

# **Granada- The Last Refuge of Muslims in Spain**

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## GRANADA- THE LAST REFUGE OF MUSLIMS IN SPAIN

In the nineteenth century, a French poet, Victor Hugo, exclaimed in a poem on Granada, included in his collection *Les Orientales* (1829):

*L'Alhambra! l'Alhambra! palais que les Genies  
Ont dore comme un reve et rempli d'harmonies...<sup>1</sup>*

Meaning:

*Alhambra! Alhambra! Palace which the genii  
have adorned like a dream flowing with harmonies.*

The Alhambra palace is one of better known features of Granada's Muslim legacy. It is not the only one. Granada was also a city of scholars. But it was most of all the last refuge of Muslims in Spain. After the loss of most of Muslim Spain, the loss of such places such as Cordova, lost to the Muslims in 1236, Valencia, lost in 1238, Murcia and the rest of Muslim Andalusia lost in the following years, and finally, and most critically the loss of the flower of Muslim civilization, Seville, which fell in 1248 to Alfonso of Castile, only Granada was left. It remained in Muslim hands until 1492, then, that year it too fell.<sup>2</sup> The history of this loss will be described in the last part of this article. First, the history and cultural prosperity of Granada need to be described.



Al Hambára Palace

(Source <http://mbravo.spb.ru/gallery/alhambra2/aag>)

Granada is the capital of the former Muslim kingdom of that name and one of the major cities of Muslim Andalusia. It is located at the foot of the Sierra Nevada some 689 meters above sea level. The city was

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<sup>1</sup>In John Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession*: Cambridge University Press, 1987. p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> For the best simplified history of Muslim Spain, and the fall of Granada, see S. Lane-Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; Fisher Unwin; London; 1888; see also H.C. Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; Burt Franklin; New York; 1968 reprint.

built on three hills, two of which are separated by a deep ravine through which the Darro River (Arabic: Hadarru) flows, covered for much of its length by broad bridges.<sup>3</sup>

The three major sections of the city are the Antequeruela (named after refugees from Antequeruela who settled there in 1410). This section is enclosed by the Darro River, with the Alhambra section to the west. The other section is the Albaicin (from *rabad al- hayazf*, or "falconers' quarter", although one tradition connects the name with refugees from Baeza who fled there in 1245, after Christians captured their home town). This is the oldest quarter, and was much favoured by Muslim nobles, located to the northwest, on the other side of the Darro; and in Granada proper.<sup>4</sup>



From the walls of Granada the Mountains of the Sierra Nevada

Granada's illustrious past is inextricably linked with the Muslims. Following the Muslim conquest in the early eighth century, it was governed by the Umayyad caliphate at Damascus and later came to be known as the Damascus of the West. After 1031 the Zirid ruler Zawl established an independent kingdom here<sup>5</sup>.

The increasing prosperity of Granada under Almohad rule made it, by about 1200, the fifth largest city in Spain, with a population of Arab, Spanish, and Berber Muslims, Spanish Christians, and Jews living in

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<sup>3</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, Joseph Strayer Editor in Chief; Charles Scribners' Sons; New York; 1980 fwd.; 651-3; at p. 651.

<sup>4</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; at p. 651.

<sup>5</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; p. 651.

separate quarters<sup>6</sup>. Ibn Sa'îd, a thirteenth-century writer from Alcalá la Real (Granada), remarked that no eastern cities reminded him of home except for Damascus and Hama, a central Syrian town, and al-Shaqundî called Granada the Damascus of al-Andalus.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, despite all the upheavals around, with the Muslim Spanish realm being lost one large stretch of land after the other, Granada remained prosperous. A brief period of insurrection between 1229 and 1238 brought a scion of the Banu Hud from Saragossa to power. He ruled Granada as part of a larger kingdom stretching from Algeciras to Almeria, but he was defeated by Muhammad ibn al-Ahmar, prince of Jaen, who seized the city and founded the Nasrid dynasty there in 1248, becoming lord of Malaga and Almeria at the same time.<sup>8</sup> He was going to be the first of a line of twenty-one Nasrid sovereigns who maintained the independence of Granada until 1492, when the city, the last surviving outpost of Muslim Spain succumbed to the Spanish Catholic monarchy, on which more information is given further on<sup>9</sup>. For the duration of its history, Granada was marked by a considerable cultural life, whose main aspects are described now.

