# IN PRAISE OF AL-ANDALUS. ANDALUSI IDENTITY IN IBN ḤAZM'S AND AL-ŠAQUNDĪ'S TREATISES

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## Abstract

In the present article the Author attempts to analyse two treatises written by Ibn Ḥazm and al-Šaqundī known under the common title of *Risāla fī-faḍl al-Andalus* preserved in al-Maqqarī's vast anthology *Nafḥ al-ṭīb min ġuṣn al-Andalus al-raṭīb*. Chronologically separated by about two centuries, they witness of profound changes in the manner of representing al-Andalus and auto-identification of its inhabitants. While Ibn Ḥazm, claiming to respond to a scribe from Qayrawān who asserted that there was no learning in al-Andalus, defends its position as a cultural centre of a rank equal to the Abbasid East, al-Šaqundī attempts to exalt the merits of al-Andalus in comparison to North Africa. The Author argues that the change in the manner of praising al-Andalus results to a great extent from the change in the political situation which, in turn, influenced the imagery of the treatises in question.

## Keyword

Al-Andalus, Identity, Caliphate, Nostalgia, Literature.

## Capitalia Verba

Baetica Arabica, Identitas, Chaliphae munus, Desiderium, Litterae.

## 1.Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus – the West and the East*

Abū Muḥammad'Alī b. Aḥmad b. Sa'īd b. Ḥazm, a Cordoban scholar and jurist (of the malikite and, later, ẓāḥirite school), born in 384/994 and deceased in 456/1064 is doubtlessly one of the best known Andalusi writers and author of such famous works as *Ṭawq al-ḥamāma fī-l-ulfa wa-l-ullāf* ("Dove's Collar on Love and Lovers"),[1] *Kitāb al-faṣl wa-l-milal* ("Book of Divisions and Sects") or *Ǧamharat fī ansāb al-'Arab* ("Collection on the Lineages of the Arabs"). Amongst his many works covering many fields one finds a short treatise on the merits of his homeland —al-Andalus.

I would like to begin the discussion of Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* from sketching its origins as they are quite interesting. In the beginning of his treatise Ibn Ḥazm says that in the library of his friend, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Isḥāq al-Muhallabī al-Isḥāqī,[2] he found a letter of a Qayrawānī scribe, named Abū'Alī al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Tamīmī and known as Ibn al-Rabīb, who reproached to the Andalusis not perpetuating the memory of their eminent scholars and letting them fall into oblivion. Although the letter was originally addressed to his cousin, Abū al-Muġīra'Abd al-Wahhāb b. Ḥazm, Ibn Ḥazm immediately felt compelled to write a polemic reply to this treatise. Further encouragement came from Abū'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b.'Abd Allāh Qāsim, the ruler of Alpuente, who, informed of the existence of Ibn al-Rabīb's letter, urged Ibn Ḥazm to write a reply to it during the latter's visit at his court.[3] As pointed out by Charles Pellat, it is from this data and from some scarce pieces of information in the *Risāla* itself that we can draw any conclusions concerning the possible date of creation of the treatise. We know of the addressee, Abū Bakr al-Isḥaqī, that he accompanied Ibn Ḥazm on his voyage to Alméria and Játiva and al-Ḍabbī confirms that it was to him that the *Risāla* was eventually destined to.[4] Ibn al-Rabīb's death occurred in 430/1038-39 and Abū'Abd Allāh b. Qāsim ruled Alpuente from 427/1035-36 to 440/1048-49, so it can be safely assumed that the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* was composed somewhere between 430/1038-39 and 440/1048-49. Moreover, in the treatise Ibn Ḥazm speaks of Tammām b. Ġālib, who died in 436/1044, as of a living person,[5] which may be an argument

1. According to Salvador Peña Martín, the bird in question appears to be barbary dove (*Streptopella risoria*), *tórtola de collar* in Spanish (see Peña Martín, Salvador. "Como el collar a la tórtola", *El trujamán*, 17th December 2004. Instituto Cervantes. 12th December 2009 <http://cvc.cervantes.es/trujaman/anteriores/diciembre_04/17122004.htm>).

2. We do not know particularly much on this person —see Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm, bibliographe et apologiste de l'Espagne musulmane". *Al-Andalus*, XIX (1954): 30. He is mentioned several times in the *Ṭawq al-ḥamāma* and al-Ḍabbī consecrates a short notice to him in *Buḡyat al-multamis*. (See al-Ḍabbī. *Buḡyat al-multamis*, eds. Francisco Codera, Julián Ribera. Madrid: Biblioteca Arabico-Hispana, 1884: 50 (doc. nº 59).

3. Ibn Ḥazm recalls these circumstances himself in the introduction to the *Risāla fī faḍl Al-Andalus*. See: Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb min ġuṣn Al-Andalus al-raṭīb* (henceforth *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*), ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās. Beyrouth: Dār al-Ṣādir, 1968: III, 158-160.

4. Ibn Ḥazm had originally planned to address his treatise to Ibn Al-Rabīb, but as the Qayrawanī scribe died in the meantime, the *Risāla* was destined to Abū Bakr al-Isḥāqī.

5. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 172.

for considering 436/1044 as a limit date. However, the main chronological difficulty results from the fact that Ibn Ḥazm speaks of Ibn Šuhayd (died in 426/1035) as of a person who "has not yet reached grown-up age".[6] From the fact that Ibn Ḥazm speaks of the physician al-Kattānī (died about 420/1029-30) "raḥima-hu Allāh"[7] Charles Pellat draws the conclusion that the earliest possible composition date is 420. However, it has to be stated that the exact date of composition of the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* cannot be determined and one can suppose that it was written between 420/1029-30 and 440/1048-49, whilst the most probable period would be from 430/1038-39 to 436/1044.[8] It is also possible that Ibn Ḥazm had begun the work on his treatise, put it away for a considerable period of time and then resumed the work finishing it without revising the details of the *Risāla* (this seems to be the view accepted by Charles Pellat who also hints at the possibility of forgery).[9]

An interesting allegorical interpretation of the treatise (including the introduction) was presented by Gabriel Martinez-Gros,[10] though it is arguable whether and to what extent such methodological stance applies to the description of the circumstances of the *Risāla*'s creation. Such an attitude implies a certain extent of doubt in the "real" course of events as well as a suspicion of its forgery. Apparently, at least some events described in the introduction did occur (if the slight possibility of forgery of the entire treatise is completely ruled out). We are in possession of Ibn al-Rabīb's letter to Abū al-Muġīra b. Ḥazm, as it is transmitted to us by Ibn Bassām al-Šantarīnī (who quotes it in the chapter dedicated to Abū al-Muġīra)[11] and by al-Maqqarī (directly preceding Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus*; the two versions differ very slightly). As said above, the main argument of Ibn al-Rabīb's letter to Abū al-Muġīra was reproaching to the Andalusis that they did not cherish the memory of their scholars or men of letters. The letter is short enough to be fully quoted here (al-Maqqarī's version is translated):

> My lord, I wrote my letter —may you be pleased with my efforts. May God Almighty decree your happiness, perpetuate your high dignity and His assistance for you, guide you in doubt and enlighten you when you seek knowledge.

6. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 178.

7. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 175.

8. This is assumed on the basis of the facts that Ibn al-Rabīb died in 430/1038-39 and that Tammām b. Ġālib died in 436 (both these dates are in the period of Abū 'Abdallāh b. Qāsim's reign). In this hypothesis the notice presenting Ibn Šuhayd as a young person is not taken into account —if we accept Pellat's supposition that the earliest possible date of composition is 420/1029-30 then the notice of Ibn Šuhayd (who was about 38 years old in 420) presenting him as a man in his adolescence becomes even more disparate and contradictory to other data (he also died before the ascent of Abū'Abd Allāh b. Qāsim).

9. For Pellat's argumentation concerning the chronology of the treatise see: Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 55.

10. See: Martinez-Gros, Gabriel. "L'écriture et la *umma*. La *Risāla fī faḍl Al-Andalus* d'Ibn Ḥazm". *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 21 (1985): 99-113.

11. Ibn Bassām al-Šantarīnī. *Al-Ḏaḫīra fī maḥāsin ahl al-Ǧazīra*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās. Beyrouth: Dār Ṣādir, 1980: I, 133-136.

I thought about your country, harbour of all merit, source of all good, place of manifestation of all curiosity, destination of all fruit, aim of all hopes of the desiring ones and haven of all seekers.

If commercial activity were in decline, the importation to al-Andalus would not be ceased and if there were no market for a good it would sell very well there. The number of its scholars is very great, its men of letters abound and of its kings are endowed with majesty —they love knowledge and their people. They strengthen the ones who are strengthened by their own knowledge and exalt the ones exalted by their own letters. Such is their way with men of war: they promote those already promoted by their courage and strengthened by their fierceness in battles so that a fearful one became bold and a coward became courageous. An unknown one became renowned and an ignorant came to knowledge, a mute one began to speak and a simpleton became refined. A vulture became an eagle and a grass-snake a viper. People competed in knowledge and skill in all arts was multiplied.

Despite all this those people are on the verge of oblivion and on the limit of being completely neglected. Scholars of other regions composed works on the merits of their lands and commemorated in their books praiseworthy things of their countries along with the lore of their kings and princes, secretaries and viziers, judges and fellow scholars. They prolonged the memory of those people among the ancients, which renews itself with the passing of days and nights and provided trustworthy lore of their deeds in posterity —it becomes ever more credible as the years go by.

On the contrary, despite their excellence in all branches of knowledge and lore, every one of your scholars, having grown in the everlasting shade of knowledge and having been trained in its unfading glory, is afraid to be criticised each time he composes a book. And when he writes he fears to be different from his peers. If he is, he is not spared —his flight ends abruptly and the wind tosses him into abyss.

No scholar of yours has ever made an effort for the sake of the merits of the people of your country, nor has he employed his intelligence in praise of its kings. He did not wet his quill for the nobleness of its secretaries and viziers, nor did he blacken a sheet of paper on the virtues of its judges and scholars. If he freed what negligence had barred from his tongue and if he expressed what omission had fended off from his eloquence, his word would be uttered easily —no route would be narrow to it nor would it go astray and its sources and origins would never rise doubts.

Nonetheless, every one of them aspires for the summit and to reach higher goals than his peers before him. Striving to obtain the palm of victory, to enjoy the vase of Ibn Muqbil, the pen of Ibn Muqla or the feather-notch of Daġfal's arrow or to become a quinsy in Abū 'Amayṭal's throat. And when he reaches his end and is taken away by death his letters and knowledge are buried with him. The memory of him dies and his lore is not passed further on, whilst the scholars of other countries, whose memory preceded us, had prolonged the memory of them with greatest skill and intelligence. They managed this by composing works which renew their memory ever after.

You said: "It had been likewise with our scholars" maintaining that they had composed books but they had not reached us. Such an assertion is not justified —it is possible to get from you to us in a short journey of one evening. If somebody with ill lungs wheezed in your country he would be heard in ours even in graves, not only in houses or castles. His words would be welcomed here eagerly, just like the compilation of Aḥmad Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, which he named "The Collar". This work provoked some criticism here, for he did not describe the merits of his country in his book, nor did the nobleness of its kings constitute one of the pearls of this collar. The occasion was favourable, yet the eloquence proved erroneous and the whole affair turned out to be just a sword without a cutting edge. Finally, the work was put aside because of abandoning what interested the readers and neglecting what they had been concerned with. If you are in possession of evident truth and definitive

judgment guide your brother and God shall guide you, lead him and God shall lead you. Peace be upon you along with mercy and blessing of God.[12]

This critique of Andalusi scholars written in rhymed prose is not a criticism of the country itself —al-Andalus is presented as a "harbour of all merit", reigned by just rulers, the habitants of which are endowed with many talents. The main argument can be divided into several parts the most important of which is the aforementioned critique of scholars. Not only did their lack of disposition towards praising the men of letters which had preceded them prevent the name of al-Andalus to be renowned and famed but also kept them from attaining their goals, for an Andalusi has to discover what had already been discovered, as Andalusi lore had not been passed on. After an ironic refutation of the argument that Andalusi books may not have reached Qayrawān and North Africa Ibn Al-Rabīb proceeds to a critique of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi's *'Iqd al-farīd* maintaining that the author had neglected his own country and for this reason his work is not held in esteem in the Ifriqiya.

