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Guardians of Knowledge: The Intellectual Legacy of the Ulamā in Muslim Al-Andalus

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Abstract

This article explores the pivotal role of Islamic scholars in shaping the intellectual, religious, and judicial landscape of Muslim Spain (Al-Andalus) from the 8th to the 15th century. Drawing on primary and secondary historical sources, it highlights the contributions of key Andalusian scholars—including Abu ‘Amr al-Dani, Ibn al-‘Arabi, Baqi ibn Makhlad, and Ibn Rushd—in Qur’anic sciences, Hadith studies, and the development of Maliki jurisprudence. These scholars not only produced foundational texts but also institutionalized religious learning, advanced legal reasoning, and served as judges within an evolving judicial framework. The article examines the office of the Qadi al-Qudat (Chief Judge), emphasizing its independence and influence across the Islamic West. Furthermore, it demonstrates how Andalusian scholarship illuminated the broader Islamic world and laid the intellectual groundwork that later impacted European thought. The study concludes that the legacy of Andalusian ulama reflects the integration of religious devotion, academic excellence, and administrative justice in Islamic civilization.

Keywords: Al-Andalus, Muslim Spain, Islam, Maliki fiqh, Qur’anic sciences and Hadith studies.

Introduction:

In all human societies, and particularly in Islamic society, a scholar is regarded with great respect. For this reason, scholars held exceptional importance in Andalusia as well. The Muslim rulers of Andalusia greatly honored scholars in their courts. No historian, regardless of their religion or region, can deny the fact that when Muslims arrived in Andalusia, Europe was engulfed in the darkness of ignorance. There were no scholars, no physicians, and no alchemists.¹ “As soon as the Muslims arrived, they transformed the country. The lamps of knowledge and skill were lit everywhere. The people of Andalusia were highly mindful of rank and status. Even the ignorant, who had not been granted the opportunity to acquire knowledge, strove to excel in some quality and disliked becoming a burden on others. The scholar was the center of attention, held in high esteem, and often consulted. Living near a scholar was considered an honor.

In Andalusia, the responsibility of public accountability was given to the scholars. The official responsible for accountability held the rank of a judge.”²

Notwithstanding the acknowledged contributions of Al-Andalus, the particular position of the ‘ulamā’ as key drivers of the preservation, elaboration, and dissemination of knowledge is less explored in recent scholarship. A lot of the available literature tends to highlight the political, scientific, or philosophical contributions of Al-Andalus, much to the detriment of the religious scholars (‘ulamā’) who were the guardians of Islamic learning, legal expertise, and cultural continuity. This study aims to bridge this gap by discussing how the ‘ulamā’ not only influenced Islamic religious thinking but also helped to build the overall intellectual and educational framework of Muslim Spain, thus guaranteeing the transmission of a productive scholarship with an influence on the Islamic world as well as medieval Europe.

This research argues that Muslim Al-Andalus ‘ulamā’ were instrumental in safeguarding, organizing, and passing on Islamic and classical learning, functioning not merely as religious experts but as teachers, jurists, and cultural mediators whose intellectual heritage informed the religious, legal, and educational institutions of Al-Andalus and had an impact on wider Islamic and European intellectual traditions.

Contributions of Scholars in Qur’anic Sciences

The Umayyad Caliphs of Andalusia were not only patrons of knowledge but also scholars themselves. For example, Hisham I used to sit in the company of

¹ Nawab Zulqadar Jang Bahadur, *Khilafat-e-Andalus* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2006)

² Muhammad Yusuf, *Andalus: Tareekh wa Adab* (Karachi: Madina Publishing Company, 1949), 39

renowned scholars from a young age. He was endowed with a deep appreciation for literature and was taught by the great scholars of his time. His association with jurists made him strictly observant of religion and Sharia. Whenever he was free from state affairs, he preferred to spend time with scholars, especially Imam Malik bin Anas, to whom he was deeply devoted. Imam Malik, known for his piety and integrity, feared none other than God, which displeased the Abbasid caliphs, who restricted his freedom. Hisham was aware of these circumstances and was eager to meet the Imam. Imam Malik consistently refused despite sending many envoys and wealth to invite him to Spain. As a result, Hisham sent knowledgeable men like Yahya bin Yahya to study under him and learn the principles of the Maliki school. Upon their return, they were given high positions.³ “During the reign of Al-Hakam I, scholars were also held in high esteem. He enjoyed the company of religious scholars, jurists, and pious individuals, although he did not tolerate their influence in political affairs. He had a fondness for Ziyad bin Abd al-Rahman, a student of Imam Malik. However, he did not favor Yahya bin Yahya as much due to his political ambitions. Al-Hakam took great interest in scholarly debates and even overlooked the most rebellious actions of scholars. When the scholars revolted during his reign, he initially exiled many of them but eventually had some executed when they persisted in rebellion—a decision he deeply regretted until his death.”⁴