## Cultural and scholarly Granada

Granada produced a large number of scholars. The names of the best known are included here:

Al-Mazini al-Andalusi al-Gharnati was born in 1080-1081 in Granada; died in 1169-1170 in Damascus. An Hispano-Muslim geographer, in 1114-1115 he was in Egypt, but he must have returned to his country not long afterwards; in 1117 he left Spain, sailing to Egypt via Sardinia and Sicily; in 1122-1126, he was in Baghdad; in 1130 in Abhar, Jibal; in 1131 at Sakhein (or Saqsin) on the Upper Volga—he spent many years in that region.<sup>10</sup> In 1135-1136 he was in Bulghar (near Kazan, on the Volga); in 1150-1151 in Bashgird, Hungary, in 1160 in Baghdad; after that he resided in various places in Khurasan and Syria—for example, in 1162 he was in Mosul. He died in Damascus in 1169-1170.<sup>11</sup> Travel to the East was very common among Andalusî fuqahâ' (scholars of Islamic laws), and it was typical to read in a biographical account that a man had travelled in the lands of the East (*tâfa bilâd al-mashriq*) and that he had done so "in search of knowledge" (*fi talab al-'ilm*).<sup>12</sup> To a certain extent, the pilgrimage destination of Mecca determined the places visited (e.g., Qayrawân, Alexandria, Cairo, all places with scholarly communities), but the search for specialized knowledge deflected scholars to, for example, Basra and other Iraqi centres to study subjects such as grammar.<sup>13</sup>

Al-Mazini, was a contemporary of another illustrious geographer, al-Idrisi, born before him, and dying three years after him. Al-Mazini was more of a cosmographer in the old Islamic way than a systematic geographer, yet he gives information which is unobtainable anywhere else. He wrote various geographical works: (1) in Baghdad in 1160, *Al-mughrib 'an bad. 'ajaib al-Maghrib* (Collection of singularities relative to some of the marvels of the Maghrib); (2) in Musul in 1162, *Tuhfat al-albab wa nukhbat al-a'jab* (Gift to the

<sup>6</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; p. 652.

<sup>7</sup> T. Glick: *Islamic and Christian Spain in the early Middle Ages*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1979. pp 55-6.

<sup>8</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; p. 652.

<sup>9</sup> See S. Lane-Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; Fisher Unwin; London; 1888;  
H.C. Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; Burt Franklin; New York; 1968 reprint.

<sup>10</sup> G. Sarton: Introduction to the History of Science; The Carnegie Institution; Washington; vol 2; p. 412.

<sup>11</sup> G. Sarton: Introduction; 2; p. 412.

<sup>12</sup> T. Glick: *Islamic and Christian Spain*; op cit; p. 285.

<sup>13</sup> T. Glick: *Islamic and Christian Spain*; p. 285.



hearts and choice of wonders); (3) *Nukhbat al-adhan fi 'aja'ib al-buldan*; (4) *'Aja'ib al-makhlūqat* (Wonders of the creatures).<sup>14</sup> It would seem that 3 and 4 are completely or partly identical with 1 and 2. His accounts of foreign countries are largely anecdotal and include many fables. The *Tuhfat* is divided as follows: Introduction; (1) general description of the world and its inhabitants, men and jinn; (2) singularities of various countries, (3) seas and islands, extraordinary animals living in them; (4) caverns, fossils, etc.<sup>15</sup> After many years of travel he settled down in the Near East-as much as a restless person of his type could settle down anywhere - and finally died in Damascus.<sup>16</sup>

Ibn Tufayl is another well known scholar from Granada. He was an Hispano - Muslim scientist and physician. He was born about 1100-1110 in Wadi Ash, modern Guadix, northeast of Granada. He was a physician in Granada; later secretary to the governor of the province; in 1154-1155 he became a secretary to the governor of Ceuta and Tangier; finally he worked as physician to the Almohad Abu Ya'qub Yusuf I (sultan 1163-1184). Ibn Tufayl was among the illustrious scholars who lived and worked in the Almohad court, especially under the third Caliph, Abu Yaqub, where they constituted a sort of corporation presided by one amongst them.<sup>17</sup> Alongside Ibn Tufayl were Ibn Rushd and Ibn Zuhr, and many more scientists and scholars found sanctuary and served the Almohad rulers.<sup>18</sup> When old age obliged Ibn Tufayl to resign his position at the service of the Almohad rulers in 1182-1183, he was succeeded by his friend Ibn Rushd.<sup>19</sup> He died in Marrakech in 1185-1186. Ibn Tufail wrote one of the most original books of the Middle Ages, a philosophical romance called after its hero, Haiy ibn Yaqzan.<sup>20</sup>