We are told by Ibn Bassām al-Šantarīnī that Abū al-Muġīra b. Ḥazm wrote a response to this letter but it has unfortunately not survived to our times. Ibn Bassām himself restrained from copying it to his *al-Ḏaḫīra fī maḥāsin ahl al-Ǧazīra* stating that it was extensively long and treated of generally well-known books. All that he did retain from it in his anthology are merely some examples of Abū al-Muġīra b. Ḥazm's elaborate rhymed prose which shed little light upon his means of refutation of Ibn al-Rabīb's judgements.[13]

Two conclusions arise from those preliminary remarks —firstly, it can be stated that al-Andalus' self-definition was an important issue in the intellectual debates of the time of the last-years of the caliphate and in the beginnings of the *taifas* period. It was also clearly a matter of regional rivalries with the Mašriq and with the African Maǧrib (as in case of Ibn al-Rabīb's letter and Abū al-Muġīra's response). Secondly, Ibn Ḥazm (the author of the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus*) chose to polemize with a work which was apparently well known (it has survived in two versions, whereas Ibn Bassām al-Šantarīnī who quotes it in the chapter dedicated to Abū al-Muġīra b. Ḥazm says nothing of the response of Abū al-Muġīra's more famous cousin), moreover with one that had already been responded to. We do not know whether Ibn Ḥazm was aware of the existence of Abū al-Muġīra's response and disregarded it (he does not mention it in his treatise) or whether he did not know that such response existed. If he had known that his cousin had already composed his response it would have been possible that he wanted to draw more attention to his work presenting it as a polemic with a well-known treatise.

Ibn Hazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* can generally be divided into two parts: the introductory part containing general considerations on al-Andalus and on the nature of this country and its inhabitants and the bibliographical part which may be described as a catalogue of books written by Andalusi scholars (those works

12. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 156-158.

13. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 136-139.

are enumerated in order to thwart Ibn al-Rabīb's argument that al-Andalus has no learning worthy of note). Charles Pellat divided the treatise into three parts —the introductory and the bibliographical one and the conclusion,[14] but this assertion seems somewhat arbitrary as the conclusion is at best not very distinct (if at all) from the bibliographical part. One paragraph is, however, quite disparate from the rest and Pellat perceived it as a beginning of a new part of the treatise. I shall return to this question further on.

After an account of the origins of his treatise[15] and reminding briefly the works of Aḥmad al-Rāzī[16] Ibn Ḥazm begins the praise of his homeland by alluding to the following *ḥadīṯ* transmitted by the Prophet's aunt, Umm Ḥaram b. Milḥān:

> The Prophet (on whom be peace and prayers) fell asleep and woke up laughing. Umm Milḥān asked: "Why are you laughing, o Messenger of God?" He answered: "People of my community have been shown to me, sailing the Green Sea (al-Baḥr al-Aḫḍar) like kings on their thrones". He then fell asleep again and the same repeated itself. O, Messenger of God —Umm Milḥān said— pray to God that I may be among them! You are among the first ones —replied the Prophet[17].

Ibn Ḥazm does not quote this *ḥadīṯ* explicitly, but merely refers to it in a quite obscure phrase, assuming that his readers would be familiar enough with the Prophetic traditions to understand it.[18] Then he proceeds to an analysis of this tradition pointing out that the second group of the faithful mentioned in it were the conquerors of al-Andalus, reminding that they could not have been the conquerors of Crete or Sicily, as both those islands had been taken in possession by the Arabs after the conquest of al-Andalus. At the same time he maintains that the first group were the conquerors of Cyprus, as its conquest had taken place before the invasion on the Iberian Peninsula.[19] He also recalls the fact that Umm Ḥaram b. Milḥān died during the invasion on Cyprus having fallen off her mule,[20] which further corroborates Ibn Ḥazm's argumentation. What follows is a typically ẓāḥirite linguistic analysis —the Prophet said to Umm Ḥaram b. Milḥān that she would be "among the

14. Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 55.

15. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 158-160.

16. "As far as the antiquities of our land are concerned, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Rāzī, the historian, composed a very great number of books on these matters, especially a vast work on its roads, ports, main cities and six *aǧnād* of Al-Andalus, as well as on the curiosities of each city and their particularities. It is a very pleasant and entertaining book." (al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 160-161). The *aǧnād* (pl. of *ǧund*) were military districts located in Elvira (*ǧund* of troops from Damascus), Málaga (*ǧund* of troops from Jordan), Sidona (from Palestine), Seville (from Emese), Jaén (from Qinnaṣrīn), Beja and Murcia (from Egypt). See Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 64; Lévi-Provençal, Evariste. *L'Espagne musulmane au Xe siècle*. Paris: Larose, 1932: 22, 119.

17. Bin Al-Haǧǧaǧ, Muslim. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Cairo: 1290/1873: II, 104.

18. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 161.

19. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 161. Cyprus was conquered in 27/648-49, Crete after 203/818-19 and Sicily in 212/827 (all those dates are reminded by Ibn Ḥazm himself).

20. It is noteworthy that her tomb on Cyprus was a relatively important pilgrimage centre in classical Islam.

first ones" because there would be two groups of conquerors. Ibn Ḥazm states that one group is first only because there is a second one.

> It is a matter of relation and arithmetic, a consequence of the natural logic —the first is first in relation to the second and the second is second in relation to the first. To speak of the third there must necessarily be the second before it.[21]

Ibn Ḥazm concludes his initial argument by recalling briefly the circumstances of the Arab conquest of Crete and Sicily as well as expeditions against Constantinople and reminding that the first Arab governor of Crete, Abū Ḥafṣ ʻUmar b. Šuʿayb, known as Ibn al-Ḡalīẓ, came from the village of Biṭrawǧ (Pedroche) in the district of Faḥṣ al-Ballūṭ near Cordoba and saved himself from the repressions following the Suburb Rebellion of 202/818. He also emphasizes the fact that the majority of Crete's conquerors came from al-Andalus which serves him to refute definitely the argument that the discussed *ḥadīṯ* does not predict the conquest of al-Andalus.[22]

This introduction of a Prophetic tradition in the beginning of the treatise is quite significant. It is a reasoning which serves to place al-Andalus in the course of Islamic history and, at the same time, undermine the view that it is a peripheral region of little importance in comparison to others. (Such unfavourable opinions were expressed by some authors, mainly Oriental geographers like Ibn Ḥawqal). Here the supreme authority of the Prophet is used in order to defend the position of al-Andalus in the Muslim world and to legitimise its claims to an even (or higher) position in comparison to other Islamic lands. Even in Andalusi writings (especially the earlier ones like the *Kitāb al-taʼrīḫ* of ʻAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb, but also e.g. in the later anonymous chronicle of *Aḫbār maǧmūʿa* dating from the Vth/XIth century and, of course, chronologically closer to Ibn Ḥazm) one can perceive a conviction that al-Andalus is a limit of the known world beyond which there is an ocean (*al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ*) which no man can cross. (The anonymous author of the *Aḫbār maǧmūʿa* even expresses a regret that caliph ʻUmar II (d. 101/720), who allegedly wanted to lead the Muslims out of al-Andalus due to their isolation from the community of the faithful, could not fulfill this project and predicts a terrible fate to the Andalusis lest God has mercy upon them)[23]. Those are precisely the views Ibn Ḥazm fights against (as well as the opinions of those who interpret this *ḥadīṯ* in a different manner than his own). In the initial argument of the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* al-Andalus appears as a highly important region the appurtenance of which to the Islamic community has

21. *Wa qad ūtiya mā ūtiya min al-balāġa wa-l-bayān anna-hu yaḏkuru ṯāʻifatayn qad samā iḥdāhimā ūlà illa wa-l-tāliya la-hā ṯāniya. Fa-hāḏā min bāb al-iḍāfa wa-l-tarkīb al-ʻadad, wa hāḏā yaqtaḍī ṭabīʻa ṣināʻa-l-manṭiq, iḏ lā takūnu-l-ūlà illa li-ṯāniyatin, wa lā-l-ṯāniya ṯāniya illa li-ūlà, fa-lā sabīla ilà ḏikri ṯāliṯ illa baʻda ṯānin ḍurūra.* (Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 161-162). My lecture differs slightly from that of Charles Pellat but no full edition of the *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* existed at the time when he wrote, nor were the available fragments entirely reliable. (Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 66).

22. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 162.

23. *Ajbar Machmuâ (colección de tradiciones): crónica anónima del siglo* XI, ed. Emilio Lafuente Alcántara. Madrid: Imprenta Ribadeneyra, 1867: 22-23.

been predicted and legitimised by the Prophet himself. This importance is further exposed by reminding the role of the Andalusis in the conquest of Crete that is the development of the very course of history into which al-Andalus was previously "inscribed" by the Prophet.

This reasoning is immediately followed by a second one:

> If one considers the division of the world into climates,[24] Cordoba, the city of our birth where childhood's amulets were hung upon our neck,[25] is situated in the same climate as Sāmarrā". Our intelligence and wit are the consequence of this climate. Even if light reaches us only after attaining its point of setting, far away from the inhabited countries where it rises (which, according to the ones expert in the decrees indicated by the astral bodies, diminishes their influence)[26], al-Andalus is nonetheless privileged in comparison to most other lands because of the fact that one of the two Brilliant Ones[27] is elevated over it at the angle of ninety degrees[28] which, according to the afore-mentioned authorities, results in skill and aptitude in learning. This is confirmed by facts and made clear by experience —the Andalusis reserved for themselves in the learning of the Qur'ānic lecture, Prophetic traditions, great parts of jurisprudence (fiqh) as well as understanding of grammar, poetry, lexicography, history, medicine, mathematics and astronomy a very spacious, rich and important place.[29]

At a first glance this fragment seems to be a fairly common consideration on the natural qualities of a country and its inhabitants and the ways in which the ones affect the others. (This type of discourse is prevalent in geographical works). Some details are striking, though.

Firstly, the description of Cordoba's position is a highly peculiar one, especially given Ibn Ḥazm's views and uncompromisingly pro-Umayyad attitude. One has to note that at the beginning of the quoted fragment he does not speak of a country

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24. *Iqlīm* (pl. *aqālim*) —"climate" was one of the core concepts of Arabic geography. Originally borrowed from Greek tradition, it was developed by Arab scholars and generally meant a zone with similar geophysical characteristics which was thought to influence the nature of its inhabitants. Thus the concept of climate pertained not only to the strictly natural and physical properties of described regions but also aimed at describing their social realities. See: Tixier-Cacerés, Emmanuelle. *La géographie et géographes d'Al-Andalus*. Rouen: University of Rouen (PhD Dissertation), 2003: I, 9 and following pages.

25. Fa-inna Qurṭuba masqaṭ ra'si-nā wa-ma'aqq tamā'imi-nā. (Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 163). Charles Pellat reads *ma'allaq* in place of *ma'aqq* (Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 67) which does not really affect the meaning of the phrase. (See Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 163, note 1 for Iḥsān 'Abbās' explanation of the term *ma'aqq tamā'im*).

26. *Wa ḏālika 'inda-l-muḥsinīn li-l-aḥkām al-latī tudillu 'alayhā-l-kawākib nāqiṣ min quwā dalā'ili-hā.* (Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 163, note 1). This refers to a conviction common in classical Islam that the astral bodies and their movements could indicate future events. Since Cordoba and al-Andalus are situated close to the point of setting of the stars this phenomenon was believed to diminish in this region, so it seems to result from this phrase that the events in Al-Andalus are less predictable than in the East. (For further explanation see also Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 68 and note 2).

27. *Al-Nayyirān* —the Sun and the Moon.

28. I.e. the respective position of the Sun and the Moon is 90 degrees, which was believed to have numerous beneficial effects.

29. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 163.

but of a city or, to be more specific, of two cities. The principal peculiarity of this fragment resides in comparison of Cordoba to Sāmarrāʾ. In no Andalusi text apart from Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* do we find such a specific analogy, we do find though various comparisons of al-Andalus to Bilād al-Šām (this is caused by the fact that both those regions were often classified in the same climate). Comparing Andalusi cities to Eastern ones (e.g. of Granada to Damascus) is not uncommon either but a comparison of Cordoba to Sāmarrāʾ is definitely not a *topos* and its presence in Ibn Ḥazm's treatise has to be treated as a *hapax*.

