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The tears of the prayer niche

A multi-aspectual presentation of elegy for cities in Andalus- Arabic poetry



(The image is of the Mosque of Cordoba)

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Abstract

This essay is a presentation of the elegy for cities in Andalusí-Arabic poetry. In this essay, which is a presentation, the reader is presented with three full poems of Andalusí-Arabic Elegy for lost cities, brief analyses of the poems in terms of content and style, background information concerning the poems, short biographies of the poets. Different aspects of the Andalusí-Arabic elegy for cities are presented, such as a mentioning of cities which fell in al-Andalus and brief look at some common themes and stylistic features in Andalusí-Arabic elegy for cities. All of this is preceded by two short sections in which brief background information concerning the style of elegy, and the sub style of elegy for lost cities in Arabic poetry is given, in order to acquaint the reader with the subjects of Elegy and elegy for cities in Arabic poetry before moving on to the subject of the Andalusí-Arabic elegy for lost cities. The essay contains many different aspects, yet none of the different parts are extremely long, or contain very complicated language, in order to make it interesting for those who are not fully acquainted with the subject. In the end of the essay a short vocabulary of words and phrases which may be unfamiliar to many people is presented, followed by an appendix containing the three presented and Analyzed poems in their original Arabic forms.

Key words: Arabic poetry. Al-Andalus. Elegy. Elegy for cities

.....

1) Introduction

1.1.A short foreword

“The only things which remain of Cordoba

are the tears of the crying minarets

the scent of roses, bitter oranges and dahlias

About Walada and the tales about her love, not a rhyme remains

not even the parts of a rhyme

.....

The only things which remain of Granada

of Banú Al-Ahmar

are the tales of the narrator

and “there is none victorious except God”

the motto which you find upon all of the walls.

The only thing which remains is the palace,

A naked woman of marble

who is still living from the memories of a past love.

.....

Five centuries have passed

since the little Caliph left Spain

yet still we carry within us our little bitterness

as before^{1 2}

(Nizzár Qabbání. Sorrows in Al-Andalus)

For nearly eight centuries the Muslims maintained their civilization in the Iberian Peninsula, and the memory of this great civilization is not forgotten. Al-Andalus remains in our days as somewhat of a symbol of yearning for lost glory in Arabic culture.

The Medieval Andalusí-Arabic poetry of Elegy for cities truly embodies a sense of mourning and yearning for a land that has been lost, a land somewhere between heaven and earth, a physical location and at the same time often a symbolic ideal existing in the minds of the poets.

1.2. The Purpose of this essay

It is intended in this essay to present the poetry of elegy for lost cities in Andalusí- Arabic poetry by briefly mentioning different aspects of this poetical subcategory. It is a descriptive essay of the mentioned subject which is intended to acquaint those unfamiliar with the subject with this subcategory of elegy for cities in Andalusí-Arabic poetry. Three poems of elegy for Andalusí cities are presented and briefly analyzed, in order to give a slightly more in depth look at the elegy for cities in Andalusí-Arabic elegy. This essay furthermore contains a short introduction to the poetical style of elegy, as well as an introduction to the subcategory of elegy for cities in Arabic poetry in order to briefly acquaint the unfamiliar reader with this form of poetry, before moving on to the elegy for cities in Al-Andalus. It is my wish with this presentation to promote an increased interest for the elegy for cities in Andalusí -Arabic poetry especially, but also the elegy for cities in Arabic poetry in general, and to promote an increased interest for Medieval Andalusí-Arabic poetry in general.

¹Holmberg. Bo and Persson. Cecilia. Nizzar Qabbani: Från nostalgisk kärlekspoet till diktare med orden som vapen. Dikter tolkade från arabiska till svenska av Bo Holmberg och Cecilia Persson. Bokförlaget Tranan. 2008. PP. 102-103.

² I have myself translated the poem from Swedish, from the previously mentioned source) to English.

1.3. Methodology

One of the main principles which I have tried to maintain in this essay is to provide plenty of information without making it too long. I have turned to that, which I myself find the most suitable sources in providing the information in the different parts of the essay. In the sections where backgrounds to elegy and elegy for lost cities are given, I have turned to sources which focus upon this subject. In the backgrounds of the poems I have searched information from books of history which I believe to be accurate, and in the presentation of the biographies of the poets I have turned mostly to old Arabic biographical works. One may find plenty of information in a book dealing with a certain subject, however, unfortunately, when subjects are discussed which are not the areas of expertise of the author of the work in question, the information is often vague and sometimes even false. When experts in literature discuss history, the historical information provided is, unfortunately, quite often rather scarce, and sometimes even incorrect. On the other hand, when historians discuss detailed aspects of literature, they often, involuntarily, bereave the literature of its spirit and deeper meanings. Therefore I have tried to use different sources, in their most suitable place. The text quotes and verses of poetry which are referred to Arabic sources have been translated by me. Concerning translation of Arabic texts and poems I have tried as much as possible to provide translations close to the original, literal meanings, while making it comprehensible in English, and not depriving the reader of the beauty of the poems. I cannot confidently say that all of this has been achieved; however my outmost efforts have been made to achieve these objectives.

In cases where different accounts of historical events are in conflict with each other, different theories are presented, or where verses of poetry are presented differently. I have tried to have a critical approach, and search different sources to come to correct conclusions.

An example of this is the reason behind Al-Rundis elegy for al-Andalus. Different theories have been presented for the reason behind Al-Rundí composing his poem, and the fall of Seville is only one of the causes which have been suggested. However I have chosen to present this as the cause behind Al-Rundis composition of his elegy because of the presence of a verse in the poem, which in my opinion strongly indicates that it was inspired by the loss of Seville:

“And you who walk forth cheerfully while your homeland diverts you [from cares], can a homeland beguile any man after [the loss of] Seville?” (Verse. 26)³.

The poet in this verse makes a special mention to the fall of Seville.

1.4. Specification

³ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry: A student anthology. University of California press. Printed in The United States. 1974. P. 334.

The sections of the essay in which the poetic style of elegy is briefly introduced and backgrounds are given to the elegy for cities in Arabic and Andalusí-Arabic poetry are quite short, and so are the sections containing background information about the poems and the poets. The main focus point in this essay is the presentation of the poems and their analysis.

The number of poems is limited to three, for the sake of the analysis of the poems, which would become very long if many poems were to be fully presented and analyzed. The poems presented are; 1) An Elegy for Cordoba by Ibn Shuhaid Al-Ashja'í, 2) An Elegy for Valencia by Ibn 'Umayra Al-Makhzúmí and 3) An Andalusian Elegy by Abu Al-Baqá' Al-Rundi.

Ibn Shuhayds elegy for Cordoba and Ibn 'Umayras elegy for Valencia have been translated by in Alexander E. Elinson in his book "Looking back at Al-Andalus; the poetics of loss and nostalgia in medieval Arabic and Hebrew literature". As for Al-Rundis elegy for Al-Andalus, it has been translated in the book "Hispano-Arabic poetry: a student anthology" by James T. Monroe. For exact page references to the translated versions of the poems see the Presentation of the poems in the sixth part of this essay. The original Arabic versions of these three elegies have been traced to different sources, and are provided in the appendix of this essay. Ibn Shuhayds elegy for Cordoba is found in original Arabic form in the Appendix of the book Looking back at Al-Andalus: The poetics of loss and nostalgia in medieval Arabic and Hebrew literature by Alexander E. Elinson, and I have also traced it to the following sources:

- 1) The Diwán of Ibn Shuhayd.
- 2) The book Rithá' Al-mudun fí al-shi'r Al-Andalusí by 'Abd Allah Muhammad Al-Zayyát.
- 3) A Ph.D thesis in Arabic literature called "Al-shi'r al-'arabí fí rithá' al-duwal wa al-amsár hattá niháyat suqút al-Andalus" by *Sháhir 'Awd Al-Kafáwín*.

The elegy of Ibn 'Umayra is also found in original form in the appendix of the book Looking back at Al-Andalus; the poetics of loss and nostalgia in medieval Arabic and Hebrew literature. I have further Ibn 'Umayras elegy for Valencia to the book "Nafh Al-Tíb fí ghusn al-Andalus al-ratíb" by Ahmad Bin Muhammad Al-Maqqarí. Al-Rundis elegy for Al-Andalus is found in original Arabic form in the book Hispano-Arabic poetry: a student anthology by James T. Monroe, and I have also traced it to two more sources:

- 1) Nafh Al-Tíb fí ghusn al-Andalus al-ratíb by Ahmad Bin Muhammad Al-Maqqarí.
- 2) Rithá' Al-mudun fí al-shi'r Al-Andalusí by 'Abd Allah Muhammad Al-Zayyát.

For exact page references to the original Arabic forms of the poems see the appendix of this essay. The general reasons for choosing these three poems are the following:

- 1) All of the three poems, in my opinion are very beautiful in terms of style, yet at the same time they differ from each other.
- 2) These three poems have been translated into English by two scholars who have a high level of proficiency in Arabic language, and good knowledge of Arabic literature, and literary history James T. Monroe and Alexander E. Elinson. James T. Monroe is emeritus professor of Arabic and comparative literature at the University of California

at Berkeley). As for Alexander E. Elinson, He is Assistant Professor of Arabic at Hunter college of the City University of New York and obtains a Ph. D. in Middle East and Asian languages and cultures.⁴

- 3) The three poems differ from each other greatly in terms of theme, which makes the analysis much more interesting. All poems are mourning for a fallen city, or in the case of Al-Rundi, several cities. However, the different poets are focusing upon different aspects of the events of the fall of the cities, as will be shown later in the analysis of the poems.
- 4) They were inspired by the fall of different cities. Through the reading of these poems one moves through different phases in the history of Al-Andalus. It may be argued that it is incorrect to claim that much change had taken place between the fall of Valencia in 1238, and the fall of Seville in 1248. However the Christian Spanish Reconquista had reached its peak with the conquest of Seville.⁵

2) A brief introduction to the poetry of elegy in Arabic-poetry

“Elegy according to a general description is the crying and mourning over a dead one by (using) touching expressions and saddening formulations, as well as mentioning his achievements in life, recounting his virtues and attributes which through his death were missed, as well as to grieve for the (loss of) the attributes which were appealing to his contemporaries and which effect and influence would reach them, so they would benefit from them (the attributes) and praise their possessor”⁶

The poetical style of elegy (“Al-Rithá”, ’Arabic-الرثاء) was well known to the Arabs already in the pre-Islamic era. Both men and women poets would mourn for and lament over the dead by their graves, and mention in praise the fine qualities and attributes which they had.⁷ In the pre-Islamic elegy poetry we find the following three characteristic images of elegy:

- 1) Mourning and lamenting over the dead one.
- 2) Praising of the dead one, and mentioning his fine qualities and attributes.
- 3) Mentioning of fate, recognition of the inability to escape the fate of death and submission to fate.⁸

These three mentioned characteristic images of elegy have remained throughout time in Arabic literature⁹, and are also found clearly in the elegy for lost cities (which will be shown through the presentation and analysis of the poems), with the exception of the calamity afflicted or fallen city or country taking the place of the departed person. It is mentioned that

⁴ See E. Elinson, Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus: The poetics of loss and nostalgia in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew literature. Leiden. Brill. 2009. The back cover of the book.

⁵ Kennedy. Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal. A political history of Al-Andalus. New York. Longman. 1996. Chapter 11: The Nasirids of Granada; Ibn al-Ahmar and the foundation of the Nasirid kingdom, 1232-73. P. 273

⁶ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí. Ben Ghází. University of Qáryúns. The first print. 1990.. P. 81.

⁷ Dayf. Shawqí. Al-Rithá’. Cairo. Dár al-Ma’árif. 1987. The fourth print. PP. 7-8.

⁸ See previous source. PP. 8-9.

⁹ See previous source.. P. 9

praising of the deceased object is a central theme in the elegy poetry, thus the elegy does not simply consist of mourning over the deceased object. As a matter of fact, the literary critic Ibn Rashíq (d. between 1064 and 1070¹⁰), said in his work “Al-‘Umda fí mahasin al-Shi’r wa ádábihi wa naqdihi”, (trans. approx as: The pillar concerning the fine qualities of poetry and its literature and critique): “There is no difference between the elegy poetry” (Al-ritha”) and the panegyric, *poetry* of praise (“Al-madh”, Arabic- المدح) except for the fact that the elegy contains something mixed within it which indicates that the object (of the poem) is dead, such as “he was” or “this and that has been lost to us”, *and other* devices of this sort, in order for it to be known that the object is dead”¹¹. Although this statement is true in the sense that praising of the deceased one is a central theme in the elegy poetry, it is not correct to say that the only difference between it and the poetry of praise is the presence of some sort of indicator within the poem of elegy which shows that the object is dead. The elegy contains both mourning for the deceased, display of sorrow and regret, as well as praising the qualities which the deceased one had¹². One of the distinguished subcategories of elegy is the elegy for kings, leaders and people of great status and power. The literary critic Ibn Rashíq said in his book al-‘Umda: “*And the stylistic way of the elegy, in the case of the departed one being a king or a great leader, is for it to be apparent in its expression of agony, manifest in its display of sorrow, mixed with yearning and regret as well as magnification, such as the example of what Al-Nábigha*¹³ *said about Hisn Bin Hudhayfa Bin Badr:*

“They say “Hisn?!”, and then their souls deny.

How could it befall Hisn, and the mountains are still standing, far in distance?!,

***The graves have not announced his death, and vanished have not,
the stars in the sky, and the skin remains sound and healthy.***

***A short time it was, and then came the announcer of his death.
So the assembly of the clan remained lamenting.”***^{14 15}

The characteristics of the elegy for kings and great leaders mentioned by Ibn Rashíq I believe can also be found in the Andalusí-Arabic elegy for cities, which will be mentioned later in this essay, in the analysis of Ibn Shuhayds elegy for Cordoba.

3) A brief introduction the elegy for cities in Arabic-poetry

3.1. Mentioning of places: A technique used to invoke feelings of nostalgia in pre-Islamic poetry

As for elegy for places which have been lost, it may be noticed that even in the pre-Islamic era the Arab-poets would mention different locations in their poems in order to express a

¹⁰ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus: The poetics of loss and nostalgia in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew literature. P. 25.

¹¹ Ibn Rashíq. Abú ‘Alí al-Hasan. Al-‘Umda fí mahásin al-shi’r wa ádábihi wa naqdihi. Ed. Muhammad Muhiy al-dín ‘Abd al-Hamíd. Beirut. Dar al-Jíyl. 1981. V.2. P. 147

¹² For further discussion concerning this subject, see: Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi’r al-Andalusí by ‘Abd Al-Zayyát Allah Muhammad. PP. 81-82..

¹³ Al-Nábigha refers to Al-Nábigha al-Dhubayání, a famous pre-Islamic poet.

¹⁴ This is an approximate translation

¹⁵ Ibn Rashíq. Abú ‘Alí al-Hasan. Al-‘Umda fí mahásin al-shi’r wa ádábihi wa naqdihi. Ed. Muhammad Muhiy al-dín ‘Abd al-Hamíd. Beirut. Dar al-Jíyl. 1981. V.2. P. 147.

sense of nostalgia and longing for that which no longer is. An example for this we find in Imru' al-Qays' famous Mu'allāqa (Arabic - معلقة) which begins with the following verses;

*“Halt my two friends, and we will weep over the memories of a beloved
And a campsite that was at the sand dune’s rim, between al-Dakhúl and Hawmal.*

*And Túdíh and al-Miqrát, whose traces have not been effaced
By the weaving of the north and south winds.¹⁶*

However the places in the pre-Islamic poetry were more of symbolic value, representing an ideal rather than a physical location¹⁷. The places mentioned were used as metaphors for expressing feelings of loss and nostalgia. Yumna al-‘Íd argues that the mentioning of places was “no more than an introduction to other ends and goals”¹⁸.

3.2. The elegy for lost cities in Arabic poetry: A mentioning of Its appearance and a presentation of a few examples of elegies for fallen cities in Arabic poetry.

The time from which we can clearly begin to trace the appearance of the distinguished sub-form of elegy which is known as ‘Elegy for cities’ (Rithá’al-mudun, Arabic-رثاء المدن) is during the ‘Abbasid era. In 762 the city of Baghdad was founded. The foundation of Baghdad led to an increasing urbanization and the flourishing of an urban culture. Baghdad with its liveliness and rich culture became a symbol for poets, a symbol which was used to express a variety of emotions.¹⁹

During the civil war between the two sons of Harún al-Rashíd, al-Amín and al-Ma’mún (809-813) the city of Baghdad was burnt down by the general of Al-Ma’mún, Ibn Táhir²⁰. An unknown poet said in description of the tragic fate of Baghdad:

*“My eye wept for Baghdad when
bereft of the opulence of the elegant living I was.*

*It was afflicted by an evil eye from the envious ones
and by the catapult its people were destroyed*

*A people were forcibly burnt by the fire,
and a wailing woman over a drowned one laments”*

*A shouting woman cries out:”O my friends!”
and a woman utters: “O my dear brother”.*

*A stranger far from his home lies thrown,
headless in the middle of the road.*

A son stops not to stand over his father,

¹⁶ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P, 17.

¹⁷ See previous source.. P. 18

¹⁸ See previous source. P. 17-18.

¹⁹ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P. 19.

