Valencian Mudéjar style and features a central heraldic symbol similar to the coat of arms of Leon. While it might be suggestive of a Christian patron, that definitive designation is likely not possible as Paola Chadwick noted, "such blazons were frequently used as decorative emblems of prestige and luxury rather than as identifiers."[395] Chadwick's comments suggest that by the 15th century, even the Spanish

[393] "Dish (*Brasero*) with Heraldic Lion," Valencia, Spain, late 15th-early 16th Century, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art,* accessed July 8, 2017, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/187253.
[394] Side view of *Brasero* with Heraldric Lion, "Dish (Brasero) with Heraldic Lion | Spanish, Valencia | The Met."
[395] Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.) and Maryam Ekhtiar, eds., *Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York : New Haven [Conn.]: Metropolitan Museum of Art ; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2011), 76.

Christian heraldry had become part of the Islamicate design repertoire, much in the same way the previous Islamic designs had been for the Christians centuries before. At the same time, the combination of Christian and Muslim-associated designs which conglomerated in Islamicate Mudéjar material suggests not only that the styles had evolved to incorporate the contributions of successive communities, but that even heraldic designs had become symbolic and evidence of a style that was shared and representative of high culture, separated conceptually from affiliations with specific polities or religions. The Islamicate nature of such designs is suggested by the likelihood that luster painting "was probably first brought to Malaga and Murcia…by Fatimid potters from Egypt in the late twelfth century."[396] Chadwick also indicates that "the appearance of the heraldic device on so many examples affirms that luster-painted ceramics were regarded as precious luxury objects by the Valencian nobility in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and that they were highly coveted in, and exported to, places as far away as Egypt, Algeria, and Sicily."[397] The case of these luster-painted *braseros* and other material across confessional communities seems similar to the use of ivory boxes and other material noted in Toledo and the Northern Kingdoms, but here again suggests commissioning or at least patronage across political and religious spectra since the patrons were likely nobles and wealthy merchants as well as patrons from Egypt and Algeria, then both Muslim territories, along with Sicily, which had been ruled by the Muslim Emirate of Sicily from the mid-ninth century until their ouster by the Normans in the late eleventh century and had an Islamicate history of its own.

The Islamicate themes that pervaded Valencian and Sevillian material culture was widespread and incorporated design elements that echo the decoration in the *Sala de la Justicia*.

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[396] Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.) and Ekhtiar, *Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art*, 76.

[397] Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.) and Ekhtiar, *Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art,* 77.

*Figure 33: Valencian plate with stylized script*



398

*Figure 34: Valencian serving dish with stylized script*



399

Serving plates from Valencia and Manises featuring Islamicate Mudéjar designs and "stylized

kufic and pseudo-kufic script," reflect the intricacy and intermingling of designs which Mark

Meyerson suggested had become popular, even outside of al-Andalus.[400]

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[398] "Plate," Valencia, Spain, late 14th-early 15th century, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, accessed July 8, 2017, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/468520.

[399] "Deep Dish," Valencia, Spain, 1420-1430, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art,* accessed July 8, 2017, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/471784.

[400] "Plate," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

The broad use of Islamicate Mudéjar ceramics can be seen in numerous pieces, including what are described as Pharmacy Jars, which were meant to hold pharmaceutical components, concoctions and even spices.

*Figure 35: Valencian pharmacy jar with stylized script*



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*Figure 36: Valencian pharmacy jar with stylized script*



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[401] "Pharmacy Jar," Manises, Valencia, Spain, c. 1400-1450 CE, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art,* accessed July 8, 2017, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/464680.

[402] "Pharmacy Jar," Manises, Valencia, Spain, c. 1400-1450 CE, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art,* accessed July 8, 2017, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/463086.

*Figure 37: Valencian pharmacy jar with Latin script*



403

In the above samples, all coming from Valencia in the early to mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, the first two jars (figs. 35 & 36) feature stylized kufic script, while the third (fig. 37) features a stylized Latin inscription which is a permutation of the biblical phrase, "IN PRINCIPIO ERAT VERBUM (In the beginning was the Word)"[404] While each possesses similar banded designs and Mudéjar decoration, the stylized Arabic and Latin inscriptions likely reflect patron preferences in the design or decoration, but the overall style of design remains Islamicate suggesting customized variation on the same shared cultural product. The blending of Christian and Islamicate themes on these ceramics mirrors the Paternaware plates that manifested the same hybridity.

In his own study of the Muslims of Valencia, Meyerson noted that Mudéjars in post-conquest Valencia were heavily involved as artisans across several industries from shoemaking to metalwork.[405]  Meyerson detailed an extensive legal program in 15<sup>th</sup> century Valencia which sought to curtail Mudéjar and Jewish artisans through prohibitions against work days, guild

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[403] "Pharmacy Jar," Manises, Valencia, Spain, c. 1400-1450 CE, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art* accessed July 8, 2017, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/471749.
[404] "Pharmacy Jar | Spanish | The Met."
[405] Mark D. Meyerson, *The Muslims of Valencia in the Age of Fernando and Isabel: Between Coexistence and Crusade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 128–34.

formation and membership and in favor of Christian monopolization of some industries.[406]

Meyerson noted that these legal prohibitions and restrictions, like many such restrictions in other

kingdoms with regard to Christians, Muslims, and Jews, may not have had the same real world

impact that the imagined world of the law suggests. Meyerson contended that "Muslim and

Christian [artisans] seem to have coexisted amicably enough," often sharing workspaces,

materials, and standing for each other as surety in business credit (predominantly with the

Christians doing so for Muslim artisans).[407] In the case of Mudéjar artisans in Valencia, it seems

there was at least some mirror for the law vs. reality dichotomy that affected Seville interactions.

Meyerson also indicated that "artisans were usually artisan-retailers, responsible for both

manufacturing and selling their wares."[408] As a result, the Muslim and Jewish artisans were also

selling their wares to the citizens of Valencia, likely across religious lines in some cases, but

Meyerson also details artisans working and selling beyond Valencia.[409]

The comparative examples taken from Valencia seem to mirror similar patronage and

production in Seville and Triana. It is also likely that the material cultural situation in Seville

may have been even more amenable than that in Valencia given the former city's history of

cosmopolitanism. On another level, the later dates of some of the material, suggest that

appreciation and patronage of Islamicate ceramics was still ongoing after the transition to more

exclusivist political and religious contexts that took place in the region. The ceramics, like

architecture, both seem to have existed in a context that was separate and distinct from political

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[406] In some cases Mudéjars were prohibited from working in some industries for fear that they would transfer technologies like crossbow manufacture to their coreligionists in Muslim controlled territory. Meyerson, *The Muslims of Valencia*, 128-134.

[407] Meyerson reports considerable cooperation between Muslim and Christian artisans which would belie the legal constructs that suggest animosity and competition. Meyerson, *The Muslims of Valencia*, 131.

[408] Meyerson, *The Muslims of Valencia*, 132.

[409] As reflected in the markets for both Paternaware and Manises pottery. Ibid.

or religious affiliations, which is especially pronounced when the political and religious conflicts amplified and became more contentious.

## 4.10  Other Forms of Shared Culture

The purpose behind all of the gestures toward shared culture is to cement the concept of an interactive cosmopolitan Islamicate community that possessed a shared visual language and material culture that crossed political and religious boundaries in such a way that would make hybrid material culture, and especially architecture like the Alcazar of Seville reasonable and intelligible to the people of al-Andalus, even if that material appeared wildly inappropriate to those outside of its shared cultural context. To be clear, the participation was not merely in architecture and ceramic material culture, but rather that both of those genres of material were part of the larger shared cultural landscape.  As the *Sala de la Justicia* revealed, an Islamicate building or structure was not merely a decoration, but reflected a symbolic connection to the past as well as a projection of power and authority imbued by that connection.  The use of *braseros* and *ataifors*, while again useful for projecting connection, luxury, and refinement, also reflected a particular style of cuisine and manner of eating that seemed to be shared.  Music, literature, entertainment, and intellectual pursuits also seem to be shared.  Even clothing and its value as a cultural identifier, which was frequently the subject of Church decrees and Royal laws, seems to have been shared in the context of Castilian al-Andalus.  On the one hand, J. N. Hillgarth indicated that "there was a tendency to imitate the appearance of the rival community."[410] "Christians (Mozarabs)…in Toledo continued to dress very much [like the Muslims] as did the Mudéjars.  Their women wore veils when they left the house."[411]  On the other hand, Hillgarth

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[410] Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms*, 168.
[411] Ibid.

reported a comment from Ibn Sa'id, who in the late thirteenth century noted that "Sultans and warriors [of Granada] imitate the dress of the Christians,"[412] a situation corroborated by Ibn Khaldun, who later remarked that "Spanish Muslims 'assimilate themselves to the [Christians] in their dress, their emblems, and most of their customs and conditions.'"[413] Hillgarth noted that even "Christian liturgical vestments of this century [13th] bear Arabic inscriptions."[414] While this last comment would again clearly draw a line between the consideration of cultural products within the framework of religion, the entire issue of dress coincides with all the other forms of shared culture discussed in this section. If Muslims in Granada, Mozarabs in Toledo, or Christian clerics in al-Andalus shared boundary crossing clothing styles, the idea that each also seemed to be reflecting styles of dress that were considered grand and possibly reflecting power and authority are likely and seem to mirror many other material interactions and motivations on the cultural level. However, like several other commentators, Hillgarth may have monolithicized and projected modern identity categorization backward in time. As would seem clear, it was likely not the case that Muslims, Christians, and Jews were imitating each other's' distinctive cultural products, but rather that they were all participating in customizable forms of shared culture similar to that seen in the plates, bowls, and pharmacy jars. Islamicate shared culture could therefore be seen at all levels of society and across confessional communities. It is this Islamicate shared culture that contextualizes and explains the cosmopolitan milieu of al-Andalus and the contextual framework in which post-*Reconquista* architecture and material culture was created.

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[412] Bermúdez López noted "Nasrid Granada had a large colony of merchants from Genoa and Venice who greatly influenced the court." This influence also may have inspired some of the vault paintings in the Alhambra's *Sala de los Reyes*. Jesús Bermúdez López, *The Alhambra and the Generalife: Official Guide* (Madrid: TF, 2010), 140.

[413] Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms*, 168.

[414] Which may in turn justify the burial cloaks and repose cushions noted for Fernando III and members of the Castilian Royal family in the same time period. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms*, 169.

# 5    THE SYNOPTIC CONSTRUCTIONS

The central argument of this dissertation is that there was an Islamicate shared culture which existed between the three confessional communities (Muslims, Christians, and Jews) in al-Andalus.  This shared culture existed separately from affiliations with the respective religious and political spheres of the participants such that architectural designs and decorations, along with a host of other cultural permutations could coexist amidst ongoing antagonism and conflict in other spheres.  As manifested in building constructions and material culture from all three communities, Islamicate shared culture also included a common visual language which could be customized to reflect the personal choices of the patrons.  As a result, Islamicate shared culture permeated al-Andalus over the course of several centuries, but reached its height during the 14th century with several building projects commissioned by prominent rulers each community which incorporated the shared style and visual language into their projects.

The shared visual language and culture in al-Andalus being proposed influenced material production throughout the 13th and 14th centuries.  This form of cosmopolitan culture, being referred to as Islamicate, can be most clearly seen in a series of elite and royal constructions from the mid to late 14th century.  New building projects in the Royal Palace (and later convent) at Tordesillas, the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* in Toledo, the Mudéjar Palace at the Alcazar of Seville, and Muhammad V's improvements and new constructions at the Alhambra of Granada were all products of the shared Islamicate culture that crossed religious, social, and political lines to produce some of the most representative constructions of the Mudéjar period in al-Andalus. Each of these projects, completed over a period of less than 15 years represented the penultimate expression of Mudéjar architecture and design as well as clear manifestations of Islamicate shared culture.  Arguably, the continued production and patronization of Islamicate material

culture that carried on for more than a century after the demise of several of its most prominent patrons, Pedro I, Samuel ha-Levi, and Nasrid ruler, Muhammad V, served as the crowning achievements and lasting legacy of these patrons.

This chapter will examine four elite and royal building projects that incorporated many of the Mudéjar design elements that had been developing since the Almohad period in al-Andalus to illustrate the continued presence and influence of Islamicate shared culture that influenced palatial and religious construction projects at the highest level. A Castilian king, a Nasrid sultan and a Jewish minister all commissioned constructions during this period, in many cases sharing artisans and craftspeople and producing some of the most recognizable and influential examples of Mudéjar architecture and design. The cohesion in style and design, which while still reflecting customized elements relevant to each patron's individual context, suggest a shared visual language and foundational design repertoire that could be molded to the needs and desires of each patron.

As seen with the *Sala de la Justicia* in the Alcazar of Seville and the constructions of Yusuf I in the Alhambra, a particular form of triumphalism was again suggested as a rationale for some of the designs (in this case with Muhammad V's contribution to the Alhambra in Granada). At the same time, a new explanation, hereafter known as the "default theory," was proposed as an explanation for the similarity of designs and styles as opposed to that of a shared culture and visual language being offered here. An examination of both of these theoretical explanations (triumphalism and default) reveals that while valid on some levels, they ultimately serve to cement Islamicate shared culture as the most likely explanation suitable for the long cosmopolitan history in medieval al-Andalus and the Islamicate cultural orientation of the patrons, regardless of their religious, political, or social affiliations.

## 5.1   The "Default Theory"

Much like the inverted triumphalism attributed to Alfonso XI and his construction of the *Sala de la Justicia*, Pedro I would also be subject to an alternative assertion regarding his commission and construction of the Mudéjar Palace and other Islamicate constructions in Castile and al-Andalus.  Dubbed the "default theory" by Ruggles,[415] the explanation argues that Mudéjar architecture and designs were largely the result of a "default" aesthetic prompted by the available "local" artisans (frequently Muslim) and materials that were readily available.  A "default theory" had been proposed often enough with regard to the designation of the Mudéjar style that he directly addressed it in his article, "Architectural Languages, Functions, and Spaces: The Crown of Castile and al-Andalus."[416]

The "default theory" has also been promoted by Pedro I's most recent biographer, historian Clara Estow.[417]  Estow argued that Pedro's commission and selection of Mudéjar designs and aesthetics in his Mudéjar Palace at the Alcazar of Seville was not the result of a particular preference on the King's part, but rather was due to the prevailing regional design style along with the availability of artisans and materials and their convenience.[418]  Estow also suggested that the decorative plaster common to Mudéjar designs were cheaper, concluding "Pedro's *alcazar*, if a tribute [to anything] at all, is probably more to the king's parsimony than to his presumed favoritism toward Muslims."[419]  Estow was attempting to make a point about Pedro's presumed favoritism toward both Muslims and Jews that had been attributed to him in the wake of charges by his rival and eventual murderer, Enrique de Trastamara.  In a 1366 CE grievance

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[415] D. Fairchild Ruggles, "The Alcazar of Seville and Mudéjar Architecture," *Gesta* 43, no. 2 (2004): 95.
[416] Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages, Functions, and Spaces: The Crown of Castile and Al-Andalus," *Medieval Encounters* 12, no. 3 (2006): 360–87, https://doi.org/10.1163/157006706779166084.
[417] Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile,* 174–75.
[418] Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile,* 176.
[419] Ibid.

against Pedro I, issued in Burgos, Enrique referred to Pedro as "*tiranno malo enemigo de Dios* (tyrannous evil enemy of God)." and accused him of "*acreçentando e enrrequiçiendo los moros e los iudios e enseñorandolos e abaxando la fe catolica de nuestro Señor Jhesu Christo* (promoting and enriching Moors and Jews and ennobling them and abandoning the Catholic faith of our Lord Jesus Christ)."[420]  Estow contended that such charges, along with Pedro's own activities have given him the false characterization of having what she described as "orientalist sympathies."[421]  Unfortunately, Estow's and others' "default theory" runs up against the same difficulties as Dodds' "triumphalism theory."  With regard to Pedro I's renovations in the Alcazar, no matter how convenient or inexpensive Mudéjar designs and building techniques may have been it is unlikely that he would have been comfortable with phrases like the *shahada* of Islam, the Nasrid motto, and other Qur'anic references being inscribed on the walls of his palace by local artisans without his approval, regardless of his preferences or sympathies.  Also, the Mudéjar designs featuring these and similar inscriptions, were not only used in the public areas of the Alcazar but in Pedro's private quarters.  Thus, similar to Alfonso XI's throne room, Pedro's private residence literally contained him and was not meant for the public, so the choice to maintain the Mudéjar design in his own chambers had to have been intentional. The idea of a "default" style is further complicated by the palace at Tordesillas, which pre-dates the Mudéjar Palace in the Alcazar of Seville.  Pedro's renovation of Tordesillas is also in the Mudéjar style – a structure that was later willed to the Church as a monastery and convent.[422] The same Islamicate Mudéjar style was also employed by Samuel ha-Levi for the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* as

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[420] Luciano Serrano, *Cartulario del Infantado de Covarrubias* (Madrid : Gregorio del Amo, 1907), 217, http://archive.org/details/cartulariodelinf02serr.

[421] Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1350-1369*, 175.

[422] Pedro I made two proclamations in 1363 regarding the Palace at Tordesillas being converted to a monastery and convent, later known as Santa Clara de Tordesillas. Luis Vicente Díaz Martín, *Itinerario de Pedro I de Castilla: Estudio Y Regesta* (Valladolid: Universidad, Secretariado de Publicaciones, 1975), 391, 396.

well as by Muhammad V of Granada for his own constructions within the Alhambra.  Given the widespread prevalence of this particular style, there must have been more to the use of Mudéjar designs than simply convenience and economy.

Although potentially correct in some respects, a default style of design occurring on such a large and widespread scale is problematic and may suggest that Estow was making the same monolithization error as other scholars.  The misinterpretation of Pedro I that she was attempting to correct, that Pedro was an orientalist, is again based on the idea that there was an understood Islamic style that was in turn associated with Islam writ large that would then be something Enrique de Trastamara could exploit.  More succinctly, the only way for Pedro to have been perceived as an "orientalist" is if Mudéjar designs were seen as "oriental."  Perceptions of orientalism in this context, especially in the categorization of "oriental" as something foreign, other, or non-traditional, is anachronistic and factually inaccurate.  If anything, the so-called "oriental" style would prove to be the norm for al-Andalus, regardless of political or religious affiliations.  As a result, whatever style might be suggested in place of something Islamicate, like Gothic or Romanesque, had popularity outside of the region but were considerably underrepresented locally.  Thus, these alternative styles would actually be more unfamiliar and uncommon in al-Andalus, possibly making non-Mudéjar styles non-traditional or "other," not the other way around.  As such, the suggestion of "orientalism" leads to the second issue.  There is no contextual support for Enrique attacking Pedro over architecture or design.  Enrique, having lived at various times in both Castilian and Aragonite territory, would be familiar with Mudéjar designs.  Furthermore, upon murdering Pedro and taking his throne, Enrique did not destroy or otherwise eradicate Mudéjar material culture either in the palace or his new territory.  In fact,

Mudéjar material and Islamicate culture remained popular throughout al-Andalus and the surrounding territory for generations after Pedro's death.

In her analysis of *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, Art Historian Cynthia Robinson pushed back against interpretations of Islamicate Mudéjar design and the triumphalism interpretations championed by scholars like Jerrilynn Dodds and other orientalist-style interpretations. She classified these interpretations as those seen through a "generalized 'fascination' lens," which reflected more generous interpretations of orientalism.[423] Robinson's stated intent was to examine *Santa Clara de Tordesillas* as the product of a shared visual language. As she argued, this shared visual language "was generated not by the appropriation of a category of motifs, or of an aesthetic by one tradition from another entirely separate from it, but by the participation of specific groups from among the practitioners of all three traditions in the creation of a devotional language, literature, practice, and visual tradition."[424] Furthermore, she argued that the shared language was not a manifestation of the moment, but rather the product of long-term interactions between the three confessional communities.[425] In other words, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, along with the other constructions in this time frame were all manifestations of Islamicate shared culture. Thus, far more than a default style or style of convenience or parsimony, Mudéjar designs, as reflections of Islamicate shared culture, also represented, majesty, grandeur and a reflection of power. Their adoption by a Catholic king, a Muslim Emir, and a Jewish minister; used respectively in religious, personal, and political contexts all suggest that the style was both intentional and meaningful. As Ruggles also contended, these designs were clearly choices made by patrons.[426]

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[423] Robinson, "Mudéjar Revisited," 51.
[424] Robinson, "Mudéjar Revisited," 53.
[425] Robinson, "Mudéjar Revisited," 52.
[426] Ruggles, "The Alcazar of Seville," 97.

Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, confirmed the arguments made by Ruggles regarding choice in the

design decisions by royal patrons, and argued that the Palace at Tordesillas could not have been

constructed in such a way without the blessing of the patron.[427]  Furthermore, due to the

numerous relationships, sponsors, and close temporal proximity of the constructions, the Palace

at Tordesillas, Muhammad V's constructions in the Alhambra, Samuel ha-Levi's *Sinagoga del

Tránsito* and the Mudéjar Palace in the Alcazar of Seville should all be considered Andalusian

architecture.[428]

## 5.2  The Synoptic Constructions

As examples of Islamicate or Andalusian architecture, the Palace at Tordesillas, the *Sinagoga

del Tránsito*, the Mudéjar Palace at the Alcazar of Seville, and Muhammad V's building in the

Alhambra of Granada reflect what might be considered synoptic constructions or constructions

and building projects that are best read or viewed together.  These correlated constructions are

understood as cross-influential on each other as well as embodying a unity that reflects shared

Islamicate culture.  In addition to the projects themselves, their patrons Pedro I, Samuel ha-Levi,

and Muhammad V are equally important in this context as their relationships with each other and

their constructions were equally shared and intertwined, likely resulting in the wide

dissemination of the Islamicate shared culture to their respective projects and communities.