This imagery is even more striking when we take into account Ibn Ḥazm's political views. It seems indeed quite odd that a fervent follower of the Umayyads (who even denied to the 'Abbasids the right to call themselves Arabs in his *Ǧamharat ansāb al-'Arab*) compares his beloved Umayyad capital to a city 'Abbasid *par excellence* which was Sāmarrāʾ.

It is possible, nonetheless, to interpret this fragment in a sense similar to Ibn Ḥazm's preceding argument. Despite the particularity of rhetoric it seems quite clear that the main theme of this part of the treatise is a confrontation between the West and the East. Firstly, Ibn Ḥazm admits that the way in which light reaches the West is unfavourable to some extent[30] but adds without delay that in al-Andalus the respective positions of the Sun and the Moon bring many benefits upon its inhabitants and privilege this land.[31] It seems that the main strategy is to balance the position of the West and the East of the Islamic world and it is possible to interpret the introduction of the comparison between Cordoba and Sāmarrāʾ in a very much the same way. The Umayyad capital in the West is contrasted and placed on an equal position with the old 'Abbasid capital in the East, which can be seen as a way of legitimising and affirming its place in the Islamic history. In this sense the argument of Ibn Ḥazm can be perceived in much the same way as the preceding *ḥadīṯ* analysis and as its logical continuation. Since the Prophet himself assured for al-Andalus a place in the Muslim world, there is no reason to suppose that Cordoba is endowed with lesser splendour and importance than Sāmarrāʾ. This comparison may also have another, strictly political, sense. At the times of Ibn Ḥazm Sāmarrāʾ was an ancient and long derelict capital of the dynasty with no power other than in a symbolic sphere. One can wonder if by comparing Cordoba to Sāmarrāʾ Ibn Ḥazm did not perceive the Western Umayyad capital ripped by the ongoing crisis in much the same terms as the Eastern 'Abbasid one. It may well be possible that this argumentation is a highly pessimistic critique of political reality confronted by the author of the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus.*

There is also one interesting aspect of the quoted fragments of the treatise's introductory part. Very little is done by Ibn Ḥazm to refute or even to treat on the arguments of Ibn al-Rabīb with which the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* was supposed to contain a polemic. It would seem that a polemic with his letter should contain a comparison of al-Andalus and Ifriqiya and the latter is not even once mentioned

30. See above note 26.

31. See above note 27.

explicitly in the introductory part of the treatise. (Gabriel Martinez-Gros is of the opinion that Ibn al-Rabīb's letter is referred to while mentioning Aḥmad al-Rāzī,[32] yet this allusion seems quite vague). While a doubt in the origins of the treatise recalled by Ibn Ḥazm may be a little far-fetched (there is no evidence proving that his relation is false) it may be true that he treated Ibn al-Rabīb's letter as a pretext for writing his *Risāla* and did not perceive the polemic with it as his main task. (Such a possibility has already been taken into account by Charles Pellat who, nevertheless, did not entirely rule out a possibility of forgery).[33]

Further in the introductory part we encounter the first explicit mention of Ibn al-Rabīb's letter:

> As to what the author of the afore-mentioned treatise reproached to us, if this were true we would most certainly be only dependent upon principal cities, important countries and vast regions. Nonetheless, as to Qayrawān, the home city of our correspondent, we do not recall having encountered works on its history other than "A clear exposure of the history of the Maġrib"[34] and the books of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Warrāq ("The Bookseller")[35] who composed for al-Mustanṣir[36] a vast compilation on roads and kingdoms of the Ifrīqiya[37], as well as a set of books on the history of Tahart, Oran, Tanis, Siğilmāsa, Nakūr, al-Baṣra[38] and other cities. By his origins and lineage this man was Andalusi —his ancestors were from Guadalajara and he is buried in Cordoba where he migrated having passed his youth in Qayrawān[39].

Ibn Ḥazm insists here on two things —firstly on the independence of al-Andalus from any external geopolitical entities, which can be regarded as a prolongation and corroboration of the preceding arguments. Secondly, this fragment is a veiled critique of North Africa insisting on its inferiority in comparison to al-Andalus. Ibn Ḥazm's point seems quite clear— were it not for the Andalusis, no history of the Ifriqiya would have been written, as its only historian was an Andalusi.

He then further justifies his point of view by stating that a man should be linked with a place where he chose to settle in, taking for example the Companions of the Prophet who were divided by the *ḥadīṯ* scholars into several groups ("those of al-Baṣra", "those of al-Kūfa", "the Syrians", "the Egyptians" or "the Meccans") de-

32. Martinez-Gros, Gabriel. "L'écriture et la *umma*...": 104.

33. Pellat, Charles."Ibn Ḥazm...": 54. See also Martinez-Gros, Gabriel. "L'écriture et la *umma*...": 99-100.

34. *Mu'rib 'an aḫbār Al-Maġrib*, most probably a work of a certain Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān known as Ibn al-Wakil, (d. in Qayrawān about 350/961). This book has not survived to our times. On this matter see Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 68, note 1.

35. A historian of the Maġrib born in 292/904 in Guadalajara who lived in Qayrawān and died in Cordoba in 363/973. On this see Pons Boigues, Francisco. *Ensayo bio-bibliográfico sobre los historiadores y geógrafos arábigo-españoles*. Madrid: Establecimiento Tipográfico de San Francisco de Sales, 1898: 80-81 (doc. nº 39), and Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 69, note 2.

36. I.e. Umayyad caliph, Al-Ḥakam II (350-366/961-976).

37. *Kitāb fī masālik Ifrīqiya wa-mamāliki-hā.* This book, used by Bakrī, has not survived to our times.

38. I. e. al-Baṣra in Morocco, a city which does not exist today.

39. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 163.

pending on the place where they settled. He adds that when a man immigrates to al-Andalus the Andalusis have the right to consider him as one of them (here he gives the examples of Ismaʿīl b. al-Qāsim (known as al-Qālī), a famous grammarian born in Iraq in 288/901 who settled in Cordoba in 330/941 and died there in 356/967 and of Muḥammad b. Hānī, an exiled Andalusi poet (d. 362/973) who settled at the Fatimid court; according to Ibn Ḥazm the latter should not be referred to as an Andalusi).[40] This reasoning serves to prove definitely that the inhabitants of al-Ifriqiya have no right to regard Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Warrāq as one of them. There is an interesting incoherence in this argumentation —Ibn Ḥazm states that the ancestors of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Warrāq originated from Guadalajara only to maintain afterwards that ancestors and birthplace should not be taken into account when attributing a man to a land or region.

He then proceeds to apply to the cities of the Mašriq the reasoning he used in the fragment quoted above:

> Behold Baghdad, the capital of the world, source of all virtue, homeland of the first ones to carry the banner of knowledge, advancement in learning, refinement of customs, wit, intelligence, perspicacity of spirit and power of thought. Behold al-Baṣra, "the eye" of this region inhabited by all the virtues already mentioned[41]. We do not know any work on the history of Baghdad other than that of Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir[42] —other historical works by the inhabitants of Baghdad are not consecrated exclusively to their city. We do not know a history of al-Baṣra other than that of 'Umar b. Šabba[43], as well as a work of a descendant of al-Rabī' b. Ziyād[44] attributed to Abū Sufyān[45] on al-Baṣra's streets and districts. We also know two books of two inhabitants of al-Baṣra, one of which is called 'Abd al-Qāhir of the Banū Qurayz[46] containing a description of the city— its markets, districts and streets[47]. We do not know any history of al-Kūfa other than that of 'Umar b. Šabba[48]. As to Ḫurasān, Ṭabaristān, Ǧurǧān, Kirmān, Siǧistān, Sind, al-Rayy, Armenia, Azerbaijan and all those numerous and important kingdoms, we do not know any book of an author who would try to give an account of the history of their kings, poets or physicians. We would like very much to have at hand a book on the jurists of Baghdad, but no such book exists as far as we are aware, even if those jurists constitute the elite of that region and are highly influential. If such a book existed it is probable that it would reach us as did other books of Baghdad scholars or like "History of Ispahān"

40. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 164-165.

41. Ibn Ḥazm alludes here to the proverb "Iraq is the eye of the world, al-Baṣra the eye of Iraq and Mirbād the eye of al-Baṣra". On this see: Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 71, note 1.

42. 204-280/819-893, author of *Taʾrīḫ Bagdād*, see Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 72.

43. 173-264/789-878. His history has survived to our times only partially.

44. A companion of the Prophet, governor of Siǧistān and Ḫurasān.

45. The identity of this Abū Sufyān and the book remain unknown today.

46. The identity of this author is unknown.

47. This book has not survived to our times.

48. On the contrary to this author's history of al-Baṣra (see above, note 45), his history of al-Kūfa has not survived to our times.

> of Ḥamza b. al-Ḥasan al-Isbahānī[49], "History of Egypt" of al-Mawṣilī[50] and others. It would reach us just as all those works on various branches of knowledge like the treatise of the qāḍī Abū al-'Abbās Muḥammad b. 'Abdūn al-Qayrawānī[51] on obligations (šurūṭ), its refutation by al-Šāfi'ī,[52] its refutation by Abū Ḥanīfa and the polemic with al-Šāfi'ī by the qāḍī Aḥmad b. Ṭālib al-Tamīmī,[53] the books of Ibn 'Abdūs,[54] of Muḥammad b. Saḥnūn[55]and a lot of little known works besides the famous ones.[56]

Ibn Ḥazm seems to imply here that both the Ifriqiya and, more importantly, given the previous argument, the Mašriq have one disadvantage in common —on the contrary to al-Andalus, they do not have historians to eternalize the memory of their most remarkable personalities. Again, this argument is a political one —both the Ifrīqiya and the Mašriq are regarded by Ibn Ḥazm as dependent on external geopolitical entities, whereas al-Andalus remains independent (the proof of that is the abundance of its literary production). This can be regarded as an allusion to a crisis of the 'Abbasid power and its dependence from "external" dynasties and be linked with the comparison of Cordoba to Samārrā' (although here we do not seem to encounter a possible veiled critique of the *taifa* kingdoms, as it may be the case in the comparison discussed above)[57].

Ibn Ḥazm concludes the introductory part of his treatise with a reflection on the nature of the Andalusis:

> The state of things in our part of the world proves the wisdom of the proverb "No one scorns a scholar more than his own family". I read in the Evangile of ʿIsà (on whom be peace) that it is only in his own country that a prophet loses his due respect (ḥurma).[58] What further convinces us is the way the Prophet (on whom be peace and prayers) had been treated by the people of Qurayš, who are nonetheless the noblest, wisest and the most patient of men. They are exalted by inhabiting the best of world's regions and drinking the most valuable of waters. Almighty God has endowed the tribes of al-Aws and al-Ḫazraǧ with qualities by which they distinguish themselves from other people. God bestows His grace upon whom He chooses to, which is evident in our al-Andalus —it distinguishes itself by the jealousy of its inhabitants towards a scholar who distinguishes himself from themselves by his talent. They minimize the abundance of his work, vilify its good qualities and ardently

49. Died between 350 and 360/961 and 971. His *Ta'rīḫ Isbahān* was edited and translated into Latin by Gottwald, St. Petersburg-Leipzig 1844.

50. The book (*Aḫbār Miṣr*) has not survived to our times and the author is not identified.

51. He was qāḍī of Qayrawān and died probably in 299/912. See Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 72, note 13.

52. As indicated by Charles Pellat (Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 72, such refutation does not appear in the lists of Al-Šāfi'ī's works.

53. He was qāḍī of Qayrawān at the end of II/VIIth century. See Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 72.

54. 201-258/816-872, a malikite jurist from Qayrawān.

55. Malikite qāḍī of Qayrawān (200-255/315-369).

56. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 165-66.

57. The problem of Ibn Ḥazm's attitude to the *taifas* states is very complex and can only be signaled here, as it requires extensive interpretation of sources other than the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* and exceeds by far the scope of the present work.