The story itself includes a sketch of a natural classification of the sciences, a discussion of spontaneous generation, and miscellaneous scientific information. It was translated into Hebrew, and Moses ibn Joshua of Narbonne (second half of the fourteenth century) wrote a commentary upon it in 1349.<sup>21</sup>

Ibn Tufail wrote two medical treatises, and gave advice to Ibn Rushd with regard to the latter's commentaries and to his *Kulliyat a tib*, which was known as collegiate in the Latin world.<sup>22</sup>

It was he who suggested to al-Bitruji the latter's modification of the theory of homocentric spheres.<sup>23</sup>

A large number of Muslim scholars transited between Granada and North Africa. The historian Ibn Khaldun, the philologist Abu Hayyan, Ibn Battuta, and the vizier-cum-litterateur Ibn al-Khatib frequented this court.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> For more on Al-Mazini, see:

Gabriel Ferrand: *Le Tuhfat al-albab* edite d'apres les MSS. 2167, 2168, 2170, de la Bibliotheque Nationale, et le MS. d'Alger (*Journal Asiatique*, vol. 207, 1-148, 193-304, 1925) Arabic text followed by an analysis, partial translation and notes; this is not yet the complete edition which we need, but it brings us much nearer to it (*Isis*, 11, 424).

Haji Khalifa: *Lexicon* (vol. 2, 222, no. 2548, 1837; vol. 4, 189, no. 8072, 1845; the author's name is written differently in each note).

J. T. Reinaud: *Geographie d'Aboulfeda* (vol. 1, cxi-cxiii, 1848).

<sup>15</sup> G. Sarton: Introduction; op cit; 2; p. 412.

<sup>16</sup> G. Sarton; ii; p. 300.

<sup>17</sup> G. Deverdun: *Marrakech*; Editions Techniques Nord Africaines; Rabat; 1959.p. 261.

<sup>18</sup> R. Landau: *Morocco*. Elek Books Ltd, London 1967. p. 431.

<sup>19</sup> G. Sarton: Introduction; op cit; II; pp. 354-5.

<sup>20</sup> G. Sarton: Introduction II; pp. 354-5.

<sup>21</sup> G. Sarton: Introduction II; pp. 354-5.

<sup>22</sup> In 1255, in Padua, Italy, Bonacossa translated the *Kulliyat* (*The Book of generalities* (on medicine) of Ibn Rushd into Latin from Arabic in 1255.

<sup>23</sup> G. Sarton: Introduction II; op cit; pp. 354-5.

<sup>24</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; op cit; p. 653.

The passport given to the great scholar Ibn-Khaldun by Mohammed V., King of Granada, was interestingly written in rhyme.<sup>25</sup>

Ibn-al-Khatib, of Granada, whose marvellous erudition was displayed in the greatest of his works: The Universal Library; an immense epitome of the literary and historical facts obtainable in his time.<sup>26</sup> Besides their patronage of the arts, literature, and science, the Nasrid sultans cultivated a consciously Islamic civilization<sup>27</sup> where women had their share of participation, too. Hence, Zainab and Hamda, the daughters of Zaid, the bookseller who lived at wadi al-Hima in the neighbourhood of Granada, were both 'excellent poetesses, thoroughly versed in all branches of learning and science.'<sup>28</sup>