With regard to explanations like the so-called "default theory" or other interpretations based

on any socio-ethnic grouping of workers, Ruiz Souza confirmed that project-based constructions

during the medieval period and into the early modern period were regularly the result of multiple

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[427] "*Ya que este palacio vallisoletano jamas hubiera sido posible sin los deseos de sus promotores, creemos justo que se estudie dentro de la arquitectura andalusi*." Ibid. Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages, " 330.
[428] Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, "El Patio Del Vergel Del Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas Y La Alhambra de Granada. Reflexiones Para Su Estudio," *Al-Qantara: Revista de Estudios Árabes* 19, no. 2 (1998): 315–335, 330.

workshops working collectively on projects.[429]  As he stated, "the ethnic origin of the workforce

cannot be the determining factor in the appearance of a finished product since artisans of

different religions worked on the same construction site."[430]  That said, it is likely that there were

specialists used at Tordesillas and some of them may have been sent by or borrowed from

Muhammad V of Granada.[431]  However, even if there were Mudéjar or Muslim artisans working

on the Palace at Tordesillas or indeed every construction discussed in this chapter, it is doubtful

that their stylistic influence was transcendent.  Given the widespread appearance of

Islamicate/Mudéjar stylistics in constructions across al-Andalus, Ruiz Souza indicated that it

would have been "highly unlikely that the contribution of a clearly marginal segment of the

population established the aesthetic criteria for all of Iberia during the entire later Middle

Ages."[432]  It is far more likely that design elements and stylistics that have been termed

"Mudéjar" were not only separate from the ethno-religious group of the same name but were

reflective of the shared cultural language and identity of al-Andalus and the greater Iberian

community regardless of their religious affiliations.

   Tordesillas, Toledo, Seville, and Granada contain synoptic constructions that are part of the

Andalusi architectural canon.  The idea that shared Islamicate culture developed and evolved

over the course of several generations following the Castilian defeat of the Almohads is a

testament to the popularity of these designs along with the likelihood that they represented ideas

and identities that were commonly understood in al-Andalus and beyond.  While palatial and

religious constructions by the prominent members of the three confessional communities in al-

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[429] This explanation stands in contrast to theories that suggests Mudéjar constructions were built by Mudéjars vs. a wide variety of specialized artisans.  Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 363.

[430] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 364.

[431] Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 14.

[432] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 364.

Andalus served as inspiration and example for other constructions, Ruiz Souza indicated that the intricacy and delicacy of the designs had "become corrupted by less skilled workmanship," leading to "a greatly simplified and repetitive formal language."[433]  It is likely this same simplified and repetitive visual language that found its way into the ceramic workshops of Seville and Valencia so that the same inspirational and representative material could reach a wider audience, even if the specificity of the designs, symbols, or inscriptions were no longer coherent or representative.

The connectivity between the Islamicate designs in al-Andalus and their origins within the communities under Islamic rule prior to the Reconquista is clear.  As Ruiz Souza observed, the façades that appeared on educational institutions built by Castilians in this time period resembled those in Granada and other Islamic polities.[434]  Ruiz Souza noted that "if a Muslim [from outside Iberia] had visited the finished structures of [*Colegio de*] San Gregorio in Valladolid or the University of Salamanca during the sixteenth century, he would have no doubt that he was standing in front of two educational institutions."[435]  While the Islamicate heritage would have been evident to such a visitor, Ruiz Souza pointed out that "the formal [visual] vocabulary utilized in each specific instance [would have been] change[d] radically."[436]  This case further exemplifies that while Islamicate shared culture confirms its Islamic heritage, it had become Iberianized and reflective of an Andalusi culture that was far more diverse with vastly different influences than its Muslim ancestry would provide.

For his part, Ruiz Souza is concerned about what he considered to be the false importance of the ethnic or confessional affiliation of the construction worker on the design of the projects they

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[433] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 366.
[434] Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 372.
[435] Ibid.
[436] Ibid.

were working on.  Unfortunately, Ruiz Souza was likely responding to perceptions regarding Mudéjar "art" that existed within a monolithicized framework in which Mudéjars make Mudéjar art, Christians make Christian art, etc.  The cosmopolitan context of al-Andalus, however, and the diverse and pluralistic nature of its communities, including its artisanal workshops, decries such categorization.  In concluding, Ruiz Souza asked "Do we not distort reality by trying to identify the ethnic or confessional origins of any individual architectural element? And accompanying this question would be an even more difficult one.  Specifically, the difficult question of just how often a patron or master would actually have been conscious of, or concerned about, the different origins of each and every element that constituted a local architectural tradition."[437]  In response to this question it could be suggested that the thought likely wouldn't have occurred to them at all as the question would likely never have been asked or even considered in the first place. In al-Andalus and Iberia, these elements had likely lost any affiliation with religion, ethnicity, or politics, and would rather have been seen as Andalusi and thereby removing the need for questions about origins or affiliations.  Once again, such identity-based monolithic conceptions of material or society would have been contemporarily anachronistic and thus such questions would be the product of a modern scholarly sensibility and not that of a medieval patron or master.

If it is indeed the case that the synoptic Andalusi constructions shared a visual language and reflected the contributions of Islamicate culture over time then a closer look at these constructions should reveal it.

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[437]  Ruiz Souza, "Architectural Languages," 373.

## 5.3    The Palace at Tordesillas

*Figure 38: Real Monasterio de Santa Clara*



438

The Royal Palace at Tordesillas (later the *Real Monasterio de Santa Clara*) is the first of the four synoptic 14th century Islamicate constructions. The specific constructions related to Tordesillas in this comparison derive from Pedro I and his mistress Maria de Padilla and were built between 1354 – 1361 CE. The Palace and the subsequent monastery and convent are significant in that they likely represent the first of Pedro I's patronage in the Mudéjar style and would provide a trajectory for the future Islamicate projects connected to it through artisans, designs, and materials. At the same time, despite its primary status in this group, the palace at Tordesillas was nonetheless already a part of the pre-existing Islamicate culture of al-Andalus.

The palace contains many familiar design elements and features that connect it to other constructions and traditions in the region, including references to Almohad designs as well as early post-Reconquista Islamicate designs from Toledo. Beyond these references, the evidence of shared visual language is apparent and construction analysis suggests there may even have

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[438] Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Valladolid*, 12–13.

been a specific building metric or measurement that linked Tordesillas with the other synoptic

constructions in al-Andalus as well as to other Islamic and Islamicate projects outside of Iberia.

One of the critical links between Tordesillas, the synoptic constructions, and the larger visual

canon of al-Andalus may be in this particular building metric. Art Historian Ángel González

Hernández observed that the palace at Tordesillas, the Alhambra of Granada, the Mudéjar Palace

in Seville, and the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* in Toledo share an architectural kinship through the use

of a modular system built around what he termed the "Mamluk cubit" of 54 centimeters.[439] This

building metric, which was applied across the region, links these constructions together

structurally, but also suggests the ongoing development of the Islamicate style. This Mamluk

cubit based modular system was combined with the previous Almohad designs and influences in

the ongoing evolution of the Mudéjar style. The combination of buildings with earlier design

metrics alongside those with the newer Mamluk cubit system also occurred with the Alhambra,

Alcazar, and palace at Tordesillas. At Tordesillas, for example, the Gilded Chapel, which

extended in part to earlier Almohad or Almohad-influenced designs incorporated newer Mamluk

cubit-based designs in Pedro's later renovation. Similar combinations and exchanges were also

evident in Moroccan buildings over the same stretch of time suggesting that the new modular

system was a part of the shared culture that existed across polities and confessional communities.

Because the Mamluk cubit was in use among builders from Granada, González Hernández

suggested that the Mudéjar style of Pedro I's palace construction and his renovation at

Tordesillas were more highly influenced by Nasrid design than the Almohad design that likely

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[439] "Mamluk" refers to the Egyptian Sultanate that ruled from Cairo c. 1250-1517 CE who were prominent builders during their reign. The modular system and its Mamluk cubit base were found in constructions across al-Andalus during Pedro's reign, but also in the Marinid Magreb, where it also likely meshed with Almohad-influenced designs. Ángel González Hernández "De Nuevo Sobre el Palacio del Rey Don Pedro I en Tordesillas," *Reales Sitios*, no. 171 (2007), 16.

influenced the construction of the earlier Gilded Chapel.[440] As such, he believed that the designs

in Pedro's renovation of Tordesillas were better described as Nasrid, rather than Mudéjar, since

the style, construction technique, and workers likely came from that point of origin. Based on

his interpretation of José Amador de los Ríos who coined the term "Nasrid," González

Hernández contended that the term is therefore a more apt descriptor of the designs in

Tordesillas, "*ya que estimamos que «lo mudéjar» se debe referir, exclusivamente, a*

*construcciones ejecutadas con técnicas y modos islámicos, pero siguiendo esquemas y plantas, o*

*alzados, de origen cristiano en sus líneas generals*."[441]

While González Hernández identified a significant architectural link between these

constructions, it may inspire a radically different interpretation in the Islamicate shared culture

theory. Rather than requiring an alternative to the term "Mudéjar," the presence of what he

described as Nasrid influences should instead suggest a reimagining of the term Mudéjar itself.

By so tightly defining the term Mudéjar, González Hernández created another exclusive

monolithization where all these descriptors referenced one singular concept or designation.

Alternatively, if Mudéjar is instead envisioned as a reference or signal of Islamicate shared

culture, the interplay between Almohad, Mamluk, Mudéjar, and Nasrid elements makes much

more sense. In this way, what Pedro was doing architecturally in Tordesillas was part of the

same shared visual language and culture as that found among Muslims in Granada, Marinids in

the Maghreb, and Christians and Jews in al-Andalus. And, when taken together with Ruiz

Souza's intervention into assertions about the ethnic or confessional affiliations of workers or

workshops, it is far more likely that what González Hernández was seeing as exclusively Nasrid

was simply part of a larger whole. Even if the Mamluk cubit model did derive from Nasrid

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[440] Ángel González Hernández, *Reales Sitios*, 16.
[441] Ángel González Hernández, *Reales Sitios,* 20.

architectural techniques, the design elements and decorations being used across al-Andalus reflect the same patron-led customization and blending of styles endemic of Islamicate shared culture and far more likely represent the ongoing evolution of the shared style over time.

*Figure 39: Patio del Vergel, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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As a case in point, in his analysis of the *Patio del Vergel* in the *Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas* (fig. 39), Ruiz Souza noted the similarities between aspects of the construction of this courtyard and monastery with the *Patio de los Leones* (Courtyard of the Lions) constructed by Muhammad V in the Alhambra.[443]  Ruiz Souza also observed that the construction of this patio as well as other aspects of the palace that once sat on this space were

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[442] *Patio del Vergel*, *Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, Tordesillas, Spain. https://www.patrimonionacional.es/sites/default/files/img_7892.jpg, 9/23/2017.

[443] See Ruiz Souza, "El Patio Del Vergel Del Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas y La Alhambra de Granada. Reflexiones Para Su Estudio."

the product of multiple influences vs. the primarily Nasrid influences that González Hernández noted.  As further evidence on this point, the "Nasrid" style was itself a product of multiple influences, including the earlier Islamicate styles in al-Andalus and the *Maghreb*. Ruiz Souza highlighted numerous influences on the Palace at Tordesillas in terms of the patio design ranging from "*la casa de La Alberquilla de Madlnat al-Zahra' (siglo X), en el patio de crucero de Ia Casa de Ia Contratacion de Sevilla (siglo XII) y en el Alcazar de los Reyes Cristianos de Córdoba (siglo XIV).*"[444]  And in the case of the *crucero* (transept) influences, those linkages extend back to Latin Church designs.

*Figure 40: Patio Árabes, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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[444] Ruiz Souza, "El Patio Del Vergel," 319.
[445] *Patio Árabes* (Arab Courtyard), Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas,* 24–25.

*Figure 41: Poly-lobed arch detail, Patio Árabes*



446

While there are numerous commonalities between Pedro's renovations to the palace at Tordesillas and the other synoptic constructions, perhaps the most significant is the *Patio Árabes* (Arab Courtyard). The *Patio Árabes* (fig. 41) featured poly-lobed arches, *ataurique* stucco decoration, planked wood overhangs, and *alicatados* mosaic (*dado*) designs, all of which were part of the shared Islamicate visual language. These elements, combined with the influence and patronage by Pedro I, would solidify them along with the Royal Palace at Tordesillas in general, as inspirations for future constructions including the other synoptic structures. While the palace at Tordesillas will be a major source of discussion going forward in relationship to Islamicate shared culture theory, the shared visual language is evident in the synoptic constructions and the breadth of these influences and language already appeared in the Royal Palaces' "Arab baths."

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446 Poly-lobed arch detail, *Patio Árabes*, Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Toledo, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

### 5.3.1   The "Arab" Baths

*Figure 42: Baños Árabes, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*
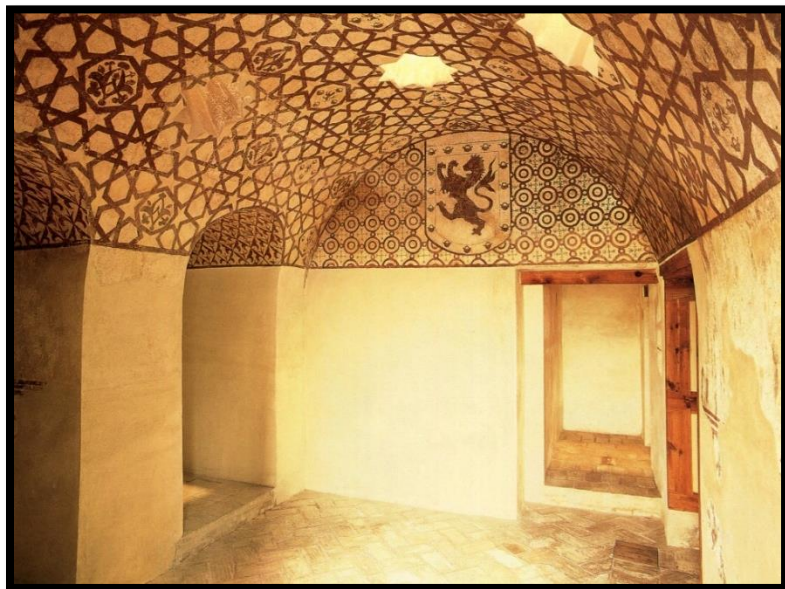


447

The *Baños Árabes* (Arab Baths) located in the lower region of the present monastery/convent

are largely an architectural palimpsest of the Palace's history while also illustrating the far

reaching influence and presence of shared Islamicate culture.  The dating and origin of the baths

themselves are unknown.  Cynthia Robinson noted that there is a documented history of Juana

Manual (1339-1381 CE), Queen Consort of Enrique de Trastamara, making improvements and

renovations to the baths.[448] And Carmen García-Frías Checa confirmed that a license was

granted to Juana Manuel to connect the baths to the convent proper.[449]  Checa also argued that

the "origin [of the heraldry depicted above] must be traced back to the great moment when the

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[447] Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 71.

[448] While being unable to determine a specific date of origin for the specifics of the decorations in the baths, Robinson conceded that the fact that Juana Manual was restoring, rather than building, likely suggests that the bath and possibly some of their decoration was extant. Robinson, "Mudéjar Revisited," 53–54.

[449] The baths had been part of the original Palace built by Pedro I and had not been part of the monastery and convent after the 1363 gift. Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 75.

palace was built during the time of Pedro I in the 1350s."[450]  The painted designs on the ceiling

are of the *girih* or *lacería* design that is a recurring theme across the synoptic constructions, but

also a design feature that had been part of Islamic art for centuries.  The eight-point stars carved

out of the ceiling structure served a dual purpose, to act as skylights bringing light in, while also

serving as vents to allow steam from the baths to escape.  Like the *girih* designs, the star carvings

were also a common feature of Islamic period baths in al-Andalus.

*Figure 43: Baños Árabes de Ceuta*



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[450] Some dispute exists of the origin of the entire complex, with some evidence suggesting an earlier construction under Alfonso XI c. 1340 CE, so the ultimate dating of the baths is in flux, especially given the conflicting design elements present. Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 75.
[451] Interior, *Baños Árabes de Ceuta*, Marek, own work, 12/07/2011. Creative Commons license 3.0.

*Figure 44: Hammam interior, Alhambra*



452

In two examples from al-Andalus, the eight-point star carving appeared in both the baths in Ceuta (fig. 43) and the Alhambra of Granada (fig. 44). Both of these baths also featured the vaulted ceilings, brick work and horseshoe arches that were equally emblematic of Islamicate design.

*Figure 45: Brick work detail, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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[452] Interior, Hammam Alhambra, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[453] Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 75.

*Figure 46: Tile detail, Hammam, Alhambra*



454

The above images taken from Tordesillas (fig. 45) and Granada (fig. 46) further connect the

baths of al-Andalus.  Tordesillas featured the brick work and horseshoe arches common to these

structures and the image from the Alhambra *Hammam* also holds remnants of the *alicatados*

mosaic that served as the interior wall décor for the bath.

*Figure 47: Tepidarium, Banos Árabes, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*
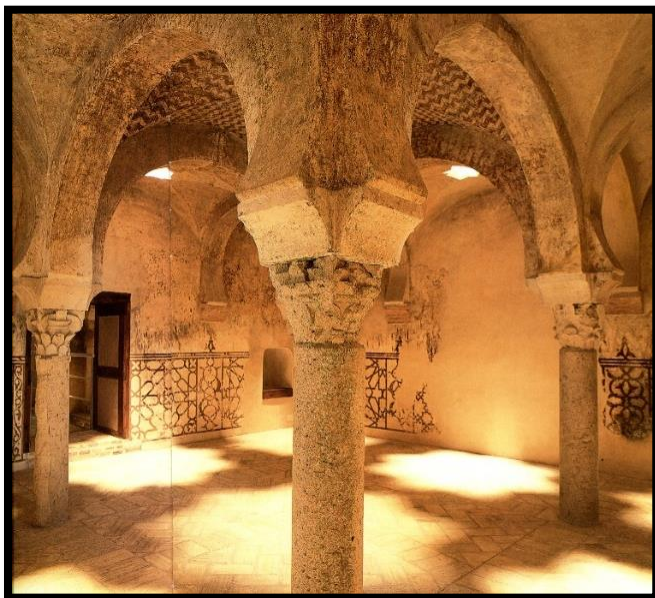


455

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[454] Interior with wall tile detail, Hammam Alhambra, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 05/21/2016.
[455] Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 73.

*Figure 48: Tile detail, Hammam, Alhambra*
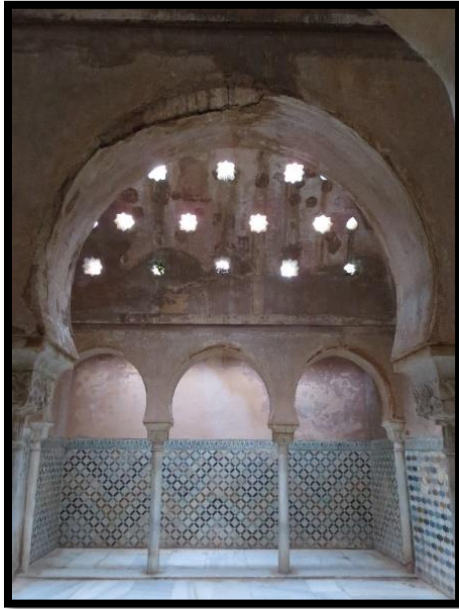


456

In the above image (fig. 47), taken from the *bayt al-wastani* (*tepidarium*) of the *Baños Árabes* in the Palace at Tordesillas, several of these elements come together. The vaulted ceiling, star carvings, and horseshoe arches are all present. The *alicatados* mosaic also decorated the *dado* of the bath, but in this case was drawn rather than tiled. The room also features capitals, that Checa indicates are of Almohad origin "and are similar to those in the Arab Courtyard [of Santa Clara de Tordesillas]."[457] The *hammam* at the Alhambra (fig. 48) also includes several similar elements including the capitals, arches, vaulted ceiling and *alicatados* mosaic on the *dado*. In just these few examples, one architectural space (a bath) stylistically, and arguably culturally, links a Christian palace and later monastery with a Muslim palace. And, as discussed previously, at least some of the renovations to the bath were completed by the Queen Consort of Enrique de Trastamara, the same individual who allegedly attacked Pedro I over his supposed "orientalism" per Estow.

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[456] Tile detail, *Hammam* Alhambra, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.
[457] The capitals themselves are not Almohad specifically, just the design. Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 74.

The *Baños Árabes* and the larger palace at Tordesillas also provide links to a Jewish synagogue in Toledo. The *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, parts of which may have been built concurrently or even before some elements of the palace at Tordesillas, share numerous similarities. Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale noted that *El Tránsito's* patron Samuel ha-Levi used the same workshop (*atelier*) that had worked on Pedro's palace at Tordesillas, so the presence of shared visual culture would be expected.[458]

*Figure 49: Underground vault, Museo del Greco*
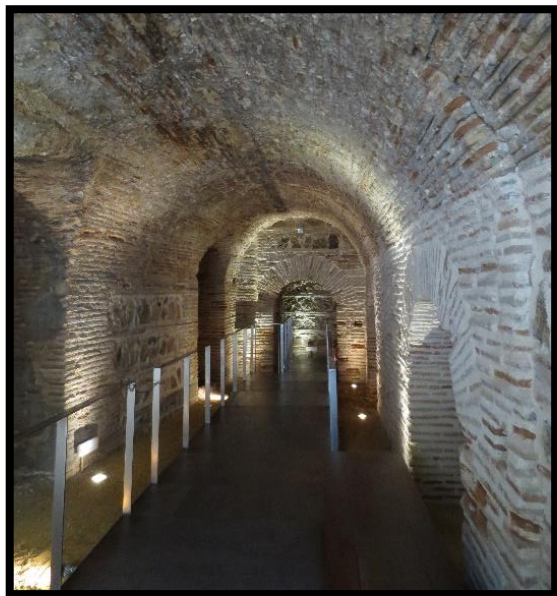


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[458] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 244.
[459] Underground connector, Museo del Greco (former residence of Samuel ha-Levi), Toledo, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 50: Poly-lobed fenestration detail, Sinagoga del Tránsito*

460

The underground vault (fig. 49), currently located beneath the *Museo del Greco*, used to connect *El Tránsito* to the museum property, when the current museum was the residence of ha-Levi, and served as his personal synagogue. The brickwork, arches, and building details are of the same style as those found in the *Baños Árabes* at Tordesillas and other "Arab baths" in al-Andalus. Likewise, the poly-lobed arches on the fenestration of the clerestory of *El Tránsito* (fig. 50), also mirror similar designs in Pedro's vestibule of the old palace at Tordesillas (fig. 50).