²⁰ Dayf. Shawqí. Al-Rithá’. P. 47.

and friends from their friends have fled”²¹

This great calamity which the city of Baghdad was afflicted by had a strong effect upon poets²². The event mentioned was the source of inspiration for one of the earliest elegies for a city, composed by the poet Abú Ya’qúb Isháq al-Khuraymí²³. The poet praises the past glory and splendor of the city of Baghdad, and contrasts it to its situation after being subjected to the trials of a civil war. The poet mourns for the death of Baghdad. Al-Khuraymí mentions plenty of the important features of the city, turning the focus of the audience to the city of Baghdad as it once was:

*“They said, when Time had not yet had a chance to play with Baghdad,
when her ill luck had not yet caused her to topple,*

*When she was like a bride, whose inner secrets
were alluring to the young man, as was her outward appearance:*

*“An immortal garden (jannatu khuldin). An abode of bliss”
Before, few distressing calamities befell it.*

*O have you seen the flowering gardens
whose brilliance is pleasing to all who gaze upon them?*

*And have you seen the palaces rising up,
Their chambers hiding women like statues?*

*And have you seen the villages whose lands
were planted with all sorts of greenery?*

*Surrounded by vineyards and date palms and
sweet basil that rise up loftily?*

*It has become emptied of humankind
Its stones have been made to bleed.*

*A desolate waste where dogs howl.
A traveler would not recognize the traces left behind.*

*At Zandaward and al-Yásiriyya,
and on the two river banks, where the ferries have stopped crossing,*

*And at al-Ruhá and Upper al-Khayzurániyya,
to its bridges that were lofty,*

*And at the Palace of ‘Abduwayh, there is a warning and guidance
for every soul whose inner thoughts are pure.*

²¹ See previous source.

²² See previous source.

²³ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P.20.

*Where are their guards, and where is their guardian?
Where is the one who received benefits, and where is the one who bestowed them?*

*Where have the Slavic, al-Jarádiyya guards gone,
and the Abyssinians with their pendulous lips?*

*Do not immerse yourself in deep water
from which not even the wise can emerge*

*You must remain in the shallows water; do not enter the
flood when the waters are surging and tumultuous.*

*Take something enticing like a piece of shining silver.
This poem will not become lost in any country it goes.*

*I do not recite it out of greed or vanity.
Every soul has passions that command it.*

*God has carried it forth, as advice
And a warning; and its strands have been neatly woven.*

*It has come to you to relate matters to you,
as one might spread out the cloth of a merchant.*

*I have given it to a trustworthy friend to carry it;
One who, out of admiration for it, will recite it again and again”²⁴*

Moving on in time poets mourned deeply over the loss of the city of Jerusalem, which fell into the hands of the crusaders in the year 1099²⁵.

In the year 1400 the city of Damascus was sacked by the infamous Tamerlane²⁶. The poet known as Bahá’ al-Dín al-Bahá’í²⁷ (D. 1412, 815 according to Muslim calendar²⁸), in a poem of his mourned for the fate of the city of Damascus:

*“I announce my sorrow for those castles with the beauty which they had.
They were surrounded by the misfortunate events of time.*

*I announce my sorrow for the valley of Damascus with its graciousness,
and for the exchange of Gazelles for oxen.”^{29 30}*

²⁴ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. PP. 20-21.

²⁵ Dayf. Shawqí. Al-Rithá’. P. 48.

²⁶ Al-Kafáwín. Sháhir ‘Awd. Al-shi’r al-‘arabí fí rithá’ al-duwal wa al-amsár hattá niháyat suqút al-Andalus. ph. D thesis. Umm Al- Qurá’ university. Mecca . The faculty of Arabic language. Branch of literature. 1984. PP. 178-179.

²⁷ His name was ‘Alí Bin ‘Abd Allah Al-Ghazúlí. See: Al-Kafáwín. Al-shi’r al-‘arabí fí rithá’ al-duwal wa al-amsár hattá niháyat suqút al-Andalus. P. 179. Footnote 1.

²⁸ Al-Kafáwín. Al-shi’r al-‘arabí fí rithá’ al-duwal wa al-amsár hattá niháyat suqút al-Andalus. P. 179. Footnote Nr 1.

²⁹ This is an approximate translation.

³⁰ Al-Kafáwín. Al-shi’r al-‘arabí fí rithá’ al-duwal wa al-amsár hattá niháyat suqút al-Andalus. P. 179.

In the year 1926, the city of Damascus was mourned for once again when it fell to the French, by the poet Ahmad Shawqí³¹. These are only a few examples, and many further examples may be given. However the purpose here is simply to demonstrate the existence of the elegy for cities in Arabic poetry

4) Elegy for cities in Andalusí-Arabic poetry

A short prelude

Previously brief introductions to the poetic style of elegy and the elegy for lost cities have been presented. The three elegies which are presented and analyzed in this essay are elegies for cities of Al-Andalus. It is intended in this part to pay focus to the elegy for lost cities in Andalusí-Arabic poetry. The Elegy for the cities of Al-Andalus is a part of the general tradition of elegy for cities in Arabic poetry, however it may well be that is in the Andalusí-Arabic poetry which this poetical subgenre flourished the most. This part of the essay is meant to give a brief insight to the historical context of the rich tradition of Elegy for cities which developed in Al-Andalus, present some common themes and stylistic features which are found in it, as well as to give a glimpse at how Al-Andalus was viewed in the eyes of the Andalusí- Arab poets. Nevertheless, it is important to first provide a definition of Al-Andalus, in terms of location and time, in order to know what is being referred to.

4.1 Definition of Al-Andalus

Al-Andalus (Arabic- الاندلس) according to Muslim-Arab understanding and definition is the name of a land which consisted of the entire Iberian peninsula (“Al-Jazírat al-aybíriyah”, Arabic- الجزيرة الابيرية), which includes all of that which is known today as Spain and Portugal. The time span of the land known as Al-Andalus begins with the Muslim conquest in the region, which took place between the years 711-716^{32 33}, and ends with the fall of Granada in the year 1492 (898 according to Muslim Hijrí calendar).³⁴ The reason for presenting the Muslim-Arab definition of the Al-Andalus is that this definition was the definition of the composers of the different elegies for cities of Al-Andalus presented in this essay, as well as the definition of the scholars whose statements concerning the poets of the three presented and analyzed elegies are quoted. For this reason I am not using the word Andalusian in this paper, since the word Andalusian could be understood as referring to the region in modern day Spain known as Andalusia (Spanish. Andalucía), which is not intended, since the Arab-Muslim definition, as mentioned, reaches beyond such borders. The word Andalusí (أندلسي)

³¹ Dayf. Shawqí. Al-Rithá'. P. 51.

³² In the source of this information it says “Arab conquest”, and further the date of this conquest is given as the year 92 according to Hijrí calendar. See: 'Anání. Muhammad Zakariyya Tárikh Al-adab al-Andalusí. Alexandria. Dár al-Ma'rifat al-jámi'iyyah. 1999. P. 7. However I find this information to be incorrect, and have therefore turned to the book Muslim Spain and Portugal: A political history of al-Andalus by Hugh Kennedy, for a definition of this conquest.

³³ Kennedy .Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal: A political history of Al-Andalus. Chapter 1: The Conquest and the age of the Amirs, 711-56. P. 3.

³⁴ 'Anání. Muhammad Zakariyya. Tárikh Al-adab al-Andalusí. Alexandria. Dár al-Ma'rifat al-jámi'iyyah. 1999. P. 7.

which is what is called in Arabic “Nisba” (نسبة), points towards a belonging to this mentioned region (Al-Andalus) during the mentioned period of time.³⁵

4.2. An introduction to *The Elegy for cities in Andalusí-Arabic poetry*

Doctor Shawqí Dayf says in his book “Al-Rithá” (Arabic- الرثاء) “Elegy”:

*“It may well be that none of the lands and cities of an Islamic land were cried for as much as the lands and cities of Al-Andalus were cried for”*³⁶

A rich tradition of Elegy for cities developed in Andalusí-Arabic poetry as a result of numerous losses of cities in Al-Andalus between 1013 and 1492, the year which marked the end of the civilization of Al-Andalus³⁷. The different cities however did not fall to the same enemies, and the causes of their fall differed³⁸. The poets who composed the elegies presented the images of their lost cities from their own subjective perspectives³⁹. Thus clear variations in depicting the cities and their fates are found. The Andalusí poets were very skilful in describing the places which had been lost, or were on the brink of being lost. Through their poetry they immortalized these places. Poets composed elegies for lost homes, palaces and entire cities, in a way to pay homage.⁴⁰

4.3. *The fall of the cities of Al-Andalus and the mourning of the Andalusí poets*

The cities of Al-Andalus which fell and were specifically mourned for by poets were put in two different categories by ‘Abdulláh Muhammad Al-Zayyát in his book “Rithá al-mudun fí al-shi’r al-Andalusí” (Arabic- الرثاء المدن في الشعر الاندلسي), “The elegy for cities in Andalusian poetry”; 1) Cities which fell to other Muslims due to inner strife and 2) Cities which fell to Spanish Christians and other Christian powers⁴¹. Abú Baqá Al-Rundis elegy for Al-Andalus, as will be shown in the presentation of the poem, contains the mention of two other cities Múrcia (Arabic- مرسيّة) and Játiva (Arabic- شاطبة). However Al-Zayyát places Al-Rundí in a category of poets who mourned for the whole of Andalusia in general, and not for a specific city.⁴²

4.3.1. *Cities which fell due to inner strife*

The cities in this category mentioned by Al-Zayyat, which were mourned for by Andalusí poets are three:

1) *Cordoba*⁴³ (It fell in the year 1013⁴⁴)

³⁵ Just as one says in English “Spanish poetry”, and “a Spanish man” when referring to poetry from Spain and a man from Spain.

³⁶ Dayf. Shawqí. Al-Rithá’. P. 49.

³⁷ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. PP. 24-25

³⁸ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P. 25.

³⁹ See previous reference.

⁴⁰ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. Chapter 1: Introduction. P. 15.

⁴¹ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi’r al-Andalusí. P. 134.

⁴² See previous source. P. 363.

⁴³ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi’r al-Andalusí. P. 135.

⁴⁴ Muhammad Hussayn. Hamdí ‘Abd al-Mun’aim.. Dirasát fí al-tárikh al-andalusí: Dawlatu Baní Birzál fí Qarmúna.. Alexandria. Mu’assasat shabáb al-jámi’a. 1990. P. 36.

- 2) *Elvira*⁴⁵
 3) *Almeria*⁴⁶ (It fell in the year 1091, 484 according to Muslim Hijrī calendar⁴⁷)

As for the city of Cordoba, It was afflicted with destruction in the year 1013 in an event which will be mentioned in the presentation of the background of Ibn Shuhayds elegy for the city. Apart from Ibn Shuhayd we find amongst the poets who mourned for the fate of the city, the well-known Islamic scholar and poet Ibn Hazm (D. 1064⁴⁸), who paid his own personal homage to the city :

“Peace be upon an abode from which we departed and which was left empty of its kin folk, (as) a lonely desert.

One views her as if she was not flourishing yesterday, a wasteland as if her people did not inhabit her before us even for a slight time

O abode, It was not our choice that you were deserted by us for if we could have our way, you would be our burial place.

Events which were predestined by God (Allah) took their course. We would have been destroyed in that which took place, either willingly or forcibly (It makes no difference)⁴⁹

O best of abodes, abandoned lovely though you are, the morning clouds watered you; how splendid you were, how noble.

O unveiled gardens, surrounded by beautiful garden courtyards that became dust after we left.

O fate, deliver my greetings to her inhabitants⁵⁰, even if they live in Marwīn , or have crossed the river.⁵¹

(Ibn Hazms elegy for Cordoba. Verses. 1-7⁵²)

⁴⁵ Al-Zayyāt. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithā al-mudun fī ash-shi’r al-Andalusī. P. 168.

⁴⁶ Al-Zayyāt. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithā al-mudun fī ash-shi’r al-Andalusī. P. 183.

⁴⁷ Al-Zayyāt. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithā al-mudun fī ash-shi’r al-Andalusī. P. 185.

⁴⁸ Ormsby. Eric. Chapter 10: “ Ibn Hazm” ..The Litterature of al-Andalus. Ed. María Rosa Menocal, Raymond. Scheindlin and Michael Sells. Cambridge University press. The first digitally printed paperback edition. 2006. P. 240.

⁴⁹ This is my interpretation of the meaning of this verse. I find a literal translation or even something close to a literal translation impossible to make in the case of this verse.

⁵⁰ Elinson has translated it as “its” instead of her. I myself however find it more suitable, because of the style and context of the poem, to refer to the city as “She”, instead of “it”. Ibn Hazm is directly addressing the city in the poem, as if it was a person.

⁵¹ I have translated verses 1, 2 and 4, the rest of the verses have been translated by Elinson in his book “Looking back at Al-Andalus. P . 27.

⁵² Al-Zayyāt. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithā al-mudun fī ash-shi’r al-Andalusī. PP. 658- 659.

4.3.2. Cities which fell to Spanish Christians and other Christian powers

The cities in this category mentioned by Al-Zayyat, which were mourned for by Andalusí poets are the following:

- 1) *Barbastro*⁵³ (It fell in the year 1064^{54 55})
- 2) *Toledo*⁵⁶ (It fell in the year 1085⁵⁷)
- 3) *Fuengirola (Suhayl)*⁵⁸ (It fell in the year 1181, 577 according to Muslim Hijrī Calendar⁵⁹)
- 4) *Cordoba* (It fell in the year 1236)⁶⁰
- 5) *Valencia*⁶¹ (It fell in the year 1238⁶²)
- 6) *Jáen*⁶³ (It fell in the year 1244, 642 according to Muslim Hijrī Calendar⁶⁴)
- 7) *Seville*⁶⁵ (It fell in the year 1248^{66 67})
- 8) *Granada*⁶⁸ (It fell in the year 1492⁶⁹)

The first city which fell to Christian forces was the city of Barbastro. In the year 1063 Pope Alexander II ordered an expeditionary crusade. The expedition was led by Guillermo De Poitiers the Duke of Aquitania and consisted of Italian and French soldiers. The majority of the soldiers were Normans commanded by a Baron by the name Robert Crispin. Participating in this crusade was also one by the name Armengol of Urgel. Armengol had interests concerning the choice of location for the expedition. The primary target of the expeditionary forces was the city of Barbastro which they seized and conquered in the year 1064. However, the control of Barbastro would not be long lasting. The city was re-conquered by Muslims in 1065, only a year after the fall of the city⁷⁰. Although the city was held only for a short time, the attack upon and seize of Barbastro had a very strong effect. The event was described by the Historian Ibn Al-‘Idhárí Al-Marákushí as;” *the greatest calamity afflicting the Muslims in*

⁵³ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. *Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí*. P. 197.

⁵⁴ Reynolds. Dwight Chapter 3: “Music”. *The literature of Al-Andalus*. P. 71.

⁵⁵ E. Elinson. Looking back at al-Andalus. Pg. 71.

⁵⁶ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. *Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí*. P. 207.

⁵⁷ See previous source.. P. 213.

⁵⁸ .See previous source.. P. 221.

⁵⁹ See previous source.. P. 222.

⁶⁰ See previous source. P. 233.

⁶¹ . See previous source P. 235.

⁶² Álvarez Palenzuela. V. A. and Suárez Fernández.. *Historia de Espana*. Part 6: La consolidación de los reinos Hispánicos (1157-1369). *Madrid. Editorial Gredos. 1988. P. 60.*

⁶³ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. *Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí*. P. 293.

⁶⁴ See previous source. P. 295,

⁶⁵ See previous source. P. 300.

⁶⁶ Monroe. James T. *Hispano-Arabic poetry: A student anthology*. Berkeley; Los Angeles, London. University of California press. 1974. P. 335.

⁶⁷ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P. 29.

⁶⁸ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. *Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí*. P. 315.

⁶⁹ See previous source. P. 320.

⁷⁰ Álvarez Palenzuela. V.A. and Suárez Fernández . Luis. *Historia de Espana*. Part 5: La Espana Musulmana y los inicios de los reinos cristianos (711-1157). *Madrid. Editorial Gredos. 1991 P. 207.*

the Peninsula of Al-Andalus”⁷¹. The poet Ibn al-‘Assál (D. 1094⁷²) said in a poem of his, in which he mourns for the city of Barbastro:

***“And the Polytheists have thrown their harm toward us
which never missed. It struck with devastating accuracy! .***

***They tore apart with their cavalry the palaces of her sanctuary.
No hill or flatland remained intact.***

***They searched through their houses, and upon them,
dreaded raids were launched every day.***

***The Muslims spent their nights with their hearts filled with fear;
since our protectors were cowards in the war.***

***How many a place did they ransack?
where no child, old man or virgin was pitied?***

***And how many a nursing baby, did they separate from its mother,
while crying for her it was and seeking her in desperation? “***

(Ibn Al-‘Assál’s elegy for Barbastro. Verses 1-6⁷³)

The last city of Al-Andalus which fell was the city of Granada. It fell to the two famous monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabelle in 1492⁷⁴. The historical accounts concerning this event and, that which took place after it are plenty, and can be found in European History books as well as Arabic. Descriptions of the event by Muslim historians as well as non Muslim are far from absent. However it is not intended here to discuss this significant historical event in detail. Instead I wish here to present a few verses from an elegy for Granada, the last fallen city of Al-Andalus, and for the whole of Al-Andalus The poet Abú Al-‘Abbás Al-Duqqún⁷⁵ (D. 1515, 921 according to Muslim Hijrī calendar⁷⁶) said the following in his elegy for Granada and the whole of Al-Andalus:

***“She remained safe from the reverses of circumstances and desires
and lived as one who lives under the protection of (fostering) uncles.***

***She was not put into trial by harshness of the heart.
Therefore the body is (now) working without anything keeping it at work.***

***And how could it not be so when the sites of the religion are completely absent
in the soil of Al-Andalus because of terrifying events***

⁷¹Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí. P. 199

⁷² See previous source. P. 203.

⁷³ See previous source. P. 669.

⁷⁴ E. Elinson. Looking back at al-Andalus.

⁷⁵ His name was Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Yúsuf Al-Sinhájí. See: Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí. P. 324.

⁷⁶ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí. P. 327.