“Abd al-Rahman II was also a great admirer of scholars. He consistently honored them in his court and treated them with great respect. Among the most prominent scholars of Andalusia, Yahya bin Yahya stood out for his knowledge, piety, and character, earning the admiration of nobles and commoners alike. He became the spiritual center for millions of Andalusians.”⁵ Al-Hakam II was himself a scholar-ruler, unmatched in learning among Spain’s rulers. Being a scholar, he valued other scholars highly, whether from within Spain or abroad. Al-Mustansir Billah was very generous, and as a result, his court was always surrounded by learned individuals. The caliphate not only protected scholars but also philosophers, allowing them to pursue knowledge without fear of prejudice.⁶

Drawn by his scholarly zeal, learned men from distant lands endured hardships to reach Córdoba and were honored in his court. Among the highly respected scholars of Andalusia was Abd al-Rahman ibn Ziyad, a devout and eminent hadith

³ *ibid*

⁴ Zia Abdul Qawi, *Tareekh-e-Andalus* (Hyderabad: 1957), 318.

⁵ Rashid Akhtar Nadwi, *Tahzeeb wa Tamaddun-e-Islami*, (Lahore: Idara Saqafat-e-Islamiya 1952), 2: 815.

⁶ Rain Heart Dozy, *Ibrat Nama-e-Andalus*, trans. Molvi Inayatullah (Lahore: Maqbool Academy, 1966), 567.

scholar and jurist. He taught many scholars of Andalusia, including Yahya, who was proud to have studied under him. Ibn Ziyad had the honor of introducing Imam Malik's Muwatta to Andalusia—a great distinction. "Baqi bin Makhlad was among the few scholars who elevated the reputation of Andalusian scholars in the academic world. He was so highly respected that his words were considered authoritative. His piety and scholarship were unparalleled. Ibn Hazm stated that he had never seen a more learned scholar. Baqi's teachers were also outstanding."

⁷ Based on these facts, it is evident that the arrival of Arab scholars in Andalusia significantly benefited Islam, especially the Maliki school of jurisprudence. These scholars worked tirelessly to uphold the faith and exerted a profound influence on governance and politics. There was no sphere in the Spanish state untouched by the contributions of scholars.⁸

The contributions of key scholars who advanced the intellectual legacy of the 'Ulamā' in Muslim al-Andalus across diverse fields of knowledge are examining as follows.

Abu Amr al-Dani:

"Abu Amr al-Dani, full name 'Uthman ibn Sa'id ibn 'Uthman ibn Sa'id ibn 'Umar al-Akhwi', became known as 'al-Dani' due to his residence in Denia (Dāniyah). He was born in 371 AH (981 CE) and passed away in 444 AH (1053 CE). He was a distinguished expert in Qur'anic sciences. In 793 CE, he traveled east in pursuit of knowledge. He stayed in Qayrawan for four months, then reached Egypt in Shawwal and spent a year there. He performed Hajj and returned to Andalusia in Dhu al-Qa'dah 393 AH. In Córdoba, he studied the Qur'an in various Qira'at (recitations) under scholars such as 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Ja'far al-Farisi, Abu al-Hasan ibn Ghalyun, Khalaf ibn al-Khaqan al-Musaddi, and Abu al-Fath Farisi ibn Ahmad. His memory and intelligence were such that anything he read once would remain etched in his mind. He was highly skilled in Qur'anic knowledge, its variant readings, interpretations, meanings, and exegesis."⁹ No other scholar surpassed Abu Amr al-Dani in the science of Qur'an and Qira'at. Thus, reciters relied completely on his writings regarding Tajwid, Qira'at, and grammatical structures. He is reported to have authored around 160 works.