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460 Poly-lobed fenestration detail, Great Prayer Room, *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, Toledo, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 51: Poly-lobed arch detail, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*
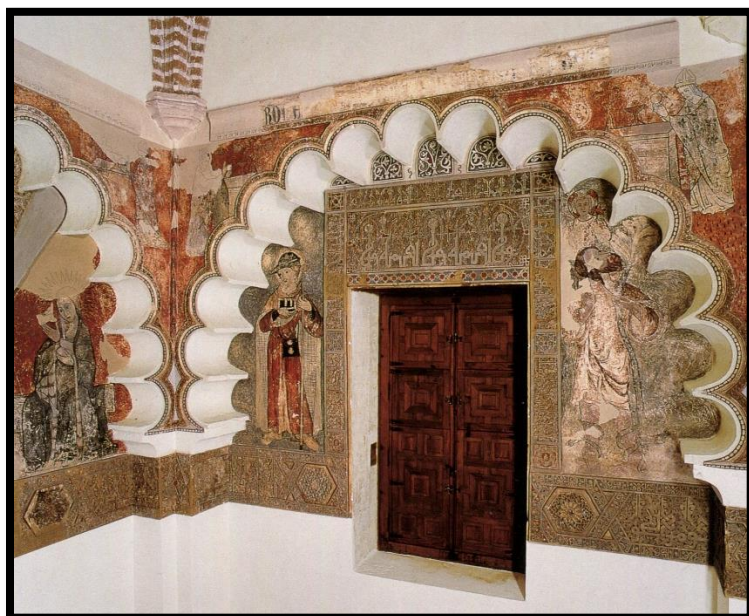


[461]

While the Palace at Tordesillas is the foundational building of the four synoptic constructions, its linkages to the other three constructions are abundant. The two connections between the palace and *El Tránsito* already noted are only a small part of the shared visual language and Islamicate culture that existed between these two buildings and arguably most of the material culture in 14th century al-Andalus. In addition, the mural paintings and figures depicted above reflect, according to Checa, religious subjects and saints, but which suggest earlier gothic and religious styles.[462] The images are also reminiscent of the embedded saints and figures depicted in the frescos in *Cristo de la Luz*.

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[461] Poly-lobed arch detail, Vestibule of the old Palace. Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 22.
[462] Ibid.

## 5.4    El Sinagoga del Tránsito

*Figure 52: Exterior, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



463

The second of the synoptic Mudéjar constructions is the synagogue of Samuel ha-Levi

Abulafia in Toledo.   Samuel ha-Levi was a member of the established Jewish Abulafia family in

Toledo and a member of the sizable Jewish population in that city.  Ha-Levi worked as an

*almojarife* (tax collector) in Toledo before moving into the same position in Seville c. 1351

CE.[464]  Within a few years he was working as the Royal Treasurer (*tesoro mayor del rey*) for

Pedro I.[465]  Ha-Levi worked as treasurer and advisor to Pedro for nearly ten years and in that

time secured permission to construct a synagogue c. 1357 CE, which later became known as the

*Sinagoga del Tránsito*.[466]  While not the largest synagogue in Toledo, *El Tránsito* is significant

in its role as one of the four synoptic constructions.  Following Pedro's renovation of the palace

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[463] Exterior Museo Safardi (*Sinagoga del Tránsito*), Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[464] Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1350-1369*, 169.
[465] Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1350-1369*, 171.
[466] The original name of the synagogue is unknown but later became known as *El Tránsito* which was derived from the name *Tránsito de Nuestra Señora* from the dedication of the building after its ceding to the Order of Calatrava in 1494 CE. Estow, 167–68 n.39.

at Tordesillas, the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* is the second chronological construction of the group.
It is particularly important to the larger discussion of Islamicate shared culture in al-Andalus
specifically because it pre-dates Pedro's signature construction of the Mudéjar Palace at the
Alcazar in Seville, but bears similar hallmarks and designs as the other buildings in this study.
More intriguing, however, is the building's function. Constructed as a synagogue, *El Tránsito*,
like Alfonso XI's *Sala de la Justicia*, is subject to the same questions about design and
decoration. To borrow the orientation of Ruggles's earlier question, why would a Jew build a
synagogue adorned with Islamicate Mudéjar designs and featuring Arabic inscriptions alongside
Hebrew inscriptions if those designs or inscriptions had any perceived connection to Islam? In
the case of the *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, ha-Levi does not even have a triumphalism interpretation
available, so explanations outside of those reflecting shared culture do not immediately present
themselves. In the case of this structure, an argument could be made for the default theory, but
that could be countered by the earlier constructions in Toledo like *Cristo de la Luz* and the
nearby *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca*. Also clearly countermanding suggestions of a
default theory is the unprecedented amount of patron choice and customization that went into the
decoration of *El Tránsito*.

   If there were indeed a default or shared set of artisans, designs, and workshops for these
projects who produced similar styles or types of work, which there may indeed have been, it
doesn't certainly follow that they would be given free range to design a personal and private
worship temple for a senior court official and prominent member of the Toledo community. Far
more plausible is the existence of a shared style that offered patron customization from a
common visual repertoire (i.e. shared visual language) – especially considering that any ethno-
confessional homogeneity of workshops in Toledo, or anywhere else for that matter, are unlikely

as previously discussed. The familial characteristics of the Mudéjar décor, the likely use of

Nasrid artisans, and the use of the Mamluk cubit base in both Tordesillas and *El Tránsito*, but

with broad personalization and customization between the two suggest that both structures were

built for their respective patrons, but drew from the visual and material culture that was shared

by both. In the case of the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* in particular, given the specificity of the

designs and inscriptions, along with the numerous hurdles necessary for the construction to even

occur in the first place,[467] it doesn't seem at all likely that ha-Levi would turn over the design

and construction of his personal temple to convenience.

To further this point, as Clara Estow noted, the fact that the structure is a synagogue meant

for Jewish worship, combined with the content and nature of the Hebrew inscriptions, suggest

that the intended audience of the synagogue were primarily Jews.[468] More specifically, she

argued that while public inscriptions honoring a patron were a common feature of Andalusi

architecture, appearing in the *Sala* and all the other structures in this discussion, "*El Tránsito* was

not a true public building."[469] Given the building's purpose and the primarily Hebrew

inscriptions, Estow contended that they "only served to celebrate and enhance [ha-Levi's]

reputation in his own community."[470] If so, this evidence would further suggest Islamicate

shared culture as the most likely interpretation. If the primary consumer, beyond ha-Levi

himself, was the Jewish community of Toledo, clearly the design of the synagogue as much as

the inscriptions would be intended to reflect ha-Levi and potentially the greater community by

extension. Thus, the inclusion of anything Islamic would be odd to say the least and realistically

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[467] From Las Siete Partidas: Part VII, Title XXIV, Law IV - Jews were banned from erecting new synagogues anywhere in the Castilian domain without royal permission, and even with permission, such constructions come with height and external decoration limits and other requirements. S. P. Scott, Robert Ignatius Burns, and Alfonso, eds., *Las Siete Partidas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 1434.

[468] Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1350-1369*, 168.

[469] Ibid.

[470] Ibid.

must have already been part of the visual language familiar to the residents of Toledo. This interpretation is further supported by the history of Toledo itself. As one of the early conquests by the Christians c. 1085 CE, it had been under Christian rule and influence for far longer than Seville had been. As such, if an alternative design style, more reflective of a Christian aesthetic, would have developed in al-Andalus, Toledo would have been the most likely nexus. However, returning to the discussion of *Cristo de la Luz*, it is clear that Islamicate shared culture was present and ongoing and therefore would be well-established when Samuel ha-Levi received permission to construct his synagogue in the city. Architectural evidence suggests that it was indeed the case that Islamicate shared culture continued throughout this period.

While *El Tránsito* shares many features with Pedro's palace at Tordesillas and would in turn share Nasrid and other developing features with both the Alcazar's Mudéjar Palace and the Alhambra of Granada. The synagogue also incorporates some visual elements that appear in earlier constructions in Toledo, further suggesting an ongoing and evolving Islamicate culture and visual language rather than something done by default. One site which suggests such an influence is the *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca*.

*Figure 53: Interior, Santa María la Blanca*



471

*Figure 54: Interior detail, Santa María la Blanca*



472

The *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca* predates *El Tránsito* and serves as evidence of the

lengthy history of Islamicate shared culture in Toledo and connects *El Tránsito* architecturally to

*Cristo de la Luz* and the earliest Mudéjar constructions in the city.  The origins and patronage of

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471 Interior, *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca*, Toledo, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
472 Interior detail, *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca*, Toledo, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Santa Maria la Blanca* is, however, in question.  Circumstantial epigraphic references suggest a construction date c. 1205 CE, a date which has been the working date for many scholars.[473]  Like its construction date, its patron is likewise unknown.  Again, circumstantial evidence suggests Ibn Shoshan (Joseph ben Shoshan) as a possible patron.  Ibn Shoshan died in 1205 CE and his epitaph mentions him having built a synagogue.[474]  Architectural historian Carol Herselle Krinsky suggested that the plan of *Santa Maria la Blanca* was unique among synagogues in Iberia and with its aisles, brickwork, and horseshoe arches more closely resembled a mosque or some synagogues found in North Africa.[475]  At the same time, the synagogue also bears several hallmarks of Islamicate Mudéjar architecture found in Toledo and al-Andalus.  While it has a construction history that is difficult to pin down, *Santa Maria la Blanca* nonetheless offers some evidence of an ongoing shared culture and visual language and may reflect a way point between the early Islamicate constructions in Toledo and the more recent, like *El Tránsito*.

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[473] A reference to the synagogues of Toledo with mention of a "new" synagogue being the greatest, is believed to be *Santa Maria la Blanca*. Carol Herselle Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning*, Architectural History Foundation Books 9 (New York: Cambridge, MA: Architectural History Foundation ; MIT Press, 1985), 333.

[474] Other biographical documents on Ibn Shoshan fail to mention a synagogue, so the attribution to him is questionable. Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe*, 334.

[475] Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe*, 333.

*Figure 55: Interior, Cristo de la Luz*
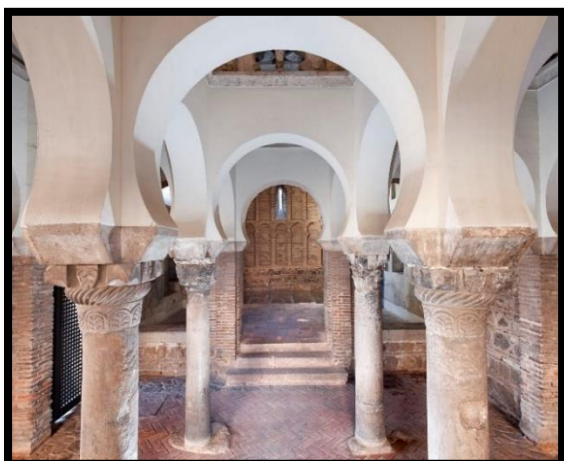


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*Figure 56: Exterior poly-lobed arch detail, Cristo de la Luz*
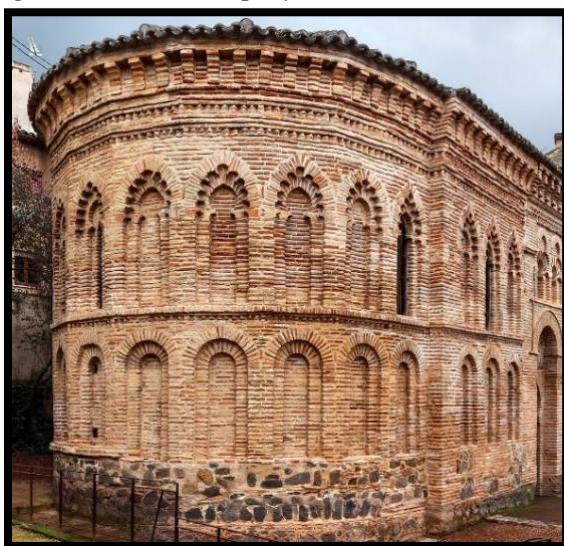


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While it is impossible to determine the specific influences on the *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca*, which may indeed include Almohad or other North African influences, there are direct correlates readily available in Toledo itself which also likely involved the same workshops that built these structures.  The most obvious corollary is *Cristo de la Luz.*  If the date of 1205 CE for *Santa Maria la Blanca* is accurate, then it was built not long after the dedication of *Cristo de la*

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476 Interior, *Cristo de la Luz*, Toledo, Spain. Toledomonumental.com, accessed 1/2/2018.
477 Poly-lobed arch detail, exterior, *Cristo de la Luz*, Toledo, Spain. Toledomonumental.com, accessed 1/2/2018.

*Luz* in 1186 CE which coincides with the construction of the apse.[478]  The interior of the former

mosque (fig. 55) features capitaled columns with horseshoe arches in aisle form, much like the

synagogue.  It may be that *Santa Maria la Blanca* had previously been a mosque, as Krinsky

suggested.[479]  However, a more likely explanation, and one that Krinsky also offered as a

possibility, would be one in line with Islamicate shared culture theory.  As she noted, "styles

mixing Islamic and Christian artistic ideas [i.e. Islamicate] were common at this time and even

later in Spain."[480] As further evidence, the apse of *Cristo del la Luz* (fig. 56) included poly-lobed

arches in the second story which mirror those on the clerestory of *Santa Maria la Blanca.*

The *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca* is also significant because it seems highly likely that

it was one of the influences on the *Sinagoga del Tránsito*.

*Figure 57: Ceiling detail, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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*Figure 58: Ceiling detail, Santa María la Blanca*



482

The ceiling of the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* (fig. 57) seems to draw from *Santa María la Blanca*, featuring similar planking details and an *artesonado* (coffered) design as well as a poly-lobed clerestory on facing sides of the arcade.

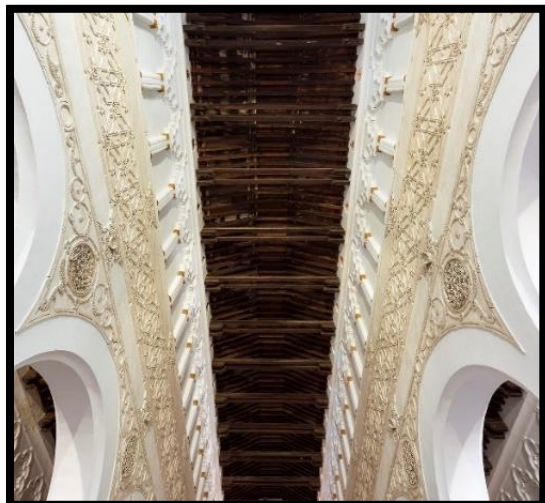*Figure 59: Ceiling detail, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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[482] Interior, *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca*, Toledo, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

[483] Great Prayer Room Ceiling detail, *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, Toledo, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 60: Ceiling detail, Santa María la Blanca*



484

The ceiling of the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* also likely reflected an evolution of the feature that also incorporated elements from the Nasrid style, which were added into the Mudéjar corpus in the period between the two constructions. As previously noted, *Santa Maria la Blanca* more closely resembles its Islamicate contemporary in *Cristo de la Luz*, but clearly also included the evolving elements of the further developed shared visual language present at the time.

*Figure 61: Flooring detail, Cristo de la Luz*



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484 Ceiling detail, *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca*, Toledo, Spain. Toledomonumental.com, accessed 1/2/2018.
485 Interior floor detail, *Cristo de la Luz*, Toledo, Spain. Toledomonumental.com, accessed 1/2/2018.

*Figure 62: Flooring detail, Santa María la Blanca*



486

*Figure 63: Flooring detail, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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The three buildings are even connected on some level by flooring.  Beginning with *Cristo de la Luz* (fig. 61), the inlaid terracotta flooring appears in the main room of each structure, while also displaying various forms of refinement and customization. Indeed this style flooring was common across the region over several centuries and appears in this study at *Cristo de la Luz* in the 12th century at least through the 15th/16th century at the *Casa de Pilatos,* as well as in each of the synoptic constructions.  The flooring is not a significant point but simply shows further evidence of a shared style in evidence across polities and confessional communities.

Moving forward, the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* is a non-traditional subject.  While it was clearly constructed for a Jewish patron with clear socio-political forms of positioning for ha-Levi in the

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486 Flooring detail, *Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca*, Toledo, Spain. Toledomonumental.com, accessed 1/2/2018.
487 Flooring detail, Great Prayer Room Ceiling detail, *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, Toledo, Spain. Wikimedia commons, accessed 01/02/2018.

inscriptions, it may or may not have been intended for public consumption, as Estow previously mentioned.  Jerrilynn Dodds noted that the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* was built as a private temple for ha-Levi including a private entrance from his residence.[488]  In particular, she suggested that the synagogue served much in the same way as the private chapels that were commissioned by Christian kings for their own use and by their immediate family and close courtiers.[489]  To this, Dodds's proposed that *El Tránsito* may have functioned as a "'micro-court' for Samuel ha-Levi himself, setting him at the pinnacle of his own minority society, that of the Jews of Toledo."[490] Dodds' suggestion would seem to follow, given the nature of the inscriptions and the connections between the synagogue, the Jews of Toledo, and ha-Levi's role in the court of Pedro I.  Proceeding from Dodds's characterization of the synagogue, the structure does place it within the larger Andalusi corpus and the Islamicate Mudéjar context of the synoptic constructions.

Dodds noted that Arabic inscriptions join numerous Hebrew inscriptions in the synagogue some of which she indicated are Qur'anic in nature.  For clarity, Dodds immediately addressed any suggestion of the default theory, citing Art Historian Rachael Wischnitzer, who among others put the Arabic inscriptions down to the Muslim craftsmen used on the project.[491]  While Ruiz Souza and others have largely debunked the Muslim craftsman explanation for Arabic inscriptions, Dodds explicitly stated that the suggestion that Muslim craftsmen somehow

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[488] The former residence is currently home to the El Greco Museum. Jerrilynn Denise Dodds, "Mudéjar Tradition and the Synagogues of Medieval Spain: Cultural Identity and Cultural Hegemony," in *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain* (New York: G. Braziller in association with the Jewish Museum, 1992), 128.

[489] Dodds, *Convivencia*, 128.

[490] Ibid.

[491] Architect and Art Historian Rachael Wischnitzer studied synagogue architecture in particular. Dodds, *Convivencia*, 125.

managed to "slip in" Arabic inscriptions without notice or consent is nonsensical, especially given how clearly intentional the epigraphic and decorative program in *El Tránsito* was.[492]

Dodds then spoke directly to Islamicate shared culture, suggesting that "the educated Jews of Toledo felt that much of Islamic culture was their culture as well. The Jews of Toledo had spoken Arabic for hundreds of years, and they had long come to understand the literary and scholarly culture of Islam and considered it something that they shared."[493] Dodds also corroborated the stylistic and sociopolitical connections between ha-Levi, Pedro I, and the Nasrids through Pedro and Muhammad V's ongoing personal relationship.

Dodds proposed that given the close connections between these patrons, along with the historical influences behind what became the Mudéjar style, the form of shared Islamicate culture being illustrating in the synoptic constructions might be construed as a court style of Pedro I.[494] While this was likely the case, attributing the style to Pedro specifically diminishes the widespread use of the style by others, including Muhammad V who would construct new additions to the Alhambra after Pedro, but would likely not attribute them as Pedro's court style. Such an attribution to Pedro also elides the ongoing and evolving Mudéjar style that arguably descended from the Almohads and earlier Muslim polities. The reality is that the Nasrid-influenced form of Mudéjar designs is not a new set of designs, but rather a continuous evolution and customization of the same shared Islamicate culture and visual language that had been ongoing from the early conquests and previous Muslim rule. Once again, there is a Roman analogue available for customized architectural decoration with shared elements. Roman floor

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[492] The fact that *El Tránsito* was meant to be ha-Levi's private temple, much like that which will appear in Pedro's private residence in the Alcazar of Seville, makes such suggestions by Wischnitzer and others all but impossible. Dodds, *Convivencia*, 125.
[493] Ibid.
[494] Dodds, *Convivencia*, 126.

mosaics, which had been a staple of private and public structures across the empire, were typically built using standardized forms or patterns but with customized elements based on the interests of the patrons.[495]

Regarding another aspect of Islamicate shared culture, Dodds confirmed its role as a sociopolitical status symbol indicating, "Islamic developments in stucco ornament and even certain building types were viewed as emblematic of high court culture."[496] As she argued, "the adoption of [the] Nasrid style was part of the appropriation of the mythic power of Islamic culture, which had come to mean wealth, power, refinement, and sophistication to all Spaniards."[497] Dodds pondered whether ha-Levi had the same sense of Islamicate culture as Pedro I. She seems to have characterized Pedro as appropriating an existing Islamicate culture, while simultaneously suggesting that ha-Levi deployed it because he saw it as his own.[498] Given the customization used in all manifestations of Mudéjar design, including the inclusion of Castilian-style heraldry in Pedro's constructions as well as ha-Levi's, it is likely that they were both expressing themselves through their shared visual culture, especially if it is recognized that both the Jews and Christians had been participating in it extending back to the reconquest of Toledo in the 11th century and the Islamicate building projects that followed. Samuel ha-Levi and Pedro I were contemporaries and their respective constructions were products of the then contemporary permutation of shared Islamicate culture in al-Andalus. And, given their synoptic qualities, any extended history or participation in the shared culture of one group, Jews, over that

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[495] For example, Roman patrons in North Africa tended to incorporate local and regional symbols and references that did not appear in European contexts. Katherine Dunbabin, "The Triumph of Dionysus on Mosaics in North Africa," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 39 (1971): 64–65.

[496] Dodds, *Convivencia*, 127.

[497] While the language of appropriation and power is likely tinged with too much orientalism and postcolonial theory, the sentiment is corroborated by the ongoing incorporation of Islamicate culture and the Castilians' own characterization of it in the *Primera Cronica* and other writings. Ibid.