*She was blinded and so she blinded the hearts of the Muslims.*⁷⁷

*O (what a sorrow) for the Muslims! , struck by the horrors of enemies and chains!"*⁷⁸

(Abú Al-‘Abbás Al-Duqqúns elegy for Granada and the whole of Al-Andalus. Verses 1-4⁷⁹)

4.4. Some common themes of the Andalusí-Arabic elegy for lost cities

The following is a list of common themes found in Andalusian- Arabic elegy for cities taken from the book “Rithá al-Mudun fí al-sh’ir Al-Andalusí” by ‘Abd Alláh Muhammad al-Zayyát:

- 1) Yearning for the homeland.⁸⁰
- 2) Calling for unity and encouraging jihad (jihad in this case means armed struggle)⁸¹
- 3) Mentioning the causes of the fall of the city.⁸²
- 4) Showing examples of human fates (of suffering, in relation to the fall of the city)⁸³
- 5) Treating the subject of the struggle between Christianity and Islam.⁸⁴
- 6) Praise (of the city).⁸⁵

Furthermore, I would like to add a seventh theme, which is not mentioned by Al-Zayyát, but I have myself found it occurring very frequently in the Andalusí-Arabic elegy for cities:

- 7) The power of fate and the inability to escape it.

4. 5. Some common stylistic features of the Andalusí- Arabic elegy for lost cities

Alexander E.Elinson in his book “Looking back at Al-Andalus: The poetic of loss and nostalgia in medieval Arabic and Hebrew literature”, mentions some common stylistic features of the Andalusian elegy for lost cities. I intend here to make a summary of these features mentioned by Elinson:

*Repetition*⁸⁶

The literary critic Ibn Rashiq mentions in his book ‘Al-‘Umda that the category of Elegy is that in which the use of repetition (“tikrár”, Arabic- تكرر) is most common because of the feelings of agony and pain felt by the agonized poet^{87 88}. The poet creates a sense of continuity

⁷⁷ It says in The Holy Quran: **“For it is not the eyes which go blind, but blinded are the hearts in the chests”**. The Quran. Verse 46. Chapter 22. The Interpretations of the meaning of Quranic verses are my own.

⁷⁸ This is an approximate translation.

⁷⁹ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi’r al-Andalusí. PP. 760-761.

⁸⁰ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi’r al-Andalusí. PP. 404.

⁸¹ See previous source. P. 426

⁸² See previous source. P. 441.

⁸³ See previous source. P. 453.

⁸⁴ See previous source. P. 464.

⁸⁵ See previous source. P. 487.

⁸⁶ E.Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. P. 25.

⁸⁷ The author says only “the agonized (al-mutafajj’a, Arabic- المتفجع) however from its context, being about poetry, one can perceive that what is intended is the poet, who uses repetition to handle deep feelings of pain

⁸⁸ Ibn Rashiq. Ibn ‘Alí al-Hasan. Al’Umda fí mahásin al-shia’r wa ‘ádábihi wa naqdihi. V. 2. P. 76.

and expectation which helps to bear grief, and enables the reader to anticipate what is to come next.⁸⁹

East meets west

A common feature found in the Andalusí Elegy for Cordoba (Rithá al-mudun) is the mentioning of names of places in the East, natural locations such as the river Nile, the river Tigris, as well as manmade cities such as Makkah and Baghdad for the great importance that such locations hold and their symbolic value, and also mentioning them together with locations in Andalusia.⁹⁰

Water imagery

Water imagery is used to represent life. Ibn Shuhaid, in his elegy for Cordoba, which will be presented later in this essay, uses water imagery plentifully. These water images were to represent the richness and the glamour of the past, and are put in contrast with images of a dark present situation which holds. However water images have also been used to represent death. The poet Ibn Sahl al-Ishblí⁹¹ (D. 1251, 649 according to Muslim Hijrī calendar.⁹²) used the imagery of salt water to represent death, contrasting it to sweet water, representing life.⁹³

4. 6. Al-Andalus; a paradise on earth

It is important in order to understand the reason behind the mourning for lost cities in Al-Andalus, to know the strong attachment which its people had to it. The following are a few examples from the poetry of Arabic Andalusí poets, which give some light to the great love which was held for Al-Andalus:.

Cordoba

The following verses are from Ibn Shuhayds elegy for Cordoba:

" And the abode- perfection had pitched its tent there

while it was beyond any deficiency."

And the people felt secure that its beauty would never change,

wearing its splendor as a turban and a cloak "(Verses. 11-12)⁹⁴

⁸⁹ E.Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. P. 26.

⁹⁰ See previous source. P. 29-30

⁹¹ This poet is sometimes referred to as Ibn Sahl al-Ishblí' (from the city of Seville, "Ishblí'ya", Arabic-إشبيلية) However his name is presented in most sources as "Al-Isrá'ílí"(Arabic-إسرائيل), instead of "Al-Ishblí'". See: Al-Zayyát. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi'r al-Andalusí. P. 305.

⁹² Al-Zayyát. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi'r al-Andalusí. P. 306.

⁹³ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. P. 35-36.

⁹⁴ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P. 40.

**"The Euphrates flowed plentifully through your two courtyards, as did the Tigris,
so too the Nile and the river Kawthar."**

You were given drink by the life-giving waters of a cloud

by which your gardens were given life and flourished" (Verses. 22-23.).⁹⁵

Valencia

Shiháb al-Dín Yaqút bin 'Abd 'Allah al-Hamawí said in his famous book Mu'ajam al-Buldán:

"It was sung to me from (the poetry of) Abí al-'Abbás Ahmad Al-Zaqáq⁹⁶, in which He mentions that it (the city of Valencia) is surrounded by gardens;

***"as if Valencia is a firm breasted maiden,
whose clothing is that of green silk.***

***If you come to her she covers her face,
with her sleeves, thus She does not appear""⁹⁷***

The following verses of poetry are also from Abí al-'Abbás Ahmad Al-Zaqqáq, about Valencia:

***"Valencia is a garden raised high,
In which the shades of the grape clusters are very close.***

Through it run The Springs of the nectar⁹⁸, and Al-Salsabíl,⁹⁹

as well as The Spring of life " ^{100 101}

Seville

⁹⁵ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P..41.

⁹⁶ I have not managed to find a biography for this poet.

⁹⁷ Al-Hamawi. Yaqút Bin 'Abd Allah. Mua'jam al-buldán. Beirut. Dár al-sádir, 1977. Volume 1. P. 491.

⁹⁸ The springs of the nectar, refers to "The sealed nectar "which is mentioned in the Quran as being given to the inhabitants of paradise to drink. **"They are given to drink from sealed nectar"**. The Holy Quran. Verse 25. Chapter 83.

⁹⁹ Al-Salsabil is the name of a spring in paradise mentioned in The Holy Quran. **"In it (Paradise) there is a spring which is called Salsabil."** The Holy Quran. Verse 18. Chapter 76.

¹⁰⁰ This is an approximate translation.

¹⁰¹ Al-Hamawi. Yaqút Bin 'Abd Allah. Mua'jam al-buldán. Beirut. Dár al-sádir, 1977. Volume 1. P. 491.

The poet Abú Músá Hárún Bin Hárún ¹⁰² said about Seville:

*"O its beauty!, everyone knows its beauty.
None but grace in abundance went towards it."* ¹⁰³

The whole of Al-Andalus

The final example is a selection of verses from a poem of the famous Andalusí poet Ibn Zaydún (D. 1070 ¹⁰⁴), in which He declares his full-hearted love for Al-Andalus:

*"Do not imagine
that distance from you
will change us,
as distance changes other lovers.

We sought, by God,
no other in your place,
nor do our hopes
turn us another way."* (Verses. 18-19)

*"Fostered in royalty
as if God shaped her from musk
(and we mere humans from clay),

Or formed her in pure silver
and crowned her
with gold, unalloyed,
new creation and glory"*(Verses. 24-25) ¹⁰⁵

5) Short biographies of the composers of the three chosen poems

¹⁰² I have not managed to find a biography for this poet.

¹⁰³ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P. 29.

¹⁰⁴ Stewart. Devin. J. Chapter 15: "Ibn Zaydún". The Litterature of al-Andalus. P. 308.

¹⁰⁵ .The Litterature of al-Andalus. Part 6. "To Al-Andalus, would she return the greeting?". The Núniyya (poem in N) of Ibn Zaydún. P. 493.

5.1. Ibn Shuhayd Al-Ashja'í (992¹⁰⁶–1035¹⁰⁷)

His full name was Ahmad Bin 'Abd al-Malik Bin Ahmad Bin 'Abd al-Malik Bin 'Amr Bin Muhammad Bin Shuhayd Bin 'Ísá Bin Al-Waddah Al-Ashja'í¹⁰⁸, and his nickname (“Kunya” Arabic-كنية) was Abú 'Ámir^{109 110 111}. Ibn Shuhayd was born in the year 992 (382 according to Muslim calendar), in the city of Cordoba¹¹². The clan of Ibn Shuhayd, Banú Shuhayd came to Al-Andalus from Syria during the reign of Abd al-Rahmán I (756-788)¹¹³. The great grandfather of Ibn Shuhaid, 'Abd al-Malik was appointed as minister (“wazír”, Arabic-وزير) by the Umayyad ruler 'Abd al-Rahmán al-Nasir III in the year 939, and his son Ahmad (the grandfather of Ibn shuhayd) was given the honorary title “the holder of the two minstrel positions” (“Dhú al-wizáratayn, Arabic-ذو الوزارتين)¹¹⁴. The poet Ahmad Bin 'Abd al-Malik Bin Shuhayd was a great scholar of rhetoric (the rhetorical art of the Arabs, “Ilm al-Balágha”, Arabic-علم البلاغة). He immersed himself in the studies of the branches and styles of rhetoric and learnt from the scholars of rhetoric, from east to west.^{115 116}. Ibn Shuhayd was appointed as a minister (“wazír”, Arabic-وزير) by two rulers, Al-Mustadhhir¹¹⁷, and after him al-Mua'tadd Billah^{118 119}. Ibn Shuhaid said in praise of Al-Mustadhhir: “Al-Mustadhhir was a natural poet, He used the art (of poetry), and did so with excellence”¹²⁰. Amongst the works of Ibn Shuhaid is the famous epistle “Al -Tawabi'a wa Al-Zawábia”¹²¹ (aprox:“The Epistle of Attendant Jinn and Whirling jinn”), and a book called “Kashf Al-Dakk wa ídáh al-

¹⁰⁶ Ibn Shuhayd Al-Ashja'í. Ahmad Bin 'Abd al-Malik. *Diwán Ibn Shuhayd al-Andalusí*. Ed and collection. Yaqúb Zákí. Cairo. Dár al-kátib al-'arabí. No year mentioned. P. 6.

¹⁰⁷ Ibn Shuhayd. *Diwán Ibn Shuhayd al-Andalusí*. P. 51.

¹⁰⁸ Ibn Shuhayd. *Diwán Ibn Shuhayd al-Andalusí*. P. 5.

¹⁰⁹ See previous source.

¹¹⁰ Ibn Kháqán. Al-Fath Bin Muhammad. *Matmah al-anfus wa masrah al-ta'annus fí mulahi ahli Al-Andalus*. Ed. Muhammad 'Ali Shawáwbika. Beirut. Mu'assasat al-Risála. 1983. P. 189.

¹¹¹ Al-Maqqarí. *Ahmad Bin Muhammad. Nafh al-tíb min ghusn al-Andalus al-ratíb*. Ed. Ihsán 'Abbás. Beirut. Dár Sádir. 1988. V.1. P. 621.

¹¹² Ibn Shuhayd. *Diwán Ibn Shuhayd al-Andalusí*. P. 12.

¹¹³ E. Elinson. Alexander. *Looking back at Al-Andalus*. P. 46.

¹¹⁴ Ibn Shuhayd. *Diwán Ibn Shuhayd al-Andalusí*. P. 6.

¹¹⁵ Ibn Kháqán. *Matmah al-anfus*. P. 189.

¹¹⁶ Al-Maqqarí. *Nafh al-tíb*. V.1. P. 621.

¹¹⁷ *Al-Mustadhhirs name was 'Abd Al-Rahmán Bin Hishám. .He lived between the years 1002- 1023(392-414 according to Muslim calendar). See: Al-Dabí. Ibn 'Umayra. Ahmad bin Yahyá. Baghiyyatu al-multamis fí táríkh rijál ahli Al-Andalus. Dár al-kátib al-'arabí. 1967. P. 31.*

¹¹⁸ *Al-Mua'tadds Billáhs name was Hishám Bin Muhammad. See: Al-Maqqarí.. Nafh al-tíb min ghusn al-Andalus al-ratíb Pg. 438. Ed. Ihsán 'Abbás. Beirut. Dár Sádir. 1988. V.1., and; Al-Marákushí. Ibn al-'Idhári. Al-Bayán al-mughrib fí akhbár al-Andalus wa al-Maghrib.. Ed. G.S Colan and E Lévi Provencal . Beirut. Dár al-thaqáfa. The third print. 1983. V.3. Pg. 145. Hishám Bin Muhammad lived between the years 975-1036 (364-427 according to Muslim calendar). See: Al-Dabí. Ibn 'Umayra. Baghiyyat al-multamis. P. 36.*

¹¹⁹ Ibn Kháqán. *Matmah al-anfus*. P. 189. Footnote Nr 4.

¹²⁰ Al-Dabí. Ibn 'Umayra. Ahmad bin Yahyá. *Baghiyyatu al-multamis fí táríkh rijál ahli Al-Andalus. Dár al-kátib al-'arabí. 1967. P. 31.*

¹²¹ Ibn Kháqán. *Matmah al-anfus*. P. 189. Footnote Nr 4.

shakk”(approx. trans: “Unveiling of the demolition and clarification of the doubt”)^{122 123}. The poetry of Ibn Shuhayd has been collected in a divan which has been printed¹²⁴. Ibn Kháqán (D.1135¹²⁵), the author of “Matmah al-anfus wa masrah al-ta’annus fí mulahi ahli al-Andalus (A book about the history of the people of Al-Andalus)” said in praise of Ibn Shuhayd: “*He was like no other of the people of his time*”¹²⁶

And: “‘*Amr Bin Bahr (Al-Jáhidh, Arabic- الجاحظ¹²⁷) did not measure up to him.*”^{128 129}

The famous Islamic scholar and poet Ibn Hazm (D.1064¹³⁰), who was a friend of Ibn Shuhayd¹³¹, said the following about him: “*And He is one of the masters in the field of rhetoric, amongst the truly strong ones at it*”¹³². At the end of Ibn Shuhayd's life He became semi paralyzed. However he was still able to move from one place to another with the support of a walking stick or the help of another person¹³³. Despite his condition, Ibn Shuhaid composed no less than ten poems during the last seven months of his life¹³⁴. Ibn Shuhaid passed away the year 1035 (Year 426 according to Muslim calendar) in the city of Cordoba, and He was by the time of his death a flag bearer of Arabic rhetoric and poetry.¹³⁵

5.2. Ibn ‘Umayra Al-Makhzúmi (1186 -1258¹³⁶)

His full name was Ahmad Bin ‘Abd Allah Bin Muhammad Bin al-Hassan Bin ‘Umayra al-Makhzúmi¹³⁷. His nickname (kunya) was Abú al-Mutarrif¹³⁸. Ibn ‘Umayra was born in the month of Ramadan year 1186 (582 according to Muslim Hijri calendar) in the Penninsula of Jucár (Shaqr)^{139 140}, which is located south of the city of Valencia¹⁴¹. Ibn ‘Umayra was very versatile. Ibn ‘Umayra was appointed as a judge (Qádin. Arabic- قاضٍ) several times in different cities in al-Maghrib¹⁴², he was a scholar of prophetic tradition (“hadíth”, a “Muhaddith”- Arabic – محدث), a scholar of Arabic language, mastered different sciences, had

¹²² Al-Kafáwín. Al-shi’r al-‘arabi fí rithá’ al-duwal wa al-amsár hattá niháyat suqút al-Andalus. P. 194. Footnote1.

¹²³ Ibn Kháqán. Matmah al-anfus. P. 189. Footnote Nr 4.

¹²⁴ Ibn Kháqán. Matmah al-anfus. P. 189. Footnote Nr 4.

¹²⁵ See Matmah al-anfus. The front cover of the book.

¹²⁶ The text says that “He is like no other of the people of his time”, but since Ibn Shuhaid had passed away by the time the book was written I chose to translate it in past tense in order to avoid confusion.

¹²⁷ Ibn Kháqán. Matmah al-anfus. P. 189. Footnote nr 6.

¹²⁸ The text says “does not measure up to him”. I chose to translate it in past tense for the same reason given before

¹²⁹ Ibn Kháqán. Matmah al-anfus. P. 189.

¹³⁰ Ormsby. Eric. “ Ibn Hazm”. Chapter 10 . The Litterature of al-Andalus. Pg. 140.

¹³¹ Ibn Hazm. ‘Alí Bin Ahmad. Al-taqrib li hadd al-mantiq wa al-madkhal al-lumya bi al-alfádh al-‘amiyya wa al-amthila al-fiqhiyya. P. 618.

¹³² Ibn Hazm. ‘Alí Bin Ahmad. Al-taqrib li hadd al-mantiq wa al-madkhal al-lumya bi al-alfádh al-‘amiyya wa al-amthila al-fiqhiyya. P. 618-619.

¹³³ Ibn Shuhayd. Diwán Ibn Shuhayd al-Andalusí. P. 51.

¹³⁴ See previous source.

¹³⁵ Al-Dabí. Ibn ‘Umayra. Baghiyyat al-multamis. P. 193.

¹³⁶ Ibn Khatíb..Lisán al-Dín. Al-iháta fí akhbár Ghirnáta. Ed. Muhammad ‘Abd Allah Ghiyyán. Cairo. Maktaba al-Khánjí. 1974. V.1. P. 180.