The second reign of Muhammad V (1362-1391) witnessed the apogee of Nasrid culture in Granada, when much of the Alhambra was built; silks and other textiles of unsurpassed quality were widely exported; irrigation and agriculture flourished as never before.<sup>29</sup> But it was earlier, in 1248, that Muhammad ibn al-Ahmar (1232-73) ordered the erection of Spain's most famous edifice, the Alhambra (i.e., 'the red').<sup>30</sup> The date of the construction of the Alhambra very probably dates from even earlier. The dates mentioned here are, however, the more certain ones. Regardless, the chosen site was a mountain crag bounded by deep ravines, and looking down upon two rivers, the Darro and the Genil. The Emir found there a fortress, the Alcazaba, dating from the ninth century; he added to it, built the great outer walls of the Alhambra and the earlier of its palaces, and left everywhere his modest motto: 'There is no conqueror but Allah.'<sup>31</sup> The immense structure has been repeatedly extended and repaired. Following the principles of military architecture as developed in Eastern Islam, the unknown architect designed the enclosure first as a fortress capable of holding 40,000 men.<sup>32</sup> The more luxurious taste of the next two centuries gradually transformed this fortress into a complex of halls and palaces, nearly all distinguished by unsurpassed delicacy of floral or geometrical decoration, carved or stamped in coloured stucco, brick, or stone. In the Court of the Myrtles a pool reflects the foliage and the fretted portico.<sup>33</sup> Behind it rises the battlemented Tower of Comares, where the besieged thought to find a last and impregnable place of refuge. Within the tower is the ornate Hall of the Ambassadors; here the emirs of Granada sat enthroned, while foreign emissaries marvelled at the art and wealth of the tiny kingdom; here Charles V, looking out from a balcony window upon the gardens, groves, and stream below, mused, "How ill-fated the man who lost all this!",<sup>34</sup> In the main courtyard, the Patio de los Leones, a dozen marble lions guard a majestic alabaster fountain; the slender columns and flowered capitals of the surrounding arcade, the stalactite archivolts, the Kufic lettering, the time-subdued tints of the filigree arabesques, make this the masterpiece of the 'Morisco style'.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps in their, enthusiasm and their luxury the Muslim architects and artists here pressed their art beyond elegance to excess; where all is ornament, the eye and soul grow weary even of beauty and skill. This building has

<sup>25</sup> S.P. Scott: History of the Moorish Empire; The Lippincot Company; Philadelphia; 1904; vo III; p. 446.

<sup>26</sup> S.P. Scott; III; p. 458.

<sup>27</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; op cit; p. 653.

<sup>28</sup> Sayid Amir'Ali: A Short History of the Saracens, (569 at foot) in A. Shalaby: *History of Muslim Education*. Beirut: Dar al Kashaf, 1954., p. 28.

<sup>29</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; op cit; p. 653.

<sup>30</sup> W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; Simon and Shuster, New York; 6<sup>th</sup> printing; 1950. p. 316.

<sup>31</sup> W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; p. 316.

<sup>32</sup> W. Irving: *The Alhambra*; 1832; 47.

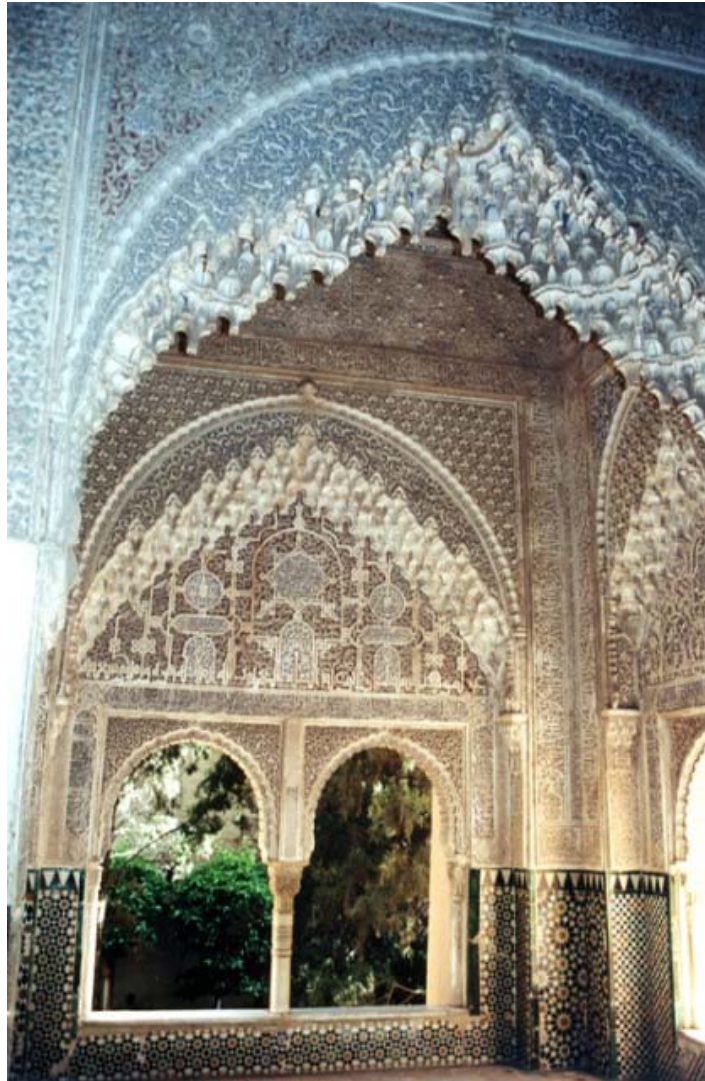
<sup>33</sup> W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; p. 316.