[498] Dodds, *Convivencia*, 128.

of another, Christians, does not seem to have resulted in any distinctions between the respective applications or manifestations of the shared style.

Moving into the design and décor of the synagogue itself, the aesthetic and epigraphic program is a clear representation of both Islamicate shared culture as well as the customization of the larger foundational design style for a Jewish patron and largely Jewish audience. At the same time, the parallels and similarity between the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* and *Santa Clara de Tordesillas* confirm both the shared culture and synoptic context of these constructions.

*Figure 64: Clerestory with girih detail, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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[499] Clerestory of the Interior East Wall of the Great Prayer Room featuring framing detail and *girih* window tracery, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 65: Polychrome detail with muqarnas feature, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*
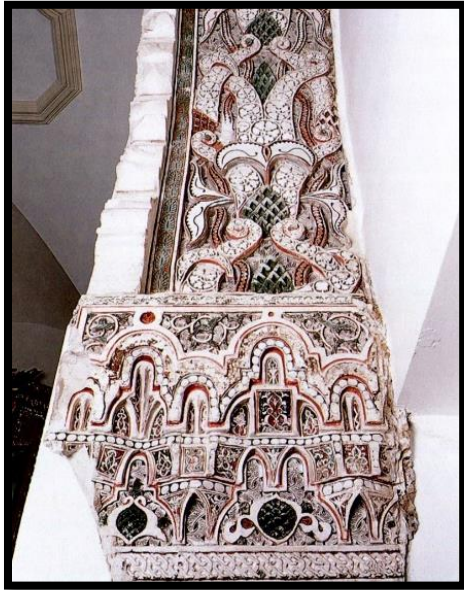


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With regard to the interior décor of the synagogue, the majority of the decoration mirrored designs that previously appeared at Tordesillas as well as several other buildings previously mentioned. Numerous poly-lobed arches appeared in both structures, matching both the *Patio Árabes* and external façade of Tordesillas with elements from the Great Prayer Room at *El Tránsito*. Both structures also featured poly-chromed plasterwork (largely with the same red, green, and black color washing scheme) which was a prominent feature of Islamicate Mudéjar designs as were various interlocking geometric patterns and the traditional *girih* and *muqarnas* designs.

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[500] Polychrome arch detail with red, green, and black color scheme and *muqarnas* detail in the Long Choir archway at Tordesillas. Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 18.

*Figure 66: Interior frieze, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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*Figure 67: Presbytery Detail, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*
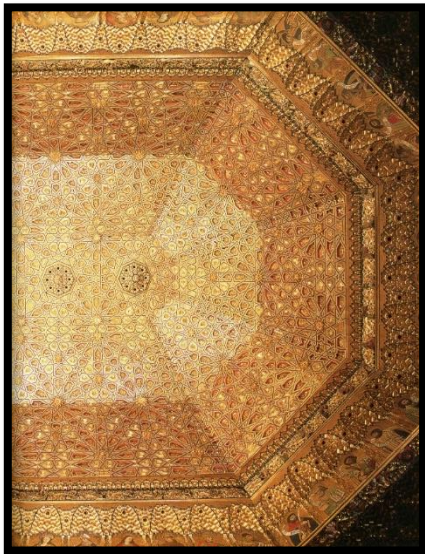


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In the above example from the Great Prayer Room of the synagogue (fig. 66), the room was

ringed by an attic band with a *muqarnas* design.  The same style of design appears throughout

the region and also in the same location in the nave of the Presbytery at the palace at Tordesillas

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501 Detail of Interior frieze of the Great Prayer Room, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

502 *Muqarnas* ring featured on the Presbytery Detail, Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Patrimonio Nacional in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 53.

(fig. 67).  The poly-lobed arches in the clerestory of *El Tránsito* also reflect those found in the

*Patio Árabes* of Tordesillas as wells as both *Santa Maria la Blanca* and *Cristo de la Luz*.

*Figure 68: Great Prayer Room detail, Sinagoga del Tránsito*
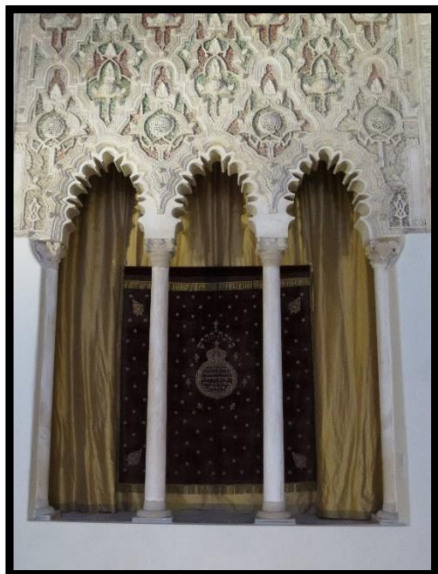


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*Figure 69: Old Façade, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*
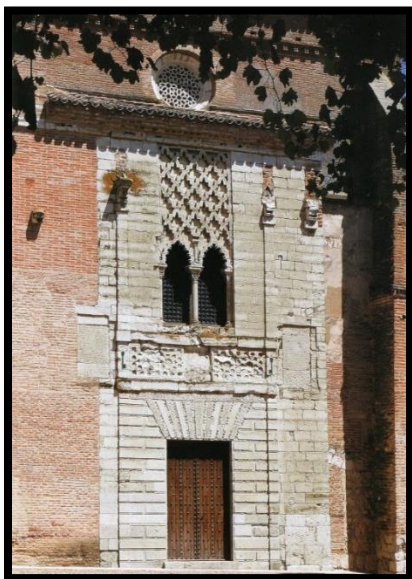


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503 Detail of Interior East Wall of the Great Prayer Room, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

504 Old façade, Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Patrimonio Nacional in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 21.

The niche of the Great Prayer Room employed the same columned, poly-lobed arch detail as the

exterior of the old façade at Tordesillas which also included the *sebka* diamond motif in different

forms with the polychrome wash on the interior of *El Tránsito* (fig. 68) and carved relief on the

exterior of Santa Clara (fig. 69). Like many others, this particular design element appeared in all

of the synoptic constructions illustrating both patron choice and customization and reflecting a

foundational design element individually detailed for the building in question.

*Figure 70: East wall detail, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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*Figure 71: Polychrome tracery detail, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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[505] Detail of Interior East Wall of the Great Prayer Room featuring inscription and heraldry of Castile & Leon, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

[506] Polychrome plasterwork with tracery from the Vestibule of the old Palace, Tordesillas. Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Patrimonio Nacional in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 23.

The frieze décor in the great prayer room of the synagogue (fig. 70) was covered with an interwoven Islamicate vegetal tracery that Spanish historian and Hebraist Francisco Cantera Burgos indicated was popular at the time, also appearing on coins and other Spanish-Hebrew and Christian decorations.  This vegetal scrollwork was also used at Tordesillas (fig. 71), as well as the *Patio de Machuca* in the Alhambra.[507]  It is also possible that the vegetal scrollwork that appears intertwined with the heraldry and Hebrew inscriptions at *El Tránsito* (fig. 70) may have also signified a connection kabbalah.[508] The heraldry of Castile and Leon that appears on this frieze was, according to Cantera Burgos, likely the heraldry of ha-Levi.[509]  The specific attribution of the heraldry to ha-Levi is difficult to confirm and could be exacerbated by the same Castile and Leon heraldry appearing on the dedicatory inscription which praises both ha-Levi and Pedro I.  Certainly the same symbolism also reflected the crown, so may simply reflect ha-Levi's role in the court and connection to it, especially if part of the intent of the construction was to elevate his own status.

The largest section of epigraphic material appeared in the Great Prayer Room or Main Hall of the synagogue (fig. 72).

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[507] While this common feature might support Gonzalez Hernandez's argument in favor of a Nasrid designation for these designs, they may alternatively rather represent the evolving canon of shared visual language and Islamicate culture present among the synoptic constructions. Francisco Cantera Burgos, *Sinagogas de Toledo, Segovia y Córdoba* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto B. Arias Montano, 1973), 64.

[508] See Cynthia Robinson, "Trees of Love, Trees of Knowledge: Toward the Definition of a Cross-Confessional Current in Late Medieval Iberian Spirituality," *Medieval Encounters* 12, no. 3 (November 1, 2006).
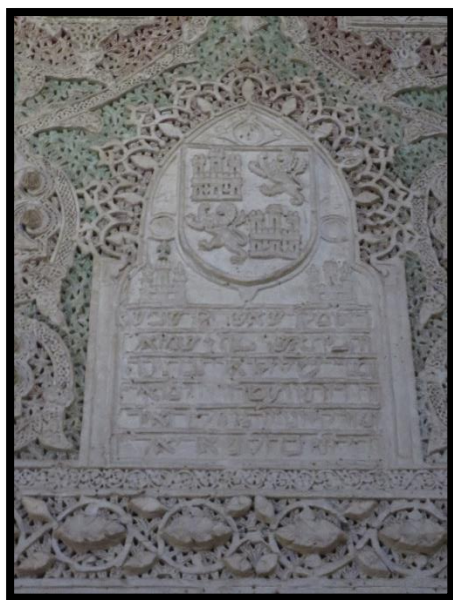
[509] The specificity of Levi's heraldry is uncertain, especially given its similarity to Castile and Leon which is also represented. Cantera Burgos, *Sinagogas de Toledo, Segovia y Córdoba*, 64.

*Figure 72: Great Prayer Room, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



510

*Figure 73: Great Prayer Room inscription, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



511

On either side of the eastern wall were dedicatory inscriptions, one dedicating the synagogue

to God, with some praise for ha-Levi as its patron, and the other praising ha-Levi's own patron

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510 Interior East Wall of the Great Prayer Room, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
511 Detail of Interior East Wall of the Great Prayer Room featuring inscription and heraldry of Castile & Leon, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

Pedro I.  The dedicatory inscription for Pedro (fig. 73) is particularly relevant with regard to

some of the language and imagery used.

> He [Pedro I] has ruled over the country like an immense tamarisk,[512] a powerful
> bulwark and turret. He has climbed the steps of the empire, according to his fame;
> the great and holy call it a right-hand column on which the house of Levi and the
> house of Israel are built, who, then, may enumerate his praises, qualities and
> prowess? Who could say and who managed to exhaust the *loa*?[513] Diadem of the
> empire, jewel of majesty which rises to the top of the category. Prince of the
> Princes of Leviatus, R. Samuel ha-Levi was placed on high, be his God with him
> and exalt him, has found grace and mercy in the eyes of the great eagle with huge
> wings [Pedro], a man of war and champion whose terror has invaded all peoples -
> great is his name among the nations, the great monarch, our lord and our master
> King Don Pedro: May God help him and increase his strength and glory and keep
> him as a shepherd his flock![514]

As the text indicates, it is similar to a *loa* serving as praise and dedication to Pedro, but also

elevated ha-Levi by linking him with the praise, power, and majesty heaped on his King and

patron.  More informative are the references to local Spanish cultural elements like the *loa* and

tamarisk along with honorifics for both ha-Levi and Pedro.  The inscription also includes a

blessing for Pedro I; *"El Rey Don Pedro: sea Dios en su ayuda y acreciente su fuerza y su gloria*

*y guárdelo cual un pastor su rebaño."*[515] These honorifics and blessings; "be his God with him

and exalt him" and "may God help him and increase his strength and glory and keep him as a

shepherd to his flock," sometimes referred to as *salawat* in Arabic, were a common feature of

Islamic discourse and by the time of this inscription, were clearly part of the Islamicate

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[512]  A *tamarisco* or tamarisk is a flowering shrub that extends across a landscape. The plant genus derives from
*tamarix* a Latin reference to the Tamaris River in *Hispania Tarraconensis* (Roman Spain). The use of this imagery
would be a local reference likely understood by the local populace in al-Andalus. Umberto Quattrocchi, *CRC World
Dictionary of Plant Names: Common Names, Scientific Names, Eponyms, Synonyms, and Etymology* (Boca Raton,
FL: CRC Press, 2000), 2628.

[513] A *loa* is a reference to a theatrical prologue typified by laudatory praise.

[514] Translated from the Spanish; originally translated from the Hebrew by Cantera Burgos. Cantera Burgos,
*Sinagogas de Toledo, Segovia Y Córdoba,* 107.

[515] "King Don Pedro: may God help him and increase his strength and glory and keep him as a shepherd to his
flock." translated from the original Hebrew by Cantera Burgos. Ibid.

epigraphic corpus and shared culture.  The inscriptions throughout *El Tránsito* continue to reflect Islamicate shared culture as well as the customization indicative of Islamicate visual elements.

Further customization can be seen in several sections of the synagogue.  In the Women's Gallery of *El Tránsito*, which also includes Arabic and possibly pseudo-Arabic script alongside the Hebrew inscriptions (fig. 74) provides further local customization in some of the word choices.

*Figure 74: Women's Gallery inscription, Sinagoga del Tránsito*
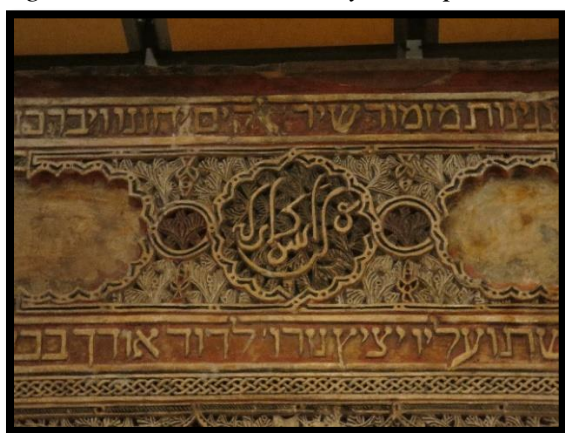


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*Figure 75: Hebrew and Arabic inscriptions, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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[516] Non-kufic or possibly pseudo-Arabic and Hebrew inscriptions from the Women's Gallery, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

[517] Arabic and Hebrew inscriptions from the Women's Gallery, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

Part of the Hebrew inscription is taken from the book of Exodus, and reads *"Y salieron todas las mujeres en pos de ella con adufes y danzadando en corro.  Y Maria respondia a ellos [los israelitas] 'Cantad a Yahveh, que soberanamente se ha glorificado."* (And all the women came out after her [Aaron's sister] with *adufes*[518] and dancing in a circle. And Mary responded to them [the Israelites] 'Sing to Yahweh, who has gloriously triumphed'.)[519] Especially interesting about this scriptural quote is the local flavor it includes.  The inscription references an *adufe*, a frame drum/tambourine known in al-Andalus (and still in use in Portugal).  Most English translations of the Bible use the term *timbrel* which is similar, but reflects the traditional Middle Eastern instrument, rather than its Andalusi relative.  Like the references to the *loa* or *tamarisco* in the dedicatory inscription, ha-Levi was including concepts and terms that would be recognized in the local vernacular, which again suggests a shared cultural language since it was predominantly meant to speak to residents of Toledo. Recalling the mutli-lingual inscriptions on the tomb of Fernando III, it is possible that these word choices also reflected the ongoing cosmopolitan interaction with language in al-Andalus that saw the development of numerous linguistic amalgams like Hispano-Arabic and Judeo-Arabic which blended the languages of the three confessional communities.

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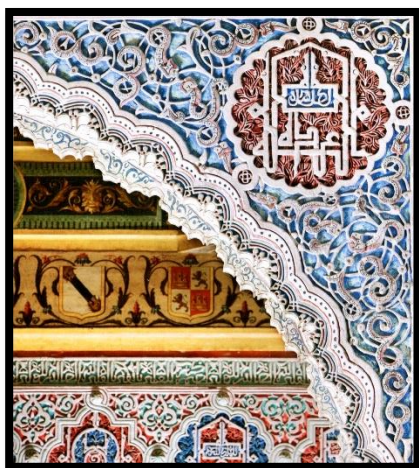[518] An *adufe* is frame drum or tambourine of Islamicate origin.
[519] From Exodus 15:19-20.  Spanish translation of Hebrew by Cantera Burgos.

*Figure 76: Patio Árabes, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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*Figure 77: Medallion detail, Mudéjar Palace, Alcazar of Seville*



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In the comparative depictions above, the *ataurique* scrollwork and medallion feature appears in both the decorative programs at Tordesillas and in Seville. In the detail from the *Patio Árabes* at Tordesillas (fig. 76), the Latin inscription follows a nearly identical design structure as the Hebrew inscription found in the Women's Gallery in *El Tránsito*, again potentially indicating a shared stylistic template with patron-based customization. The Arabic medallion detail surrounded by *ataurique* from the Alcazar of Seville (fig. 77) again mirrors a similar design from

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520 Wall detail, *Patio Árabes*, Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

521 Medallion detail, *Cuarto del Principe*, Mudéjar Palace, Alcazar of Seville Spain. José Barea and Paloma de los Santos Guerrero, *The Real Alcázar of Seville* (Madrid: Palacios y Museos, 2011), 97.

*El Tránsito*, not only reflecting the shared visual language, but also connecting these synoptic

constructions stylistically.

The larger epigraphic program in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* is the most intriguing and is also

the most representative of the customization of the synagogue by the patron, specifically for a

local Jewish audience.  Historian of Spanish synagogues Daniel Muñoz Garrido suggested that

the interior decoration of the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* was the product of ha-Levi's Andalusi

acculturation.

> Jewish architecture, like other aspects of the Hispano-Jewish culture, followed the
> same models that triumphed in the social and cultural contexts in which the
> communities lived." Continuing, he indicated "the synagogue of Samuel ha-Levi
> (or *el Tránsito*) enters into the patterns of Palatine architecture of Castile of the
> XIV century. In the Hispanic synagogues that have survived to this day, we can
> observe a predilection for the Hispano-Arabic aesthetic language, as something
> assimilated and made its own. The biblical inscriptions written in slender Hebrew
> characters that decorate the Hispanic synagogues emulate the Koranic verses that
> decorate the mosques.[522]

Garrido described the aesthetic language as Hispano-Arabic and suggested the Hebrew

inscriptions as an emulation of the Qur'anic inscriptions in Arabic that were a familiar feature of

Islamicate Mudéjar design.  Garrido stated as fact ha-Levi and the Jews of Toledo's participation

in a shared culture of which ha-Levi's synagogue was also part.  At the same time, ha-Levi's

choice to substitute Hebrew for Arabic in this instance is another example of customization – this

time on the religious front, substituting inscriptions from the Torah in Hebrew rather than the

Qur'an in Arabic.  Even this substitution was the product of patron choice and customization.  In

particular, the Hebrew inscriptions that occurred throughout the synagogue appear to have served

a particular function, directly related to ha-Levi.

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[522] Translated from the Spanish. Daniel Munoz Garrido, "La Creacion Del Mundo en el Arte Medieval: La Sinagoga del Tránsito," *'Ilu. Revista de Ciencias de Las Religiones* 15 (2010): 138.

*Figure 78: Great Prayer Room frieze, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



523

*Figure 79: Clerestory, Great Prayer Room, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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The inscriptions that appear in the Great Prayer Room include several selections from the

Psalms which are predominately focused on laments and requests for mercy.[525]  Other Psalms

and inscriptions in the Great Prayer Room included those requesting protection from enemies.[526]

There is a strong likelihood that the plethora of Psalmic inscriptions in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito*

served as a form of practical kabbalah given the connection between Psalms and these practices,

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[523] Detail of Interior frieze of the Great Prayer Room, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[524] Clerestory of Interior East Wall of the Great Prayer Room featuring poly-lobed fenestration and *girih* window tracery, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[525] Specifically, Psalms 17.1, 28.2, 65.3, 61.2, 86.6, 102.2, 18.7, 88.3. Cantera Burgos, *Sinagogas de Toledo, Segovia y Córdoba*, 110–11.
[526] Specifically, Psalms 5.8, 69.14, 52.10, 73.28, 88.14, as well as Hebrews 3.18. Cantera Burgos, *Sinagogas de Toledo, Segovia y Córdoba,* 112–13.

also given that the *Zohar* and Kabbalah had strong affiliations with Spain and the Castilians

through Kabbalist Moses de Leon (1240-1305 CE) and his work on the *Zohar*. The interwoven

vegetal scrollwork which appeared throughout *El Tránsito*, and on the friezes surrounding the

Hebrew inscriptions in particular, may further the connection to both Kabbalah and ha-Levi and

his synagogue. Cynthia Robinson, in her exploration of the symbology of trees as a shared *topos*

in cross-confessional Andalusi spirituality, indicated that "this efflorescence [of tree imagery]

coincides with the flourishing of a style of architectural ornamentation which is characterized by

strikingly naturalistic vegetation and is most often subsumed beneath the rubric of Mudéjar."[527]

She argued that this shared tree imagery "appears in the 1350s in Toledo, probably first in the

*Sinagoga del Tránsito* and then again at *Santa María de Tordesillas* (near Valladolid) shortly

thereafter.[528] She also noted that "a similar but not causally related vegetal naturalism also

characterized the ornamental program of the Alhambra's Palace of the Lions [*Palacio de los

Leones*], built between 1359 and 1392."[529] The tree imagery and its deployment by the three

confessional communities adds an additional element of support for its appearance in the

*Sinagoga del Tránsito*. Robinson indicated that the tree imagery in the Kabbalah tradition is a

feminized form of the tree of life and also connected to divine wisdom.[530] She also confirmed

the link between the Abulafia family and Kabbalah noting, "the family of the synagogue's

patron, Schlomo [Samuel] ha-Levi, had been connected for more than a century to Kabbalistic

exegesis and practices and would certainly have been familiar with the tree- and plant-based

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[527] Robinson, "Trees of Love," 395.

[528] This imagery appears in the Patio Mudéjar (or Arab Courtyard) in Tordesillas, as wells as in the Great Prayer room at *El Tránsito*. Robinson, 395.

[529] Robinson's point about causality serves as further support for the shared culture thesis in that the Christians, Jews, and Muslims were employing similar foundational elements but contextualizing them in their own aesthetic visual programs. Robinson, "Trees of Love," 395.