¹³⁷ Ibn Khatíb..Lisán al-Dín. Al-iháta fí akhbár Ghirnáta.. V.1. P. 173.

¹³⁸ See previous source

¹³⁹ Ibn Khatíb..Lisán al-Dín. Al-iháta fí akhbár Ghirnáta. P. 180.

¹⁴⁰ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P.28

¹⁴¹ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P.28

¹⁴² Al-Maqqarí. Nafh al-tib. V.1. P. 313.

good knowledge of history and was a literary profile¹⁴³. Al-Maqqarí mentions the following about Ibn ‘Umayra in his book *Nafh al-tīb min ghusn al-Andalus al-ratīb* (An extensive work about the history of Al-Andalus and its distinguished people):

“*And Abu al-Mutarriif was, as some of the scholars of al-Maghrib said about him; ‘the example of the eloquent, the pillar of the scholars and the core of the noble and distinguished one.’”*^{144 145}. The Famous Islamic scholar Al-Suyúti said about him:

“*He was an Imam, a scholar of Islamic jurisprudence, a Málíkí (Arabic- مالكي, a follower of the Málíkí School of Islamic jurisprudence¹⁴⁶), a scholar of the sciences of logic and intellect, grammar, language, literature and medicine”*¹⁴⁷.

Ibn ‘Umayra left behind him several works in different subjects, such as History and the Foundations of Islamic jurisprudence (“Usúl al-fiqh”, Arabic- أصول الفقه). Amongst the works which Ibn ‘Umayra authored in the field of history is a book about the Christian Seize of Mallorca (Year 1230, 627 according to Muslim hijrî calendar¹⁴⁸) and an abridgement of a book by Ibn Sahib al-Salat, which was called “al-mann bil imáma ‘alá al-mustada’ fîn¹⁴⁹ (Arabic- المن با الامامة على المستضعفين), approx transl: “The bestowal of leadership upon the weak ones”¹⁵⁰. As for the poetry of Ibn ‘Umayra, his gathered writings with the poetry which they contain were collected and organized by Abú Muhammad Bin Háni’ Al-Sabtí in a book which he named “Baghiyyatu al-Mustatarriif wa ghaniyyatu al-Mutarriif min kalám Imam al-Kitába Ibn ‘Umayra”¹⁵¹. Ibn ‘Umayra passed away in the year 1258 (656 according to Muslim calendar) in the city of Tunis.¹⁵²

5.3. Abu Al- Baqá’ Al-Rundí (1205¹⁵³ - 1285¹⁵⁴)

The full name of Abu Al-Baqá’ Al-Rundí was Sálíh Bin Abí al-Hasan Yazíd Bin Sálíh Bin Mùsá Bin Abí al-Qásim Bin Sharíf¹⁵⁵. As for the nickname (“kunya”) of the poet, it is presented by Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marákushí in his book “Al-Dhayl wa-at- takmila li kitábí al-mawsúl wa al-silah” as Abu al-Tayyib¹⁵⁶, while Al-Maqqarí in *Nafh al-tīb* referred to him as Abu Al-Baqá’¹⁵⁷. Doktor Ihsán ‘Abbás, in his checking of the book *Nafh al-Tīb*, mentions that the poet was called by both of the mentioned nicknames¹⁵⁸. Sálíh Bin Sharíf, Abú Al-

¹⁴³ Ibn Khatíb. *Al-iháta fí akhbár Ghirnáta*. V.1. P. 174.

¹⁴⁴ This is an approximate translation

¹⁴⁵ Al-Maqqarí. *Nafh al-Tīb*. V.1. P. 313.

¹⁴⁶ The Maliki school of jurisprudence was founded by Malik Bin Anas. He died in the year 795 (179 according to Muslim Hijrî calendar). See: Ibn Kathír. *Abú al-Fidá’ Isma’íl. Al-Bidáya wa al-Nihaya*. Cairo. Dár al-taqwá. The first print. 1999. Part 9. P. 200.

¹⁴⁷ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. *Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi’r al-Andalusí*. P. 283.

¹⁴⁸ Al-Maqqarí. *Nafh al-Tīb*. V.1. P. 314. Footnote.2

¹⁴⁹ Al-Maqqarí. *Nafh al-Tīb*. V.1. P. 314.

¹⁵⁰ Al-Maqqarí. *Nafh al-Tīb*. V.1. P. 314. Footnote 3.

¹⁵¹ Ibn Khatíb. *Al-iháta fí akhbár Ghirnáta*. V.1. P.178

¹⁵² Ibn Khatíb. *Al-iháta fí akhbár Ghirnáta*. V.1. P.180

¹⁵³ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. *Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi’r al-Andalusí*. P. 363.

¹⁵⁴ Monroe. James T. *Hispano-Arabic poetry*. Biographical notes. XVII.

¹⁵⁵ Al-Marákushí. Muhammad Bin Muhammad Bin ‘Abd al-Malik al-Ansári. *Al-Dhayl wa al-takmila li kitábí al-mawsúl wa al-silah*. Ed. Ihsán ‘Abbás. Beirut. Dár al-thaqáfa. No year mentioned. The remaining 4^{th part}. PP. 136-137.

¹⁵⁶ Al-Marákushí. *Al-Dhayl wal takmila*. V..4. P. 137

¹⁵⁷ Al-Maqqarí. *Nafh al-tīb*. The remaining 4^{th part}. Pg 486.

¹⁵⁸ Al-Maqqarí. *Nafh al-tīb*. The remaining 4^{th part}. P. 486. Footnote Nr 1.

Baqá' Al- Rundí was born in the city of Ronda (Runda, Arabic- رندة)¹⁵⁹. James Monroe says in his books Hispano-Arabic poetry that the life of Abú Al-Baqá' al-Rundí is not well known, and does not attribute any date of birth to the poet¹⁶⁰. However, 'Abd Allah Muhammad Al-Zayyat in his book "Rithá' al-mudun fí al-shi'r al-Andalusí" says that Al-Rundí was born in the year 1205 (601 according to Muslim Hijrí calendar).¹⁶¹ If this date is correct, that would mean that Al-Rundí died at the age of 80, which is fully plausible despite being a high age at that time. Considering the fact that I have not found any conflicting sources concerning the date of birth of the poet, I choose to present the year 1205 as the year of birth of the poet. Al-Rundí was an Islamic jurist ("Faqlh", Arabic- فقيه), a grand scholar of prophetic tradition ("Háfídh", Arabic- حافظ), and a literary profile. Abú Baqá' Al- Rundí was loyal to the Nasirid state (in Granada), and composed poetry in praise of it¹⁶². Ibn 'Abd al-Málik al-Marakushí said about Al-Rundí in his work "Al-dhayl wa al-takmila li kitábí al-mawsúl wa al-silah":
*"And He was the seal of the literary profiles in Al-Andalus"*¹⁶³.

Al-Rundí wrote a work in the field of the rules of inheritance in Islamic law (Ahkám al-fará'id, Arabic- احكام الفرائض)^{164 165}, and a work in the field of poetical composition, called "Al-Wáfi" or "Al-Káfi fí nadhm al-Qawáfi"¹⁶⁶, "The adequate concerning the composition of the rhymes"^{167 168}, which is a work that also deals with the subjects of literary criticism and rhetoric¹⁶⁹. The poetry of al-Rundí was collected in a divan; however it is missing, except for parts of his poetry, which are found in other works of Al-Rundí, and in biographical works and books about the history of Al-Andalus¹⁷⁰. Salih Bin Sharif Abú Al-Baqá' Al-Rundí died in the year 1285.¹⁷¹

6) Backgrounds of the poems

6.1. Ibn Shuhayds elegy for Cordoba

Between the years 1008 and 1031 Al-Andalus disintegrated into a variety of small independent states, so called "Taifa kingdoms", which were often in direct competition with

¹⁵⁹ Al-Zayyat. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi'r al-Andalusí. P. 363.

¹⁶⁰ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. Biographical notes. XVII.

¹⁶¹ Al-Zayyat. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi'r al-Andalusí. P. 363.

¹⁶² Al-Zayyat. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi'r al-Andalusí. P. 367.

¹⁶³ -Marákushí. Al-Dhayl wal takmila. The remaining 4th part .P. 137

¹⁶⁴ The author literary says " fí al-fara'id", "in the inheritance". However it is well known that what is referred to by "al-fará'id" is "Ahkám al-fará'id", the rulings of inheritance in Islamic law.

¹⁶⁵ Al-Zayyat. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi'r al-Andalusí. P. 369.

¹⁶⁶ Ibn 'Abd al-Malik Al-Marákushí presents the name of the book as "Al-Káfi fí 'ilm al-Qawáfi". Doktor Ihsán 'Abbás however, in his checking of Al-Dhayl wa al-Takmila, refers to the book as "Al-Wáfi fí nadhm al-Qawáfi". See: Al-Marákushí. Muhammad Bin Muhammad Bin 'Abd al-Malik al-Ansári. Al-Dhayl wa al-takmila li kitábí al-mawsúl wa al-silah. Ed. Ihsán 'Abbás. Beirut. Dár al-thaqáfa. No year mentioned. The remaining 4th part. . P. 137. Footnote Nr 3. , and in his checking of Nafh al-tib Dr. 'Abbás says that the book was called "Al- Wáfi" or Al-Káfi fí nadhm al-Qawáfi. See: Al-Maqqarí. Nafh al-tib. V.4. P. 486. Footnote Nr 1."

¹⁶⁷ See previous source..

¹⁶⁸ Al-Marákushí. Al-Dhayl wal takmila. The remaining 4th part.. PP 136-137.

¹⁶⁹ Al-Zayyat. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi'r al-Andalusí. P. 369

¹⁷⁰ See previous source.

¹⁷¹ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. Biographical notes. XVII.

each other¹⁷². Berber fractions adopted a member from the Umayyad family whose name was Sulayman Bin Al-Hakam Bin Sulayman in order to strengthen their claim to the rule of the city of Cordoba. An army of Berbers with the support of troops given by Sancho Garcia of Castille attacked the city of Cordoba in 1009. In the year 1009 Sulayman bin Al-Hakam entered the city and was proclaimed caliph with the title “Al-Musta’ín. The previous ruler, Muhammad al-Mahdi escaped to Toledo trying to negotiate with the counts of Barcelona and Urgel. Al-Mahdi managed to hire an army which marched on Cordoba to meet with Sulayman Bin Al-Hakam. Sulayman Bin Al-Hakam marched north with his troops to meet with the opposing army at ‘Aqabat al-Baqar in 22 May 1010, however his Berber army was defeated and retreated southwards, maintaining themselves in the southern mountains of Andalusia. Muhammad al-Mahdi retained the rule of the city, however due to impopularity he was trialed and executed in June 10, and replaced by the ruler Hisham II. In the years 1010-1013, Berber troops laid siege to the city of Cordoba. In 1013 the city surrendered, after its people had suffered great hardships.¹⁷³ In 1013 Sulayman Bin al-Hakam, al-Musta’ín entered the city with an army of Berbers who afflicted the city with destruction, overthrowing the caliph Hishám al-Mu’ayyid (Hisham II. Al-Mu’ayyid was his nickname), and reassuming the Caliphate for a second time¹⁷⁴. Amongst the Berber troops which assisted Sulaymán Bin Hakam in his capture of Cordoba were two brothers named ‘Ali¹⁷⁵ and Al-Qásim Bin Hamúd¹⁷⁶.¹⁷⁷ ‘Alí Bin Hamud took advantage of growing Berber disenchantment towards the ruler Sulayman Bin Al-Hakam Bin Hamud, and claimed to be the avenger of Hisham II (Hisham al-Mu’ayyid)¹⁷⁸. In the year 1016 (407 according to Muslim Hijrî calendar) ‘Alí Bin Hamúd entered the city of Cordoba and killed Sulaymán Bin al-Hakam as well as his father Al-Hakam Bin Sulaymán¹⁷⁹. ‘Alí Bin Hamúd took over the leadership of the city of Cordoba, and after him his brother Al-Qasim Bin Hamúd ruled the city¹⁸⁰. Umayyad rule of the city was retained in the year 1023 (414 according to Muslim hijrî calendar) with the appointment of ‘Abd al-Rahmán Bin Hishám, Al-Mustadhir, as ruler¹⁸¹. However, it would not last. The year 1031 marked the definite end of Umayyad power in Al-Andalus¹⁸². In his Elegy Ibn Shuhayd mourns not only for the destruction of the city, but also for a loss of what the poet saw as an ideal Arabic-literary culture, and for the lost glory of the Umayyad dynasty to which the family of Ibn Shuhayd

¹⁷² Kennedy. Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal. A political history of Al-Andalus. Chapter 6. The Taifa kingdoms. P. 130.

¹⁷³ Kennedy. Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal. A political history of Al-Andalus. Chapter 5: The ‘Amirids and the collapse of the Caliphate of Cordoba. PP. 126-127.

¹⁷⁴ *Muhammad Hussayn*. Dirasât fî al-târikh al-andalusî: Dawlatu Banî Birzál fî Qarmúna. *Alexandria*. *Mu’assasat shabâb al-jâmi’a*. 1990. P. 36.

¹⁷⁵ ‘Alí Bin Hamúd was called by the nickname “Al-Nasir”, Arabic-النَّاصِر. He died in the year 1017 (408 according to Muslim Hijrî calendar). See: Al-Dabí. Ibn ‘Umayra. Ahmad bin Yahyá. Baghiyyatu al-multamis. P. 27.

¹⁷⁶ Al-Qásim Bin Hamúd was called by the nickname “Al-Ma’mún”, Arabic-المأمون. He died in the year 1039 (431 according to Muslim Hijrî calendar). See: Al-Dabí. Ibn ‘Umayra. Ahmad bin Yahyá. Baghiyyatu al-multamis. P. 29.

¹⁷⁷ Ad-Dabí. Ibn ‘Umayra. Ahmad bin Yahyá. Baghiyyatu al-multamis. Pg 24.

¹⁷⁸ Kennedy. Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal. A political history of Al-Andalus. Chapter 5: The ‘Amirids and the collapse of the Caliphate of Cordoba. P. 129.

¹⁷⁹ Ad-Dabí. Ibn ‘Umayra. Ahmad bin Yahyá. Baghiyyatu al-multamis. P. 25.

¹⁸⁰ Ad-Dabí. Ibn ‘Umayra. Ahmad bin Yahyá. Baghiyyatu al-multamis. P. 28.

¹⁸¹ Ad-Dabí. Ibn ‘Umayra. Ahmad bin Yahyá. Baghiyyatu al-multamis. P. 31.

¹⁸² E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P. 46.

was loyal¹⁸³. Ibn Shuhayd says in his Elegy for Cordoba (which will be presented in full form later in this essay), concerning what he saw as a declination of a pure Arabic culture and language¹⁸⁴:

*“An abode, may God forgive the faults of its people,
for they were Berberized, Moroccanized, and Egyptianized.*

*Everywhere there are groups of them
perplexed and bewildered in separation” (Verses. 78).*

And He says, mourning the memory of the lost glory of the Umayyad dynasty:

*“And the palaces is the – that of the Umayyad clan- so abundant
With everything, but the Caliphate was even more abundant”. (Verse. 14).¹⁸⁵*

6.2. Ibn ‘Umayras elegy for Valencia

Ibn ‘Umayras elegy is for the fallen city of Valencia, and for his and other Valencians expulsion from the city.^{186 187}. The city of Valencia fell to the Spanish Christian kingdom of Aragon in 1238 (Safar 636 according to Muslim calendar)^{188 189}. The Andalusian fourteenth century literary profile Lisán Al-Dín Ibn Al-Khatīb, in his work A‘mál al-A‘lám, describes the Seize and fall of Valencia. Ibn Al-Khatīb mentions that the great Andalusian poet Ibn Al-Abbár pleaded to the Emir of Tunis Abú Zakariyyah for help, yet his response was too late:

“When his response and aid arrived the tyrant had already launched his attack against Valencia. It was on Thursday in the month of Ramadan in the year 635. The enemy of God, James (“Jáqmuh”- جاقمه) king of Aragon continued waging war against Valencia, firing upon it with catapults and engaging it in severe battle. The numbers of the Muslims continued decreasing, while the reinforcements of the Christians kept coming until the provisions ran out and hunger took over, and the strength was weakened, and skins and skin residues were eaten, and that which had been predestined took its course. The submission of Islam in the land and the separation from it took place in the fourteenth of Safar, in the year following the engagement of war.”^{190 191}

Ibn ‘Umayra says in his elegy for Valencia, mourning the fate of the city:

*“After the woe that befell Valencia,
Will beacons in the heart still shine with secret candescence?”. (Verse. 7)¹⁹²*

” Yet would that I knew, will she once more rise,

¹⁸³ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. PP.38-39

¹⁸⁴ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P. 38

¹⁸⁵ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P. 40.

¹⁸⁶ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. PP. 31-32.

¹⁸⁷ Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá al-mudun fí ash-shi‘r al-Andalusí. P. 285.

¹⁸⁸ Álvarez Palenzuela. V. A. and Suárez Fernández.. Historia de Espana. Part 6: La consolidación de los reinos Hispánicos (1157-1369). Madrid. Editorial Gredos. 1988. P. 60.

¹⁸⁹ Ibn al-Khatīb. Lisán al-Dín. A‘mál al-A‘lám: Táríkh Isbániyya al-islámiyya. P. 273.

¹⁹⁰ This is an approximate translation.

¹⁹¹ Ibn al-Khatīb. Lisán al-Dín. A‘mál al-A‘lám: Táríkh Isbániyya al-islámiyya. PP. 272- 273.

¹⁹² E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P.32.