<sup>34</sup> S. Lane Poole: *Moorish*; op cit; 225.

<sup>35</sup> W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; op cit; p. 316.

survived a dozen earthquakes; the ceiling of the Hall of the Ambassadors fell, but the rest remained.<sup>36</sup> In sum this picturesque ensemble of gardens, palaces, fountains, and balconies suggests both the climax and the decay of Muslim art in Spain: a wealth gone to extravagance, a conquering energy relaxed into a flair for ease, a taste for beauty that has subsided from power and grandeur to elegance and grace.<sup>37</sup>

In the nineteenth century, a new wave of travel literature swept over Europe in the decades after Waterloo, culminating in one of the most widely read books of the century: *The Alhambra* (1832) by Washington Irving.



Al Hambra Decoration

(Source <http://mbravo.spb.ru/gallery/alhambra2/aau>)

This understandably went through numerous editions in the land of its author: from the time of the welcoming review in the *New York Mirror* in June of the year of publication its success was assured.<sup>38</sup> It is

<sup>36</sup> W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; p. 316.

<sup>37</sup> W. Durant: *The Age of Faith*; p. 316.

<sup>38</sup> John Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession*; op cit; pp.217-8.



of some significance that Mrs L.C. Tuthill in her *History of Architecture from the Earliest Times* (Philadelphia 1848) has, as Gerald Bernstein noted, five pages on 'Arabian Architecture' of which three consist of direct quotations from Irving's book.<sup>39</sup> This may suggest a relative scarcity in America of Owen Jones's book on the Alhambra which, the New World apart, was circulating badly enough in Britain, no doubt in part because of its bulk. But then Irving's volume, lacking in visual analysis yet replete with romantic narrative, scored heavily on a number of counts: small size, comparative cheapness, and human content.<sup>40</sup>



Alcazar de Genil

(source <http://www.legadoandalusi.es/itinerarios/it7/eng/circuitos7.htm> )

The same man, Washington Irving also wrote a great work on the conquest of Granada,<sup>41</sup> and also left us memorable lines of his trip to the place. Thus, in one of his letters date May 28, 1828, he says:

*'The Arab conquest brought a higher civilisation and a nobler style of thinking into Gothic Spain. The Arabs were a quick witted, sagacious, proud-spirited, and poetical people, and were imbued with Oriental science and literature. Wherever they established a seat of power, it became a rallying place for the learned and ingenious; and they softened and refined the people whom they conquered.'*<sup>42</sup>

and:

*'They (the Muslims) deserved this beautiful country, for they won it bravely, and they enjoyed it generously and kindly... Everywhere I meet traces of their sagacity, courage, urbanity, high poetical feeling, and elegant taste. The noblest institutions in this part of Spain, the best inventions for*

<sup>39</sup> John Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession* pp.217-8.

<sup>40</sup> John Sweetman: *The Oriental Obsession* pp.217-8.

<sup>41</sup> W. Irving: *The Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada*; Geoffrey Crayon Edition; New York; 1850.

<sup>42</sup> W. Irving: *The Spanish Papers*; Riverside Edition; Philadelphia, 1868; pp. 519-20.