[530] Robinson, "Trees of Love," 406.

symbolism that characterizes such key texts as the *Zohar*."[531]  If ha-Levi was knowledgeable

enough to include this form of Kabbalistic imagery, it certainly gives credence to the suggestion

of the Kabbalistic nature of the broader epigraphic program in the synagogue.  And while a great

subject for study well outside the present exploration, the inclusion of Kabbalah in the

synagogue certainly indicates patron-based customization, but also points to a well thought out

visual program and should eliminate the possibility of a default theory or any suggestion that

Islamicate designs in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* were the product of the workers' or workshop's

independent or unsolicited interests.

As synoptic constructions, both the palace at Tordesillas and the *Sinagoga del Tránsito*

reflect the ongoing development and patronage of Islamicate shared culture.  Before even

including the other two structures, it is already evident that Tordesillas and *El Tránsito* were part

of a developing visual language and architectural program that extended back to the earliest

Castilian buildings in al-Andalus as well as the previous Muslim regimes.  This shared culture

and its long history continued prominently with the remaining two synoptic constructions, in the

Alcazar of Seville and the Alhambra of Granada.

## 5.5    On the Origins of the Alcazar of Seville

By definition, what became known as the Alcazar of Seville, had always been an Islamicate

building.  While some archaeological evidence suggests the presence of Christian burials[532] and

possible religious structures during the Visigothic Period (c. 6th century CE), the then

contemporary and current complex existed as a non-religious compound, but with significant

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[531] Robinson, "Trees of Love," 406–7.

[532] Evidence of Christian burials were discovered under the present Patio de Banderas.  See Miguel Angel Tabales, *El Alcázar de Sevilla: reflexiones sobre su origen y transformación durante la Edad Media: memoria de investigación Arqueológica 2000-2005*. (Seville, Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Cultura : Real Alcázar, 2010), 19.

cultural and political orientations and affiliations. Many scholars placed the construction of what would become the Alcazar complex in the early 10th century in the beginning of the reign of Abd al-Rahman III (r. 912-929/961 CE), then Emir and later Caliph of Córdoba.[533] However, an extensive archaeological excavation, directed by Miguel Angel Tabales, indicated that the exterior wall (fig. 80, facing the *Plaza del Triunfo*), which contained the original entrance and is widely considered to be the oldest remaining structure from the pre-Almohad period (mid-12th century CE), was built in the mid-11th century around the time of Abbadid ruler al-Mu'tadid during the *ta'ifa* period in al-Andalus.[534]

*Figure 80: Exterior Wall c. 12th Century CE, Alcazar of Seville*



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[533] Several Alcazar historians place Abd Al-Rahman III's *Dar al-Imara* inside the present complex. See Ana Marin Fidalgo, *The Real Alcazar of Seville* (Madrid, Aldeasa, 1999) and Juan Carlos Hernandez Nunez and Alfredo Morales, *The Royal Palace of Seville* (London, Scala Publishers, 1999), Paloma de los Santos Guerrero, *The Real Alcazar of Seville*, Nigel Williams and Jennifer Beach (Madrid, Palacios y Museos, 2011).
[534] Tabales, *El Alcazar de Sevilla*, 20.
[535] External wall, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

*Figure 81: Exterior wall with present-day entrance, Alcazar of Seville*



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If Tabales's analysis is accepted, then the Islamicate History of the Alcazar of Seville essentially began with the construction of the *Al Qasr al-Mubarak* by al-Mu'tadid in the 11th century. While al-Mu'tadid's construction was primarily a fortified palace, it established the initial footprint for the future complex and reflected an early Islamicate construction. Where the Alcazar became a full-fledged Islamicate complex, and where the likely developmental origin of the shared Islamicate culture resides, is with the constructions of the Almohads who emerged as rulers of Seville following the demise of the Abbadids and later Almoravids. As will discussed later, it is with the Almohads that a distinctive cultural experience that operated apart from the religious and political orientation of that group may have emerged.

The Almohads were responsible for several signature constructions in Seville that were influential on what would emerge as the Mudéjar style, but also the post-*Reconquista* analysis of Christian constructions in the Alcazar complex. The Almohads built *La Giralda*, the bell tower which served as the minaret for the mosque, which existed prior to the present-day Cathedral of

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536 External wall adjacent to present-day entrance, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

Seville.  They also built the *Torre de Oro* (Tower of Gold), *Torre de la Plata* (Tower of Silver) and the *Patio del Yeso*, their only remaining construction inside the Alcazar.

*Figure 82: La Giralda, Seville*



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537 *La Giralda*, Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

*Figure 83: Torre de Oro, Seville*



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*Figure 84: Torre de la Plata, Seville*



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[538] *Torre de Oro*, Seville, Spain, Jebulon, own work, public domain, 2012.
[539] *Torre de la Plata*, Seville, Spain. Lobillo, own work, public domain, 2007.

*Figure 85: Patio del Yeso, Alcazar of Seville*



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While each of these constructions are architecturally and historically significant in their own right, their collection as Islamicate structures (either contemporaneous or in later periods) is crucial for understanding the shared culture theory being proposed for al-Andalus and the Islamicate History for the Alcazar, which escalated after Seville transferred to the Christians in 1248 CE. Already in the transition from the Abaddid to Almohad regimes, there were elements of shared architecture between the two towers and the original wall of al-Mu'tadid's Alcazar. And as already discussed, the *Patio del Yeso*, along with *La Giralda*, shared elements with Islamicate constructions produced by all three confessional communities in al-Andalus for years to come.

The Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville therefore reflects on the shared culture that existed between these three confessional communities in al-Andalus, which led to the development of a shared visual language and aesthetic born in Muslim Spain but adopted and adapted by succeeding generations of patrons, builders, and craftspeople from across confessional communities to produce Islamicate shared culture and its manifestation as the so-

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540 *Patio del Yeso*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

called Mudéjar design aesthetic.  The Mudéjar Palace at the Alcazar of Seville commissioned by Rey Don Pedro I (1364-1366 CE) arguably represented both the culmination and likely pinnacle of Islamicate shared culture in al-Andalus, although the Mudéjar design aesthetic would continue in al-Andalus for generations after Pedro and even travel to the New World.

As was seen with the first two structures of the synoptic construction group, Pedro I will also play a critical role in the remaining two, the Alcazar of Seville and the Alhambra of Granada.  As the patron of the palace of Tordesillas and the ultimate patron of his treasurer's construction of the *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, Pedro's role has been both influential and crucial and is the glue which holds the four synoptic constructions together within the framework of Islamicate shared culture.  Pedro's constructions within the Alcazar of Seville are perhaps the most significant of the group in that they are the most extensive representation of the Islamicate Mudéjar aesthetic, but also because they contain both public palatial elements meant to reflect the grandeur and majesty of the Christian King, but also include a private residence (still in use by the Spanish Royal family today).  The Alcazar complex was already home to Alfonso XI's controversial *Sala de la Justicia* and was presumably still used as a throne room by Pedro himself.  For all the questions raised by that Islamicate construction, the design of the private royal chambers in an evolved form of the same aesthetic pose even more.  Going forward, Pedro's Mudéjar palace, along with the *Sala de la Justicia,* likely influenced his friend Muhammad V's own constructions in the Alhambra, so Pedro I's interaction with Islamicate shared culture is pivotal.

## 5.6   Pedro I

Pedro I was born to Alfonso XI and Maria of Portugal in 1334 CE in Burgos, Spain.  Pedro was the only legitimate heir of the King, a fact that would ultimately prove fatal when he was murdered by his half-brother Enrique de Trastamara in 1369 CE.  Though Burgos is north of

Madrid, Pedro's exposure to Islamicate material may have occurred early on. The *Monasterio de las Huelgas* in Burgos is home to some of the early Islamicate constructions completed by Alfonso X.[541] As Dodds *et al.* indicated, "Alfonso X covered the oldest parts of Las Huelgas – those not completed in the Gothic Style – with a thrilling variety of fine stucco carvings. These include motifs that might be found at the Alcazar of Seville or the Nasrid kingdom of Granada."[542]

*Figure 86: Assumption Chapel vault, Monasterio de las Huelgas*



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[541] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 185.

[542] Alfonso X and his selective use of Gothic architecture, which also occurred in the Alcazar of Seville, may have been related to his his association with the Church and his pursuit of the Holy Roman emperorship - where Gothic aesthtics were cloesly associated with contemproary church and kingdom architecture. Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 185.

[543] Ribbed vault from the Assumption Chapel, *Monasterio de las Huelgas*, Burgos, Spain. Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 185.

*Figure 87: Chapel de Belen, Monasterio de las Huelgas*
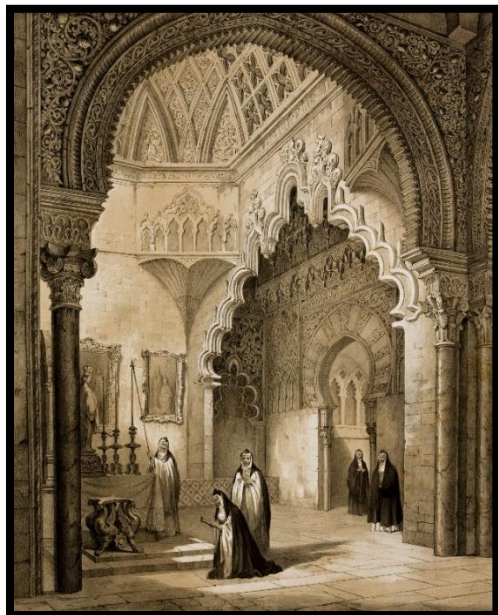


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Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale also indicated that a chapel at Las Huelgas was built in the *qubba* style, the same model as the *Sala de la Justicia*, and was "given a vault that was a reminder of Córdoba, taken by Ferdinand in 1236 (fig. 86)."[545]  Interestingly, in an 19th century artistic representation of the *Monasterio de las Huelgas* by Jenaro Pérez Villaamil and Léon Auguste Asselineau (fig. 87), Las Huelgas is depicted with poly-lobed arches, *ataurique* vegetal scrollwork and what appears to be a direct copy of the *mihrab* arch in the Mezquita at Córdoba (fig. 88).  Given the artistic rendering is coming from the 19th century Orientalist period, it is likely that there has been borrowing and artistic license used in the rendering.  However, the perceived connection between Las Huelgas and Islamicate shared culture was apparent even centuries after the fact.

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[544] Chapel de Belen in *Monasterio de Las Huelgas*, Burgos c. 1850 by Jenaro Pérez Villaamil and Léon Auguste Asselineau. Public Domain, c. 1842-1850.
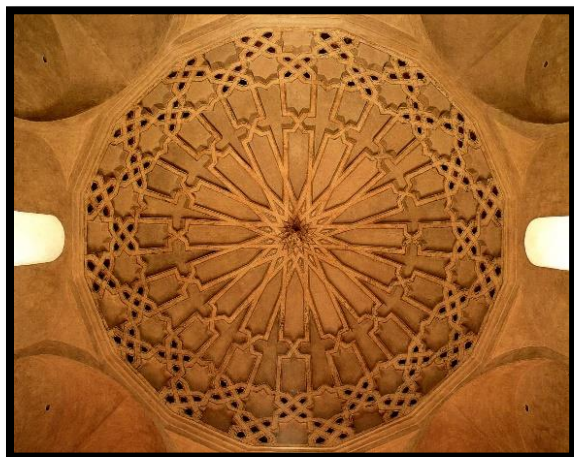[545] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 185.

*Figure 88: Mihrab, Mezquita de Córdoba*
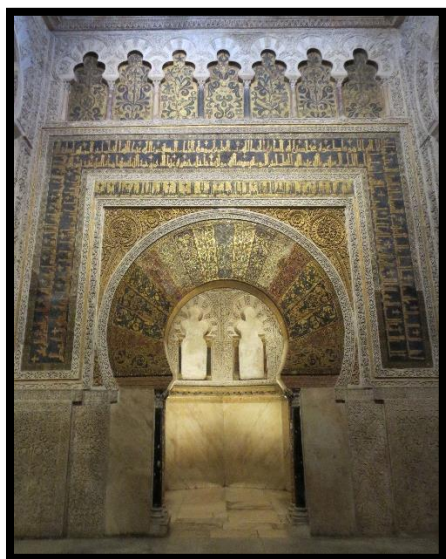


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*Figure 89: Ceiling detail, Gilded Chapel, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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In addition, Las Huelgas shares the *qubba* format and a familial resemblance to the Gilded Chapel in the palace at Tordesillas (fig. 89). What this suggests is that the Alfonso XI's *Sala de la Justicia* was not an isolated design, but likely part of an emerging visual language that carried the shared Mudéjar aesthetic to the synoptic constructions in the future. All of these structures and designs were familiar to Pedro I and were part of his lived experience. Given the number of

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[546] *Mihrab*, Mezquita of Córdoba, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.
[547] Ceiling detail, Gilded Chapel, Patrimonio Nacional in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas,* 26.

Islamicate structures and the prevalence of the Mudéjar style during his youth and adulthood,

Pedro I was likely the ruler with the most familiarity with these aesthetics and arguably the most

comfortable.  On this point, if any of the early Castilian rulers would have imagined the Mudéjar

style as part of his own culture, it would be Pedro.  Given the close relationship between Pedro I

and Muhammad V of Granada and their respective interactions with shared Islamicate culture, it

is little wonder that their signature royal constructions would seem to reflect it so clearly.

## 5.7    The Synoptic Constructions – The Alcazar and The Alhambra

*Figure 90: The Alhambra of Granada*



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Like the Alcazar of Seville, *Al-Qal'at al-Hamra* (The Red Fort), more commonly known as

the Alhambra, has a long history.  Where the Alhambra intersects with the Islamicate history of

the Alcazar largely begins with the rise of the Nasrid dynasty and the building of the palace-city

complex.  The Emirate of Granada, of which the Alhambra was the centerpiece, began with

Muhammad ibn Nasr (Ibn al-Ahmar) when he split from the Almohads in 1232 CE. The majority

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[548] The Alhambra, Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

of the buildings and renovations in the Alhambra of Granada that are relevant to this study were commissioned by Yusuf I (r. 1333-1354) and Muhammad V (r. 1354-1359, 1362-1391).  Yusuf I and Alfonso XI were contemporaries, as were Pedro I and Muhammad V.  The later pair shared a particularly close relationship especially during the period where Muhammad V resided with Pedro in Seville and the Alcazar following his ouster from power in 1359 until his reinstatement in 1362. Many of Muhammad V's constructions and renovations were completed concurrently or after those in the Alcazar of Seville, technically making it the fourth synoptic construction chronologically.  However, due to the relationship between the constructions completed by Yusuf I and Muhammad V and their relationship to the Castilian monarchs, Alfonso XI and Pedro I, it will be more illuminative to discuss this structure in concert with the Pedro's Mudéjar Palace in the Alcazar due to their numerous points of contact and similarity and connections with the other synoptic constructions, provide the strongest evidence of shared Islamicate culture.

### 5.7.1   Making Connections

The connections between the four synoptic constructions are evident in numerous features of the Alcazar and Alhambra, as well as their many connections to each other.  One of the more prominent connections is likely the entry point to the Mudéjar Palace, which is reflected in its façade (below - based on its dedicatory inscription the façade was built in 1364 CE).[549]
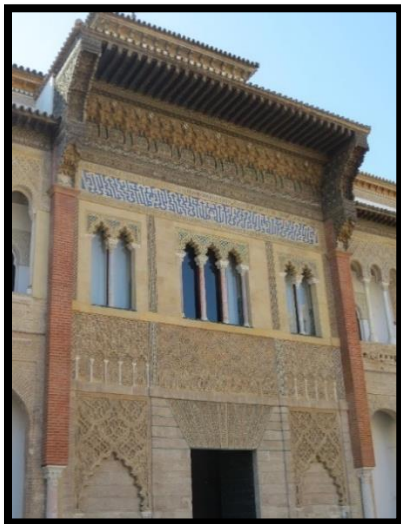
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[549] Paloma de los Santos Guerrero and José Barea, *The Real Alcázar of Seville* (Madrid: Palacios y Museos, 2011), 87.

*Figure 91: Mudéjar Palace façade, Alcazar of Seville*



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*Figure 92: Mudéjar Palace façade detail*



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The façade of the Mudéjar Palace was the most public feature and the one that greeted

visitors from its location on the grand courtyard of the *Patio de la Montería*. The façade is a

representation of both the Mudéjar style and Islamicate shared culture combining poly-lobed

arches, *sebka* and *ataurique* design panels, a *muqarnas* frieze, and several other features which

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550 Façade of the Mudéjar Palace, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
551 Detail, Façade of the Mudéjar Palace, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

appear in the synoptic constructions and several other buildings across al-Andalus and the three

confessional communities.

*Figure 93: Great Prayer Room, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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*Figure 94: Patio de los Leones, Alhambra of Granada*
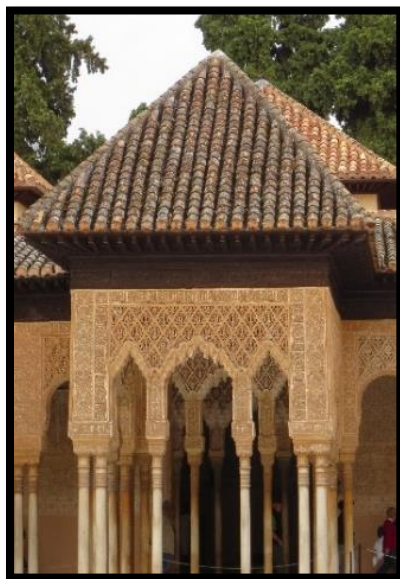


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[552] Great Prayer Room, *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, Toledo, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

[553] Detail, *Patio de los Leones*, Alhambra, Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 95: Old Façade, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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The upper section of the façade, along with the exterior second floor feature recurring triple

and double arch segments similar to those found in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* (fig. 93), as well as

those seen in the *Patio de los Leones* at the Alhambra (fig. 94) and the palace at Tordesillas (fig.

95). Each also incorporated variations on the shared *sebka* decoration.

*Figure 96: Muqarnas detail, facade of the Mudéjar Palace*



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[554] Old façade, Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Patrimonio Nacional in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 21.
[555] *Muqarnas* detail, Façade of the Mudéjar Palace, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 97: Muqarnas detail Sala de dos Hermanos, Alhambra of Granada*



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The *muqarnas* frieze (fig. 96) is a feature of the façade and other rooms in the Mudéjar palace. It also appeared in several locations in the palace at Tordesillas as well as the Alhambra of Granada (fig. 97).  The frieze on the Mudéjar Palace façade includes heraldry associated with Castile and León, which also appeared in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* and the *Sala de la Justicia*. Further linking the façade with the *Sala de la Justicia* was the added presence of the *La Banda* military heraldry.  Whereas the *Sala* was believed to be a victory monument commemorating a military triumph, the façade of the Mudéjar Palace does not coincide with a similar victory, especially since Pedro was far more likely to be engaged in fighting his own relatives, rather than Muslims.  The appearance of the *La Banda* heraldry is probably meant to connect with Alfonso XI and the power and grandeur associated with him and the greater dynasty of Castile and León. While the Castilian heraldic symbols reflected a connection to that polity and Pedro in particular, ha-Levi's use of similar heraldry in his synagogue was likely meant for the same effect, connecting him to Pedro, and in turn the grand legacy that went along with him. Outside of the

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556 *Muqarnas* detail, *Sala de dos Hermanos*, Alhambra of Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

connections specific to Castile and León, the façade as a whole also served as an inspiration for

Muhammad V's throne room in Granada, according to Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale.[557]

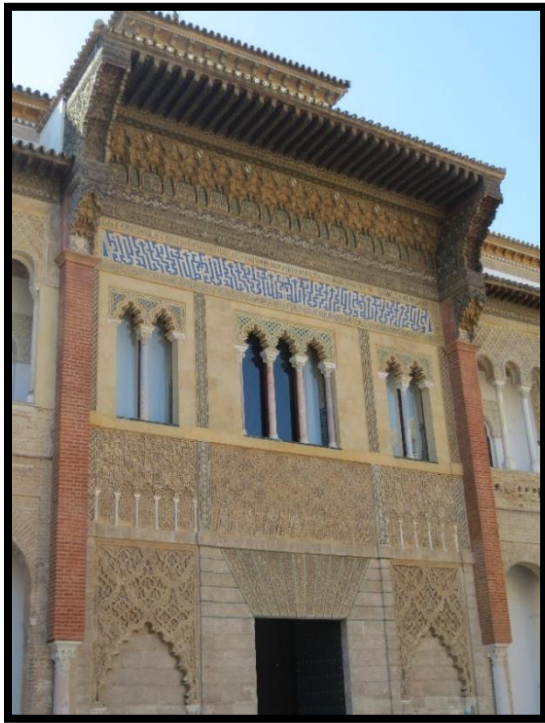*Figure 98: Façade of the Palacio de Comares, Alhambra of Granada*
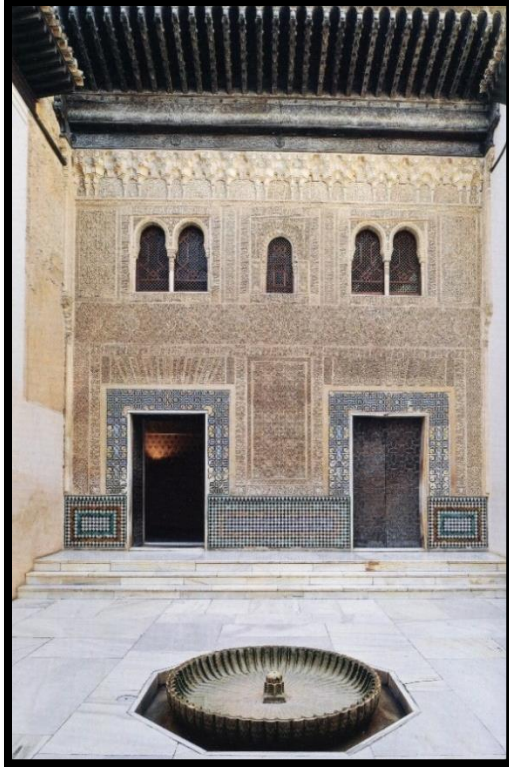


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[557] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 253.

[558] Façade, *Palacio de Comares*, Alhambra, Spain. Jesús Bermúdez López, *The Alhambra and the Generalife: Official Guide* (Madrid: TF, 2010), 108.