58. Allusion to Luke, 4, 24: And *he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.*

> search it for every little error and mistake, especially during the scholar's life. They do it to a greater extent than inhabitants of other countries —if the scholar were very talented they would say: "It's a thief of other's work and a dishonest plagiarist". If his qualities were average they would say: "He is cold, weak and full of vice". If finally the scholar obtained the palm of victory they would say "When was that? When did he learn? When did he study?" They would be happy if his mother lost him! If fate grants him a higher place than that of his neighbours or if he dares tread new paths, they declare a war upon him and the wretched one becomes object of slander and target of calumnies. He falls prey to bad tongues and to attacks at his honour —words he never uttered, acts he never committed and judgments he never thought of are attributed to him. If he overtakes and prevails over his peers without being protected by the ruler he is exposed to all the dangers of those deserts and it is difficult for him to be saved intact from these perils. If he dares compose a book he is defamed, slandered, contradicted and denigrated. All pounce upon him, his slightest errors are magnified and his most insignificant mistakes are aggrandized while the merits of his work disappear, its value becomes veiled and the author's attention is violently drawn to the work's deficiencies. It is then when his glorious ardour becomes lukewarm, his prowess dwindles rapidly and his zeal cools off. Such is the way in which those who compose poems or treatises are treated here. A scholar who wishes to flee this snare and save himself from those traps has, like a young bird, to take an escape flight or soar upwards with one beating of wings. In spite of all this, works have been composed in al-Andalus which could be deemed impossible to compose and beautiful books have been written. In case of some of them we had the merit to be the first ones to treat the subject[59].

This critique of the jealousy of the Andalusis towards their eminent scholars is one of the better-known fragments of Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus*[60]. Indeed, the assertions of Ibn Ḥazm are quite original in comparison to the rest of the Andalusi production not only of his times, but in general. While a reproach that the Andalusis restrain from prolonging the memory of their scholars, rulers or men of letters is to be found in some of the later literary anthologies, such as *al-Ḏaḫīra* of Ibn Bassām al-Šantarīnī, such a violent attitude is specific to Ibn Ḥazm —this stylistically and rhetorically elaborate description of the vices of his compatriots has to be regarded as a *hapax*. In this argument Ibn Ḥazm abandons the problems of affirmation of al-Andalus in regard to the Mašriq which have been drawing his attention up to this point. Nevertheless, by means of criticizing the traits of the Andalusi society he formulates a praise of its scholars —he states that they managed to compose valuable works despite the considerable obstacles created by their compatriots.

With this Ibn Ḥazm concludes the introductory part of his *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus*, which is by far more important for the questions of the Andalusi identity than the second, bibliographical, one. The latter one, being little more than a catalogue of authors and their books, does not contain particularly many polemic arguments or other assertions concerning the Andalusi identity. I will now proceed to a brief

59. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 166-167.

60. It was referred to especially by Pérès, Henri. *La poésie andalouse en arabe classique au XI^e siècle*. Paris: Larose, 1953: 77-78.

characteristic of the bibliographical part as well as an account of the relatively scarce polemic or ideological elements which appear there.

Ibn Ḥazm's listing of Andalusi authors of remarkable books is generally organized in regard to the subjects they treat and one can conclude that this catalogue can also be regarded as a classification of sciences. Gabriel Martinez-Gros proposes a comprehensive outlook of this classification, which I have no intention to argue with. He divides the bibliographical part of the treatise into the following sections:

1. *Kalām* (speculative theology)
2. Medicine, philosophy and mathematics
3. History
4. Language and poetry
5. *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) and traditions[61]

In his interesting allegorical interpretation of the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* Gabriel Martinez-Gros insists upon parallels between Ibn Ḥazm's argumentation from the introductory part and this classification. He points out that the introducing ḥadīṯ (the first section of the introductory part) is interpreted in the spirit of the *kalām* theology (the matter treated upon in the first section of the bibliographical part) and the considerations on al-Andalus' geography and climate are paralleled by the bibliographical section on medicine, philosophy and mathematics (i.e. natural sciences in general). Martinez-Gros maintains that such parallels exist in the entire treatise but I do not deem it necessary to fully convey his argumentation here, as the division of the introductory part proposed by the French scholar differs considerably from the one adopted for the purposes of the present work.[62]

As to the three-fold division of the treatise proposed by Charles Pellat, it seems that opting for it would be somewhat far-fetched. As indicated above, Pellat divides the treatise into three parts —the introductory and the bibliographical parts closed by a conclusion.[63] However, this seems arbitrary because what Pellat qualifies as a conclusion[64] also contains principally bibliographical references and is difficult to be separated from the preceding sections of Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla*. Moreover, nothing announces a shift of subjects —there is a brief paragraph on the method of classifying the listed works[65] but it is far from being conclusive of the entire treatise and is disparate because it is hard to perceive the application of the described method in the treatise. After this paragraph Ibn Ḥazm returns to listing remarkable Andalusi authors, whereas the last section is dedicated mainly to men of letters (poets and prose writers) but also to *ḥadīṯ* scholars and jurists and comparing them to the Eastern ones. The treatise ends with a customary greeting formula which cannot be treated as an attempt to summarize or conclude its content.[66]

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61. For this division see Martínez-Gros, Gabriel. "L'écriture et la *umma*...": 110.

62. See: Martínez-Gros, Gabriel. "L'écriture et la *umma*...": 110.

63. Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 55-57.

64. See Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 94-97, paragraphs 34-37. For the Arabic original see: Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 177-179.

65. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 176.

66. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 169.

I deem irrelevant giving a detailed account of the authors listed in each of the sections specified above but I will limit myself to an account of the fragments of the bibliographical part which contain assertions pertaining to the Andalusi identity. As this part is primarily a list of works, the ideological content pertaining to identity are principally comparisons of Andalusi books and authors to Eastern ones treating on the same or similar subjects. It is notable though, that such affirmation of the Andalusi literary production at the expense of the Eastern one does not occur particularly frequently in the bibliographical part of the treatise.

Apart from the above-mentioned section on men of letters mentioned above, such a comparison occurs only once when Ibn Ḥazm states that the Qur'ān commentary by Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Baqī b. Maḫlad[67] prevails over the one of al-Ṭabarī and that his collection on the merits of the Companions of the Prophet is of more value than the works of Abū Bakr b. Abī Šayba,[68] 'Abd al-Razzāq b. Ḥammām[69], Saʿīd b. Manṣūr[70] and other authors.[71]

Apart from this brief mention only one paragraph of the bibliographical part is worth being quoted explicitly (which will also convey the idea of this part's style):

> Despite the long distance separating our country from the source from which knowledge springs and its being far away from the abode of wise men we were able to quote such a great number of the works of its inhabitants that in vain would we search for similar ones in Persia, al-Aḥwaz, Diyār Muḍar, Diyār Rabīʿa, Yemen or Syria, even if those countries are close to Iraq, which is the target of voyage of all the refined spirits and a meeting-point of knowledge and scholars.

If amongst poets we quote Abū al-Aġrab Ǧaʿwana b. al-Ṣimma al-Kilābī[72], we shall place him only beside Ǧarīr and al-Farazdaq who were his contemporaries. Truly, his poetry should be regarded as a"lexicographical witness",[73] as he followed the ways of the ancient poets, not the modern ones. If we quote Baqī b. Maḫlad[74] we are convinced that he can only be rivaled by Muḥammad b. Ismaʿīl al-Buḫārī[75], Muslim b. al-Ḥaǧǧāǧ al-Nīsābūrī,[76] Sulaymān b. al-Aš'aṯ al-Siǧistānī[77] and Aḥmad b. Šuʿayb al-Nasā'ī.[78] If we mention Qāsim b. Muḥammad[79] we shall compare him only

67. An Andalusi traditionist, jurist and theologist, 201-276/817-889.

68. A jurist from al-Kūfa, 159-235/775-849.

69. A Yemeni historian and jurist, 126-211/744-827.

70. A Mašriqī jurist whose works were well known in al-Andalus, died in 227/842.

71. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 168-169.

72. An early Andalusī poet from the turning point of I-II/VII-VIII centuries. See Pérès, Henri. *La poésie andalouse*...: 44.

73. *Law unṣifa la-stašhada bi-ši'ri-hi.*

74. See note 67.

75. A traditionist, author of a very famous *Ṣaḥīḥ* (194-256/810-870).

76. Author of another famous *Ṣaḥīḥ* (died in 261/875).

77. A traditionist, author of *Kitāb al-sunan* (202-275/817-889).

78. Another Oriental traditionist, died in 363/915.

79. An Andalusī šāfiʿī jurist, died in 277 or 278/890-92.

to al-Qaffāl[80] and Muḥammad b ʻUqayl al-Faryābī,[81] of whom he was a companion and with whom he studied under the tuition of al-Muzānī Abū Ibrāhim.[82] If we mention ʻAbd Allāh b. Qāsim b. Hilāl[83] and Munḏir b. Saʿīd[84] we do so alongside only Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Muḡallis,[85] al-Ǧallāl,[86] al-Dibāḡī[87] and Ruwaym b. Aḥmad[88] with whom he studied under the tuition of Abū Sulaymān.[89] If we talk of Muḥammad b. ʻUmar b. Lubāba,[90] of his uncle Muḥammad b. ʻIsā[91] and of Faḍl b. Salama[92] we compare them only to Muḥammad b. ʻAbd al-Ḥakam,[93] Muḥammad b. Saḥnūn[94] and Muḥammad b. ʻAbdūs.[95] If we give an account of Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Riḡāḥī[96] and of Abū ʻAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʻĀṣim[97] we do not respect them less than the famous disciples of Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Mubarrad.[98]

> We could well hold ourselves in high esteem for having only one poet like Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Darrāḡ al-Qasṭallī[99] who is doubtlessly a peer of Baššār b. Burd, Ḥabīb[100] and al-Mutanabbī, but we also have Ǧaʿfar b. ʻUṯmān al-Ḥāḡib, Aḥmad b. ʻAbd al-Malik b. Marwān, Aḡlab b. Šuʿayb, Muḥammad b. Šaḡīṣ, Aḥmad b. Farağ and ʻAbd al-Malik b. Saʿīd al-Murādī.[101] [...]
> Amongst prose-writers (bulāḡġ) we have our friend and companion Aḥmad b. ʻAbd al-Malik b. Šuhayd[102]who lives and has not yet reached maturity[103]. His great

80. A šāfiʿī jurist from Ḫurasān (291-365/904-976).

81. An Egyptian šāfiʿī jurist, died in 235/850.

82. A direct disciple of al-Šāfiʿī, died in 264/878.

83. An Andalusi malikite jurist, who played an important role in the transmission of this school to Al-Andalus. Died in 272/885-86.

84. A ẓāḥirite qāḍī of Mérida and Cordoba (273-355/878-962).

85. An Irāqī ẓāḥirite jurist. I follow Pellat's lecture of his name (see Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 92, note 13).

86. A hanbalite jurist from Bagdad, died in 311/923.

87. His identity is unknown.

88. A ẓāḥirite mystical theologist from Bagdad, died in 303/915.

89. Abū Sulaymān Dawūd b. ʻAlī b. Ǧalaf (200-270/815-884), founder of the ẓāḥirī school.

90. A Cordoban traditionist and jurist (225-314/840-926).

91. Another Cordoban traditionist.

92. A malikite jurist from Pechina, died in 317 or 319/929 or 931.

93. A direct disciple of Malik, qāḍī of Qayrawān (186-268/799-881).

94. See note 57.

95. See note 54.

96. A Cordoban grammarian, died in 358/968.

97. An Andalusi philologist, died in 382/992.

98. A famous philologist of al-Baṣra (210-285/826-898).

99. One of the greatest Andalusi poets (347-421/958-1030).

100. I.e. Abū Tammām, see Pellat, Charles. "Ibn Ḥazm...": 93, note 2.

101. Relatively little known Andalusī poets. Ibn Farağ is the athor of the *Kitāb al-ḥadāʿiq*, a famous anthology, lost today.

102. A very famous Cordoban poet and man of letters (382-426/992-1035).

103. As indicated above, this remark is puzzling —its disparity complicates the question of Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl Al-Andalus* creation date.