Ibn al-'Arabi:

Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah ibn al-'Arabi, a resident of Seville (Ishbiliyya), was among the greatest scholars of Andalusia. His fame for

⁷ *ibid.*, 925.

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ Ahmad Saeed, "Andalus mein Musalmanon ke Deeni Karnamay" (M.A. thesis, Department of Islamic Studies, Punjab University, 1964).

scholarship extended far beyond Andalusia into all corners of the Islamic world. He was a trailblazer in the application of analogical reasoning (qiyas) and derived detailed rulings (furu') from their principles (usul). He became like a radiant cloud from which Allah showered the land of Andalusia with knowledge. At a time when Andalusia had become barren in knowledge and sciences, his scholarly efforts revitalized and illuminated the land.

“He wrote al-Qabas as a commentary on Imam Malik’s Muwatta. He also authored Anwar al-Fajr, Ahkam al-Qur’an, and ‘Arifat al-Akhudi as a commentary on al-Tirmidhi. These books are highly valued for their religious significance. He later wrote al-Mushkilayn—a commentary on Qur’an and Hadith. He authored al-Nasikh wa al-Mansukh fi al-Qur’an, clarifying commands and prohibitions, as well as Qanun al-Ta’wil, Siraj al-Muhtadin, and al-Amwal al-Aqsa, a comprehensive work on the Divine Names and their significance.”¹⁰

Abu Bakr ibn ‘Atiyyah:

Abu Muhammad ‘Abd al-Haqq ibn ‘Atiyyah was a distinguished scholar of his time. His Qur’anic commentary gained great fame. He mastered language, grammar, jurisprudence, Hadith, and Qur’anic sciences. He expressed his opinions in both prose and poetry. His intellectual grasp was sharp, and he could memorize everything he read in knowledge and literature. His most renowned work, often cited by scholars, is al-Wajiz fi al-Tafsir.¹¹

Baqi ibn Makhlad:

Baqi ibn Makhlad ibn Yazid Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Qurtubi al-Andalusi was born in 196 AH (812 CE) and passed away in Jumada al-Akhirah 276 AH (889 CE). He was regarded as the most outstanding and foremost scholar of his time. No other exegete in Andalusia matched his rank. He also had the honor of compiling a Musnad of Hadith. Among his teachers was the famous Yahya ibn Yahya. He initially studied under Yahya in Andalusia and then traveled east to Iraq and Arabia to gain knowledge from the primary sources of Islam. In the sacred land of Hijaz, he benefited from scholars like Mus‘ab al-Zuhri, Ibrahim ibn Mundhir, and others. He then went to Egypt and studied under Yahya ibn Bukayr, one of the leading scholars of the time, and Zuhayr ibn ‘Ubad. From there, he traveled to Damascus, where he studied under great scholars like Ibrahim ibn al-Hisham al-Fasani and Safwan ibn Salih. His thirst for knowledge eventually led him to Baghdad, where he attended the classes of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal. He then visited Basra and learned from Hammād ibn Zayd, a celebrated hadith

¹⁰ Ahmed Mohammed al-Maqqari, Nafh at-Tib, 2: 91.

¹¹ Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, Tabaqat al-Mufasssin, 2:703.

scholar of his era.¹² According to al-Maqrizi in *Nafh al-Tib*, “The number of his teachers reached 432, although *Tabaqat al-Mufasssir* lists 482.” Baqi also wrote a *tafsir* (Qur’anic commentary), though its title is not preserved in extant records. However, historians agree that his commentary was so comprehensive and authentic that even al-Tabari’s *tafsir* did not rival it.¹³

Contributions of Scholars in the Science of Hadith

Allah Almighty has said:

“And We have revealed to you the Book so that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them.” (Qur’an, al-Nahl 16:44)

Given the importance of Hadith, the scholars of Andalusia paid special attention to its study and transmission.

Baqi ibn Makhlad:

Among the foremost in Hadith scholarship was Baqi ibn Makhlad, who wrote a famous *Musnad* (Hadith collection) that became widely known and respected. His compilation was unique and systematized the Hadith narrations by the names of the Companions (Sahabah), listing each Companion and all narrations attributed to them. He recorded more than 1,300 Sahabah in his *Musnad*. The chapters of the book were organized according to the topics of *Fiqh*. He also compiled a separate collection of the *Fatwas* of the Companions. This work holds great importance in the foundational doctrines of Islam.¹⁴

Baqi did not strictly follow any single Imam in his methodology. He pioneered a new approach based on exploration and investigation, though he had deep admiration for Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, whose influence can be seen in his work. His contributions to Hadith are praiseworthy. His *Musnad* and *Fatwas of the Companions* remain priceless assets in Islamic heritage.