*Figure 99: Façade of the Mudéjar Palace, Alcazar of Seville*



559

The façade of the *Palacio de Comares* (fig. 98) was built by Muhammad V c. 1370 CE and served as his throne room. The throne room was meant to commemorate Muhammad's victory at Algeciras in 1368 CE. There are also numerous similarities between Muhammad V's throne room and various elements in the Alcazar of Seville. The overall design style is reminiscent of Pedro's façade to the Mudéjar Palace including the planked overhang, columned upper fenestration, a *muqarnas* attic band accent, and intricate *ataurique* stucco work. Muhammad's façade also featured the same *alicatados* mosaic (*dado*) tile work on the bottom story that was found at Tordesillas and *El Tránsito*, as well as in the Alcazar. Additionally, a relationship between the throne room at the Alhambra and Alfonso XI's *Sala de la Justicia* exists both stylistically and metaphorically. Both throne rooms share a central fountain and both were commissioned to commemorate a military victory. Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale suggest the

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559 Façade of the Mudéjar Palace, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

connection and inspiration between throne rooms stemmed from Muhammad V's residence with Pedro at the Alcazar (c.1359-1362 CE), during his exile from Granada following a coup, before reclaiming his rule in 1362.[560] The metaphorical connection between the *Sala* and Muhammad V's throne room is more telling. In Chapter III, the analysis focused on the unlikely argument that the *Sala* served as a victory monument for Alfonso XI by inverting the design style of the defeated Muslims. In a counterpoint, a throne room *cum* victory monument by a Muslim ruler following his own victory over a Christian adversary was not constructed in a perceived Christian architectural style (Romanesque or Gothic being the likely options). Rather, Muhammad V built his own throne room, on some level inspired by the Islamicate designs of the Castilians, but also customized for his own commemoration, including an inscription of the *ayat al-kursi* "throne verse" from the Qur'an.[561]

The two throne rooms therefore form something of a circle in the greater theme of Islamicate shared culture. Alfonso XI built his throne room in the Islamicate style in part to emulate the grandeur and high culture of the Muslims and connect his power to their legacy, while also incorporating personally significant symbolism. At the same time, Muhammad V built his own throne room based on this same connection to the Muslim legacy, but also drew inspiration from the Castilian expression of victory and grandeur displayed in the *Sala* and the Mudéjar façade, and likewise added personally significant elements. Thus, the final products suggest a shared visual language, reflecting a shared culture, with a shared application of customization to reveal what amounts to an ongoing cultural conversation over time that operated independently of religion and politics. Of course, this conversation was not limited to two throne rooms,

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[560] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 253.
[561] See *Sura al-Baqara* (2):255. Bermúdez López, *The Alhambra and the Generalife*, 109.
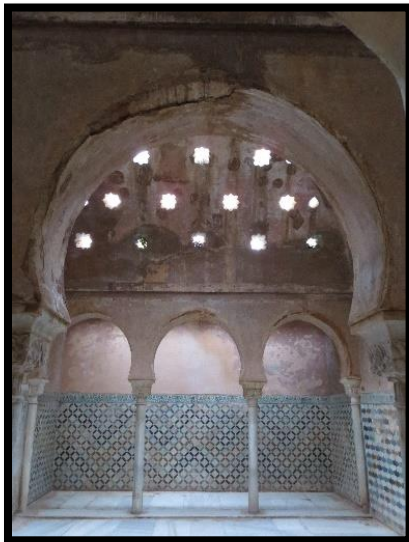
numerous other shared cultural and architectural connections and expressions existed in al-Andalus that crossed religious and political boundaries.

*Figure 100: Patio de los Leones, Alhambra of Granada*
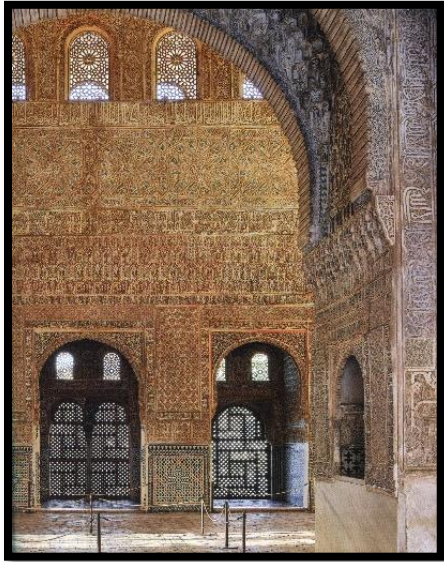


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*Figure 101: Hammam, Alhambra of Granada*



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[562] *Patio de los Leones*, Alhambra, Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.
[563] *Hammam* of the *Palacio Comares*, Alhambra of Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

*Figure 102: Salón del Trono, Alhambra of Granada*



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Muhammad V was responsible for several constructions in the Alhambra, including the

*Cuarto Dorado* in the *Mexuar*, which housed the Sultan's throne room, the *Palacio de los*

*Leones* (which included the signature *Patio de los Leones* (fig. 100), and the completion and

improvement of the *Palacio de Comares*, which had begun under Yusuf I.[565]  The façade of the

of the *Palacio de Comares* which leads from the *Cuarto Dorado* along with the *Salón del Trono*

(fig. 102) contained within the *Palacio de Comares* provide numerous links to the Alcazar and

Islamicate design.  The *Hammam* (Baths) of the *Palacio Comares* (fig. 101, discussed earlier) in

conjunction with the adjacent *Patio de los Leones* also provide design and elemental linkages to

all of the synoptic constructions.  The *Palacio de los Leones* was also home to the *Sala de los*

*Reyes*, which, as noted earlier, may have been influenced by the Genoese and Venetian

merchants at court and may have affected the vault paintings in that salon (fig. 103), but may

have also been part of the ongoing use of décor to express grandeur and high culture.

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[564] *Salón del Trono* (aka Sala de los Embajadores), Alhambra of Granada, Spain. Bermúdez López, *The Alhambra and the Generalife*, 117.
[565] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 248.

*Figure 103: Vault painting, Sala de los Reyes, Alhambra of Granada*



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Ruiz Souza suggested that the *Sala de los Reyes* may have been part of a *zawiya* or *madrasa*

in the *Palacio de los Leones* and was possibly home to the school and palace's library.[567]  He

also pointed out that the design of the *Palacio de los Leones* was meant to "present the same

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[566] *Sala de los Reyes* vault paintings: A Muslim and Christian joust (top), The Nasrid Kings (middle), and a hunt including falconry (bottom). Bermúdez López, *The Alhambra and the Generalife*, 141.
[567] Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, "El Palacio de los Leones de la Alhambra: ¿ Madrasa, zāwiya y tumba de Muḥammad V? Estudio para un debate," *Al-Qanṭara* 22, no. 1 (2001): 97.

image of luxury as that of the contemporary buildings of Fez or Tlmecen."[568]  When combined with the presentation of courtly grandeur, legacy, power, and history associated with the vault paintings, the design and presentation of the palace appears to have reflected shared elements connecting the Alhambra with the Alcazar, the Marinids, and other European polities.

The specific connections between the Alhambra and Alcazar, however, are numerous, as are those between the two structures and Tordesillas and *El Tránsito*.  The shared visual language that permeates the synoptic constructions is clear and provides several points of display that confirm its presence.

### 5.7.2   *Poly-lobed Arches*

While a common feature of Islamicate designs that appeared in all of the synoptic constructions, the poly-lobed arch was another element that connected these constructions with earlier constructions by various groups, including the *Patio del Yeso* from the Almohad period in the Alcazar (fig. 104).  In this example, the poly-lobed arch feature included the same *sebka* relief feature as Tordesillas (fig. 105).  The commonality of this element is evident but the similarity between the manifestations among the Almohads and those seen in early constructions like Tordesillas shared a particular similarity as did later manifestations which occurred with Nasrid influence.  The commonality of elements which changed over time further suggest an evolution of style based on contemporary aesthetics and patron choice.  This evolution could also point to a shared corpus from which individual customization occurred.

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[568] Then part of the Marinid Dynasty of the Maghreb. Translated from Spanish. Souza, 95.

*Figure 104: Patio del Yeso, Alcazar of Seville*



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*Figure 105: Old façade, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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These arches form a foundational part of the shared visual language of Islamicate al-Andalus,

appearing across the region over several generations of rulers, both Muslim and Christian. They

are a significant feature of *Patio de las Doncellas* (Doll's Court) in the Alcazar of Seville (fig.

106) as well as in the *Patio de los Leones* in the Alhambra (fig. 107).

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[569] Polylobed arches from the *Patio del Yeso*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.
[570] Old façade, Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Patrimonio Nacional in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 21.

*Figure 106: Patio de las Doncellas, Alcazar of Seville*



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*Figure 107: Patio de los Leones, Alhambra of Granada*



572

They also appear prominently in the *Patio Árabes* in the palace at Tordesillas (fig. 108) and

the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* (fig. 109).

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571 *Patio de las Doncellas*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
572 *Patio de los Leones*, Alhambra of Granada, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

*Figure 108: Patio Árabes, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



573

*Figure 109: Great Prayer Room, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



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All four of these rooms/patios also feature variations on the planked overhang detail which was present on the façade of the Mudéjar palace and Muhammad V's façade of the *Palacio de Comares.*

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[573] Poly-lobed arch detail, *Patio Árabes*, Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[574] Triple poly-lobed arch accent, Great Prayer Room, *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, Toledo, Spain, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

### 5.7.3   *Alicatados Mosaics (dado)*

The *alicatados* mosaic (*dado*), sometimes referred to as *azulejos* (from the Arabic الزليج),
were another common feature of the synoptic constructions and appeared in various locations
and forms.  Like other mosaic works, the *dado* was constructed by fitting small pieces of ceramic
into a geometric pattern.[575]  While some *alicatados* mosaics were arranged in the *girih* style
design, others followed different patterns with some sharing poly-lobed conical features and
intermediary design bands, while others were composed of different designs, but still comprised
of similar patterns which might suggest a bank of designs from which patron choice and
customization could impose some distinctiveness.

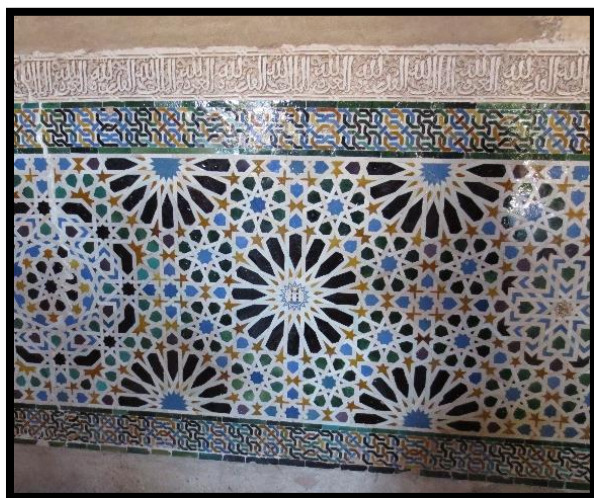*Figure 110: Dormitorio de los Reyes Moros, Alcazar of Seville*



576

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[575] Dodds, Menocal, and Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 249.
[576] *Alicatados* Mosaic (*dado*) detail, *Dormitorio de los Reyes Moros*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

*Figure 111: Sala de la Mexuar, Alhambra of Granada*



577

*Figure 112: Great Prater Room, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



578

Like many of the features of the shared visual language of Islamicate material culture, the

*alicatados* mosaic became a staple of the Mudéjar repertoire and a foundational element that

appears to have become popular during the period of Nasrid influence. *Alicatados* mosaics

specifically do not seem to appear in Islamicate decorations in al-Andalus prior to the Alfonso

XI/Yusuf I period, where they appear in the Mexuar of the Alhambra and in a limited fashion in

the *Sala de la Justicia* in Seville. Islamic mosaics however had been in use at least as early as the

7th century when they appeared on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.  These mosaics, likely

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[577] *Alicatados* mosaic (*dado*) detail, *Sala del Mexuar*, Alhambra of Granada, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[578] *Alicatados* mosaic bench, Great Prayer Room, *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, Toledo, Spain, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

inspired by Byzantine architecture, suggest yet another Roman connection with Islamicate material culture in Spain. The Byzantines and the earlier Roman architectural models pervaded the Levant as well as North African locales which became home to Islamic dynasties and polities. Art Historian Marilyn Jenkins, noted that there was a cultural unity in the Mediterranean region of which a Greco-Roman heritage was part.[579] Based on this, she argued that "the material culture found in each of the many Islamic countries bordering the [Mediterranean] can only be understood when viewed from this perspective."[580] With regard to the Roman links to *alicatados* mosaics, Jenkins noted that Byzantine mosaicists were imported to decorate elements of the Mezquita in Córdoba as well as *Madinat al-Zahra*, both of which are established inspirations for later constructions in al-Andalus. Also likely influential were the extant Roman Mosaics in Mérida, Spain. Art Historian M. J. Sanz argued that there were similarities and influences between these Roman mosaics and those commissioned by Carlos V for his *Pabellón* in the gardens of the Alcazar of Seville.[581] While the specific homage to Roman mosaics was likely due to Carlos V's Renaissance sensibilities and its classical influences, the ongoing relationship between the relational power and grandeur associated with both the Romans and the earlier Islamic polities in Spain suggest another ongoing inspirational and representational association between architectural styles and perceptions of high culture and power, especially given their widespread use in the synoptic constructions.

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[579] Marilyn Jenkins, "Al-Andalus: Crucible of the Mediterranean," in *The Art of Medieval Spain a.d. 500-1200* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993), 73.

[580] Jenkins, *The Art of Medieval Spain,* 73.

[581] M. J. Sanz, "Un Diseno de Mosaico Romano en la Ceramica Sevillana del Siglo XVI," *Labratorio del Arte* 6 (1993): 79–94.
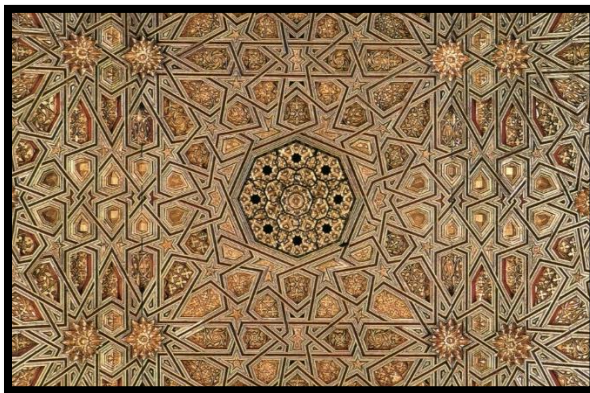
### 5.7.4 *Girih Designs*

*Figure 113: Ceiling detail, Sala de los Infantes, Alcazar of Seville*
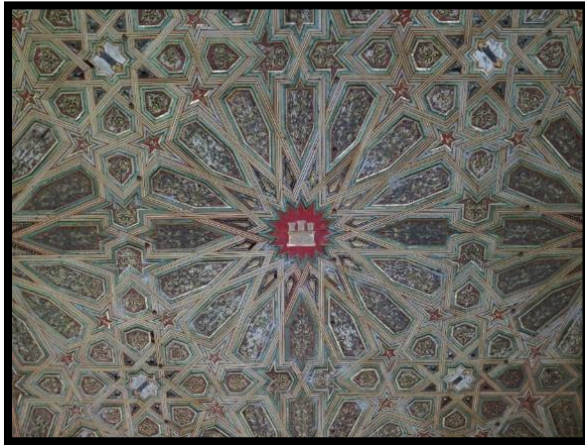


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*Figure 114: Presbytery detail, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*



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Another component of the shared visual language of Islamicate design is *girih* also known as

*lacería*.[584] "*Girih*" can refer to any interlocking geometric design pattern but most often

manifests as the Mudéjar *lacería* also sometimes known as the Moorish knot (figs. 113-114).

*Girih* appears in all of the synoptic constructions as well as numerous other buildings across al-

Andalus. Like the *alicatados* mosaics, the *girih* design can be customized and personalized for

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[582] Ceiling detail, *Sala de los Infantes*, Mudéjar Palace, Alcazar of Seville, Spain, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[583] Presbytery Tracery Detail, Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Patrimonio Nacional in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 50.
[584] See Sebastián Fernández Aguilera, *Portaventaneros Mudéjares En El Real Alcázar de Sevilla*, Arte / Diputación de Sevilla. Serie 1a 50 (Sevilla: Diputación Provincial de Sevilla, 2012).

the patron and their particular aesthetic.  The *girih* or *lacería* design can also appear in wood,

metal, stucco, or ceramic material and used on doors, ceilings, walls, windows, and several of the

same *alicatados* mosaics.

*Figure 115: Girih window, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



585

*Figure 116: Salón del Trono, Alhambra of Granada*



586

585 *Girih* window tracery, *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, Toledo, Spain, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
586 *Girih* detail, *Salón del Trono* (aka *Sala de los Embajadores*), Alhambra of Granada, Spain. Bermúdez López, *The Alhambra and the Generalife*, 117.

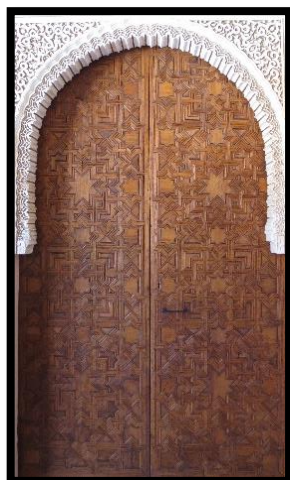*Figure 117: Girih detail, Santa Maria la Blanca*



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*Figure 118: Girih detail, Salón de Embajadores, Alcazar of Seville*



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*Figure 119: Girih detail, Palacio de los Leones, Alhambra of Granada*



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[587] *Girih* detail, door, *Sinagoga Santa María la Blanca*, Toledo, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[588] *Girih* detail, ceiling, *Salón de Embajadores*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[589] *Girih* detail, door, *Palacio de los Leones*, Alahmbra of Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

## 5.8    Further Connections

In addition to the shared design elements and visual language, several rooms in these respective constructions also illustrate a shared visual language and linkage between the synoptic constructions.  One of the most illustrative is the Mudéjar façade/*Palacio de Comares* façade already discussed, but several other rooms and patios also share such similarities.

*Figure 120: Patio de los Arrayanes, Alhambra of Granada*



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*Figure 121: Alicatados Mosaic detail, Patio de los Arrayanes, Alhambra of Granada*



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590 *Patio de los Arrayanes* (aka *Patio de Comares*), Alhambra, Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.
591 *Alicatados* Mosaic (*dado*) detail, *Patio de los Arrayanes*, Alhambra, Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

*Figure 122: Patio del Yeso detail, Alcazar of Seville*



592

The *Patio de los Arrayanes* (Myrtles) located within the *Palacio de Comares* (fig. 120)

incorporated features that appear in the Alcazar, but also connect across regimes.  The Patio

included a hedged central pool similar to that seen in the Almohad *Patio del Yeso* (fig. 122), a

feature Muhammad V would have been familiar with from his tenure there.  It also included a

connecting feed from a fountain similar to the *Patio del Yeso's* feed from the *Sala de la Justicia*.

The *Patio de los Arrayanes* also included the columned *sebka* design element and tiled roof that

appeared throughout both palaces.  The *alicatados* mosaic of the *Patio de los Arrayanes* (fig.

121) is also of similar design to that found in the *Dormitorio de los Reyes Moros* (Bedroom of

the Moorish Kings), although the latter featured the heraldry of Castile and León as well as the

poly-lobed segment similar to that found in the Alcazar's *Patio de las Doncellas* and the *Patio

Árabes* in the palace at Tordesillas.

[592] *Patio del Yeso*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

*Figure 123: Scrollwork detail, Patio de los Arrayanes*
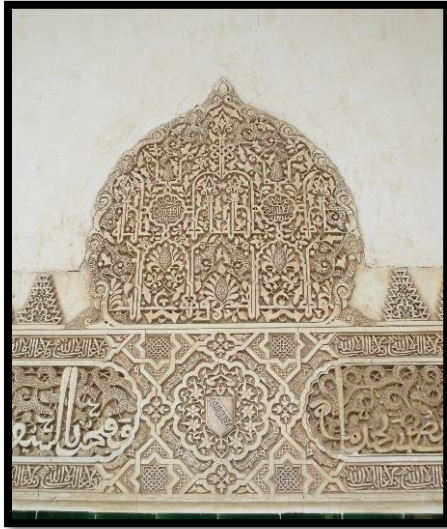


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*Figure 124: Scrollwork detail, Dormitorio de los Reyes Moros*



594

The scrollwork accent detail from the *dado* of the Alhambra's *Patio de los Arrayanes* (fig. 123)

mirrors the Alcazar's *Dormitorio de los Reyes Moros* (fig. 124) including the same triangular

accents which appear in scrollwork vs. *alicatados*, and the Castilian heraldry is replaced by the

Nasrid motto emblem in the same presentation space. In the above example, there is a veritable

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[593] Scrollwork accent top from *Alicatados* Mosaic (*dado*) detail, from *Patio de los Arrayanes* (aka *Patio de Comares*), Alhambra, Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.
[594] *Alicatados* Mosaic (*dado*) detail, *Dormitorio de los Reyes Moros*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

swapping of patron-specific elements in the same architectural feature. The variations that occurred with each of the *alicatados* mosaics suggests a basic design element that was customized for each manifestation, even within the same structure, further pointing to a shared visual language and repertoire favored by patrons and constructed by workshops, regardless of their political or religious affiliations.
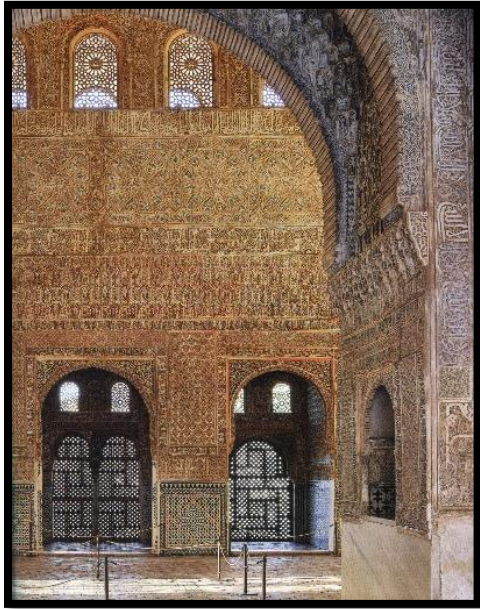
### 5.8.1   *Salón de Embajadores*

*Figure 125: Salón de Embajadores, Alcazar of Seville*
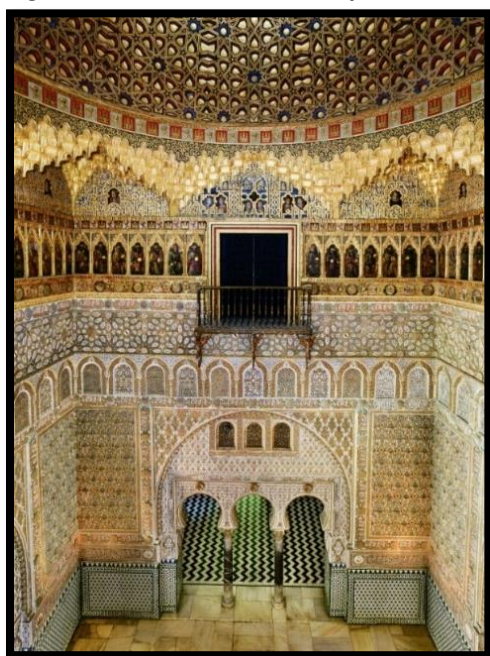


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[595] *Salón de Embajadores*, Mudejar Palace, Alcazar of Seville. Paloma de los Santos Guerrero and José Barea, *The Real Alcázar of Seville* (Madrid: Palacios y Museos, 2011), 115.