> skill in applying rhetorical figures and multiple facets of this art makes him a peer of 'Amr[104] and Sahl[105]. [...]

Thus ends the reply required by the work of our correspondent (may God have mercy upon him). To what he wanted to know we only added details relevant to our argumentation. Glory be to God who aids men in acquiring knowledge, shows them the way to approach it and guides them. Blessed be Muḥammad, our Lord, God's servant and Prophet, as well as his Family and Companions —peace, honour and nobleness be upon them all.[106]

The fragments quoted above are the only ones in the bibliographical part to contain explicit judgments involving identity. Since they contain mainly comparisons of Andalusi authors to Eastern ones (only Muḥammad b. al-Ḥakam, Muḥammad b. Saḥnūn and Muḥammad b. 'Abdūs are authors from the Ifriqiya), they could be regarded as a direct continuation of the arguments exposed in the introductory part of the treatise, aimed at affirming al-Andalus' equality or even superiority to the Mašriq, despite the distance separating those lands.[107]

This affirmation thus appears to be the main subject of the treatise and the main intellectual challenge Ibn Ḥazm sets before him. This conclusion seems somewhat surprising, given the fact that the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* is a reply to the letter of Ibn al-Rabīb which does not contain any judgments on the respective position of al-Andalus and the Islamic East but the Ifrīqiya's claims to superiority over al-Andalus. Nevertheless, in the entire Ibn Ḥazm's treatise we encounter only three explicit mentions of Ibn al-Rabīb's letter (two of which were quoted explicitly above) —two in the introductory part (an account of the treatise's origins and reflections on the historians of the Ifriqiya) and one in the closing formula. Ibn Ḥazm does not dedicated much place to refute Ibn al-Rabīb's assertions, which leads to suppose that he treated his letter more or less as a pretext to write a polemic treatise establishing al-Andalus' place in Islamic history and literature (one must bear in mind that some "anti-Western" traditions existed in the East); his intellectual preoccupations were clearly different from those of Ibn al-Rabīb and, given the specificity of Ibn Ḥazm's thought, could well have some political aspect of old Umayyad-'Abbasid rivalries.

Despite the fact that the explicit identitary content is rather scarce in the bibliographical part of the treatise it would be highly far-fetched to assume that the rest of this part does not contribute at all to the construction of Andalusi identity in Ibn Ḥazm's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus*. One has to bear in mind that this entire catalogue of authors and their works was composed to prove al-Andalus' eminent position in learning and letters, especially in respect to the Mašriq and secondly in respect to North Africa. Despite the apparent formal discrepancy between the introductory and the bibliographical part, Ibn Ḥazm's reasoning is remarkably coherent, and the

104. I.e. al-Ǧaḥiẓ.

105. I.e. Sahl b. Harūn, a famous Baghdadi scholar and man of letters from III/IX century.

106. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 177-179.

107. This distance is both physical and historical, as the Arab presence in al-Andalus is much more recent than in the Mašriq.

whole bibliographical part is tightly linked with the introductory part by means of the argument from the latter that only politically independent lands manage to create their own literary production. By insisting on the importance of this production Ibn Ḥazm also seems to insist on al-Andalus' particularity and cultural independence. In times of Ibn Ḥazm when the Cordoban caliphate was falling, in the dawn of the Taifa kingdoms this vision was more or less a nostalgic one. The concept of a unified (and Umayyad, given the ideas and biography of Ibn Ḥazm) al-Andalus as a counterbalance to the ever-influential Orient has never become more than an idealistic vision, at least in terms of political strength. In this scope the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* of Ibn Ḥazm may be regarded as one of the last outbursts of a long and tedious struggle for supremacy of the 'Abbassid and Umayyad dynasties. Al-Andalus would soon be drawn into another, North African, political orbit.

## 2. Al-Šaqundī's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* – the Arabs and the Berbers

In the second half of the VII/XIIIth century a famous Granadan historian, Ibn Saʿīd al-Maġribī, gives an account of the following events:

> My father told me the following: "When I was in the court of the lord of Ceuta, Abū Yaḥyà b. Abī Zakariyyā, son –in-law of al-Nāṣir of the Banū 'Abd al-Mu'min,[108] a quarrel arose between Abū al-Walīd al-Šaqundī and Abū Yaḥyà b. al-Muʿallim al-Ṭanğī in which they both argued for the superiority of their country over the opponent's one. Al-Šaqundī said: "Were it not for al-Andalus, no one would have ever spoken on the land of the Berbers or attributed any merit to it. Were it not for the respect I hold this assembly in, I would have told you something you already know anyway...". The emir Abū Yaḥyà interrupted him saying: "Do you imply that the inhabitants of our land are Berbers and those of yours Arabs?" "God forbid!" —al-Šaqundī replied. By God! —said the emir— This is what you meant! (And truly, the expression on al-Šaqundī's face indicated that this was his point). You say this —continued Ibn al-Muʿallim— even if power and all merit comes only from the Berber land? The emir said: "I propose that both of you compose a treatise in praise of his land, as this conversation prolongs itself and leads to nothing. I hope that when you apply all your intellect to this task, you shall write something of beauty worth being eternalized". And they both did so.[109]

Such are the circumstances which gave rise to the creation of the second treatise to be discussed in the present work —the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* of Abū al-Walīd Ismaʿīl al-Šaqundī. Little is known on the life of this Cordoban man of letters —he does not figure in any of the known Andalusi biographical dictionaries and our only

108. Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf II al-Nāṣir, the Almohad caliph (ruled in 1213-1224). The Banū 'Abd Al-Mu'min are the Almohads (from the name of the first caliph). I was unable, so far, to find any data on the life of this governor of Ceuta, so those events should approximately be dated to the first quarter of the VII/XIII$^{th}$ century.

109. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 186.

source is Ibn Saʿīd al-Maġribī mentioned above. In his continuation of al-Šaqundī's treatise he included the following fragment:

> There was a firm friendship between him and my father —they met many times, incessantly visiting each other and enjoyed conversation to such extent that it was difficult for them to separate. [...] He composed a treatise in praise of al-Andalus where he opposes to the opinions of Abū Yaḥyà who argued for the superiority of the land of the Berbers over it. In al-Šaqundī's treatise I notice merits which witness of the perspicacity of his reasoning and of the refinement of his style. He was competent in many branches of knowledge —ancient and modern ones. He was a courtier of al-Manṣūr (the Almohad caliph (580-595/1184-1199) —M.W.) where he proved his remarkable qualities. Given the office of qāḍī of Baeza and Lorca he carried out this duty justly and equitably. I heard him recite to my father his qaṣīda in praise of al-Manṣūr on the occasion of the latter's expedition against his enemies. [...] He died in Seville in 629/1231-32.[110]

One finds nearly the same information in Ibn Saʿīd's *Muġrib fī ḥulà al-Maġrib* —where, apart from Baeza and Lorca, al-Šaqundī is said to have been *qāḍī* in Úbeda. Ibn Saʿīd also claims to have seen him in Seville in the times of Ibn Hūd and the date of al-Šaqundī's death is indicated less precisely (after 627).[111] Apart from that, he is quoted several times in al-Maqqarī's vast *Nafḥ al-ṭīb* (where his treatise is preserved), but this sheds no light at all on his life, apart from the information that he was also author of *Kitāb ṭuraf al-ẓurafāʾ* ("Book of Novelties for the Intelligent Ones"), a work which has not survived to the present day.

Al-Šaqundī's *nisba* comes from Secunda, a small Roman suburb situated close to Cordoba, on the left bank of the Guadalquivir River. In Umayyad times this suburb was highly prosperous and referred to as "the southern suburb" (*al-rabaḍ al-ǧanūbī*), but in Almoravid and Almohad times it was already derelict.[112] It has to be concluded that al-Šaqundī is known to us solely as the author of the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus*, one of the finest literary works of the Andalusi literature in the VII/XIIIth century written, as we have seen, on the command of the Almohad governor of Ceuta, Abū Yaḥyà b. Abī Zakariyyā. On al-Šaqundī's opponent, Abū Yaḥyà b. al-Muʿallim al-Ṭanǧī, nothing is known apart from the above-quoted fragment (the treatise he was supposed to write on the merits of the land of the Berbers did not survive to the present day and it is not known for certain whether it existed at all).

As it is evident from Ibn Saʿīd al-Maġribī's account, al-Šaqundī's treatise is a polemic work aimed at defending the superiority of al-Andalus over the "land of the Berbers". It is worthwhile to state already at the beginning of the present discussion

110. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 223.

111. See García Gomez, Emilio. *Elogio del Islam español (Risāla fī faḍl Al-Andalus)*. Madrid: Escuela de Estudios Árabes, 1934: 13; Codera, Francisco. "Tres nuevos manuscritos árabes". *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, XIX (1891): 498-506; "Libros árabes adquiridos para la Academia". *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, XXVI (1895): 415; "Copia de un tomo de Aben Çaid, regalada a la Academia". *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, XXVII (1895): 148-160.

112. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 222-223; García Gomez, Emilio. *Elogio del Islam español*...: 14 and the references quoted therein.

that it would be highly far-fetched to assume that this concept is a geographical one. Quite on the contrary —while al-Andalus may be perceived amongst others as a geographical entity, the "land of the Berbers" cannot be simply identified with North Africa. Such an assumption would lead al-Šaqundī to undermine the merits of the Arabs in that region and to disregard ancient Arab cities like Fās or Qayrawān. Thus, "the land of Berbers" is primarily a social concept and all the arguments advanced in al-Šaqundī's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* against the Berbers pertain to the Berbers inhabiting North Africa, not to the land itself. This dualism of perception ("the land of the Berbers" as an exclusively social concept and al-Andalus as a social and a geographical one) becomes more clear when one notes that while al-Šaqundī gives an account of many Andalusi cities, he says nothing on North African ones nor does anything to vilify them. In his eyes "the land of Berbers" is inferior to al-Andalus mainly because of its inhabitants' lack of science, culture and refinement and only secondly for not having the beautiful cities of al-Andalus. Moreover, treatises in praise of the Berbers are not based upon geographical criteria, but generally focus on exposing the merits of the Berbers themselves (such is the case of e.g. the famous *Mafāḫir al-Barbar*),[113] seeking primarily to distinguish them from the Arabs and prove the superiority of Berbers. In this sense Emilio Garcia Gomez rightly claims that al-Šaqundī's treatise is devoted mainly to a conflict between Arabic and Berber culture, but his approach of defining the conflict as purely "national" or even "racial" one (with the assumption of the existence of the "hispanic race") seems methodologically obsolete today.[114]

García Gomez divides the treatise generally into two parts: the polemic and the apologetic one.[115] Not wanting to enter a long discussion of this matter, I will propose a different, three-fold, division. In any case, it is mainly a matter of words —the terms "polemic" and "apologetic" do not seem to me the most fortunate of choices, as both parts are apologetic and polemic to some extent (al-Šaqundī polemizes with his Berber adversary by means of an apology of al-Andalus). I am of the opinion that it will be much more justified to divide the treatise in regard to its content into three parts: the introductory, the literary and the geographical part.

At a first glance one may perceive a certain similarity between Ibn Ḥazm's and al-Šaqundī's treatises. It is implied by the circumstances of their creation that they are polemic works aimed at defending the position of al-Andalus in respect to North Africa. One has to bear in mind, though, that while Ibn Ḥazm's treatise was not aimed principally at thwarting the position of Qayrawān or North Africa (despite its introduction, as we have seen), al-Šaqundī's *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* is a work with much more aggressive rhetoric, where polemic content is signaled many times and the Berbers are mentioned very frequently (this contrasts sharply with the fact

113. See: Lévi-Provençal, Evariste. *Fragments historiques sur les Berbères au Moyen-Âge: extraits inédits d'un recueil anonyme compilé en 712-1312 et intitulé Kitab Mafakhir al-barbar*. Rabat: Institut des Hautes Études Marocaines, 1934 as well as the more recent edition: Ya'la, Muḥammad. *Tres textos árabes sobre Beréberes en el Occidente islámico*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1996.