Abu ‘Umar Yusuf ibn ‘Abd Allah:

Abu ‘Umar was a notable Hadith scholar who undertook long journeys in pursuit of Hadith. According to Abu al-Walid al-Baji, no one in Andalusia surpassed him in Hadith. He also wrote a commentary on *al-Muwatta’* of Imam Malik, which became highly popular.

Ahmad ibn Farah:

Shihab al-Din Abu al-‘Abbas Ahmad ibn Farah ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Ishbili was born in 526 AH and passed away in 699 AH (1131–1299 CE). He studied Hadith under Shaykh al-Shuyukh Sharaf al-Din, Mu‘in Ahmad Zayn al-

¹² *ibid*

¹³ *ibid.*, 709

¹⁴ Qur’an 16:44 (al-Nahl).

Din, and Isma‘il ibn ‘Awn. He later studied Hadith in Damascus under Ibn ‘Abd al-Da‘im and many others. He excelled in understanding the precise words and meanings of Hadith and was skilled in identifying narrators and memorizing their lineages. He also composed a well-known poem on Hadith terminology.

Abu al-Qasim ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn ‘Abd Allah:

Abu al-Qasim was born in 333 AH and died in 411 AH (944–1020 CE). His ancestral hometown was Bijana. In pursuit of knowledge, he traveled to the East, where he studied Hadith and Qur’anic sciences under Abu ‘Umar ibn Shaybah and Abu Muhammad Hasan. He ran a cloth business, and he used the profits to buy books.

Famous scholars like Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Abu Hafs, and al-Harawi narrated Hadith from him. He was a great Hadith scholar and had a natural talent for memorizing Hadith. He himself used to say:

“Among the people of Hadith, no one has a better memory than me.”¹⁵

Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Ayman:

He studied under prominent scholars like Muhammad ibn Waddah and Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Salam. He also benefited from ‘Abd Allah ibn Ahmad ibn Hanbal in Iraq. He narrated Hadith across the East and West and wrote a book titled *Sunan* on Hadith. According to Ibn Hazm:

“Ibn Ayman was a highly refined author. He narrated both authentic and rare Hadiths that are not found in other collections. His student was Abu Bakr ibn Yahya ibn Muhammad al-Qurtubi.”¹⁶

Role of Scholars in Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh)

Islamic legislation evolved through different phases. It began during the Prophetic era, when the Qur’an and Hadith were the primary sources of Islamic law. In later periods, consensus (*ijma’*) and analogical reasoning (*qiyas*) were added to the methodology. As new issues arose over time, the field of *Fiqh* expanded greatly, leading to the emergence of distinct legal schools of thought (*madhahib*). Among the most well-known Sunni schools are the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi‘i, and Hanbali schools. In addition, Imam al-Awza‘i’s school was also prominent at one point, though it gradually disappeared.¹⁷ The Hanafi school was founded by Imam Abu Hanifa Nu‘man ibn Thabit. The Maliki school was founded by Imam Malik ibn Anas. The Shafi‘i school was founded by Imam Muhammad ibn Idris al-

¹⁵ Ibn Bashkuwal, *Kitab al-Silah*, 222.

¹⁶ Ibn al-Qutiyah, *Ifritah al-Andalus* (Allahabad, India: Kutubistan, 1940). 58.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 414.