*Figure 126: Salón del Trono, Alhambra of Granada*



596

One of the many aspects of the Alcazar, and indeed most of the constructions during this period, is that they are definitionally Islamicate.   The construction and design history surrounding many of these buildings reflect the ongoing conversation over time that is Islamicate Mudéjar architecture.  The *Salón de Embajadores* in the Mudéjar Palace (fig. 125) for example, was built on the *qubba* (mausoleum) model, as was the *Sala de la Justicia*, as was the chapel at Las Huelgas, as was the *Salón del Trono (*also known as the *Sala de Embajadores)* in the Alhambra (fig. 126).  The *Salón de Embajadores* in the Alcazar itself was originally constructed in the 11th century during the Abaddid dynasty (c. 1023-1095 CE) in Seville, likely during the reign of Muhammad ibn Abbad al-Mu'tamid (r. 1069-1091 CE).[597]  Hernández-Núñez and Morales also noted that many aspects of the original design incorporated a style and material first used at Abd al-Rahman III's palace *Medinat al-Zahra*.[598]  The *Salón* was then remodeled and

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[596] *Salón del Trono*. Bermúdez López, *The Alhambra and the Generalife*, 117.
[597] Juan Carlos Hernández Núñez and Alfredo José Morales, *The Royal Palace of Seville* (London: Scala Publishers in association with Aldeasa S.A, 1999), 58.
[598] Hernández Núñez and Morales, *The Royal Palace of Seville*, 58.

incorporated into Pedro's Mudéjar Palace including the addition of Nasrid stylistics and the doors created by artisans from a Mudéjar workshop in Toledo. Thus, the entire room was the product of a long tradition of Islamicate design, blending several generations of styles, materials, and influences that also link numerous constructions across al-Andalus and the three confessional communities. Both *Salóns* included *girih* decorations and in the Alhambra (fig. 127), *girih* window tracery is similar to that seen in *El Tránsito* (fig. 128). This pairing (Alhambra and *El Tránsito*) also share text framing bands in Arabic and Hebrew respectively. In addition, the *Salón* in the Alcazar (fig. 125) featured a stylized opaque clerestory band similar to that seen in *Santa Maria la Blanca*, but with added *girih* decoration in each panel.

*Figure 127: Clerestory detail, Salón del Trono*



599

[599] Clerestory *girih* design feature, *Salón del Trono*, Alhambra, Granada, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

*Figure 128: Clerestory detail, Sinagoga del Tránsito*



600

These *Salóns* in particular represent the essence of shared culture; each construction added

and adapted familiar material and design to produce something new and meaningful for each

patron while still remaining in the context of the foundational style.

*Figure 129: Salón de Embajadores, Alcazar of Seville*
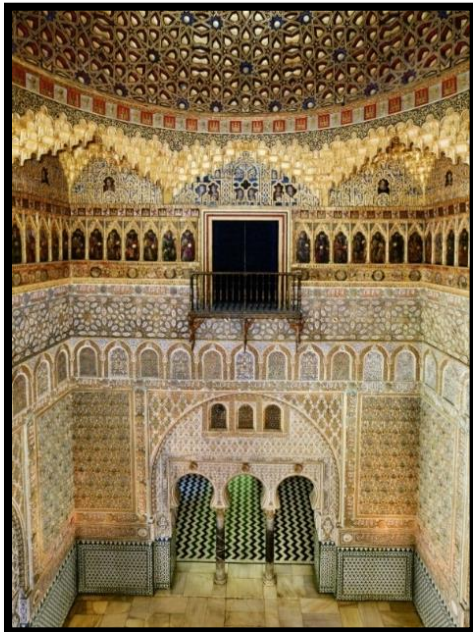


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[600] Clerestory of the Interior East Wall of the Great Prayer Room featuring framing detail and *girih* window tracery, *Sinagoga del Tránsito,* Toledo Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.
[601] *Salón de Embajadores*. Paloma de los Santos Guerrero and José Barea, *The Real Alcázar of Seville*, 115.

*Figure 130: Nave of the Presbytery, Santa Clara de Tordesillas*
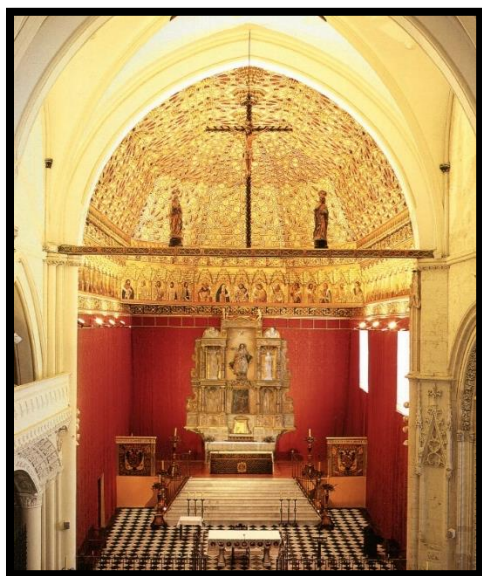


602

Based on an inscription discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the dome and *muqarnas* attic band of the *Salón de Embajadores* in the Alcazar (fig. 129) was rebuilt by Diego Ruiz in 1427 CE.[603] While there is no specific record of the earlier material, given the use of similar designs like a *muqarnas* attic band in other parts of the Alcazar, as well as at Tordesillas (fig. 130), it is likely that original featured elements similar to those of the rebuild by Ruiz.

### 5.8.2   Written Connections

All of the synoptic constructions employed writing or script within the context of their designs, some for dedicatory or celebratory purposes and others for possibly far more complicated reasons.  Inscriptions were used to offer generic blessings and expressions of glory and appeared in Arabic, Castilian Spanish, and Hebrew depending on their particular context and often included inscriptions in multiple languages as well as some amalgam expressions like hispano-arabic (Spanish written with Arabic characters).

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[602] Nave of the Presbytery, Santa Clara de Tordesillas, Spain in Checa, *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*, 51.
[603] Santos Guerrero and Barea, *The Real Alcázar of Seville*, 118.

*Figure 131: Nasrid motto inscription, Alhambra of Granada*



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*Figure 132: Alternate Nasrid motto inscription, Alhambra of Granada*



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While all the synoptic constructions included references to God in some form, one particular

Arabic phrase that appeared in both the Alhambra and the Alcazar of Seville is [ولا غالب الا الله]

("and there is no victor, but God."). This phrase was known as the Nasrid motto;[606] it appeared

both in Muhammad V's throne room in the *Palacio de Comares* as well as in the Alcazar on the

mirror text of Pedro's Mudéjar Palace façade, the *Sala del Principe*, the *Salón del Techo de los*

*Reyes Católicos,* the *Salón del Techo de Felipe II,* the *Salón del Techo de Carlos V,* and the

*Patio de las Muñecas.* Much like Qur'anic inscriptions and numerous references to God in

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[604] Nasrid motto inscription, Nasrid Palace, Alhambra, Granada, Spain, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

[605] Alternate Nasrid motto inscription, Nasrid Palace, Alhambra, Granada, Spain, J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

[606] José Miguel Puerta Vílchez and J. Agustín Núñez, *Reading the Alhambra: A Visual Guide to the Alhambra through Its Inscriptions* (Granada: The Alhambra and Generalife Trust Edilux, 2011), 19.

Arabic throughout the Alcazar, there seems to have been a separation between the general religious substance of these inscriptions and any particular religious affiliation. In other words, God was God regardless of whether one was a Christian or Muslim, so the source of the quotation or sentiment was not at issue, at least in the context of the Alcazar.

Other forms of writing, as with those seen in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, may have had a deeper meaning and purpose. One interesting written connection was the recurrence of arguably mystical inscriptions appearing across structures associated with confessional communities in al-Andalus. The Kabbalistic inscriptions that seem to have appeared in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* are not particularly unexpected given ha-Levi's social and family connections within the Jewish community. Similar inscriptions with a similar intent may also have been included in the Alcazar of Seville and the Alhambra of Granada. The doors leading to the *Salón de Embajadores* (Hall of the Ambassadors) from the *Patio de las Doncellas* at the Alcazar of Seville bear two inscriptions – the external inscriptions (figs. 133-135) are in Arabic, while the internal ones on the reverse are in Castilian.

*Figure 133: Doors to the Salón de Embajadores, Alcazar of Seville*
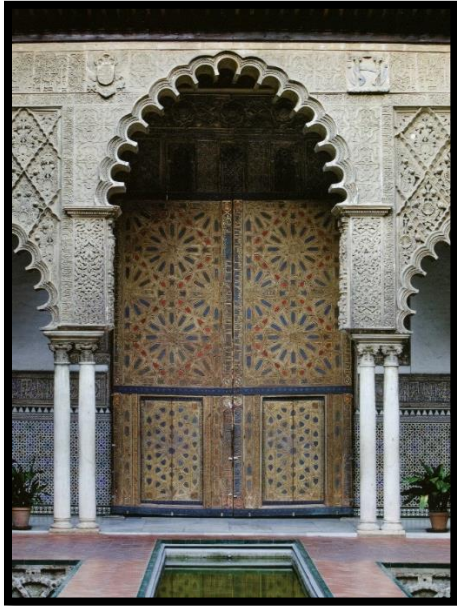


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*Figure 134: Arabic inscription detail, doors to the Salón de Embajadores, Alcazar of Seville*
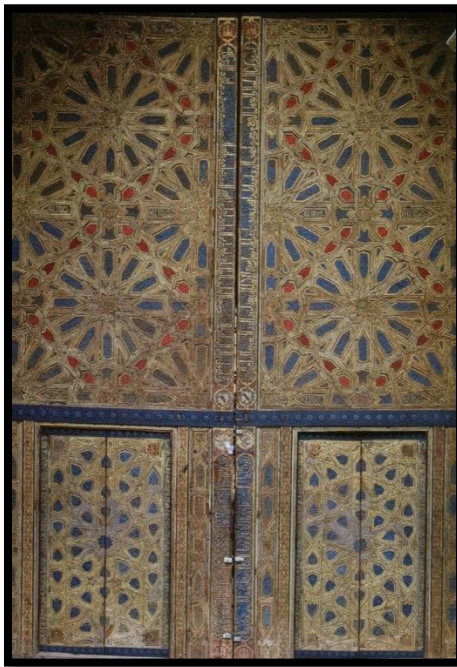


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607 Doors to the *Salón de Embajadores* from the P*atio de las Doncellas*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. Santos Guerrero and Barea, *The Real Alcázar of Seville*, 100.
608 Detail of doors to the *Salón de Embajadores* from the P*atio de las Doncellas*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. Santos Guerrero and Barea, *The Real Alcázar of Seville*, 100.

*Figure 135: Castilian inscription detail, doors to the Salón de Embajadores, Alcazar of Seville*



609

The inscription reads:

> Our exalted high lord the Sultan, Don Pedro, King of Castile and León (may
> Allah give him eternal happiness, and may it remain with his architect) ordered
> that these carved wooden doors be made for this room of happiness which order
> was made for the honor and grandeur of his ennobled and fortunate ambassadors,
> from which springs forth and abundance of good fortune for this joyful city, in
> which palaces and *Alcázares* were raised; and these magnificent abodes [are] for
> my lord and only master, who gave life to its splendor, the pious, generous sultan
> who ordered it to be built in the City of Seville with the help of his intercessor
> with God the Father.  In its dazzling construction and embellishment shone forth;
> in its adornment, craftsmen from Toledo [were used]; and this [was] in the exalted
> year 1404 [1366 CE]. Like the twilight at eventide and like the glow of dawn at
> morning a throne resplendent with brilliant colours and the intensity of its
> magnificence…Praise be to Allah.[610]

According to the inscription, the doors were built by craftsmen from Toledo, giving the doors

another possible sociocultural connection to ha-Levi's community.  The inscription also bears

resemblance to ha-Levi's dedication to Pedro found in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito*, along with the

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[609] Castilian side, door to the *Salón de Embajadores* from the P*atio de las Doncellas*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2016.

[610] The Arabic term used for "room" was *qubba*, which also reflects the design model for this hall as well as that of the *Sala de a Justicia*. Juan Carlos Hernández Núñez and Alfredo José Morales, *The Royal Palace of Seville* (London: Scala Publishers in association with Aldeasa S.A, 1999), 58, 62.

same Islamicate honorifics or *salawat*. The Castilian inscription on the opposite side of the

doors also featured elements from Psalm 53, another connection to *El Tránsito*, as well as a

further possible link to Kabbalah given that the doors were constructed by artisans in Toledo

where Kabbalah had so many historical connections. The doors to the *Salón de*

*Embajadores*/*Patio de las Doncellas* is not the only such inscription in the Alcazar, however.

*Figure 136: Dormitorio del Rey Don Pedro I, Alcazar of Seville*
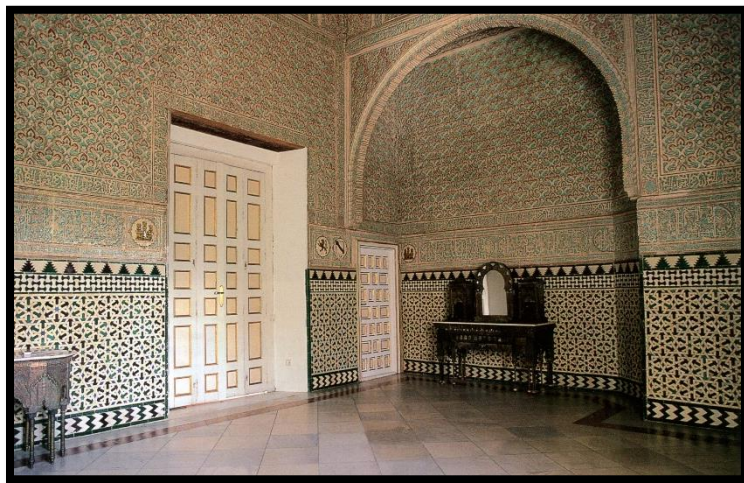


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*Figure 137: Inscription detail, Dormitorio del Rey Don Pedro I*
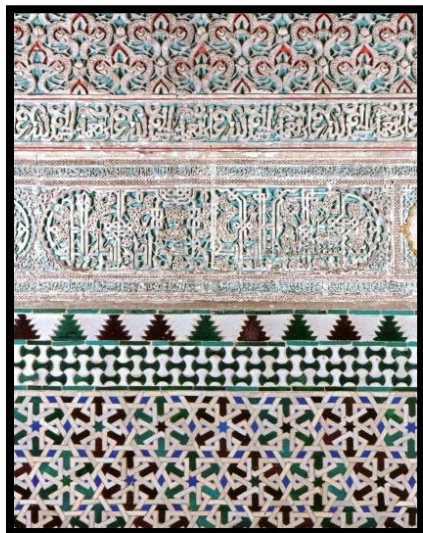


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[611] *Dormitorio del Rey Don Pedro I*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. Santos Guerrero and Barea, *The Real Alcázar of Seville*, 67.
[612] Mudéjar wall detail, *Dormitorio del Rey Don Pedro I*, Alcazar of Seville, Spain. Ibid.

The *Dormitorio del Rey Don Pedro*, which continues to house the Spanish royal family on visits to Seville, included additional inscriptions and represent an even more compelling support for Islamicate shared culture as the interpretation for the Mudéjar Palace. The private residence of the King, in this case Pedro I, incorporated several elements of the shared Islamicate visual corpus including the *ataurique* vegetal scrollwork, red, green and black polychrome wash, and a variant of the *alicatados* mosaic (*dado*) found in other parts of the Alcazar as well as at Tordesillas. The royal quarters also included medallion symbols of Castile, León, and La Banda, also found on the palace façade and in the *Sala de la Justicia*. Thus, the private chambers of the King tied stylistically into the overall Mudéjar aesthetic of the palace and other sections of the Alcazar, as well as to the other synoptic constructions in the group. Inscriptions which appeared in the scrollwork also suggest a mystical connectivity.

One of the inscriptions identified by Amador de los Rios in the *Dormitorio del Rey Don Pedro* is [يا ثقتي يا املي انت الرجا انت الولي اختم بخسير العملي][613] the inscription appears to be a combination of elements taken from the Psalms, Psalm 71 and 91 among others, along with a request for blessing. The representation of biblical passages in Arabic within the King's private residence is intriguing on several levels. First, Pedro's decision to include a biblical reference in Arabic rather than Latin may have been a design choice with the intention of keeping with the overall Mudéjar aesthetic, as opposed to some specific preference for Arabic over Latin. The Psalmic selections, however, are curious in that they reflect similar subjects as the Psalmic inscriptions in the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* and like the doors to the *Salón de Embajadores* may

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[613] Amador de los Rios translated it as "*Oh confianza mia, oh esperanza mia, tu eres mi esperanza: tu eres mi protector. Sella con la bondad mis obras,*" roughly "Oh my trust, oh my hope; you are my hope, you are my protector (guardian). Seal my works with kindness. " This inscription also appeared in the *Gabinete llamado de Maria Padilla* in the Alcazar. Rodrigo Amador de los Rios, *Inscripciones Árabes de Sevilla* (Madrid: Imprenta de T. Fortanet, 1875), 207.

also reflect Pedro's deployment of similar Kabbalistic protections for himself. Another inscription on the frieze in the *Dormitorio* might also suggest the overall protection intent of the inscriptions. The inscription reads [عز لمولانا السلطان ضن بدر ايدة الله],[614] which appears to be another blessing and also refers to Pedro as Sultan. In addition, the phrase [ايدة] may be hispano-arabic which could be read as "*ayuda*" further suggesting customization with a local dialectic convention rather than formal Arabic or simply copying other inscriptions.

Putting this all together, the private chambers of the King were a full-fledged participant in the Mudéjar Palace, which also inspire some difficult to counter conclusions. Any suggestion of convenience over choice in the aesthetic program of the Mudéjar Palace would seem to be countermanded by the *Dormitorio*. As ruler and patron, it is unreasonable to assume that Pedro would not have his private chambers designed to his liking, especially since those chambers were unlikely to be frequented by visitors or guests, and presumably not meant to serve as a public extension of the ruler, *per se*. Also the connectivity between the greater Mudéjar Palace and the private chambers and then the connectivity between the Islamicate material culture across the synoptic constructions, each with individualized and community-specific customization, should confirm the deployment of a shared Islamicate culture used by the majority of Andalusis.

The Alhambra is not immune to its own mystical connections, but again occurred in a manner customized for a Muslim patron rather than a Christian or Jewish one.

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[614] Amador de los Rios translates as "*Gloria a nuestro senor el sultan Don Pedro! Protejale Allah!*" roughly "Glory to our Lord, Sultan Don Pedro, God protect (help) him. Amador de los Rios, 207.

*Figure 138: Doors to Salón del Trono, Alhambra of Granada*



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The doors to Muhammad V's own *Sala de Embajadores* (aka *Salón del Trono*) at the Alhambra may have served a similar function.  The inscription that appeared on the doors leading into the *Salón* from the *Sala de la Barca* featured an inscription of Sura 113 of the Qur'an.  Suras 113 and 114, the last two suras of the Qur'an, were regularly used in inscriptions, especially for protection (often to ward off evil and dark magic).[616]  If their use on these doors followed established tradition, then the Psalmic inscriptions at the Alcazar and in turn the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* may have had the same intended purpose.  If true, this would further indicate a shared language with opportunities for patron-specific customization and choice.

### 5.8.3  *A Last Over-arching Connection*

A German traveler, Jerónimo Münzer who visited Granada in 1494-1495 CE, just after the surrender of the city to the Spanish, spent some time at the Alhambra and was taken by its magnificence."

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[615] Doors to *Salón del Trono* from the *Sala de la Barca*, Alhambra of Granada, Spain. Michael Jacobs and Francisco Fernández, *Alhambra* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2005), 99.

[616] Michael Anthony Sells, *Approaching the Qur'an: The Early Revelations*, 2nd ed (Ashland, Or: White Cloud Press, 2007), 139.