*comfortable and agreeable living, and those attitudes and customs which throw a peculiar and Oriental charm over the Andalusian mode of living may be traced to the Moors.*<sup>43</sup>

The Muslim legacy of Granada spread widely in space and time. Muslim construction skills also meant that architects from Granada were employed by Castilian monarchs in the construction of palaces, and even by orthodox prelates in the ornamentation of cathedrals.<sup>44</sup> But it was not the only form of legacy. Much of the Muslim legacy has been victim to time and upheavals of all sorts, but traces of this splendour survive. The Cuarto Real de Santo Domingo is a bijoux thirteenth-century villa set in beautiful gardens; the Alcazar de Genil was built in the mid fourteenth century as a palace for the Nasrid queens. Several other examples of Nasrid domestic architecture survive.<sup>45</sup>

The Casa del Cabildo Antigua has as its core a fourteenth-century college founded by Yusuf I, and beneath the modern restorations of the Corral del Carbon may be discerned a Muslim inn, *Alhondiga gedida (al-funduq- al-jadid, the new inn)*.<sup>46</sup> Some of the nine original Muslim bridges over the Darro were incorporated into the urban fabric when the river was partially covered; the best-preserved of them is the Puente del Genil (*qantarat Shanf*). The Church of S. Maria occupies the site of the Great Mosque, the Church of S. Ana was also originally a mosque, and the towers of the churches of S. Jose and S. Juan de los Reyes utilize minarets.<sup>47</sup> The covered market now known as Alcaiceria (*al-qaysarrya*) was burned down in 1843 but was rebuilt using the original pillars. Nearby is the Bibarrambla Plaza (rabbat Bab al-Ramla, "Sand Gate"), which in medieval times was the scene of tournaments, feuds, and a form of bullfighting, there are also two Muslim baths, including the "Nut-tree Bath," *Bano del Nogal*, near the eleventh-century Puente del Alcalde (*qantaratal- qadi*), "Bridge of the Judge".<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> W. Irving: *Letters*; vol ii; (1823-38); Edited by Ralph M. Aderman; Herbert. L. Kleinfeld and Jennifer. S. Bank; Boston; 1979; p. 315.

<sup>44</sup> S.P. Scott: *History*; op cit; vol 2; p. 22.

<sup>45</sup> R. Hillenbrand: *Granada*; op cit; at p. 653.

<sup>46</sup> R. Hillenbrand: *Granada*; p. 653.

<sup>47</sup> R. Hillenbrand: *Granada*; p. 653.

<sup>48</sup> R. Hillenbrand: *Granada*; p. 653.

## The Loss of Granada and the end of Muslims in Spain

Scores of people know that the Muslims lost Spain. Most, however, are aware of little about the crucial phases of this loss and fall. Many believe the whole of Spain was lost in 1492. Many more confuse the various parts and dates, and their history. Nearly everyone questions themselves on where have the Muslims of Spain gone, and when did they disappear. The following outline enlightens on such issues, but does it as briefly as possible.

Soon after the death of the great leader al-Mansur (1005), Muslim Spain fell into chaos, the era of the 'party kings' (*reyes de taifas, muluk at-tawa'if*) (1009-1091), when the Peninsula broke into as many as thirty independent rulers, who fought each other.<sup>49</sup> Profiting from this, Christian princes in North West Spain swept south, conquering one Islamic kingdom after the other, very often using one against the other.<sup>50</sup>

In panic some Reyes called the Almoravids of Morocco, and their leader Yusuf Ibn Tashfin, who had to assist them on three occasions, each time after crushing the Christian armies, he was asked to leave Spain, to be re-called once the Reyes were threatened again. The third time he was invited again, in 1090, Ibn Tashfin crossed the straight of Gibraltar from Morocco, and this time eliminated the inept Reyes, and installed Almoravid rule all over the country. Under Almoravid rule not just was the unity of the Muslim Peninsula restored, but also there re-appeared in the West a combative form of Islam that responded to the Christian combativeness.<sup>51</sup> When Almoravid power subsided, the Almohads came to the fore in 1147. Their most decisive victory was on 18th July, 1196, when they inflicted a crushing defeat on the Christian alliance of many armies at Alarcos, the Christian army being virtually exterminated.<sup>52</sup> However, once their rule became ridden with internal rivalries, the Almohads were themselves crushed at Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, a defeat which Lewis rightly recognised, 'broke the back of Muslim power in the Peninsula.'<sup>53</sup> It was not just that, for Muslims were engaged in fighting each other, too, and often siding with Christian kings against other Muslims. Hence, Muhammad ibn al-Ahmar of Granada became a vassal of Ferdinand I of Castile, contracting to pay him a large annual tribute, and even helping him to conquer the Muslim principality of Seville.<sup>54</sup> Following this, Cordova fell in 1236, Seville fell in 1248, and soon the other towns and cities followed, only leaving Granada in Muslim hands. Abul-Beka, of Ronda, Ibn-al-Lebburn, of Murviedro, and Ibn-al-Khatib, of Granada, described, in language of inexpressible beauty and pathos, the national calamities inflicted by Christian supremacy,—the dissolution of empire, the desecration of the sanctuary, the dismemberment of families, the exile of the vanquished and the horrors of servitude.<sup>55</sup>