Shafi'i. The Hanbali school was founded by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal. During the reign of al-Hakam II, the third prominent Umayyad ruler of Andalusia, the Maliki school gained significant prominence. It is believed that this was due to al-Hakam's strong devotion to Imam Malik.¹⁸

The following scholars played key roles in advancing the Maliki school in Andalusia:

Ibn Rushd (Averroes): Qadi Abu Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Rushd was born in Córdoba in 520 AH (1126 CE). His honorific was Abu al-Walid. He received formal education in *Fiqh* and authored many books. He memorized Imam Malik's Muwatta by heart and studied *Fiqh* under great scholars like Abu Ja'far ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz. Some of his renowned works in Maliki jurisprudence include: *Kitab Jaleel al-Mu'azzam 'inda al-Maliki*, a summary of Imam al-Ghazali's famous work *al-Mustasfa*, *al-Nazar fi Aghlat al-Kutub al-Fiqh*, a three-volume work in which Ibn Rushd critiques inconsistencies and errors he observed across different books of *Fiqh*, *Asbab al-Ikhtilaf*, another three-volume book that explains the reasons behind the differences among the various legal schools., *Usul al-Fiqh ka Nasab Kamil*, a comprehensive and useful text on legal theory (*usul al-fiqh*). *Fara'id al-Salatin wa al-Khulafa'*, which discusses the unlawful gains of rulers and usurers. These works offer deep insight into Ibn Rushd's juristic contributions and form a valuable intellectual legacy.¹⁹

Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Andalusi al-Qurtubi:

He was among the renowned jurists (*fuqaha'*) of Andalusia and a follower of the Maliki school. He authored a book titled *al-Sabiyah*, which gathered many rare and unusual legal issues. He died in 522 AH (1128 CE).²⁰

Qadi 'Isa ibn Dinar:

Muhammad ibn 'Isa ibn Dinar was originally from Toledo (*Tulaytulah*), although his family resided in Córdoba, hence he became known as a *Qurtubi*. In his era, no jurist in Córdoba surpassed him. He led Córdoba's legal community. The famous Maliki jurist Ibn al-Qasim respected him deeply and considered him a scholar of the highest caliber. Ibn Ayman wrote that Ibn Dinar taught the people of Egypt legal issues. Despite Yahya's fame and status, Ibn Dinar was considered the more knowledgeable jurist. He was widely known for his deep understanding of religion (*tafaqquh fi al-din*) and piety. For forty consecutive years, he performed the dawn prayer (Fajr) with the same ablution (*wudu'*) he made for the night

¹⁸ *ibid*

¹⁹ *ibid*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 458.

prayer ('Isha'). When he completed his studies with Ibn al-Qasim and was preparing to return home, Ibn al-Qasim accompanied him for three miles. When people questioned him about this, he replied, "You reproach me for walking with a man after whom there will be none more learned or more pious."²¹

Qadi Mundhir ibn Sa'id:

Qadi Mundhir ibn Sa'id al-Balluti was born in 273 AH (886 CE) and died in 355 AH (966 CE). He served during the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Nasir and was among the most respected jurists of his time due to his truthfulness and sincerity. All scholars acknowledged his legal brilliance. He authored more than fifty books in various fields such as: Sharh 'Asharat Dawawin al-'Arab, I'rab al-Qur'an, Ma'ani al-Qur'an, Sharh Abyat al-Kitab, Ahkam al-Qur'an, al-Nasikh wa al-Mansukh. He also wrote important works in *Fiqh* and *Kalam* (Islamic theology). As a judge, he based his rulings on Maliki jurisprudence.²²

Judicial Services of Scholars

In the Islamic system of governance, the judiciary has always held great importance. Hence, Muslims in every era paid serious attention to the judicial system. During the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the High Court (*al-Mahkama al-'Ulya*) in Madinah served as the supreme court of the Islamic state, and the Prophet himself was its chief judge. This system continued under the Rightly Guided Caliphs, who ensured that judicial affairs adhered to Islamic principles. When Muslims established their rule in Andalusia, they gave the judiciary a lofty and respected status. "In Muslim Spain, among all official posts, the most revered was that of the Qadi (judge). The chief of the judiciary in Andalusia was called Qadi al-Qudat or Qadi al-Jama'ah, equivalent to today's Chief Justice. All judges in the realm were subordinate to him. His authority extended across the entire empire. Even if a case was filed against the Caliph, he was required to appear before the Qadi just like any other citizen and stand in the witness box. There is no record of a Qadi ever granting the Caliph any undue privilege in court."²³

Highly qualified scholars were appointed to the position of Qadi al-Qudat. When appointing provincial judges, the administration ensured that they were well-versed in Islamic jurisprudence and known for piety and high moral character. The position was not restricted to Arabs; many non-Arabs held high judicial posts in Andalusia. For example, the distinguished Qadi Yahya ibn Yahya was of Berber descent. "Since Qadi al-Qudat was the highest office in the state, he sat next to the