*Existe también en la Alhambra una soberbia y noble mezquita, [y] un jardín verdaderamente regio y famosísimo, con fuentes, piscinas y alegres arroyuelos, tan exquisitamente construido por los moros que no hay nada mejor.*[617]

Here, nearly 250 years after Fernando III marched into Seville, another Christian visitor was describing the architecture of the Muslims with a similar reverence. Like the chronicler of Alfonso X described Seville in the *Crónica General de España*, Münzer later remarked, when viewing Granada from a tower in the Alhambra, "I believe there is no greater city in the whole of Europe and Africa."[618]

Ruggles suggested that Münzer compared the Alcazar of Seville to "the Alhambra in style and size."[619] This comment cannot be confirmed by Münzer's text specifically, since his text concludes as he is leaving Malaga for Seville, however Münzer did visit several royal palaces in the surrounding areas including Almeria and Guadix and discussed those palaces, which both used the term "alcazar" in the Spanish translation of the original Latin.[620] Despite this possible translation question, Münzer's observations are relevant on two levels. First, his clear fascination and aggrandizement of the Nazrids echoed the ongoing emulation of Islamicate material in the service of grandeur and high culture to the earliest days of the Reconquista. Secondly, Münzer, like so many other visitors, does not seem to see Dodds proposed form of triumphalism or other identity-based interpretations from his interaction with Islamicate material; neither associating them purely with Islam, nor problematizing their presence in a Christian royal context – suggesting that the orientalist or post-colonial aspersions related to this material were

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[617] "There is also in the Alhambra a superb and noble mosque [and] a garden, truly regal and famous with fountains, pools, and joyous brooks, so exquisitely built by the Moors, that there is nothing better." Jeronimo Münzer, *Viaje por Espana y Portugal Reino de Granada* (Granada: Metodo Ediciones, 2008), 116.

[618] While regarding Granada from the Alhambra, translated from the Latin, "*Credo in tota Europa et Affrica maiorem civitatem non esse.*" Münzer, *Viaje por Espana y Portugal Reino de Granada*, 65.

[619] Ruggles, "The Alcazar of Seville," 91.

[620] One of the original Latin terms used was "*castellum regium*" which might translate to royal castle or palace, for which "alcazar" as a general term would be appropriate. See Munzer, *Viaje por Espana y Portugal Reino de Granada*.

still years away.  What is apparent from Münzer is the idea that Islamicate material continued to

reflect high culture, power, and grandeur in a way that seems to have continued from the earliest

days of the conquest, through its height during the reign of the early Castilians and maintaining

through the Trastamaran upheaval to the dawn of Spain's pending "golden age" following the

unification of the country and the discovery of the New World.

## 5.9    Epilogue: The *Casa de Pilatos*

The presence of an Islamicate shared culture that influenced the Alcazar in Seville also

inspired another construction in the city, the *Casa de Pilatos*.  The site of the *Casa de Pilatos*

was part of a parcel of properties sized by the Inquisition in the 15th century.  The house was

originally constructed by principal owners Don Pedro Enríquez, *Adelantado Mayor* (Chief

Governor) of Andalucía and wife Catalina de Rivera beginning c.1483 CE.  The site was known

as *El Palacio de los Adelantados Mayores* after Pedro Enríquez, but became known as The *Casa*

*de Pilatos* (Pilate's House) as named for the biblical Roman prefect following Pedro Enríquez's

son Fadrique Enriquez de Rivera's pilgrimage to the Holy Land c. 1519 CE.  Pedro Enríquez

died following the Siege of Granada in 1492, so the layout and design of the *Casa de Pilatos* is

mostly attributed to his wife Catalina de Rivera, her son Fadrique, and her grandson Pere Afán

de Rivera.  The *Casa de Pilatos* is an important piece of shared Islamicate culture specifically

due to its many Mudéjar adornments, but also due to its founder.  Pedro Enriquez was twin

brother of Enrique de Trastamara, the murderer of Alcazar patron Pedro I and the same

individual who charged Pedro as an "enricher and ennobler of Jews and Moors."[621]  Thus if the

*Casa de Pilatos* was incorporating Islamicate designs and material culture into new

constructions, it can only have been part of a shared visual language without affiliation to the

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[621] See Serrano, *Cartulario del Infantado de Covarrubias*, 217.

Muslims, and likely without clear association to Pedro I who was its primary supporter in

Seville.  Most likely it was meant to recall the grand history of Seville and when combined with

the associated high culture, power, and grandeur of these and other designs in the building, likely

served to inspire the same associations that Münzer sought to invoke at the Alhambra.  Also,

much like other Islamicate material culture of the 15th and 16th century discussed earlier, may

have grown beyond any early associations to simply reflect the style of Andalucía.  That said, the

prevalence of Mudéjar architecture and designs predominate the *Casa de Pilatos* and seem to

have combined many aspects of the synoptic constructions while also incorporating

contemporary manifestations of the style.

*Figure 139: Summer Palace patio, Casa de Pilatos*
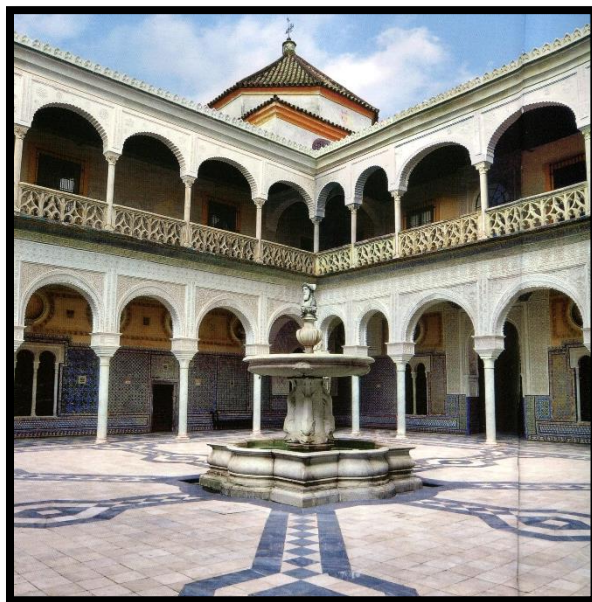


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[622] Main patio of the Summer Palace, *Casa de Pilatos*, Seville, Spain. Carlos Giordano, Nicolás Palmisano, and Ricard Regàs, *Visual Guide to Casa de Pilatos: The Palace of the Chief Governors of Andalusia* (Barcelona: Dos de Arte, 2011), 26.

*Figure 140: Arch and column detail, Casa de Pilatos*
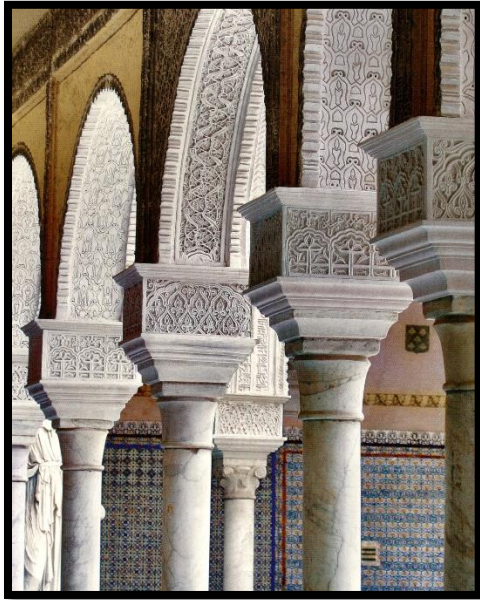
The hub of the house, the main patio (fig. 139) featured a courtyard not dissimilar from other palatial courtyards seen at the Alcazar and Alhambra. The columned arches and *alicatados* mosaics bear more than a passing resemblance to the *Patio de las Doncellas*. In the columned arches themselves (fig. 140) *ataurique* and *sebka* style designs were featured on the capitals and arch interiors. The so-called Flagellation Room (fig. 141) further suggests a shared visual culture that existed without religious or political affiliation. Featuring a Christian theme, the flagellation of Christ and a Gothic ribbed ceiling with other Gothic elements, the room is also covered in *sebka* and *ataurique* wall adornment and *alicatados* mosaic on the *dado* and altar (which also contained the same canonical design element seen in the Alcazar and Tordesillas). Conversely, the Ceremony Room (fig. 142) has numerous Mudéjar and Islamicate connections. The room was built on the *qubba* model similar to several rooms in the synoptic constructions. That model and the central fountain are also reminiscent of the *Sala de la Justicia*. The room also

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[623] Arch and column detail, main patio, *Casa de Pilatos*, Seville, Spain. Giordano, Palmisano, and Regàs, *Visual Guide to Casa de Pilatos*, 32.

incorporated an *ataurique* attic band and door frame along with *alicatados* mosaics and "*cuenca*"

tiles.

*Figure 141: Flagellation Room, Casa de Pilatos*
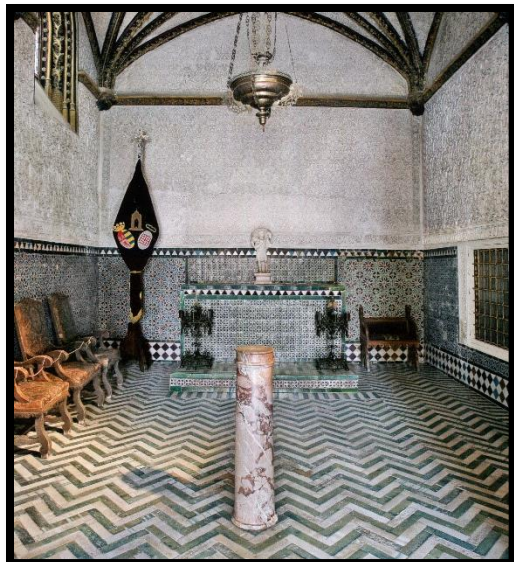

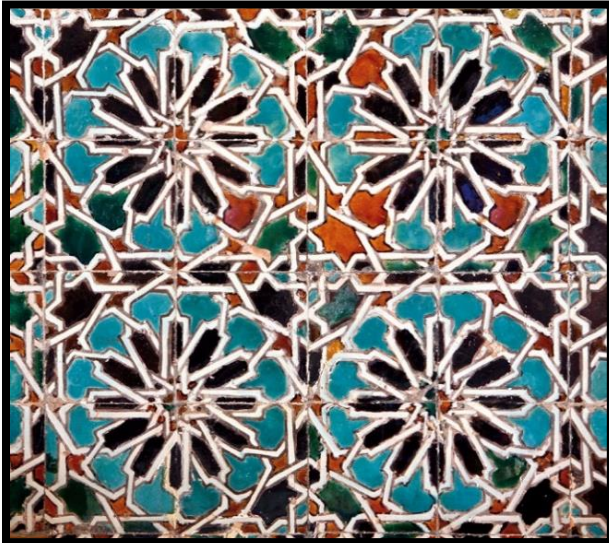
624

*Figure 142: Ceremony Room, Casa de Pilatos*



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[624] Flagellation Room, *Casa de Pilatos*, Seville, Spain. Giordano, Palmisano, and Regàs, *Visual Guide to Casa de Pilatos*, 49.
[625] Ceremony Room, *Casa de Pilatos*, Seville, Spain. Giordano, Palmisano, and Regàs, *Visual Guide to Casa de Pilatos*, 52.

The tiles appear in various styles throughout the *Casa de Pilatos*, including Mudéjar,

Isabelline, and Renaissance.  The tiles were produced in the ceramic shops in Triana that also

produced the *ataifor* ceramic bowls discussed in Chapter IV.  This particular Mudéjar tile (fig.

143), featured the *girih* design style.  The ceiling from the Ceremony Room was also built on the

*girih* design model matching other *girih* ceilings in the Alcazar and *Santa Clara de Tordesillas*.

This particular ceiling also included golden *muqarnas* elements (fig. 144) also seen in the

synoptic constructions and likely inspired by the Alcazar and Tordesillas specifically.

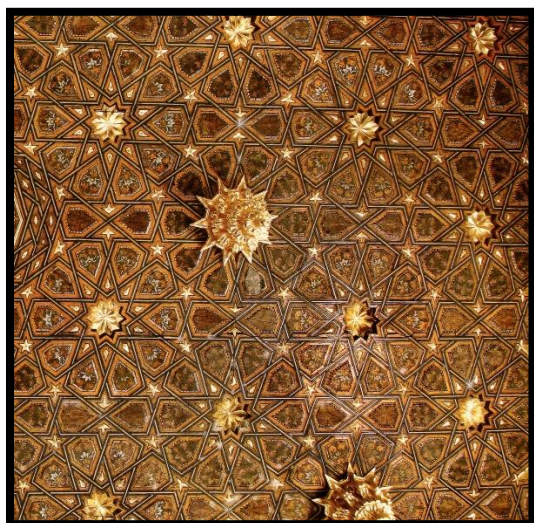*Figure 143: Mudejar Tile, Casa de Pilatos*



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626 Mudéjar tile, *Casa de Pilatos*, Seville, Spain. Dosde premium content, https://www.dosde.com/en/preguntasproductos/contenido/view/contenidoId/28/#Gallery:thetilecollection, accessed 1/2/2018.

*Figure 144: Ceremony Room ceiling detail, Casa de Pilatos*



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The *Casa de Pilatos* is further connected to the synoptic constructions and Islamicate shared culture in Seville through another ceiling.  The *artesonado* ceiling from the Fresco Room, (fig. 145) is of the same design as those that appeared in both the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* and *Santa Maria la Blanca*.  The *Casa de Pilatos* also included several inscriptions in Arabic which were also found in various rooms in the Alcazar.[628]  It is unclear if these inscriptions were included to match the Alcazar or if they were simply part of the evolved Mudéjar style at the time.

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[627] Caremony room ceiling with girih and muqarnas detail, Casa de Pilatos, Seville, Spain. Giordano, Palmisano, and Regàs, *Visual Guide to Casa de Pilatos*, 55.
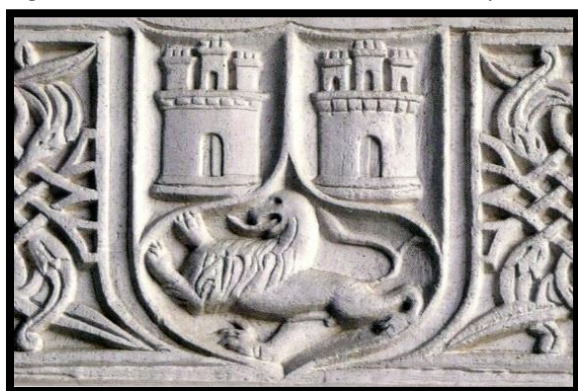[628] Amador de los Rios, *Inscripciones Árabes de Sevilla*, 216–18.

*Figure 145: Fresco Room, Casa de Pilatos*



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*Figure 146: Castile and León Heraldry, Casa de Pilatos*



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Lastly, some connections are even more explicit.  The heraldry of the House of Enriquez (fig.

146) appears in several locations and mediums throughout the *Casa de Pilatos*.  This heraldic

symbol contained the same elements that signify all the crests related to Castile and León, from

Fernando III to Enrique de Trastamara to Samuel ha-Levi and then Pedro Enriquez and his

descendants.  While each was unique to its particular family and lineage, they all seem to have

connected visually with the dynasty founded back in the 13th century.  This may again have been

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[629] Artesonado ceiling detail, Fresco Room, *Casa de Pilatos*, Seville, Spain. Giordano, Palmisano, and Regàs, *Visual Guide to Casa de Pilatos*, 70.

[630] Castile & Leon Heraldry detail, Main Patio, *Casa de Pilatos*, Seville, Spain. Giordano, Palmisano, and Regàs, *Visual Guide to Casa de Pilatos*, 27.

intended to symbolically link to the power and grandeur of that history, in the same way that Islamicate architecture and material had done for the same groups culturally.

The *Casa de Pilatos* was largely the product of Islamicate shared culture that by its time had become the style of the region and contemporary with the later Islamicate ceramics discussed in Chapter IV.  While continuing to be popular into the 16th century, wealth and prestige from Spain's ventures in the New World likely ushered in a gradual change from Islamicate/Mudéjar aesthetics to Gothic and other European architectural styles like Renaissance, Baroque, and Plateresque.   This transition in tastes included new constructions like the Great Gothic Cathedral of Seville completed c. 1506 CE, replacing the former mosque, Carlos V's 16th century Renaissance palace in the Alhambra, and the 16th century *Casa de la Contración* at the Alcazar of Seville.  While Mudéjar designs would continue to be seen in some New World constructions, their pinnacle and the predominance of Islamicate shared culture had passed, ushering in what would come to be called *El Siglo de Oro* or the Spanish Golden Age.

The central argument of this dissertation is that there was an Islamicate shared culture which existed between the three confessional communities (Muslims, Christians, and Jews) in al-Andalus.  This shared culture existed separately from affiliations with the respective religious and political spheres of the participants such that architectural designs and decorations, along with a host of other cultural permutations could coexist amidst ongoing antagonism and conflict in other spheres.  As manifested in building constructions and material culture from all three communities, Islamicate shared culture also included a common visual language which could be customized to reflect the personal choices of the patrons.  As a result, Islamicate shared culture permeated al-Andalus over the course of several centuries, but reached its height during the 14th

century with several building projects commissioned by prominent rulers of each community

which incorporated the shared style and visual language into their projects.

# 6    CONCLUSIONS

## 6.1    An Islamicate History of the Alcazar of Seville

*Figure 147: Primary entrance, Alcazar of Seville*



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At the conclusion of this exploration and analysis it is clear that the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville is not an architectural or cultural history of that complex but rather describes an exemplar of a shared culture with roots extending back to the earliest days of the Islamic empires in Iberia.  This shared culture, which likely also incorporated traditions from the earlier Visigothic and Roman cultures on the peninsula, continued through the reigns of Alfonso X, Alfonso XI, and Pedro I of Castile and onto the Spanish holdings in the New World.

The Islamicate shared culture theory presented in this dissertation outlined the use of material and aesthetics that were utilized by patrons across the three confessional communities in al-Andalus (Muslims, Christians, and Jews).  These groups in turn built, decorated, and created

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[631] Primary entrance, Alcazar of Seville, Spain.  J.F. Sullivan, own work, 2013.

material culture and architecture that reflected shared elements that appeared everywhere from royal palaces and throne rooms, to churches and synagogues, to private residences and dinnerware. This Islamicate culture in al-Andalus could be shared because it did not carry associations with the religion of Islam, despite its origins, and existed as a cultural phenomenon common to the region and adopted by its residents regardless of their political, religious, or social affiliations. Because of its separation from these other spheres, Islamicate shared culture could be employed in contexts where any overt affiliation with religion would likely have prevented it. The shared culture present in al-Andalus was so widespread and popular because it contained common recognizable elements that could be customized to create a shared style that was nonetheless unique to each patron and reflective of their personal choices and representation. This commonality of culture was also associated with expressions of power, grandeur, and luxury first recognized in the ruling Muslim polities of Iberia but later adopted by many of the Christian rulers who supplanted them, as well as by members of their respective minority Jewish populations. Thus, inscriptions, symbols, and other personally identifiable markers and references could sit in a shared matrix that could also be understood and appreciated by viewers which in turn formed a shared visual language. As a result, these shared cultural and visual elements initiated under Islamic rule, but also found among non-Muslims, cemented them as something Islamicate, positioning the shared visual language and its components under the same umbrella. This shared visual language was so prominent and evident throughout al-Andalus that it was later recognized by scholars as its own style, but proved to be problematic as questions arose regarding its attribution and associations.

This design style and aesthetic became more enigmatic when it was referred to as "Mudéjar" by art historians and other scholars beginning in the 19th century. This appellation only added to

the confusing interpretive situation due to the term "Mudéjar" already being associated with Muslims who stayed as subjects of the Christians after the 13th century conquests.   Because of the multiple definitions for the term, "Mudéjar" had the unintended consequence of associating the later described design aesthetic with the minority Muslim population, resulting in several interpretive difficulties.  The analysis presented in this project sought to unpack those associations and argue that "Mudéjar" was likely not the best descriptor of this shared culture, but rather a marker for a manifestation of a larger Islamicate milieu that grew from the shared experience of participants, which not only included the residents of Seville and Castilian-led al-Andalus, but also other Christian kingdoms, the Muslim rulers in Granada, and their coreligionists in North Africa.

Ultimately what came to be known as Mudéjar art and design encompassed an extended history of Islamicate shared culture that permeated intellectual, political, social, and religious boundaries and were prominently displayed in the four synoptic constructions from the 14th century.  These building projects and their patrons represented the pinnacle of the shared culture as well as the best examples of patron choice and customization that typified it.

Seville was at the heart of Islamicate shared culture, seeing manifestations over many generations that in turn influenced other patrons and polities in al-Andalus.  Because of its central location, rulers, and multi-confessional population, Seville became the cosmopolitan matrix in which various aspects of shared culture could congeal. As the former capitol of the Muslim Almohads, seat of power for the Castilians, and eventual hub for the New World expeditions, Seville had a long history of Islamicate shared culture and served as one of its primary dissemination points.  The Alcazar of Seville was not only the royal residence for the various rulers of the city but home to one of the best representations of Islamicate shared culture

in the Mudéjar Palace built by Pedro I. As the Alcazar was also home to the earlier *Sala de la Justicia* and the likely interaction point for dignitaries and visitors to the crown, the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville is representative of the larger cosmopolitan history of medieval al-Andalus. Visitors such as Muhammad V of Granada as well as Pedro's minister Samuel ha-Levi took inspiration from the Alcazar, which manifested in their own building projects in the Alhambra and the *Sinagoga del Tránsito* in Toledo respectively. The Alcazar and its recent constructions, however, sat atop a foundation formed and inspired by previous Islamicate constructions in Toledo, Tordesillas, and Córdoba, which in turn added to the foundation which supported the continuation of Islamicate constructions and material culture present in Mudéjar ceramics and buildings like the *Casa de Pilatos*.

Identifying a shared visual language and culture in al-Andalus is significant because it describes an environment that stood apart from other spheres in which there was conflict. On the one hand, this study has shown the value of examining cultural history through a cosmopolitan lens while on the other hand problematizing the misinterpretation and potentially anachronistic aspects of a backward-looking perspective. Moving forward, this study may inspire future examinations of shared or cosmopolitan cultures that occurred in other historically multicultural spaces in places like the Mediterranean and beyond. By focusing on spheres of cooperation coexisting amidst spheres of conflict, a nuanced and multilayered view of society and culture can emerge and produce a more discrete analysis of history that approaches involving monolithic constructs and actors may overlook. In the end, the Islamicate history of the Alcazar of Seville illustrates that the historical lens is as important as the historical information and equally responsible for the historical interpretation.

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