114. García Gomez, Emilio. *Elogio del Islam español*...: 17 and followings.

115. García Gomez, Emilio. *Elogio del Islam español*...: 16.

that Ibn al-Rabīb's letter to which Ibn Ḥazm theoretically responded was explicitly mentioned in the treatise only twice, as well as with Ibn Ḥazm's moderate and even somewhat allusive style). Al-Šaqundī's style is also much more elaborate; his treatise is written in rhymed prose, while Ibn Ḥazm's work is written in a fairly plain language.

Although al-Šaqundī's treatise is somewhat more extensive than that of Ibn Ḥazm, the main assault on the Berbers is contained in its introductory part. This fragment is interesting enough to be quoted explicitly and extensively, as all features characteristic of al-Šaqundī's vision of the Berbers and the Andalusi identity are already present there:

> Glory be to God, who makes all who pride themselves of the peninsula of al-Andalus speak in a loud voice and boast at any time without encountering anyone to contradict them or thwart their arguments. One does not call day dark or a beautiful face ugly.
> You have chosen a vast subject to treat on, speak then, if you have a tongue.[116]
> I glorify God because He caused me to be born in al-Andalus and granted me the privilege of being one of its offspring. My arm can be risen with pride and the nobleness of my condition allows me to carry out praiseworthy deeds. I pray for and salute Muḥammad, our lord, His most excellent Prophet and his noble Family and Companions.
> Afterwards, I say that I moved after having been at peace, was filled after having been hollow and reluctantly went out of my safe haven to combat the views of someone who questioned the high position of al-Andalus. This man wished to disturb the unanimity and to come to us with something eyes and ears cannot accept. Whoever sees or hears cannot accept such judgments, nor can he go astray in that manner. To pretend that the land of the Berbers is better that al-Andalus is to prefer left hand than the right one and to claim that night is clearer than day. Strange, indeed! How can one compare a spearhead to spear's other end or cut rock with glass? O you, who kindle where there are no embers and hunt falcons with sparrow-hawks! Tell me: how will you make abundant what God made scarce or embellish what God intended to be mediocre? What an intolerable lie! How can an old hag be compared to a young girl? [...] Where is your shame, o you who try to sing with whining, dress your hair without a comb and seduce honest women with dyed hair? Where have your talent and wit gone? Has local patriotism enthralled your heart and blinded your eyes and intellect?[117]

The initial argument of al-Šaqundī is a religious one. It is God who determined both the high position of al-Andalus and the low status of "the Berber land". Every endeavour of reversing this hierarchy is an act against common sense and natural order and has to be reproached as such. To live in al-Andalus is a privilege from God and something which determines an aptitude for noble deeds. Al-Šaqundī seems to imply then that since being an Andalusi is a divine favour, all Andalusis are noble-hearted. In this logic of predestination there is no place for any critique like the one in the *Risāla* of Ibn Ḥazm, where he speaks against his compatriots' envy towards

116. The author of this verse is unknown.

117. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 187-88.

the scholars. The two treatises are similar in a way —they both begin by a referral to the divine. (The religious argumentation of al-Šaqundī plays in his treatise a role similar to that of the *ḥadīṯ* in the beginning of Ibn Ḥazm's work). As it is evident from the quoted fragment, al-Šaqundīs reasoning is endowed with elaborate and aggressive rhetoric not devoid of irony. This highly contemptuous style is characteristic of the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* of al-Šaqundī, being one of the features distinguishing it from Ibn Ḥazm's work.

After these introductory remarks al-Šaqundī proceeds to a historical argumentation, which I will quote with no omissions despite its length, as it is extremely interesting for the question of the Andalusi identity in al-Šaqundī's treatise and its literary valour is very high:

> You say: "Our are the kings." But we also had our kings and our fate can be compared to the poet's words:
> One day fortune is against us and another with us. One day we are sad and another happy[118].
> If, because of the caliphate of the Banū 'Abd al-Mu'min (may God prolong their days!)[119], you hold at present the throne of all Western countries, we held it in the past with the caliphate of the Banū Qurayš[120], of whom one from their Eastern branch[121] said:
> I belong to a noble and powerful lineage. All minbars incline themselves for us to ascend upon them.
> Caliphs of Islam, commanders against the infidels. The glory of all valour has to be attributed to them[122]
> and of whom one of their Western branch[123] said:
> Are we not of the Banū Marwān, even if fate changes, despite all the misfortunes?
> When one of us is born the Earth rejoices and the minbars tremble in his honour.[124]
> In their times many famous men and poets flourished —their renown shone on every horizon and their fame is more durable on the pages of days than collars on the necks of doves.
> Like Sun, it advances through all countries, crossing lands and seas with the blowing wind.[125]
> Their kings succeeded one after another incessantly, like in the verse:
> The caliphate did not cease to go from one of you to another like pearls threading in a collar,[126]
> until God decreed that the collar must be interrupted and their power taken away. So they disappeared along with their history, they were wiped away along with their traces:

118. The author of this verse is unknown.

119. See note 108.

120. I.e. the Umayyads.

121. I.e. the Ṣufyānid branch.

122. The author of these verses is unknown.

123. I.e. the Marwānid branch.

124. Verses of an Umayyad prince, Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Malik b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (III) addressed to the Fatimid caliph al-'Azīz b. al-Mu'izz.

125. The author of this verse is unknown.

126. The author of this verse is unknown.

They were an adornment of this earth when they lived, after they had died they adorned books of history.[127]
How many a benefit they granted and how many a crime they forgave!
Since man is but history he leaves behind him, be a beautiful history for those who shall write it.[128]
One of the boons of their empire was al-Manṣūr b. Abī ʿĀmir[129]—he was a miracle of a man and his expeditions to the Christian lands reached the Green Sea[130]. He left no Muslim hostage there, combining army of Heraclius (al-Harqal) with valour of Alexander. And when he passed away the following was written on his tomb:
The traces he left behind make a description unnecessary —by them you'd believe that you have seen him with your own eyes!
By God! The times will never give out someone of his kind, and no one but him will defend the frontiers.
His eulogies have been said and books on him have been written which you surely know, to the extent that qaṣīdas on him were composed even in Baghdad. News on his goods or evil deeds propagated themselves even in farthest of lands. And when after a strife the empire had been overthrown and the Taifa kings arose to divide the land between them, their most excellent subjects were well-disposed to that because those kings animated a market for learning[131] and competed to compensate prose-writers and poets. There was no glory greater to them than to say: "The scholar So-and-so lives at the court of king So-and-so" or "The poet So-and-so serves the king So-and-so". Amongst them there was not one which did not spend his wealth on beautiful things and the eulogies of whom did not awake memories which returned after a long time. You have surely heard of the ʿāmirid Slavonic kings, Muǧāhid,[132] Munḏir[133] and Ḫayrān[134] and of the Arab kings of the Banū ʿAbbād[135], Banū Ṣumādiḥ,[136] Banū al-Afṭas,[137] Banū Ḏī al-Nūn[138] and Banū Hūd.[139] So many praises were eternalized in honour of each of them that if they were recited at night it would become clearer than dawn. The kings compensated the poets incessantly and their wealth flew like zephyres in gardens. They squandered their treasures with fury of al-Barrāḍ[140] to the extent that one of the poets, seeing that the kings compete to be praised by him, took an oath that he would not praise any of them for less than a hundred dinars. Al-Muʿtamid Ibn ʿAbbād[141] himself wanted to make him glorify him in a qaṣīda and despite the king's famous impetuosity and his extreme harshness the poet kept refusing until the king paid him the mentioned sum. One of the noblest deeds ever to be told (and we have

127. The author of this verse is unknown.
128. The author of this verse is unknown.
129. The famous Almanzor (died in 392/1002).
130. I.e. the Atlantic Ocean in this context.
131. *Iḏ naffaqū sūq al-ʿulūm*. (Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 190).
132. A king of Denia and of the Balearic Islands (ruled in 400-436/1009-1044-45).
133. The founder of the Tuǧibid dynasty in Saragossa (ruled in 410-414/1019-1023).
134. A king of Alméria (ruled in 402-419/1012-1028).
135. A dynasty ruling Seville in 414-484/1023-1091.
136. A dynasty ruling Alméria in 432-484/1041-1091.
137. A dynasty ruling Badajoz in 414-487/1022-1094.
138. A dynasty ruling Toledo in 427-478/1035-1085.
139. A dynasty ruling Saragossa in 431-536/1039-1141.
140. A pre-Islamic warrior whose fierceness in battle became proverbial.
141. A king of Seville from 434/1042 to 461/1068 and a poet himself.

not heard of anything similar) was when the lexicographer Abū Ġālib[142] composed a book and Muğāhid the ʻĀmirid, king of Denia[143], presented him with thousand dinars, a horse and many garments so that he dedicate his work to him. Abū Ḡālib, however, declined the offer and said: "I have written my book so that people might benefit from it and to eternalize my effort. Should I now sign it with the name of someone else, thus ceding my glory? This I shall not do." When Muğāhid was told this, he admired Abū Ġālib's disinterestedness and noble spirit and doubled his reward saying: "You have no obligation to dedicate your book to me. I will not make you change your mind"[144].

Even if all the kings of al-Andalus known as "the Taifa kings" competed in cultural matters[145] I would like to pay some more attention to the Banū ʻAbbād[146] because, as God Almighty said "there in is fruit, the date-palm and pomegranate"[147]. Every day was like a feast for them and they had a literary taste unmatched even by the Banū Ḥamḍān from Aleppo[148]. They, their sons and viziers were unequaled in verse and prose and competent in all branches of knowledge. Their traces are very durable and the lore of them is well-known. They eternalized every praiseworthy action the noble ones and the rabble talk of.

And now, by God, tell me who you pride yourself of before the al-Mahdī's preaching.[149] Is it of Saqūt the Ḥāğib,[150] Ṣāliḥ al-Barġawatī[151] or Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn?[152] As to the latter of them, if al-Muʿtamid b. ʻAbbād[153] had not had him praised by the poets of al-Andalus, they would not have made his fame increase and the rank of his empire rise. After they had sung his praise because of al-Muʿtamid b. ʻAbbād's intervention the latter asked him: "Did the Prince of the Faithful understand what they said?" I did not understand a word, but I know that they are asking for bread —Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn replied. And when he took leave of al-Muʿtamid b. Abbād to return to his court, al-Muʿtamid wrote a letter to him in which he said:

We separated from each other and, because of the yearning, my body is ardent and my tears flow incessantly.

At losing you my days have changed and become black, while with you my nights were white.[154]

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142. A famous scholar from Murcia, died in 436/1044.

143. See above, note 132.

144. It is noteworthy that Ibn Ḥazm also tells this anecdote in his *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus*. see Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 172.

145. *Mulāʻat al-ḥudr*, Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 190.

146. See above, note 135.

147. Allusion to the Qurʼān 55, 68 —"Wherein is fruit, the date-palm and pomegranate" (*Holy Quran*, ed. Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall. 1998. I love God. 14 March 2009 <http://www.ishwar.com/about.html>).

148. A famous dynasty which ruled in Syria and Mesopotamia from 317/929 to 394/1003, renowned for the great cultural patronage.

149. I.e. Abū ʻAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Tumart, the Almohad al-Mahdī and founder of their religious movement. Born between 470/1077-78 and 480 1087-8 and died in 524/1130 (or, less probably, in 522/1128).

150. A ḥammūdid governor of Ceuta who died during Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn's assault on the city in 467/1074.

151. The Berber II$^{nd}$/VIII$^{th}$ century prophet from the tribe of Barğawata.

152. The second Almoravid ruler. He took power in most of al-Andalus (480-500/1087-1106).

153. The last and most famous king of Seville from the ʻAbbadid dynasty and a famous Andalusi poet. (Ruled from 461/1068 to 184/1091).

154. Those two verses come from the famous "Al-Nūniyya" of Ibn Zaydūn.

> When these verses were read to Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn he said to the lector: "He asks us for black and white slaves". The lector replied: "No, my lord! What he means is that by the side of the Prince of the Faithful his night was like a day and that after bidding you farewell his day changed into night, for days of mourning are like dark nights." By God, this is so nice! —Yūsuf b. Tašfin said —Write him back that because of the separation our tears run and our head aches! It is a shame that al-'Abbas b. al-Aḥnaf[155] did not live in those times, so that he might have learned the delicacy of sentiments from this man!
> Do not be deceived when a mule goes before donkeys —there is an affinity between them.[156]
> And you, the Berbers, had better be silent, because were it not for this dynasty, you would not have obtained any power over the people.
> Rose blooms from a thorn and fire is kindled from ashes.[157]

In this extensive fragment adorned with many poetic excerpts al-Šaqundī carries out two tasks: firstly, he constructs an idealistic vision of the Andalusi past in order to confront it with the Berber present, secondly, in terms full of irony and mockery he scorns the Berber past personified principally by the Almoravids.