Will her star return as it once was? “(Verse.9) ¹⁹³

And He says, in mourning of his expulsion from the city:

” Or did the sons sin their fathers’ sins

And bring upon themselves expulsion from Paradise (jannati l-khuldi)?” (Verse.10) ¹⁹⁴

6.3. Abu Al- Baqá al-Rundís elegy for Al-Andalus

This Elegy is in reality an Elegy for the whole of Al-Andalus, in which the author mentions the loss of several cities. ¹⁹⁵. Therefore I have chosen to call it ‘An elegy for Al-Andalus’ . However, the elegy of Al-Rundí was inspired by the fall of Seville¹⁹⁶, and the poet draws more attention to the loss of the city. Seville was conquered in December, 1248, by Fernando III of Castile. ^{197 198} Fernando III was aided by a certain Ibn Al-Ahmar ¹⁹⁹, who was the founder of the Nasirid dynasty in Granada ²⁰⁰. The city of Seville could not be taken directly by force, but was starved out²⁰¹. The purpose of Al-Rundis elegy was to plead for help from the North-African neighbors, to halt the Reconquista (reconquest) of the Christian-Spanish²⁰². The great 17th century historian Muhammad Bin Ahmad Al-Maqqarí ²⁰³ mentions, after presenting the full and authentic form of of Abú Baqá al-Rundís elegy for Al-Andalus that people have added to this poem after the death of al-Rundí. For example a mentioning of the fall of the city of Granada has been added^{204 205}. Thus if one was to find a different version of this poem containing several additions, it should be known that these are later additions, and not original parts of Al-Rundis elegy. In his poem Al-Rundí warns those whom He seeks their aid from remaining negligent of the situation of their brethren of faith in Al-Andalus. Furthermore He warns them that their heedlessness may cause them to be struck by the same calamities:

“O you who remain heedless though you have a warning in Fate: if you are asleep,

Fate is always awake!”

And you who walk forth cheerfully while your homeland diverts you [from cares], can a

¹⁹³ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P.32.

¹⁹⁴ See previous source.

¹⁹⁵ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. P.334.

¹⁹⁶ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. P. 332.

¹⁹⁷ Kennedy. Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal. A political history of Al-Andalus. Chapter 10: The later Almohad Caliphate; the Caliphate of Abú Yúsuf Ya’qúb al-Mansúr, 1184-99. P . 272.

¹⁹⁸ Monroe. James. Hispano-Arabic poetry. P. 335.

¹⁹⁹ Kennedy. Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal. A political history of Al-Andalus. Chapter 10: The later Almohad Caliphate; the Caliphate of Abú Yúsuf Ya’qúb al-Mansúr, 1184-99. P. 272.

²⁰⁰ Kennedy. Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal. A political history of Al-Andalus. Chapter 11: The Nasirids of Granada: Ibn al-Ahmar and the foundation of the Nasirid kingdom, 1232-73. P. 273.

²⁰¹ Kennedy. Hugh. Muslim Spain and Portugal. A political history of Al-Andalus. Chapter 10: The later Almohad Caliphate; the Caliphate of Abú Yúsuf Ya’qúb al-Mansúr, 1184-99. P. 272.

²⁰² Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. P. 332.

²⁰³ Menocal. María Rosa . Visions of Al-andalus. Chapter 1. The Litterature of al-Andalus. P. 14.

²⁰⁴ Al-Maqqarí. Ahmad Bin Muhammad. Nafh al-tíb min *ghusn al-Andalus al-ratib*. Ed. Ihsán ‘Abbás. Beirut. Dár Sádír. 1988. V.4. P. 488-489.

²⁰⁵ For a detailed look at what has been added to the elegy of Al-Rundí see: Al-Zayyát. ‘Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá Al-mudun fí al-shi’r Al-Andalusí. PP 748-749.

homeland beguile any man after [the loss of] Seville?" (Abu Baqá Al-Rundis elegy for Al-Andalus. Verses. 25-26)²⁰⁶

"Have you no news of the people of Andalus, for riders have carried forth what men have said [about them]?"

How often have the weak, who were being killed and captured while no man stirred, asked our help?

What means this severing of the bonds of Islam on your behalf, when you, O worshipers of God, are [our] brethren?

Are there no heroic souls with lofty ambitions; are there no helpers and defenders of righteousness?

O, who will redress the humiliation of a people who were once powerful, a people whose condition injustice and tyrants have changed?" (Verses. 31-35)²⁰⁷

7) Presentation of the poems.

This is a presentation of the three Elegies for cities of Al-Andalus translated into English. After each poem my own comments concerning the translations are further added, in which I mention translations of words which I believe to be mistakes, or point to a more literal translation of a certain word.

Note #: The different poems are separated from each other by the following marking line: ---, while the notes concerning the translations of the poems are separated from the poems by the following marker:

7.1. An Elegy for Cordoba

Ibn Shuhaid Al-Ashj'aí²⁰⁸

1) There is no one at the abandoned campsite to tell us about the loved ones

So whom can we ask about their situation?.

2) Do not ask anyone except for separation

for it is what distances you from them, wherever they may have gone.

²⁰⁶ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. P. 334.

²⁰⁷ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. PP. 334, 336.

²⁰⁸ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. PP. 40-41.

**3) Time oppressed them and they were scattered
in all directions, and most of them perished.**

**4) Calamities flowed over their homes and them.
Both they and (their homes) were (permanently) transformed.**

**5) So beg Time to embellish their courtyards with flowers
that practically make their hearts glow.**

**6) For the likes of Cordoba (#), the weeping of one
who cries with an overflowing eye is not enough.**

**7) An abode, may God forgive the faults of its people,
for they were Berberized, Moroccanized, and Egyptianized.**

**8) Everywhere there are groups of them
perplexed and bewildered in separation.**

**9) I knew it well when its people were unified
and life there was green.**

**10) And the winds of its splendor shone over them
with scents emanating ambergris.**

**11) And the abode- perfection had pitched its tent there
while it was beyond any deficiency.**

**12) And the people felt secure that its beauty would never change,
wearing its splendor as a turban and a cloak (##).**

13) O how I long for their nobility in its palaces and its ladies quarters,
for its full moons concealed in its palaces.

14) And the palaces is the – that of the Umayyad clan- so abundant
With everything, but the Caliphate was even more abundant.

15) And the Záhriyyah with its boats that shone brightly
and the 'Ámiriyyah given life by the stars.

16) and the Grand mosque overflowing with all who
Recited, heard, and looked on at anything they wished to.

17) And the streets of the markets bearing witness that
the marketplace was never empty of shopping throngs.

18) O paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people.
Both it and they were destroyed.

19) I am afflicted by you in death, as was only right.
As long as you live, we do not cease to sing you praises (###).

20) Your courtyards were a Mecca to pilgrims,
The frightened taking refuge in them, finding safety.

21) O abode and its people, in which and with whom the bird of
separation alighted.

22) The Euphrates flowed plentifully through your two courtyards, as did the Tigris.
So too the Nile and the river Kawthar.

23) You were given drink by the life-giving waters of a cloud
by which your gardens were given life and flourished.

24) My sorrow is for the house whose familiar pleasures I knew
and for its gazelles who pranced and swaggered in its courtyards.

25) In the days when the eye of every kindness
Everywhere gazed upon it,

26) In the days when the command in it was but one –
that of its Amír – and the Amír was the one who issued commands.

27) In the days when the palm of every hand of peace and security
rose to it in peaceful greeting and rushed towards it.

28) My sadness, for its generous leaders and narrators,
Its honest ones and protectors, repeats itself.

29) My soul, for its blessing and pureness,
And splendor, and glory, is grieving.

30) My heart (####), for its mild-mannered scholars,
and its refined litterateurs, is rent.

.....

Notes concerning the translation of the poem

#) The translator has translated the sentence *فلمثل قرطبة* as “*For the likes of Cordoba*”, which is incorrect, the correct translation would be “*For the like of Cordoba*”.

##) Elinson has translated the verb *تأزر* as wearing cloak, which not a correct translation. The verb *تأزر* means-
to wear a lower garment which is called in Arabic – *إزار* . However it is fully understandable in this case that the

translator has diverged from the literal translation, in order to make more understandable for Western, Non-Arabic speaking readers.

###) A more literal translation would be “We do not cease to take pride in You” the verb فخر – means literally, “To take pride”.

####) The translator has translated the word كبدی as “my heart” which is not a literal translation. The word كبدی (kabidí) literally means - “My liver”



7.2. An Elegy for Valencia

Ibn 'Umayra Al-Makhzúmí ²⁰⁹

1 O heart, you who proclaim this ardent passion,
Must love's intemperance be so manifest?

2 But can a lovelorn one hope to forget

Love's agony of thirst, rejection's awesome jolt?

3 He yearns for Najd, but all in vain!

The adverse turns of time have doomed him never to return.

4 O mountain of water-sated verdure, like none I knew,
How time's ill turns of fortune slighted your spring.

5 And O you people that I love –but events now exact
That I stand alone, apart from those who merit love-

²⁰⁹ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. P.32.

6 Will pleasure one day be bared of desire,
When to us it bodes denial at all times?.

7 After the woe that befell Valencia,
Will beacons in the heart still shine with secret candescence?.

8 People hope for shields against afflictions
That transfix them with their pliant spears.

9 Yet would that I knew, will she once more rise,
Will her star return as it once was?.

10 Or did the sons sin their fathers' sins#
And bring upon themselves expulsion from Paradise (jannati l-khuldi)?.

.....

Notes concerning the translation of the poem

#) Elinson has translated *ذنب أبيهم (dhanba abihim)* "The sin of their father" (both the word *dhanb* and *abí* are singular) as "their their fathers' sins" relying, I assume, upon the understanding that the poet is referring in general to the sins of their fathers, and that the poet is using the *جنس (genus)* tense intending the sins of their fathers in general.. I have a different theory about the meaning of this verse in the poem, which I will present later in the part where I make a brief analysis of the poems.

.....

7.3. An Elegy for Al-Andalus

Abu Al-Baqá' Ar-Rundí ²¹⁰

1 Everything declines after reaching perfection, therefore let no man be beguiled by the sweetness of a pleasant life.

²¹⁰ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. P. 332, 334 and 336.

2 As you have observed, these are the decrees that are inconstant: he whom a single moment has made happy, has been harmed by many other moments;

3 And this is the abode that will show pity for no man, nor will any condition remain in its state for it.

4 Fate irrevocably destroys every ample coat of mail when Mashrifi swords and spears glance off without effect;

5 It unsheaths each sword only to destroy it even if it be an Ibn Dhi Yazan and the scabbard Ghumdan.

6 Where are the crowned kings of Yemen and where are their jewel-studded diadems and crowns?

7 Where are [the buildings] Shaddad raised in Iram, and where [the empire] the Sassanians ruled in Persia?

8 Where is the gold Qarun once possessed; where are `Ad and Shaddad and Qahtan?.

9 An irrevocable decree overcame them all so that they passed away and the people came to be as though they had never existed.

10 The kingdoms and kings that had been came to be like what a sleeper has told about [his] dream vision.

11 Fate turned against Darius as well as his slayer, and as for Chosroes, no vaulted palace offered him protection.

12 It is as if no cause had ever made the hard easy to bear, and as if Solomon had never ruled the world.

13 The misfortunes brought on by Fate are of many different kinds, while Time has causes of joy and of sorrow.

14 For the accidents [of fortune] there is a consolation that makes them easy to bear, yet there is no consolation for what has befallen Islam.

15 An event which cannot be endured has overtaken the peninsula; one such that Uhud has collapsed because of it and Thahlan has crumbled!

16 The evil eye has struck [the peninsula][9] in its Islam so that [the land] decreased until whole regions and districts were despoiled of [the faith]

17 Therefore ask Valencia what is the state of Murcia; and where is Jativa, and where is Jaén?

18 Where is Cordoba, the home of the sciences, and many a scholar whose rank was once lofty in it?

19 Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains, as well as its sweet river overflowing and brimming full?

20 [They are] capitals which were the pillars of the land, yet when the pillars are gone, it may no longer endure!

21 The tap of the white ablution fount weeps in despair, like a passionate lover weeping at the departure of the beloved,

22 Over dwellings emptied of Islam that were first vacated and are now inhabited by unbelief;

23 In which the mosques have become churches wherein only bells and crosses may be found.

24 Even the mihrabs weep though they are solid; even the pulpits mourn though they are wooden!

25 O you who remain heedless though you have a warning in Fate: if you are asleep, Fate is always awake!. #

26 And you who walk forth cheerfully while your homeland diverts you [from cares], can a homeland beguile any man after [the loss of] Seville?

27 This misfortune has caused those that preceded it to be forgotten, nor can it ever be

forgotten for the length of all time!: ##

28 O you who ride lean, thoroughbred steeds which seem like eagles in the racecourse;

29 And you who carry slender, Indian blades which seem like fires in the darkness caused by the dust cloud [of war],

30 And you who are living in luxury beyond the sea enjoying life, you who have strength and power in your homelands,

31 Have you no news of the people of Andalus, for riders have carried forth what men have said [about them]?

32 How often have the weak, who were being killed and captured while no man stirred, asked our help?

33 What means this severing of the bonds of Islam on your behalf, when you, O worshipers of God, are [our] brethren?

34 Are there no heroic souls with lofty ambitions; are there no helpers and defenders of righteousness?

35 O, who will redress the humiliation of a people who were once powerful, a people whose condition injustice and tyrants have changed?

36 Yesterday they were kings in their own homes, but today they are slaves in the land of the infidel!

37 Thus, were you to see them perplexed, with no one to guide them, wearing the cloth of shame in its different shades,

*38 And were you to behold their weeping when they are sold, the matter would strike fear
39 into your heart, and sorrow would seize you.*

40 Alas, many a mother and child have been parted as souls and bodies are separated!

41 And many a maiden fair as the sun when it rises, as though she were rubies and pearls,

42 Is led off to abomination by a barbarian against her will, while her eye is in tears and her heart is stunned.

43 The heart melts with sorrow at such [sights], if there is any Islam or belief in that heart!

7. 3. 1. Explanation of some names and phrases which are found in Abú Al- Baqá Al-Rundís Andalusian elegy

1) **Mashrifi swords:** Mashrifi swords were a kind of swords which were well-known for their excellence.²¹¹

2) **Ibn Dhi Yazan:** Saif Bin Dhí Yazan was a Yemenite pre-islamic king.²¹²

3) **Ghumdán;** Ghumdán was the castle of Saif Bin Dhí Yazan.²¹³

4) **Shaddád:** Shaddád was a king of the people of ‘Ád of Hadramout²¹⁴.

5) **‘Ád:** ‘Ád was a people of Hadamout²¹⁵ (In Yemen) which are mentioned in many places in The Quran. It is mentioned in the Quran that they built a Grand city with many columns, called Iram. See The Quran, Verses 6-7, chapter 89.

6) **Qahtán:** Qahtán was the ancestor of the South-Arabians.²¹⁶

7) **Qárún:** Qárún according to the Quran was a very rich and influential person from the people of Moses who was blinded by his wealth and rebelled against Moses. See the Holy Quran, Verses 76-82, Chapter 28,

The slayer of Darius was Alexander the Great.²¹⁷

8) **Uhud:** Uhud is a mountain chain near the city of Medina (which is located in Modern-day Saudi Arabia)²¹⁸

9) **Thahlán:** Thahlán is a mountain in the region of Najd²¹⁹

²¹¹ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. Pg. 333

²¹² See previous source.

²¹³ See previous source.

²¹⁴ See previous source.

²¹⁵ See previous source.

²¹⁶ See previous source.

²¹⁷ See previous source.

²¹⁸ See. Al-Hamawí. Yaqút Bin ‘Abd Allah. Mua’jam al-buldán. V.1. P. 109-110. “Al-hamzata wa al-‘Há’ wa ma yalíhá” Arabic: الهمزة و الحاء و ما يليها.

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Notes concerning the translation of the poem

#) Monroe has translated the word **الدهر (ad-dahr)** as “**fate**”. The word however literally translated means **time**. I find it in this case a suitable choice to diverge from the more literal translation for the sake of context and presenting the correct meaning. However so, I believe that it is necessary for the translator to mention any diversion from a literal translation.

) This sentence is not correct. The word “**nor**” has to be preceded by negation. Using the word after sentences lacking negation is grammatically incorrect and makes the sentences incomprehensible. A suggestion for an alternative could possibly be; “**and it can never be forgotten for the length of all time** “

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8) Analysis of the poems

8.1. Brief analysis of the poems

Ibn Shuhayds Elegy for Cordoba

Ibn Shuhayds poem of elegy for Cordoba is in the poetical meter called “kámil”, Arabic-كامل²²⁰. Ibn Shuhayd begins his elegy by presenting the image of standing alone at the campsite, mourning for the separation from loved ones. This is a symbolic image of loss and nostalgia, a remaining characteristic of pre-Islamic poetry.

*“There is no one at the abandoned campsite to tell us about the loved ones
So whom can we ask about their situation?”* (Verse. 1)

Compare this with the verse from the Mua’llaqa of Imru’ Al-Qays:

*“Halt my two friends, and we will weep over the memories of a beloved
And a campsite that was at the sand dune’s rim, between al-Dakhúl and Hawmal”* ²²¹

In the second verse the poet refers to the expulsion of the Cordoban citizenry.²²²

*“Do not ask anyone except for separation
for it is what distances you from them, wherever they may have gone”* (Verse. 2)

In the verses following, 3 and 4 the poet mentions the power of fate, and the city of Cordobas fate of destruction, and the calamities which befell its people. After having mentioned this, He begs that fate will turn for the city of Cordoba and its people, in verse 5.

“Time oppressed them and they were scattered

²¹⁹ Al-Hamawí. Yaqút Bin ‘Abd Allah. *Mua’jam al-buldán*. V. 2. P. 88. “Al-Thá’ wa Al-há’ wa ma yalíhá” ,Arabic-
النَّاءُ وَالْهَاءُ وَ مَا يَلِيهَا

²²⁰ Monroe. James T. *Hispano-Arabic poetry*. P. 160.