²¹ Majaddid Shaykh Khidri, *Tareekh al-Fiqh al-Islami* (Karachi: 1965), 295.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid

Caliph in official ceremonies. In the provinces, Qadis sat beside governors. Non-Muslims had their own judges who ruled according to their religious laws. However, if a dispute arose between a Muslim and a non-Muslim, the case was heard and decided by a Muslim judge.”²⁴ Qadis were known for their piety and adherence to Islamic law and were viewed as sacred figures by the public. They also held certain religious responsibilities—such as interpreting the Qur’an in both religious and worldly matters. “Enforcing and interpreting Islamic legal rulings was also among the duties of Qadis. Great care was taken in appointing Qadis; only scholars with profound religious knowledge, extensive experience, and a reputation for justice were chosen. The Qadi al-Qudat was the most powerful figure in the empire. Even the Caliph could not overturn his judgment. Qadis would first draft laws, then implement and evaluate them in the capital and border regions. Afterward, these laws were enacted throughout the country.”²⁵

Famous Judicial Figures

Qadi Muhammad ibn Bashir:

He was among the most respected and capable judges and scholars of his time. His sense of justice exceeded even that of his predecessors. The ruler al-Hakam placed great trust in him. His piety and righteousness were widely recognized.²⁶ “Qadi Muhammad ibn Bashir was a truly just and fair judge. He made rulings against kings, ministers, and prominent nobles without hesitation. While delivering judgments, he never considered the social status of the litigants. His sole concern was to uphold justice as a judge.”²⁷

Qadi Mundhir ibn Sa‘id :

“After the death of al-Nasir, when al-Hakam II ascended the throne, he appointed Mundhir ibn Sa‘id as Qadi al-Qudat. He was a great scholar and a truthful, God-fearing elder. He served on the bench for sixteen years and wrote many notable books, including *Kitab al-Qur’an* and *al-Nasikh wa al-Mansukh*.”²⁸

Qadi Yahya ibn Yahya:

“Qadi Yahya ibn Yahya ibn Ahmad ibn Abi Bakr was a chief among scholars, a leader of the learned, known for his simplicity and cleanliness. His study circles were vast, and his insights were deep. He adhered strictly to his school of thought, upheld justice, mastered Qur’anic recitation, Hadith sciences (including isnad, transmitter evaluation, and historical context), and preserved knowledge of names and lineages. He upheld the dignity of the judiciary, submitted to truth, and

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ I. H. Barni, *Muslim Spain* (Karachi: 1978), 648.

²⁶ Nadwi, *Tehzeeb o Tamaddun-e-Islami*, 2: 815.

²⁷ S. M. Imamuddin, *A Political History of Muslim Spain* (Dacca: Najmah Sons 1961), 337–338.

²⁸ Ibn al-Khatib, *Akhbar Gharnata*, trans. Ahmad Sayyidullah Nadwi, (Karachi: 1932), 2: 181.

performed his duties with dedication. He ignited envy in his critics and remained steadfast where others faltered.”²⁹

Conclusion:

Because of the immense respect given to scholars in Andalusia, scholars from all over the world gathered there. With the encouragement of the Caliphs, they transformed Andalusian society. In knowledge, literature, culture, and religion, they achieved unmatched feats. It is still astonishing to modern minds how Andalusian scholars mastered multiple disciplines at once. For instance: Baqi ibn Makhlad was simultaneously a brilliant Qur’anic exegete, a renowned Hadith scholar, and a leading jurist. Abu al-Walid al-Baji was both a Mufassir and a Muhaddith. ‘Ali ibn ‘Abd Allah al-Jazami was a great scholar in Hadith, linguistics, grammar, jurisprudence, and exegesis. Yahya ibn Yahya was an expert in mathematics, linguistics, prosody, semantics, and poetry. Countless such examples demonstrate the high status of Andalusian scholars. The Umayyad Caliphs of Andalusia provided scholars with such patronage and support that they could dedicate themselves to religion and knowledge without any worldly distractions. They wrote commentaries on the Qur’an, compiled Hadith collections, proposed solutions to new legal issues, and played foundational roles in the judicial system—contributions that remain shining examples even today.

²⁹ Ibid.