The past dynasties of al-Andalus are recalled in order to combat the Berber title to glorify themselves because political power belongs to them (the treatise was composed in the first half of the 7/13th century, i.e. in times of the Almohads). Al-Šaqundī insists on the fate's aptitude to change and states that what now belongs to the Berbers once belonged to the Andalusi Arabs and their dynasties, i.e. the Umayyads (with the 'Āmirids personified by al-Manṣur) and the Taifa dynasties. The perception of al-Manṣūr b. Abī 'Āmir and the 'Āmirids as "part" of the Umayyad power and period (al-Manṣūr is referred to by al-Šaqundī as "one of the boons of the Umayyad empire")[158] is nothing out of the ordinary as far as the Andalusi historical literature is concerned. The 'Āmirids are described by nearly all historians as a dynasty who exerted power on the order of the Umayyad caliphs and it is the caliphate that legitimized the rule of al-Manṣūr b. Abī 'Āmir and his sons 'Abd al-Malik and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Sanǧūl ("Sanchuelo", "little Sancho" thus called by his mother Abda, daughter of Sancho II Garcés, king of Navarre, because of his striking resemblance to his grandfather), who were officially caliphal *ḥāǧibs*. As we have seen, the merits of the Umayyads are principally their noble lineage and political power which caused the Andalusi culture to flourish, as well as their nobleness which caused them to be generous and forgiving (those two features inscribe themselves inherently in the Arabic and Islamic ruler ideal). The 'Āmirids participate in some way in their merits, but al-Šaqundī tends rather to underline the exploits of al-Manṣūr b. Abī 'Āmir in war against the Christians and in defending the frontiers

155. A famous poet of the court of Harūn Al-Rašīd renowned for his refined erotic poetry.

156. The author of this verse is unknown. The point of inserting this quotation here seems to be that even if Yūsuf b. Tašfin distinguished himself from other Berbers, in reality he was no better than his compatriots.

157. Here too, the author of this verse is unknown. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 188-192.

158. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 188-192.

of al-Andalus (it is noteworthy that no explicit mention of cultural flourishing is made in al-Šaqundī's account of the ʿĀmirid dynasty).

In his description of the Taifa dynasties al-Šaqundī stresses principally their cultural role and artistic patronage, not mentioning political power or noble lineage this time —one can have the impression that the only historical legitimisation of the Taifa kings was their high esteem for arts and sciences. It is highly noteworthy that only Arab and Slavonic Taifa princes and dynasties are listed with a certain disregard of the Berber ones. The only Berber dynasties mentioned in the above excerpt are the Banū al-Afṭas and the Banū Ḏī al-Nūn, two dynasties considerably more ancient than e.g. the Zīrids or some other Berber lineages and, as such, relatively more difficult to omit. This exclusion is in reality a quasi-total exclusion of the Berbers from the course of the glorious history of al-Andalus and from participation in its scholarly advancement or cultural refinement. The Andalusi history sketched by al-Šaqundī is in this instance a highly biased one and serves as another polemic argument to attack the Berbers and to exalt al-Andalus at their expense.

This idealized vision of the Andalusi history is contrasted by al-Šaqundī with the caricatured vision of the Berber one. "And now, by God, tell me who you pride yourselves of before al-Mahdī's preaching" —he asks his Berber adversary only to proceed to reducing Berber history to petty characters like an incompetent governor (Saqūt the Ḥāǧib who lost Ceuta to the Almoravids; this is the only mention of the Ḥammūdids in the entire treatise), a false prophet (Ṣāliḥ al-Barġawatī) and an unrefined simpleton who had always been one despite his rise to power (Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn). It is in this complete reduction and vilification of the Berber history where al-Šaqundī's irony reaches its climax. In his eyes the only prestige of Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn's (and, in consequence, the Almoravid) rule was due to the fact that Andalusi poets praised him, though not for the sake of his own merits but only through mediation of al-Muʿtamid b. ʿAbbād, the famous Sevillan king-poet. All Almoravid glory, even undue, was thus bestowed upon them by the Andalusis. After the section on Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn containing two anecdotes on his lack of refinement al-Šaqundī expresses views potentially dangerous to him —after holding the Almoravids up to complete ridicule (which is fairly safe, as he is in the service of an Almohad ruler), he bitterly asserts that the Almohad power came to them through the Almoravids and that the Almohads would have never been able to rule the Islamic West, were it not for this completely scorned dynasty. Here al-Šaqundī's irony really comes close to the border— one must bear in mind that the discussed treatise is paid for by an Almohad ruler. Despite the final poetic quotation destined to weaken the overall tenor (the sense of which is that even good things might occasionally originate from something vile) al-Šaqundī's allusive conclusion seems clear —even the Almohad dynasty, apparently exempt from the critique at the beginning, is worth less than the Andalusi Arab dynasties and rulers of yore.

It is evident that in both discussed treatises the vision of history is of a crucial importance. But it is also evident that al-Šaqundī's scope of analysis is entirely different from that of Ibn Ḥazm. In the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* of al-Šaqundī the main theme is not a vision of history serving to establish al-Andalus' position in respect

to the Islamic East, but only a definition of the role of al-Andalus in the history of the Islamic West and proving its historical and cultural superiority over Berber dynasties. This shift of perspective can doubtlessly be linked with the shift of power from the Arabs to the Berbers which took place between the times of Ibn Ḥazm and those of al-Šaqundī, but also with profound cultural changes which occurred in the Islamic West with the advent of Berber dynasties during the Taifa period as well as that of the Almoravids and the Almohads. These factors caused that Ibn Ḥazm's intellectual preoccupations were no longer relevant in the times of al-Šaqundī who clearly did not partake them. Even if we assume that rivalry between al-Andalus and North Africa was one of the subjects treated by Ibn Ḥazm (it certainly has its place in the introduction to his *Risāla* and then it is occasionally referred to, to say the least) this is not the same rivalry as the one encountered in al-Šaqundī's treatise. Firstly, as stated above, al-Šaqundī's "land of the Berbers" is not necessarily a geographical entity, while Ibn Ḥazm writes explicitly on Qayrawān and the Ifrīqiya. Secondly, and even more importantly, the subject of al-Šaqundī's *Risāla* treats upon the superiority of the Andalusi Arabs over the Berbers, while Ibn Ḥazm does not utter a single word on the latter ones which gives place to suppose that he had in mind a rivalry of the Andalusi Arabs with the North African ones. Despite the apparent similarities, Ibn Ḥazm's and al-Šaqundī's conceptions of Andalusi (and, more generally, Islamic) history and culture are entirely disparate.

After drawing this sketch of the Andalusi and Berber history, al-Šaqundī proceeds to what I call the "literary part" of his treatise. Before I start discussing it, though, one reservation should be made. I chose the term "literary" mainly for reasons of commodity as this part does not treat uniquely on literature. As in case of Ibn Ḥazm's *risāla* this part is a bibliographical one, though the content is different than in the previous treatise. The major part of the "literary" part of al-Šaqundī's *risāla* is dedicated to what can generally be described as Andalusi literary production. It begins from a brief (briefer than in case of Ibn Ḥazm's treatise) listing of famous Andalusi scholars in regard to their speciality, whereas the classification of branches of knowledge is somewhat reminiscent of the one applied by Ibn Ḥazm. The first of the categories specified by al-Šaqundī is jurisprudence and Qur'anic studies,[159] where Ibn Ḥazm is quoted among others:

> Do you possess in Qur'anic studies someone comparable to Abū Muḥammad b. Ḥazm who led an austere life amidst power and wealth which he rejected in order to dedicate himself solely to science, being of the opinion that it should be placed above all other things? It was him who said when his books were ordered to be burnt:
> Let them burn scrolls and parchment and speak of science so that the people can tell who the learned one is.
> Even if you burn paper you shall not burn its content for it shall be safe in my heart.[160]

159. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 192.

160. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 192.

Other branches of science are grammar,[161] music, geometry, philosophy, medicine, history,[162] literature history and rhymed prose. This section is very brief (barely two pages of Arabic text), and (as in case of Ibn Ḥazm's Risāla) does not contain particularly much content bearing explicitly on questions of identity. There is only one exception to this —the fragment treating on literature history:

> Do you possess such eminent literature scholars as Abū 'Umar b. 'Abd Rabbihi, author of "The Collar"? Do you have someone who would care to eternalize the memory of the best men of his country or to gather their noble works as did Ibn Bassām, author of "The Treasury"?[163] Even if you had someone like him, what would a purse be good for in a house devoid of all wealth?[164]

The first interesting detail is that al-Šaqundī quotes Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, the author of *'Iqd al-farīd* mentioned above. Ibn Ḥazm remains completely silent on this author despite his great fame, probably because, as it has been noticed earlier, the overwhelming majority of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi's anthology is Oriental literature, i.e. something which Ibn Ḥazm tries to combat in his treatise. The fact that al-Šaqundī mentions the name of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi in his *Risāla* is yet another argument in favour of the thesis that the scope of his treatise and his intellectual concerns differ remarkably from those of his predecessor.

Apart from that, the maliciously ironic phrase on the utility of a purse in an empty house inserted in al-Šaqundī's account of Ibn Bassām al-Šantarīnī is one of the only two explicitly polemic mentions in the "literary" part of the treatise. Apart from those two mentions, only formulas by which new Andalusi scholars or poets are introduced are polemic. Each time al-Šaqundī mentions someone, he rhetorically asks his adversary "Do you, the Berbers, have someone similar to this person?". This simple but effective strategy makes the treatise's rhetoric much more aggressive that it was in the case of Ibn Ḥazm, who himself enumerated many of the works and scholars listed by al-Šaqundī in this section.

What follows is a relatively extensive (and much more important than in Ibn Ḥazm's treatise) section on poets which I deem unnecessary to resume here despite its high literary valour. As it was in the case of the preceding section each poet is introduced by a rhetoric question to the Berber opponent of al-Šaqundī followed by quotations from this poet's pieces.[165] Al-Šaqundī closes this long catalogue of poets with yet another example of acute mockery:

> By God, if only you could inform me which poet of yours can rival any of the ones mentioned by me. I do not know of any poet of yours who would be more famous or the works of whom would be more abundant than those of Abū al-'Abbās al-

161. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 192.

162. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 193.

163. *Al-Ḏaḫīra fī maḥāsin ahl Al-Ǧazīra*, a great Andalusi literary anthology of the Almoravid times.

164. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 193.

165. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 193-210.

> Ǧurāwī[166]. And you had better refuse him this glory and forget him, anyway! He has already brought sufficient shame upon you in this qaṣīda of his, where he praises the caliph:
> If past kings were serpents you shall be a dragon amongst them for all time.
> How awkward is the word "dragon" (ṭaʿbān) and how weak is the expression "for all time" (dāʾima-l-dahri)! I recited this verse to one sagacious man from al-Andalus and he said: "This is nothing to be astonished at for a man like al-Ǧurāwī. Glory be to God, who caused his nisba, his spirit and his verses to correspond themselves in dullness!"[167]

The section on poets ends with those scornful remarks (this is the second openly aggressive polemic fragment in the entire "literary" part of al-Šaqundī's treatise) and the author proceeds to a much briefer section where he recalls some examples and anecdotes on the Andalusis' extraordinary valour in battle (giving the names of some military commanders like Ibn Mardanīš (518-567/1124-1172), which is actually quite interesting, given the fact that this warlord, having seized power over the Eastern regions of al-Andalus after the fall of the Almoravids, fought against the invading Almohads)[168]. Al-Šaqundī concludes the "literary" part of his treatise with an anecdote on Ibn Zuhr and Ibn al-Ǧadd in order to exemplify the nobleness and disinterestedness of the Andalusis (Ibn Zuhr was a philosopher and Ibn al-Ǧadd was a theologian and an expert in Qur'anic studies, both were already mentioned by al-Šaqundī in the first section of the "literary" part of his treatise[169]; they were enemies of old and Ibn Zuhr nobly refused to take advantage of his legal position in order to castigate his foe)[170]. Those last two sections do not contain bibliographical or literary data, which caused me to make the terminological reservation earlier.