²²¹ E.Elinson. Alexander. *Looking back at al-Andalus*. P. 17.

²²² E.Elinson. Alexander. *Looking back at al-Andalus*. P. 42.

in all directions, and most of them perished.

Calamities flowed over their homes and them.

Both they and (their homes) were (permanently) transformed.

So beg Time to embellish their courtyards with flowers

that practically make their hearts glow most of them perished.” (Verses. 3-5)

Further in verse 6 Ibn Shuhayd mourns for Cordoba and He calls for its mourning. Following this in the seventh verse we find the poet mourning what he sees as a declination of a pure Arabic culture.²²³

*“An abode, may God forgive the faults of its people,
for they were Berberized, Moroccanized, and Egyptianized.*

Everywhere there are groups of them

perplexed and bewildered in separation.” (Verses. 7-8)

“They were Berberized (tabarbarú, Arabic- تبربروا)” refers to the Berber Hamúdis, who became rivals to the Umayyad rule, and eventually caused its fall) and the verb “they were Egyptianized” (tamassarú, Arabic- تمصروا) refers to a lineage that the Hamúdis traced back to the fourth Caliph of Islám, ‘Alí Bin Abí Tálib, who was regarded as a symbolic religious and political leader by the Shi’ites. The Fatimid dynasty which adhered to Shi’ism (The Isma’ílite branch of Shi’ism) were the rulers of Egypt at that time²²⁴. The verb “Moroccanized” (“tagharrabú, Arabic- تغربوا) refers either to the land of Morocco (the far west, “al-Maghrib al-Aqsá”, Arabic- المغرب الأقصى), or the Islamic west in general (al-Gharb al-Islamí, Arabic- الغرب الإسلامي)²²⁵. The verb “they were Berberized” (tabarbarú) has a negative connotation to its meaning pointing towards ignorance and backwardness²²⁶. Ibn Shuhaid in his elegy defends the Umayyad rule against what he sees as a political, cultural as well as racial threat²²⁷. In the verses following after this, from 9-17, Ibn Shuhayd recalls the past of Cordoba and its people, mentioning the fine qualities of the city, by presenting images of the features of the city. Ibn Shuhayd mentions locations of symbolical significance, such as the Grand Mosque and the ‘Ámiriyya and Zahiriyah palaces, two palaces which were built by the Umayyad ruler Al-Mansúr (Muhammad Bin Abí‘ Ámir)²²⁸:

*“ And the Záhriyyah with its boats that shone brightly
and the ‘Ámiriyyah given life by the stars.*

and the Grand mosque overflowing with all who

Recited, heard, and looked on at anything they wished to.” (Verses. 15-16)

²²³ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. P. 44.

²²⁴ See previous source.

²²⁵ See previous source.

²²⁶ See previous source.

²²⁷ See previous source.

²²⁸ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. P. 46.

Furthermore in verse 14, the poet praises the Umayyad caliphate, specifically, a praise which follows his defense of the Umayyad dynasty (which has been mentioned previously):

*“And the palaces is the – that of the Umayyad clan- so abundant
With everything, but the Caliphate was even more abundant.” (Verse. 14)*

In the 18:th verse the poet once again recalls the power of fate. He mourns for the fate of Cordoba and its people in this verse as well as in the verse following (verse 19):

“O paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people.

Both it and they were destroyed.

I am afflicted by you in death, as was only right.

As long as you live, we do not cease to sing you praises” (Verses. 18-19)

After having mentioned the tragic fate of Cordoba once more, in the verses 18 and 19, the poet returns to praising the glorious past of the city as well as the Umayyad rule. In this poem as well as other Elegies for lost cities the poet gives plenty of focus to mentioning the fine qualities of the lost city, praising it. As has been mentioned before, the literary critic Ibn Rashíq, said in his work “al-‘Umda”(“the pillar”): *There is no difference between the rithá’ (elegiac poetry) and the madh (panegyric, poetry of praise) except for the fact that the rithá contains something mixed within it which indicates that the object (of the poem) is dead, such as “he was” or “this and that has been lost to us”, and other devices of this sort, in order for it to be known that the object is dead*²²⁹. This statement however does not fit the description of many of the elegies for lost cities, such as the one being discussed. Ibn Shuhayd in his poem keeps a balance between praising the past of the city and mourning for its present situation. In the verses following there is plenty of symbolic imagery, and two typical stylistic features are used; combining eastern and western places together, and water imagery. In verse 20 the poet compares the courtyards of Cordoba to the city of Makkah, the sought destination of Muslim pilgrims, using the great symbolic significance of this city as a comparison in order to glorify the city of Cordoba:

*“ Your courtyards were a Mecca to pilgrims,
The frightened taking refuge in them, finding safety.” (Verse. 20)*

In verse 22 the poet mentions the names of two great rivers The Tigris and the Nile, as well as the river Kawthar, which in Muslim belief is a river in paradise²³⁰. These are all rivers of

²²⁹ Ibn Rashíq. Al-‘Umda fí mahásin al-shi‘r wa ádábihi wa naqdihi. V.2. P. 147.

²³⁰ It says in the Holy Quran **“Indeed We have given to you (O Muhammad) Al-Kawthar”** The Quran, verse 1, chapter 108 . Al-Tabarí said in his famous Quran exegesis (tafsir), after mentioning the difference of opinion concerning the meaning of the word Al-Kawthar (Arabic- الكوثر) in the verse: **“And the most correct of these sayings according to me, is that of those who said. “It is the name of the river which The messenger of God (Allah) - May peace and blessing be upon him- was given in paradise.”** And He (Al-Tabarí) further said: **“And We only say that this is the most correct saying concerning this because of the continuity of the reports from The Messenger of God (Allah) - May peace and blessings be upon him- which show that it is so.”** See: Al-Tabarí. Muhammad Bin Jarír. Jámia’ al-bayán ‘an ta’wíl al-Qur‘án. Egypt. Cairo, Alexandria. Dár al-salám. 2007. V. 10. P. 8803.

great symbolic importance. Ibn Shuhaid here magnifies his city by combining its mention with the mentioning of these great rivers, and furthermore creates a symbolic image of the vivid life of Cordoba before it was struck by disaster, by using water imagery.

*“The Euphrates flowed plentifully through your two courtyards, as did the Tigris.
So too the Nile and the river Kawthar”* (Verse. 22)

In verse 23 we find further use of water imagery to strengthen the image of the vividness of the city: *“You were given drink by the life-giving waters of a cloud
by which your gardens were given life and flourished”*(Verse. 23)

In the verses 25-27 the poet makes a final mention of the past glory of Cordoba, using repetition to draw the attention of the one hearing or reading. The word أيام- *”in the days”*, is repeated three times:

*“In the days when the eye of every kindness
“Everywhere gazed upon it,*

*In the days when the command in it was but one –
that of its Amír – and the Amír was the one who issued commands.*

*In the days when the palm of every hand of peace and security
rose to it in peaceful greeting and rushed towards it”* (Verses. 25-27)

Finally Ibn Shuhayd pays his personal homage to the city, its leaders, and its distinguished people. In it we are also given a glimpse at Ibn Shuhayd's own aristocratic world, the world of leaders, scholars, narrators, protectors and refined litterateurs (literary profiles):

*“My sadness, for its generous leaders and narrators,
Its honest ones and protectors, repeats itself.*

*My soul, for its blessing and pureness,
And splendor, and glory, is grieving.*

*My heart, for its mild-mannered scholars,
and its refined litterateurs, is rent”*(Verses. 28-30)

Recalling Ibn Rashiqs description of the stylistic way of the elegy for kings and great leaders, I find his description very suitable for describing the style of Ibn Shuhayd's elegy for Cordoba. The city of Cordoba takes the place of the departed king:

*“And the stylistic way of the elegy, in the case of the departed one being a king or a great leader, is for it to be apparent in its expression of agony, manifest in its display of sorrow, mixed with yearning and regret as well as magnification”*²³¹

1) Apparent expression of agony and manifest display of sorrow:

*“O paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people.
Both it and they were destroyed.*

²³¹ Ibn Rashīq. Al-'Umda fī mahāsīn al-shi'ar wa 'ādābihi wa naqdihi. V.2. P. 147.

*I am afflicted by you in death, as was only right.
As long as you live, we do not cease to sing you praises” (Verses. 18-19)*

*“My sadness, for its generous leaders and narrators,
Its honest ones and protectors, repeats itself.*

*My soul, for its blessing and pureness,
And splendor, and glory, is grieving.*

*My heart, for its mild-mannered scholars,
and its refined litterateurs, is rent.”(Verses. 28-30)*

2) *Yearning and regret*

*“I knew it well when its people were unified
and life there was green.*

*And the winds of its splendor shone over them
with scents emanating ambergris” (Verses. 9-10)*

*“O paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people.
Both it and they were destroyed” (Verse. 18)*

3) *Magnification*

*“And the people felt secure that its beauty would never change,
wearing its splendor as a turban and a cloak” (Verse. 12)*

*“The Euphrates flowed plentifully through your two courtyards, as did the Tigris.
So too the Nile and the river Kawthar” (Verse. 22)*

Ibn ‘Umayras elegy for Valencia

In Ibn ‘Umayras elegy each verse (“bayt”, Arabic- بيت, pl. “abyát”- أبيات) ends with the Arabic letter dāl (د). As has been mentioned before Ibn ‘Umayras elegy is for the city of Valencia.

The poet begins by expressing feelings of passion and yearning for that which has been lost.

*“O heart, you who proclaim this ardent passion,
Must love’s intemperance be so manifest?.*

*But can a lovelorn one hope to forget
Love’s agony of thirst, rejection’s awesome jolt?” (Verses. 1-2)*

Further, in the third verse Ibn ‘Umayra pays homage to the Highlands of Najd (Today in Northeastern Saudi-Arabia) ²³². The poet is far away from Najd, and it is not the place itself which is important, but its symbolic significance. Jaroslav Stetkevych says in the book “The Zephyrs of Najd”: “Thus Ibn ‘Umayrah al-Makhzúmi, a seventh /thirteenth century poet from Al-Andalus, will talk of his sorrow over the loss of Valencia by first invoking ancient Bedouin

²³² E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. P. 31.

*passions of the heart (vv-1-2) and that heart's yearning for its autochthonous place of repose, the distant Najd of Arabia (v.3)"*²³³

"He yearns for Najd, but all in vain!

The adverse turns of time have doomed him never to return" (Verse. 3)

There a reference to fate in this verse and the impossibility to escape that which has been destined: *"The adverse turns of time have doomed him never to return"*. In the fourth verse we find the poet using natural imagery and water imagery. The image is that of a mountain with is in rich its vegetation because of the presence of water in abundance. The poet seeks to create an image of the beauty and vividness of the city of Valencia, as He viewed it. After giving a description of the beauty of its past beauty, the poet turns to mention the present situation of the city through symbolic images, which express the destruction of the city, and the decline of its beauty. Also in this verse we find a reference to fate and time. The poet depicts fate or time as a destructive force:

"O mountain of water-sated verdure, like none I knew,

How time's ill turns of fortune slighted your spring" (Verse. 4)

In the fifth and sixth verses Ibn 'Umayra mourns for the separation from people whom he held dear and expresses grief for his situation.

"And O you people that I love –but events now exact

That I stand alone, apart from those who merit love-

Will pleasure one day be bared of desire,

When to us it bodes denial at all times?" (Verse. 5-6)

In verse seven poet mentions his beloved city by name, and asks the question whether it will ever rise again after its fall.

"After the woe that befell Valencia,

Will beacons in the heart still shine with secret candescence?" (Verse. 7)

The poet then speaks about the impossibility of escaping fate, and the vain hopes of those who wish to do so:

"People hope for shields against afflictions

That transfix them with their pliant spears" (Verse.8)

Further, in verse nine, Ibn 'Umayra once more asks the question whether his dear city will ever rise again, will its splendid past ever return?

"Yet would that I knew, will she once more rise,

Will her star return as it once was?"

"Or did the sons sin their fathers' sins

And bring upon themselves expulsion from Paradise (jannati l-khuldi)?" (Verses. 9-10)

The 10th and final verse I believe contains a meaning which the translator has missed. I intend now to discuss this verse, and give arguments for why I believe the verse should be interpreted in the proposed way. Elinson does point to a usage of Quranic symbolism, and refers to the following verse from the Quran: **"Say: 'Is that better of the eternal garden**

²³³ See previous reference

(jannat al-Khuld) that was promised to the righteous? ^{234 235}, but He makes no reference to Adam (May peace be upon him) and his expulsion from paradise.²³⁶

I believe that Ibn ‘Umayra in this verse is making reference to the expulsion of Adam from Paradise, comparing his expulsion from Valencia with Adams expulsion from paradise. I believe so for several reasons:

- 1) He refers to an expulsion from paradise. Adam according to the three Abrahamic faiths; Islam, Christianity and Judaism, was expelled from paradise.
- 2) He asks if the sons were expelled from what he views as a paradise for committing a sin. Adam according to the three Abrahamic faiths ate from a tree from which he had been forbidden to eat, and was consequently expelled from Paradise.
- 3) Adam is believed in the three Abrahamic faiths to be the first human, the father of all mankind, thus humans are referred, not least in Islamic terminology as, “the sons of Adam”.
- 4) It gives more depth and sense of meaning to the sentence; Or did the sons sin their fathers’ sins”, which otherwise would have to mean the sons of one father, in a sense of belonging to the same family, having the same father. I personally have difficulty in believing that Ibn ‘Umayra, who was a great poet that used plenty of symbolism, as we have seen in this poem, would intend so.
- 5) Ibn ‘Umayra was an Islamic scholar thus one would expect him using Quran symbolism which may not be completely clear for someone without deeper knowledge of Islam.

However if the proposed interpretation would be applied then that would also necessitate a slight change in the translation. The translation in such cause would be:

“Or did the sons sin their fathers sin (commit the same sin as their father did”²³⁷)

And bring upon themselves expulsion from paradise (jannat al-khuld)” (Verse. 10)

As a matter of fact, I personally believe that the poet is referring to a specific Quran verse:

“O Sons of Adam! Do not let Satan put you into temptation, just as He caused your parents to be expelled from paradise”²³⁸

In this poem we find the poet first expressing his own feelings of mourning for the fall of Valencia, and his expulsion from the city. Ibn ‘Umayra focuses very much upon his own inner feelings, and very little upon describing the city, and that which has befallen it. As a matter of fact, if it was not for the presence of one verse, verse Nr. 5, it would be possible to refer to his poem as a poetical monolog, a monolog of a mourning poet addressing his own tormented soul.

²³⁴ Elinson has translated the word “Al-Muttaqún” Arabic- *المُتَّقُونَ* as “the righteous”. I do not agree with this translation. A more correct translation in my opinion would be “The pious” or “The Godfearing”.

²³⁵ *The Quran. Verse 15, chapter 25.*

²³⁶ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. P. 32.

²³⁷ *It would have to be understood in such a way, because the teachings of inherited sin are not present in Islam: “And no person shall carry the weight of another ones deeds”.* The Quran. Verse 15, chapter 17, and verse 18, chapter 35.

²³⁸ *The Qura. Verse 27, chapter 7.*

Abu al-Baqá' al-Rundís mourning for Al-Andalus

Abu Baqá' al-Rundís elegy poem is a Núniyyah (نونية), which means that each verse of the poem ends with the Arabic letter nún (ن). This poem is in the poetical meter called "Basít", Arabic- بسيط.²³⁹ Al-Rundí begins his poems by stating that all things are bound to decline, and thus one should not be blinded to believe that things in this world last forever:

"I Everything declines after reaching perfection, therefore let no man be beguiled by the sweetness of a pleasant life" (Verse. 1)

The poet then moves on to touch upon the nature of fate, and then expressing once again that everything in this world, no matter how strong it may be, is always destined to decline and perish.

"As you have observed, these are the decrees that are inconstant: he whom a single moment has made happy, has been harmed by many other moments;

And this is the abode that will show pity for no man, nor will any condition remain in its state for it.

Fate irrevocably destroys every ample coat of mail when Mashrifi swords and spears glance off without effect;

It unsheaths each sword only to destroy it even if it be an Ibn Dhi Yazan and the scabbard Ghumdan" (Verses. 2-5). Al-Rundí then gives examples of great kingdoms and people of ancient times, and reminds of their fates, how they despite their greatness could not stand against their irrevocable destiny to perish. In verses 6-8 we find the use of repetition. The poet here repeats the interrogative particle "Where?"- أين - three times":

"Where are the crowned kings of Yemen and where are their jewel-studded diadems and crowns?

Where are [the buildings] Shaddad raised in Iram, and where [the empire] the Sassanians ruled in Persia?

Where is the gold Qarun once possessed; where are `Ad and Shaddad and Qahtan?

An irrevocable decree overcame them all so that they passed away and the people came to be as though they had never existed.

The kingdoms and kings that had been came to be like what a sleeper has told about [his] dream vision.

Fate turned against Darius as well as his slayer, and as for Chosroes, no vaulted palace offered him protection.

It is as if no cause had ever made the hard easy to bear, and as if Solomon had never ruled the world." (Verses. 6-12)

After mentioning the fate of these powerful people and great kingdoms of ancient times, the poet reflects upon the nature of life, how it is filled with sorrows as well as joys. Fate is not described as we have seen in the previous poems as a mere destructive force. Thus we find the typical reference to the power of fate in this elegy being slightly different. It is still described as a powerful and irresistible, however it is not depicted as merely destructive:

"The misfortunes brought on by Fate are of many different kinds, while Time has causes of joy and of sorrow". (Verse. 13). Moving on the poet, from verse 14, now turns the attention of the hearer, or reader to the situation of Andalusia, describing the dreadful events which have taken place.

²³⁹ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. P. 332.

For the accidents [of fortune] there is a consolation that makes them easy to bear, yet there is no consolation for what has befallen Islam. (Verse. 14)

Al-Rundí being an Islamic scholar, describes the fall of the cities of Al-Andalus to Christian Spanish kingdoms as a great disaster afflicting Islam and the Muslims, depicting the magnify of the calamities as so great that it has caused to great mountains Uhud (Arabic- أُحُد) and Thathlan to collapse. Uhud is a famous mountain chain located near the city of Medina (in modern day Saudi Arabia)²⁴⁰. As for Thahlán (Arabic- ثهلان) it is a large mountain in the region of Najd²⁴¹. Thus we see here the use of symbolical places of the East to give strength to the image which is presented. The mention of the collapse of these two great distant mountains gives power to the symbolic imagery of disaster and calamity:

“ An event which cannot be endured has overtaken the peninsula; one such that Uhud has collapsed because of it and Thahlan has crumbled!.

The evil eye has struck [the peninsula][9] in its Islam so that [the land] decreased until whole regions and districts were despoiled of [the faith]” (Verses. 15-16)

The image of the Mountain of Uhud crumbling is an especially strong symbolic image of what the poet sees as a great disaster befalling the religion of Islam. Uhud was the location of the Battle of Uhud²⁴². The Battle of Uhud took place between The Prophet Muhammad with his followers and the tribe of Quraysh in the year 625 (Year three according to Muslim Hijrī calendar) a year after the Battle of Badr (The first Battle fought by the Muslims)²⁴³. In verses 17-20 Al-Rundí mourns for the loss of important cities of Al-Andalus, and pleads to fellow Muslims to take action to halt the continuous fall of cities. In verses 17-19 we find the use of repetition. The poet again uses the interrogative particle “**where?**”- أين - several times, drawing the focus of the reader or listener to the mention of the loss of these important cities:

“Therefore ask Valencia what is the state of Murcia; and where is Jativa, and where is Jaén? Where is Cordoba, the home of the sciences, and many a scholar whose rank was once lofty in it?

Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains, as well as its sweet river overflowing and brimming full?

[They are] capitals which were the pillars of the land, yet when the pillars are gone, it may no longer endure!” (Verses. 17-20)

In verse 21 the poet gives another symbolical image to express mourning over the Christian conquest of the Muslim cities and the consequential decline of Islam within them.

Al-Rundí, describes the sadness of these events as being so strong that they have even caused the white ablution fount cries for the faith of Al-Andalus.

“ The tap of the white ablution fount weeps in despair, like a passionate lover weeping at the departure of the beloved,

Over dwellings emptied of Islam that were first vacated and are now inhabited by unbelief;” (Verses. 21-22)

After having presented this strong image, the poet then moves on, in verse 23, to mentioning how the mosques, an important symbol of Islam, have been turned into churches, and then He returns to giving further symbolic images of sorrow; the weeping of the prayer niches (

²⁴⁰ See. Al-Hamawí. Yaqút Bin ‘Abd Allah. Mua’jam al-buldán. V.1. PP . 109-110. “Al-hamzata wa al-‘há w ama yalíhá” Arabic: *الهمزة و الحاء و ما يليها*.

²⁴¹ Al-Hamawí. Yaqút Bin ‘Abd Allah. Mua’jam al-buldán. V. 2. P. 88. Al-Hamawí. Yaqút Bin ‘Abd Allah. Mua’jam al-buldán. V. 2. Pg. 88. “Al-Thá’ wa Al-‘há’ wa ma yalíhá” ,Arabic- *الثاء و الهاء و ما يليها*

²⁴² See. Al-Hamawí. Yaqút Bin ‘Abd Allah. Mua’jam al-buldán. V.1. P . 109. “Al-hamzata wa al-‘há w ama yalíhá” Arabic: *الهمزة و الحاء و ما يليها*.

²⁴³ Ibn Hishám. Abú Muhammad ‘Abd Al-Malik. Al-Sírat al-Nabawíyya. Ed. Muhammad Fahmí Al-Sarjání and Khayrí Sa’íd. Cairo. Al-Maktaba Al-Tawfiqíyya. 2003. Book Nr 2. V.3. P. 47. Footnote Nr 1.

“maharīb”, Arabic- محاريب, sing. محراب), and the mourning of the pulpits (“Manabir” Arabic- منابر, Sing. منبر). The prayer niches and pulpits are features of the mosque. Mentioning the cry of these Islamic symbols strengthens the image of sorrow for a disaster which has befallen the religion of Islam.

“In which the mosques have become churches wherein only bells and crosses may be found”. (Verse. 23)

“ Even the mihrabs weep though they are solid; even the pulpits mourn though they are wooden!.” (Verse. 24)

From the verse 25 al-Rundí turns directly to those whom he is seeking their aid, those whom he is urging to take up arms to defend Al-Andalus. James Monroe, in his commentary of the poem mentions that Al-Rundí was seeking the aid of the North Africans.²⁴⁴ . He begins by addressing them with a strong expression in order to draw their attention “*O you who remain heedless*”, and urges them to react. He urges them not to remain heedless to the events which have taken place, lest they should be struck by the same calamities:

“O you who remain heedless though you have a warning in Fate: if you are asleep, Fate is always awake!” (Verse. 25)

In the 26:th verse the poet makes a direct mention to the event which inspired his poem, the fall of the city of Seville, and refers to it in the verse following as an unprecedented disaster.

“ And you who walk forth cheerfully while your homeland diverts you [from cares], can a homeland beguile any man after [the loss of] Seville?

*This misfortune has caused those that preceded it to be forgotten, and it can never be forgotten for the length of all time!”*²⁴⁵ (Verses. 26-27)

In the verses following criticizes those whom he is addressing for being selfish. He describes them as people of great strength and wealth, yet in spite of that not making any efforts to help the people of Al-Andalus, ignoring the bonds of Islam:

*“O you who ride lean, thoroughbred steeds which seem like eagles in the racecourse;
And you who carry slender, Indian blades which seem like fires in the darkness caused by the dust cloud [of war],*

And you who are living in luxury beyond the sea enjoying life, you who have strength and power in your homelands,

Have you no news of the people of Andalus, for riders have carried forth what men have said [about them]?

How often have the weak, who were being killed and captured while no man stirred, asked our help?

What means this severing of the bonds of Islam on your behalf, when you, O worshipers of God, are [our] brethren?

Are there no heroic souls with lofty ambitions; are there no helpers and defenders of righteousness?

O, who will redress the humiliation of a people who were once powerful, a people whose condition injustice and tyrants have changed?

Yesterday they were kings in their own homes, but today they are slaves in the land of the infidel!” (Verses 28-36)

²⁴⁴ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. P. 332.

²⁴⁵ I chose to refer to my alternative translation here, instead of Monroe's translation, because of the incorrect structure of the sentence “**This misfortune has caused those that preceded it to be forgotten, nor can it ever be forgotten for the length of all time!**” I have already mentioned in my comments of the translation of the poem why the sentence is not correct.

Finally, from verse 37 to the end of the poem, Al-Rundí makes an emotional appeal to those whom He seeks their aid, by describing that which befell the Muslims in Al-Andalus, giving very strong and emotionally shocking images:

“ Thus, were you to see them perplexed, with no one to guide them, wearing the cloth of shame in its different shades,

And were you to behold their weeping when they are sold, the matter would strike fear into your heart, and sorrow would seize you.

Alas, many a mother and child have been parted as souls and bodies are separated!

And many a maiden fair as the sun when it rises, as though she were rubies and pearls,

Is led off to abomination by a barbarian against her will, while her eye is in tears and her heart is stunned.

The heart melts with sorrow at such [sights], if there is any Islam or belief in that heart!”
(Verses. 37-43)

8.2. Similarities between the poems

8.2. 1. Thematic similarities

Praise of the past of cities

Elements of praise of the cities lost can be found in all three poems. In Shuhayd's poem consists to a large extent of praise of the Cordoba, as it once was. The verses in which Ibn Shuhayd praises Cordoba are very many, and an example of a few verses is sufficient. Ibn Shuhayd said in his elegy for Cordoba:

“Your courtyards were a Mecca to pilgrims,

The frightened taking refuge in them, finding safety. ,” (Verse. 20)

And the abode- perfection had pitched its tent there

while it was beyond any deficiency. (Verse.11)

And the people felt secure that its beauty would never change,

wearing its splendor as a turban and a cloak. (Verse. 12)

Ibn ‘Umayras said in his elegy for Valencia: *“O mountain of water-sated verdure, like none I knew”* (Verse.4), and He refers to Valencia as an eternal paradise:

“Or did the sons sin their fathers’ sins,

And bring upon themselves expulsion from Paradise (jannati al-khuldi)” (Verse. 10.).

As for Abú al-Baqá al-Rundís elegy, we find in it the following verses which contain both praise and mourning:

“Where is Cordoba, the home of the sciences, and many a scholar whose rank was once lofty in it?” (Verse.18)

“ Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains, as well as its sweet river overflowing and brimming full?” (Verse.19)

And he said concerning the lost cities which he mentions in his elegy:

“[They are] capitals which were the pillars of the land,” (Verse.20)

Mourning for the decline and loss of cities

This feature is found in all poems, as is expected since this is the common genre which all poems belong to, despite the differences found between them.

Ibn Shuhayd said in his elegy for Cordoba:

*For the likes of Cordoba (#), the weeping of one
who cries with an overflowing eye is not enough. (Verse.6)*

*“O paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people.
Both it and they were destroyed” (Verse.18)*

Ibn ‘Umayra said in his elegy for Valencia:

*“ After the woe that befell Valencia,
Will beacons in the heart still shine with secret candescence?” (Vrs.7)*

And:

*“Yet would that I knew, will she once more rise,
Will her star return as it once was?” (Verse.9).*

Abu al Baqá Al-Rundí said in his elegy for Al-Andalus:

*“Therefore ask Valencia what is the state of Murcia; and where is Jativa, and where is Jaén?
Where is Cordoba, the home of the sciences, and many a scholar whose rank was once lofty
in it?*

*Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains, as well as its sweet river overflowing and
brimming full?*

*[They are] capitals which were the pillars of the land, yet when the pillars are gone, it may
no longer endure!” (Verses 17-20)*

The inability to escape fate

Fate and the inability to escape it is a theme which is clearly found in both Ibn ‘Umayra and Abú Baqá al-Rundís elegies.

Ibn ‘Umayra said in his elegy:

*“People hope for shields against afflictions
That transfix them with their pliant spears “(Verse. 8)*

As has been mentioned in the anylisis of Ibn ‘Umayras poem, this is an expression of the inability to escape affliction, and a reference to the vainness of trying to do so.

Abú Baqá al-Rundí said in his elegy:

*“Everything declines after reaching perfection, therefore let no man be beguiled by the
sweetness of a pleasant life.*

*As you have observed, these are the decrees that are inconstant: he whom a single moment
has made happy, has been harmed by many other moments;*

And this is the abode that will show pity for no man, nor will any condition remain in its state

for it.

Fate irrevocably destroys every ample coat of mail when Mashrifi swords and spears glance off without effect;” (Verses 1-4)

8.2.2. Stylistic similarities

Repetition

The use of repetition is found in the poems of Ibn Shuhaid and al-Rundí.

In Ibn Shuhaid's the word أيام - "in the days", is repeated three times:

“In the days when the eye of every kindness

Everywhere gazed upon it,

*In the days when the command in it was but one –
that of its Amír – and the Amír was the one who issued commands.*

*In the days when the palm of every hand of peace and security
rose to it in peaceful greeting and rushed towards it.”* (Verses. 25-27)

In Al-Rundí's elegy, in verses 6-8 and 18-19 we find the use of repetition. The poet repeats the interrogative particle أين - “where?” several times.

Mentioning of eastern place names

The technique of using symbolically rich locations of the east is found in all three elegies, although it is used for different purposes in the different poems.

Ibn Shuhaid said in his elegy:

*“Your courtyards were a **Mecca** to pilgrims,
The frightened taking refuge in them, finding safety”* (Verse. 20).

And:

*“The **Euphrates** flowed plentifully through your two courtyards, as did the **Tigris**.
So too the **Nile**”* (Verse. 22)

Ibn 'Umayra said in his elegy:

*“He yearns for **Najd**, but all in vain!
The adverse turns of time have doomed him never to return”* (Verse. 3)

Abú Baqá al-Rundí said in his elegy:

*“An event which cannot be endured has overtaken the peninsula; one such that **Uhud** has
collapsed because of it and **Thahlan** has crumbled!”* (Verse.15)

Water imagery and images of greenery

This is a feature which is also found in all three poems.

Ibn Shuhaid said in his elegy:

*“The Euphrates flowed plentifully through your two courtyards, as did the Tigris.
So too the Nile and the river Kawthar”*

*“You were given drink by the life-giving waters of a cloud
by which your gardens were given life and flourished.” (Verses.22-23)*

Ibn 'Umayra said in his elegy:

*“O mountain of water-sated verdure, like none I knew,
How time's ill turns of fortune slighted your spring.” (Verse.4)*

Abú Baqá al-Rundí said in his elegy:

*“Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains, as well as its sweet river overflowing and
brimming full?” (Verse.19)*

8.3. Differences between the poems

8.3. 1 Thematic differences

Since the different poets present their own subjective views of the fallen cities, it is natural to find a great deal of difference in terms of theme. The focus point in the three poems differs. Ibn Shuhaid's main focus in his poem is to present the fine past glory of the city of Cordoba, its beauty, and to contrast this past to a dark present reality:

*“And the Záhriyyah with its boats that shone brightly
and the 'Ámiriyyah given life by the stars.*

*And the Grand mosque overflowing with all who
Recited, heard, and looked on at anything they wished to.*

*And the streets of the markets bearing witness that
the marketplace was never empty of shopping throngs.*

*O paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people.
Both it and they were destroyed” (Verses. 15-18).*

The second point of focus in Ibn Shuhaid's elegy is to give praise to the Umayyad dynasty, and the Umayyad-Arabic culture and defend it against its rivals:

*“ And the palaces is the – that of the Umayyad clan- so abundant
With everything, but the Caliphate was even more abundant.” (Verse. 14)*

*“Everywhere there are groups of them
perplexed and bewildered in separation.*

*I knew it well when its people were unified
and life there was green.” (Verses. 8-9)*

*“In the days when the command in it was but one –
that of its Amír – and the Amír was the one who issued commands” (Verse. 26)*

In Ibn ‘Umayras elegy the main focus is upon the poets own feelings of mourning and sorrow for the fall of the city, and for his own expulsion from it. Before mentioning the fall of Valencia the poet presents his own feelings of loss and mourning using symbolic imagery:

*“O heart, you who proclaim this ardent passion,
Must love’s intemperance be so manifest?.*

*But can a lovelorn one hope to forget
Love’s agony of thirst, rejection’s awesome jolt?.*

*He yearns for Najd, but all in vain!
The adverse turns of time have doomed him never to return.”* (Verses. 1-3)

*“Will pleasure one day be bared of desire,
When to us it bodes denial at all times?”* (Verse. 6)

Further we find a strong focus upon Ibn ‘Umayras own expulsion from the city of Valencia:

*“Or did the sons sin their fathers’ sins
And bring upon themselves expulsion from Paradise (jannati l-khuldi)?”* (Verse. 10)

The poet also mentions the fall of the city, and mourns for its loss:

*“ O mountain of water-sated verdure, like none I knew,
How time’s ill turns of fortune slighted your spring.”* (Verse. 4)

*“After the woe that befell Valencia,
Will beacons in the heart still shine with secret candescence?”*(Verse.7)

However the main focus in his poem is not the city itself, but the fate of the poet himself, and his feelings in relation to the events which have taken place. Abu Baqá al-Rundi in his elegy for Al-Andalus focuses primarily neither upon the fine qualities of the cities which have been lost and the glory of their past rule, nor upon his own feelings of agony. The main focus point in al-Rundís elegy is what He sees as a great loss for the religion of Islam and the Muslim nation (ummah), the Christian Spanish re-conquest (reconquista) of the cities of Al-Andalus: *“For the accidents [of fortune] there is a consolation that makes them easy to bear, yet there is no consolation for what has befallen Islam.*

An event which cannot be endured has overtaken the peninsula; one such that Uhud has collapsed because of it and Thahlan has crumbled!.

The evil eye has struck [the peninsula][9] in its Islam so that [the land] decreased until whole regions and districts were despoiled of [the faith]” (Verses. 14-16)

“The heart melts with sorrow at such [sights], if there is any Islam or belief in that heart.” (Verse. 43)

The second point of focus in al-Rundis elegy is to attract the attention and evoke the emotions of those whom He is pleading for their aid to halt the Spanish-Christian re-conquest (Reconquista).

“ O you wo remain heedless though you have a warning in Fate: if you are asleep, Fate is always awake!.

And you who walk forth cheerfully while your homeland diverts you [from cares], can a homeland beguile any man after [the loss of] Seville?” (Verses. 25-26)

“O you who ride lean, thoroughbred steeds which seem like eagles in the racecourse;

And you who carry slender, Indian blades which seem like fires in the darkness caused by the dust cloud [of war],

And you who are living in luxury beyond the sea enjoying life, you who have strength and power in your homelands,

Have you no news of the people of Andalus, for riders have carried forth what men have said [about them]?

How often have the weak, who were being killed and captured while no man stirred, asked our help?