The last extensive part of al-Šaqundī's treatise is the geographical one, which is a description of the greatest cities of al-Andalus. At the same time it is the least polemic part of all, as it contains only two explicit assertions on "the land of the Berbers". Hence a prolonged discussion of this part would be of little relevance in the present work, even if the literary valour of the geographical considerations of al-Šaqundī is very great —each city is described very skillfully and in lively terms enhanced by the elegance of language and each description is adorned with poetic quotations (which distinguishes the text from that of a standard geographical source).

The first city to be described is Seville, which is quite an interesting detail, as one would expect the account of the Andalusi cities to be opened by Cordoba[171]. In

166. Author of the compilation entitled *Ṣafwat al-adab wa-diwān al-ʿArab*. He died in the final years of Yaʿqūb Al-Manṣūr's caliphate i.e. in the end of VI/XII$^{th}$ century.

167. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 192209-210. The sense of the allusion to al-Ǧurāwī's *nisba* has become obscure today (Ǧurāwa is a place in contemporary Algeria, between Constantine and Qalʿat Banī Ḥammād. See García Gomez, Emilio. *Elogio del Islam español*...: 90).

168. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 210-211.

169. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 192, 193.

170. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 211-212.

171. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 212-214.

my opinion, this may result primarily from the fact that Seville was the Almohad capital, but also from al-Šaqundī's admiration for the 'Abbadīd kings-poets, their pieces, as well as their artistic patronage. We have already witnessed this in the anecdotes on al-Muʿtamid b. 'Abbād and Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn in the introductory part of the treatise. The lengthy section on poets also begins from a mention and quotations from poems of al-Muʿtamid b. 'Abbād, who thus appears to be considered by al-Šaqundī as the greatest Andalusī poet ever.[172] I am convinced that the fact that Seville opens the catalogue of Andalusi cities may be interpreted in much the same manner.

It is in the description of Seville that we encounter the only two direct and explicit attacks on the Berbers in this part:

> You have surely heard that there are many kinds of musical instruments in this city: ḫayāl,[173] karrīǧ,[174] 'ūd,[175] rūṭa,[176] rabāb,[177] qānūn,[178] mu'nis,[179] kaṭīra (or kanīra),[180] qitār,[181] zulāmī,[182] šuqra and nūra (which are clarinets[183]-low-pitched and high-pitched) and būq.[184] Although all those instruments are to be found in other cities of al-Andalus, in Seville they are available in greater quantities and more readily. On the contrary, in the "land of the Berbers" no such instrument exists if it was not brought there from al-Andalus. Their own instruments are duff, aqwāl, yarā, abū qarūn, dabdaba (of the Blacks) and ḥamāqī (of the Berbers).[185]

172. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 193.

173. This instrument is unknown today.

174. Probably some kind of a flute made of cane. *Carrizo* (from Arabic *karrīǧ*) is a species of cane. García Gomez, Emilio. *Elogio del Islam español*...: 98.

175. The Arabic lute.

176. Rota, which is one of the principal instruments of the Latin Middle Ages. It may have been taken by the Arabs from the Christians, although it is possible that the Andalusis adopted that name for their native instrument of some kind.

177. The Arabic monochordic fiddle.

178. The Arabic psaltery.

179. An instrument unknown today.

180. According to García Gomez this is a kind of Arabic plucked instrument, but I prefer to settle for the conclusion that this instrument is unknown, for reasons of controversies in the lecture of its name. (See García Gomez, Emilio. *Elogio del Islam español*...: 98).

181. Another plucked instrument the name of which probably comes from *cithara.*

182. Another instrument unknown today.

183. *Zummarāni.* García Gomez translates erroneously *flautas*, which is inexact, as a *zummār* (type of clarinet) is equipped with a reed, while a flute is an instrument with no reed. See Garcia Gomez, Emilio. *Elogio del Islam español*...: 98.

184. A kind of trumpet, hence the Castilian word *albogue.*

185. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 213. *Duff* is a one-hand square or rectangular drum (hence the Castillan word *adufe*), *aqwāl* is a kind of tambourin, *yarā* is probably a kind of flute and *dabdaba* is probably a kind of drum (in my opinion this is an onomatopoeic name). The rest of those instruments is unknown. On the instruments see also García Gomez, Emilio, *Elogio del Islam español*...: 98, and the references quoted by this author, though his conclusions should at times be treated with some reserve.

This remark is a rather mild one in comparison to the previous one and it is the only place when "the land of the Berbers" seems to be referred to as a place. Nevertheless, here too, this argument seems to be a purely cultural one and the point of al-Šaqundī is apparently that all the refinement comes to the Berbers from al-Andalus. This is coherent with the previous remarks of this kind like the one that were it not for the Andalusi poets, Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn's rule and conquests would have been devoid of all prestige.[186] A few lines further al-Šaqundī states that "the land of the Berbers" would not be able to contain all the poetry written in Seville, which is a continuation of the previous arguments, as the Berbers' lack of refinement is stressed once again.[187]

Other cities described by al-Šaqundī are Cordoba (an extensive description with anecdotes on the rulers and famous people who inhabited this city as well as reflections on the piety of its inhabitants and on its monuments and the account of its cultivations and production)[188], Jaén (presented as an unconquerable stronghold),[189] Baeza and Úbeda,[190] Granada,[191] Alméria,[192] Murcia,[193] Valencia[194] and the island of Mallorca.[195] As stated earlier, no comparison is made between those cities and regions and North African regions —by abstaining from doing this al-Šaqundī defines "the land of the Berbers" primarily as a cultural and social concept. The only geographical comparisons made are comparisons of Andalusi cities to Eastern ones and constitute the *topoi* of Arabic literature and geography —Seville is thus compared to Cairo, Granada is presented as "Damascus of the West", etc.

The comparison with the Islamic East is present also in the anecdote closing al-Šaqundī's treatise:

> I shall now tell you a story of something which happened to me in the house of Abū Bakr b. Zuhr.[196] When I was there one day a stranger walked in who was a scholar from Ḫurasān, whom Ibn Zuhr held in esteem. I asked him: "What is your opinion of the scholars of al-Andalus, its secretaries and poets?" "I said: 'God is the greatest...' "- he replied and I could not understand what he meant. Abū Bakr Ibn Zuhr, seeing that I was staring coldly with disapproval at the stranger, asked me: "Have you read the poetry of al-Mutanabbī?" Certainly —said I— and I know it all by heart. "So it is yourself you should be annoyed with, and your mind is

186. See above.

187. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 214.

188. For the description of Seville see Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 212-214, and of Cordoba: Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 214-217.

189. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 217.

190. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 217.

191. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 217-219.

192. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 219-220.

193. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 220-221.

194. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 221.

195. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 221.

196. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III.

> to blame for your lack of comprehension!" And he reminded to me the verse of al-Mutanabbī:
> I said: "God is the greatest" when I saw that in its houses suns rise even though it's not East.
> When I heard this I apologized to the Ḫurasānī saying: "By God, you have so grown in my eyes that I feel much smaller for not having understood your point". Glory be to God, who caused these suns to rise in the West! His prayers be upon our lord Muḥammad, his Prophet chosen from the purest Arabs and upon his Family and Companions —prayers be upon them all for all the days to come.[197]

In this final anecdote Ibn Ḥazm's main concern seems to return —that of a rivalry between the West and the East. Soon it turns out, though, that there is no rivalry at all, it is, moreover, a eulogy of al-Andalus with words of the greatest Eastern poet recited by an Eastern scholar. The East ceases to be an enemy or a cultural hegemon to be resisted by the Andalusis and begins to be an ally in al-Šaqundī's endeavour to prove the superiority of the Andalusi Arabs over the Berbers. These few phrases can well be used to summarize not only the *Risāla fī faḍl al-Andalus* of al-Šaqundī, but also our interpretation of it. It admirably illustrates the fundamental shift of themes which occurred between the times of Ibn Ḥazm and al-Šaqundī. The latter's al-Andalus is no more what it was in the times of the Umayyads' fall and the ascent of the Taifa kings and can no more joust with the Mašriq for cultural supremacy in the Islamic world. In al-Šaqundī's treatise al-Andalus has to prove its local cultural (but no longer political) supremacy over the Berbers. Sadly enough, the only available means of achieving this goal are nostalgic, because they consist principally of incessant referrals to history and the glorious Andalusi past of the caliphate and the Taifa kingdoms. In this sense, despite all the mutual divergences the two treatises have in common one essential feature: they both paint a vision of al-Andalus deeply rooted in their respective conceptions of the Islamic history.

## 3. Conclusion

Both praises of al-Andalus studied in this work have three things in common —firstly, they are destined to combat certain views or opponents and to exalt al-Andalus at their expense. Secondly, to achieve that goal both authors build a peculiar vision of the Andalusi history serving to define the Andalusi identity (in both cases this identity is constructed mainly in the introductory "historical" parts of both treatises; even if the other parts are more vast and extensive than the introductions, they serve mainly to corroborate the arguments and assumptions exposed in the beginning). Thirdly, they both present al-Andalus as a *république des lettres* and a harbour of sciences, using the fact that remarkable literary works have been created there as an argument for praising the country.

197. Al-Maqqarī. *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*...: III, 222.

Despite the somewhat deceiving introduction to his treatise, Ibn Ḥazm's principal intellectual concern is to present al-Andalus as a counterbalance to the Islamic East and its cultural and literary hegemony. He achieves this by an endeavour to establish the place of al-Andalus in the history of Islam by referring himself to the political and nostalgic flavour. He then draws an extensive list of remarkable Andalusi authors and their works, occasionally stating that some of them authority of the Prophetic tradition and by comparing two capitals of non-existent caliphates —Cordoba and Sāmarrāʾ, which gives to his argumentation a certain are more noteworthy than Oriental works treating the same subjects.

Al-Šaqundī's method bears some resemblances to that of Ibn Ḥazm (who is listed in al-Šaqundī's treatise), but his scope and preoccupations are entirely different. He seeks principally to prove the superiority of al-Andalus over "the land of the Berbers". While in his treatise al-Andalus is a social, cultural and geographical entity (an important geographical section concludes the treatise) the "land of the Berbers" is, despite its name, primarily a social and cultural one, as no account of his geography is given by the author, nor is any comparison carried out between the Andalusi cities and the Berber ones. As it is in case of Ibn Ḥazm, al-Šaqundī defines the Andalusi identity mainly by historical means, as for him history is doubtlessly the principal plane of dispute with the Berbers —he contrasts the glorious Andalusi history of the caliphs and the Taifa kings with the history of Berbers reduced to false prophets and barbaric rulers as Yūsuf b. Tāšfīn, of whom al-Šaqundī makes a laughing-stock. He even allusively states, that the Almohads (whom he serves) are worth less than the Andalusi Arab dynasties. Since the Berbers are criticized by al-Šaqundī mostly for their lack of refinement, a brief catalogue of Andalusi scholars and a long list of poets serve to further vilify and present them as culturally inferior to the Andalusis. It is also a continuation of the historical argumentation from the introduction, where the Taifa kings are presented primarily as patrons of poetry.

To conclude this discussion of two treatises bearing on the Andalusi identity, I would like to state that in both of them this identity is dominated by a nostalgic vision of a country and its history. Ibn Ḥazm's nostalgy is that of a partizan of a caliphate who witnesses its doom creating a vision of a powerful political and cultural entity able to neutralize Oriental influences and to play a leading role in the Islamic world.

Al-Šaqundī's nostalgia is of a different, more local, kind —his ideal of his homeland involves al-Andalus influencing culturally the entire Islamic West, as it did in the times of the Umayyads and the Taifa kingdoms. This change of scale is a flagrant proof of the profound political and cultural changes which occurred between the times of Ibn Ḥazm and al-Šaqundī. They both had nearly entirely different nostalgias of their own.