What means this severing of the bonds of Islam on your behalf, when you, O worshipers of God, are [our] brethren?" (Verses. 28-33)

It may be argued that the second point of focus in the poem seems to be describing the events which have taken place, presenting cases of human suffering. However, the one who holds such an argument has missed the reason for the poet mentioning these events and the objective of doing so, which is to stir the emotions of those whom He is addressing:

"And were you to behold their weeping when they are sold, the matter would strike fear into your heart, and sorrow would seize you" (Verses 38-39)

"The heart melts with sorrow at such [sights], if there is any Islam or belief in that heart!" (Verse. 43)

8.3.2. Stylistic differences.

In terms of stylistics we find that the use of repetition is absent in the elegy of Ibn 'Umayra, in difference to the two other poems. The major differences however are found in Al-Rundis elegy. The first major difference is that the poet, from verse 25 on, clearly marks that He is directly addressing someone, repeating the phrase "O you" many times. In the elegy of Ibn Shuhayd the reader or listener is not addressed directly, and in the elegy of Ibn 'Umayra the poet turns most of the attention to himself, in a manner which could almost be perceived as a poetical monolog. The second point in which Al-Rundis elegy differs from the other two poems are the shocking and somewhat uncensored images which Al-Rundí presents of the fate of the people of the fallen cities:

"And were you to behold their weeping when they are sold, the matter would strike fear into your heart, and sorrow would seize you.

Alas, many a mother and child have been parted as souls and bodies are separated!

And many a maiden fair as the sun when it rises, as though she were rubies and pearls, Is led off to abomination by a barbarian against her will, while her eye is in tears and her heart is stunned" (Verses. 38-42)

Comparing these images to the images of affliction found in the two other poems we find that the images of calamity in the two other poems lack such detailed descriptions, and are often very symbolical:

Ibn Shuhayd said in his elegy:

"Calamities flowed over their homes and them.

Both they and (their homes) were (permanently) transformed." (Verse. 4)

"O paradise, the wind of separation has blown over it and its people.

Both it and they were destroyed.

*I am afflicted by you in death, as was only right.
As long as you live, we do not cease to sing you praises.”* (Verses. 18-19)

And Ibn ‘Umayra said in his elegy:
*“O mountain of water-sated verdure, like none I knew,
How time’s ill turns of fortune slighted your spring.”* (Verse 4)

“After the woe that befell Valencia,

Will beacons in the heart still shine with secret candescence?”(Verse.7).

The reason for Al-Rundí giving such detailed and shocking images has to be understood in context of the purpose of his elegy, which was to seek aid from fellow Muslims in halting the ongoing Reconquista (Re-conquest) of the Spanish Christians. City after city had fallen:

*“Therefore ask Valencia what is the state of Murcia; and where is Jativa, and where is Jaén?
Where is Cordoba, the home of the sciences, and many a scholar whose rank was once lofty
in it?*

*Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains, as well as its sweet river overflowing and
brimming full?*

*[They are] capitals which were the pillars of the land, yet when the pillars are gone, it may
no longer endure!”* (Verses. 17-20).

It is well known that when the pillars of a building are no longer standing, that building is bound to fall, and just as such, when the pillars a land have fallen the whole land is bound to crumble. Therefore Al-Rundí is making his outmost efforts to achieve the support and aid of those whom he addresses, before the whole of Al-Andalus crumbles apart.

9) Summary and conclusion

In this presentation, a very short introduction to the poetic style of elegy in Arabic poetry has been given, brief introductions to the poetical subcategory of elegy for cities in Arabic and Andalusí-Arabic poetry have been presented, and three poems of elegy for Andalusian cities have been presented and analysed. The objectives of this essay, as mentioned in the introduction are to; “to promote an increased interest for the elegy for lost cities in in Andalusí -Arabic poetry especially, but also the elegy for the elegy for cities in Arabic poetry in general, and to promote an increased interest for Medieval Andalusí-Arabic poetry in general”. If these objectives have been achieved, then the purpose of this essay has been fulfilled. During the writing of this essay, several questions have come to my mind, such as; “what is exactly the relation between mourning, and praise in the elegy for cities, in Arabic and Andalusí-Arabic poetry” and “Are there any specific criteria which can be used to precisely define the elegy for cities in terms of theme and style?”, considering the fact that different elegies differ greatly from each other, due to the different perspectives of the poets”. Another question which has come to my mind during the analysis of Ibn Shuhayd and Al-Rundis elegies is; “how much does the purpose of the elegy influence its content and style?”

Al-Rundis elegy seems much focused, in terms of theme, and style upon achieving the objective of catching the attention of those whom he addresses in his elegy. Ibn Shuhayd succeeds well through his choice of theme and style to present the image of Cordoba as an ideal city under a perfect rule (Umayyad rule), and contrasting it to the image of a ruined city, with a perplexed and divided people, under the rule of Berbers. These few questions, and others, which may arise from reading this presentation, I leave for others to research further

Nevertheless, one thing is certain, the memory of Al-Andalus has remained, and it has not been forgotten in modern times. In modern times we find famous Arab-poets such as Mahmúd Darwísh and Nizzár Qabbání” looking back at Al-Andalus” with nostalgia.²⁴⁶

10) Vocabulary of words and phrases

The following is a vocabulary of some words and phrases in Arabic which occur in this essay, that may be unfamiliar to many people.

الرثاء (Al-Rithá') = Elegy (the poetry of elegy)

رثاء المدن (Rithá'al-mudun) = Elegy for cities (a subgenre of elegy)

المدح (Al-madh) = Praise (the poetry of praise)

علم البلاغة (‘Ilm al-balágha) = The rhetorical art of the Arabs

مالكي (Málikí) = A follower of the Málikí school of Islamic jurisprudence. The school of Málik Bin Anas.

محدث (Muhaddith) = A scholar of Hadíth (Prophetical tradition)

أصول الفقه (Usúl al-fiqh) = The foundations of Islamic jurisprudence (“fiqh”, Arabic- فقه)

فقيه (Faqíh) = A scholar of Islamic jurisprudence.

حافظ (Hafidh) = A grand scholar of Hadíth.

أحكام الفرائض (Ahkám al-fará'id) = The rules of inheritance in Islamic law

المغرب الأقصى (Al-Maghrib al-Aqsá) = The far west. The land of Morroco.

الغرب الاسلامي (Al-Gharb al-islámí) = The Islamic west (The western region of the past Islamic empire)

محراب (Mihráb, pl. Mahárib- محاريب) = Prayer niche

منبر (Minbar, pl. Manábir- منابر) = Pulpit

²⁴⁶ E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at Al-Andalus. P.2,.

Appendix: The three presented and analyzed poems in their original Arabic forms

رثاء قرطبة

250 249 248 247 **إبن شهيد**

- 1 ما في الطلول من الأحبة مخبرِ فمّن الذي عن حالها نستخبرِ
- 2 لا تسألن سوى الفراق فإنه ينيك عنهم أنجدوا أم أغروا
- 3 جارا لزمان عليهم فنفرقوا في كل ناحية و باد الأكثر
- 4 جرت الخطوب على محل ديارهم وعليهم فتغيرت وتغيروا
- 5 فدع الزمان يصوغ في عرصاتهم نوراً تكاد له القلوب تنور
- 6 فلمثل قرطبة يقل بكاء من يبكي بعين دمعها متفجر
- 7 دار أقال الله عشرة أهلها فتبربروا و تغربوا و تحصروا
- 8 في كل ناحية فريق منهم منقطر لفراقها متحير
- 9 عهدي بها والشمل فيها جامع من أهلها والعيش فيها أخضر
- 10 و رياح زهرتها تلوح عليهم بروائح يفتر منها العنبر
- 11 والدار قد ضرب الكمال رواقه فيها وباع النقص فيها يقصر
- 12 والقوم قد آمنوا تغير حسننها فتعمموا بجمالها و تأزروا
- 13 يا طيبهم بقصورها و خدورها و بدورها بقصوره تتخدر
- 14 و القصر قصر بني أمية وافر من كل أمر و الخلافة أوفر
- 15 و الزاهرية بالمراكب تزهر والعامرية بالكواكب تعمر

²⁴⁷ Ibn Shuhayd. Díwán Ibn Shuhayd Al-Andalusí. Pgs. 109-111.

²⁴⁸ Al-Zayyát. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá' Al-mudun fí al-shi'r Al-Andalusí. Pgs. 657-658.

²⁴⁹ E. Elinson Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. Pgs. 161-162.

²⁵⁰ Al-Kafáwín. Al-shi'r al-'arabí fí rithá' al-duwal wa al-amsár hattá niháyat suqút al-Andalus. Pgs, 194-197.

- 16 و الجامع الأعلى يغص بكل من يتلو ويسمع ما يشاء وينظر
- 17 و مسالك الأسواق تشهد أنّها لا يستقل بسالكيها الخشر
- 18 يا جنة عصفت بها وبأهلها ريح النوى فتدمرت و تدمروا
- 19 آسى عليك من الممات و حق لي إذ لم نزل بك في حياتك نفخر
- 20 كانت عراصك للميمم مكة يأوي إليها الخائفون فينصروا
- 21 يا منزلا نزلت به و بأهله طير النوى فتغيروا تنكروا
- 22 جاد الفرات بساحتيك و دجلة و النيل جاد بها و جاد الكوثر
- 23 و سقيت من ماء الحياة غمامة تحيا بها منك الرياض و ترهر
- 24 أسفي على دار عهدت ربوعها و ظباؤها بفنائها تبختر
- 25 أيام كانت عين كل كرامة من كل ناحية إليها تنظر
- 26 أيام كان الأمر فيها واحدا لأميرها و أمير من يتأمر
- 27 أيام كانت كف كل سلامة تسمو إليها بالسلام و تبدر
- 28 حزني على سرواتها و رواها و ثقاها و حماها يتكرر²⁵¹
- 29 نفسي على آلائها و صفائها و بهائها و سنائها تتحسر
- 30 كبدي على علمائها حلمائها أدبائها ظرفانها تنفطر

²⁵¹ In the book “Looking back at Andalus: the poetics of loss and nostalgia in medieval Arabic and Hebrew literature” by Doctor Alexander .E. Elinson” it says in the end of verse 28 “-يتكروا” – “yatakarrarú”, instead of “-يتكرر” - “yatakarraru”. I believe this to be a printing error for two reasons:

- 1) *The tense of the verb* يتكروا – “yatakarrarú” in the context of the verse is grammatically incorrect.
- 2) *In the díwán of Ibn Shuhayd , as well as in the books “Rithá al-mudun fí al-shi’r al-Andalusí” and “Al-shi’r al-‘arabí fí rithá’ al-duwal wa al-amsár hatta nihayat suqút al-Andalus ,it says “-يتكرر” - “yatakarraru”, and not يتكروا “yatakarrarú”.*

رثاء بلنسية

إبن عميرة^{253 252}

- 1 أَلَا أَيُّهَا الْقَلْبُ الْمَصْرَحُ بِالْوَجْدِ أَمَا لَكَ مِنْ بَادِي الصَّبَابَةِ مِنْ بَدِ
- 2 وَهَلْ مِنْ سَلْوٍ يَرْتَجِي لِمَتِيمٍ لَهُ لَوْعَةُ الصَّادِي وَرَوْعَةُ ذِي الصَّدِ
- 3 يَخُنْ إِلَى نَجْدٍ وَهِيَهَاتِ حَرَمَتْ صُرُوفَ اللَّيَالِي أَنْ يَعُودَ إِلَى نَجْدِ
- 4 فَيَا جِبَلَ الرِّيَّانِ لَأَرِي بَعْدَمَا عَدَتْ غَيْرَ الْأَيَّامِ عَنْ ذَلِكَ الْوَرْدِ
- 5 وَ يَا أَهْلَ وَدِيِّ وَ الْحَوَادِثِ تَقْتَضِي خَلْوِي عَنْ أَهْلِ يَضَافُ إِلَى الْوَدِ
- 6 أَلَا مَتَعَةٌ يَوْمًا بَعَارِيَةَ الْمَنَى فَإِنَا نَرَاهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ إِلَى الرَّدِ
- 7 أَمِنْ بَعْدِ رِزْءٍ فِي بِلَنْسِيَةِ ثَوَى بِأَحْشَانِنَا كَالنَّارِ مَضْرَمَةَ الْوَقْدِ
- 8 يَرْجِي أَنَاسَ جَنَّةٍ مِنْ مَصَائِبِ تَطَاعَنَ فِيهِمْ بِالْمُتَقَفَّةِ الْمَلْدِ
- 9 أَلَا لَيْتَ شَعْرِي هَلْ لَهَا مِنْ مَطَالَعِ مَعَادٍ إِلَى مَا كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ السَّعْدِ
- 10 وَ هَلْ أَذْنِبُ الْأَبْنَاءَ ذَنْبَ أَبِيهِمْ فَصَارَ وَالِي الْإِخْرَاجِ مِنْ جَنَّةِ الْخُلْدِ

²⁵² E. Elinson. Alexander. Looking back at al-Andalus. Pg. 159.

²⁵³ Al-Maqqarí. Nafh al-tib. V.1. Pgs. 305-306.

رثاء الاندلس

أبو البقاء الرندي^{254 255 256}

- 1 لكل شيء إذا ما تم نقصان فلا يغير بطيب العيش إنسان
- 2 هي الأمور كما شاهدتها دول من سره زمن ساءته أزمان
- 3 وهذه الدار لا تبقي على أحد ولا يدوم على حال لها شان
- 4 يمزق الدهر حتما كل سابعة إذا نبت مشرفيات و خرصان
- 5 و ينتضي كل سيف للفناء و لو كان ذي يزن و الغمد غمدان
- 6 اين الملوك ذوو التيجان من يمن و أين منهم أكاليل و تيجان
- 8 و أين ما شاده شداد في إرم و اين ما ساسه في الفرس ساسان
- 8 و اين ما حازه قارون من ذهب و أين عاد و شداد و قحطان
- 9 اتى على الكل امر لا مرد له حتى قضوا فكأن القوم ما كانوا
- 10 و صار ما كان من ملك و من ملك كما حكى عن خيال الطيف و سنان
- 11 دار الزمان على دارا و قاتله و أم كسرى فما أواه إيوان
- 12 كأنما الصعب لم يسهل له سبب يوما و لا ملك الدنيا سليمان
- 13 فجائع الدهر أنواع متنوعة و للزمان مسرات و أحزان
- 14 و للحوادث سلوان يسهلها و ما لما حل با الإسلام سلوان
- 15 دهى الجزيرة أمر لا عزاء له هوى له أحد و أهد ثهلان
- 16 أصابها العين في الإسلام فارتزأت حتى خلت منه أقطار و بلدان

²⁵⁴ Monroe. James T. Hispano-Arabic poetry. Pgs.333, 335 and 337.

²⁵⁵ Al-Maqqarí. Nafh al-tib. V.4. Pgs. 487-488.

²⁵⁶ Al-Zayyát. 'Abd Allah Muhammad. Rithá' Al-Mudun fí al-shi'r Al-Andalusí. Pgs. 746-748.

- 17 فاسأل بلنسية ما شأن مرسية و أين شاطبة أم أين جيان
- 18 و أين قرطبة دار العلوم, فكم من عالم قد سما فيها له شان
- 19 و أين حمص و ما تحويه من نزه و نهرها العذب فياض و ملآن
- 20 قواعد كن أركان البلاد فما عسى البقاء إذا لم تبق أركان
- 21 تبكي الحنيفة البيضاء من أسف كما بكى لفراق الإلف هيمان
- 22 على ديار من الإسلام خالية قد أقفرت و لها بالكفر عمران
- 23 حيث المساجد قد صارت كنائس ما فيهن إلا نواقيس و صلبان
- 24 حتى المخاريب تبكي و هي جامدة حتى المنابر ترثي و هي عيدان
- 25 يا غافلا و له في الدهر موعظة ان كنت في سنة فالدهر يقظان
- 26 و ماشيا مرحا يلهيه موطنه أبعد حمص تغر المرء أوطان
- 27 تلك المصيبة قد أنست ما تقدمها و ما لها مع طول الدهر نسيان
- 28 يا راكبين عناق الخيل ضامرة كأنها في مجال السبق عقبان
- 29 و حاملين سيوف الهند مرهفة كأنها في ظلام النقع نيران
- 30 و راتعين وراء البحر في دعة لهم بأوطانهم عز و سلطان
- 31 أعندكم نبأ من أهل أندلس فقد سرى بحديث القوم ركبان
- 32 كم يستغيث بنا المستضعفون و هم قتلى و أسرى فما يهتتر إنسان
- 33 ماذا التقاطع في الإسلام بينكم و أنتم يا عباد الله إخوان
- 34 ألا نفوس أبيات لها همم أما على الخيرات أنصار و أعوان
- 35²⁵⁷ يا من لذلة قوم بعد عزهم أحال حالهم جور و طغيان

²⁵⁷ جور و طغيان "jawrun wa tughyán" instead of "kufrun wa tughyán", Al-Maqqari and 'Al-Zayyát read "See: Al-Maqqarí. Nafh al-tib. V. 4. Pg. 488, Al-Zayyát. Rithá' Al-Mudun fí al-shi'r Al-Andalusí. Pg. 748.

36 با لأمس كانوا ملوكا في منازلهم و اليوم هم في بلاد الكفر عبدان

37 فلو تراهم حيارى لا دليل لهم عليهم من ثياب الذل ألوان

38 و لو رأيت بكاهم عند بيعهم لها لك الأمر و استهوتك أحزان

39 يا رب أم و طفل حيل بينهما كما تفرق أرواح و أبدانيا

40 و طفلة مثل حسن الشمس إذ طلعت كأنما هي ياقوت و مرجان

41 يقودها العليج للمكروه مكرهة و العين باكية و القلب حيران

42 لئلهذا يذوب القلب من كمد إن كان في القلب إسلام و إيمان

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Other tools

A very accurate tool for converting Hijrí dates to Gregorian dates and vice verse:

[http:// prayer.al-islam.com/convert.asp?I= eng.](http://prayer.al-islam.com/convert.asp?I=eng)