For a couple of centuries, while the Spanish monarchs were busy in their rivalries, Granada remained independent in Muslim hands, it was the last beacon of Muslim civilisation in the Christian West. Granada

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<sup>49</sup> For details on the rule of al-Mansur and the break up of the kingdom see S.P. Scott: History ; op cit;.

<sup>50</sup> S.P. Scott: History; Vol 1; p.453 fwd.

<sup>51</sup> C. Cahen: *Orient et Occident au temps des Croisades*, Aubier Montaigne, 1983. p.21.

<sup>52</sup> John Glubb: *A Short History of the Arab Peoples*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1969. p.190.

<sup>53</sup> B. Lewis: *Cultures in Conflict*, Oxford University Press; 1995. p. 19.

<sup>54</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; op cit; p. 652.

<sup>55</sup> S.P. Scott: History; op cit; vol III; p. 450.

provided refuge for Muslims expelled from Spanish Christian territory, such as Valencia and Almeria, and these refugees in time doubled the size of the city, besides increasing the lustre of its civilization.<sup>56</sup>

Commerce and industry revived, art flourished, and the little kingdom survived till 1492 as the last European foothold of 'a culture that had made Andalusia for many centuries an honour to mankind.'<sup>57</sup> Granada's useful services to its Christian neighbours and its natural impregnability go far to explain its long survival, enjoying a unique position in Christian Spain and in the Muslim West.<sup>58</sup>

It then became the turn of Granada to submit, just like the rest of Muslim Spain before it. The fate of the Nasrid rulers of Granada was sealed at the victory of Salado de Tarifa, won in 1340 by Castilians and Portuguese, putting an end to Moroccan interventions to save Muslim Spain; although the Nasrid rulers held for another century and half (until 1492, to be precise).<sup>59</sup> The conquest of Granada was a combined outcome of the Spanish Catholic monarchs Ferdinand's and Isabella's decision to overthrow the emirate, and also of the Pope's crusading zeal.<sup>60</sup> A regular army was built to replace feudal horsemen; artillery was reformed, peasants were armed en masse under the name of St Hermandad (fraternity), and a special corps of thirty thousand *talladores* para military forces was charged with burning crops, expelling labourers, and cutting fruit trees in all Muslim lands. All was ready for the fight to death which Spain was delivering to the Muslims.<sup>61</sup> Before the attack, the Christian monarchs launched a sustained campaign of devastation against the Nasrid realm, attacking its economy, before they engaged in a conquest of one town and city after the other.<sup>62</sup>

Just at the moment when the Muslims of Granada needed all their forces to withstand the Christian attack, they were seriously weakened by dynastic quarrels: jealousies in the court of the emir.<sup>63</sup> 'Such a suicidal mania invaded the minds of the rulers of Granada,' Lane Poole says, 'at a time when every man they could gather together was needed to repel the invasion of the Christians, they wasted their strength in ruinous struggles with each other, and one would even intercept the other's army when it was on the march against the common enemy. The people of Granada, divided into various factions, aided and abetted the jealousy of their always fickle sovereigns.'<sup>64</sup>

The Catholic monarchs were understandably happy at the divisions amongst Muslims, which they supported so as to neutralise their fighting spirit.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, the Muslims of Granada could have held out for more than the ten years that it took to conquer the kingdom, had it not been for a bitter family feud.<sup>66</sup> This feud involved Abu'l

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<sup>56</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; p. 653.

<sup>57</sup> W. Durant: The Age of faith, op cit; p.314-5.

<sup>58</sup> R. Hillenbrand: Granada; op cit; at p. 653.

<sup>59</sup> G. Sarton: Introduction; Volume III; op cit; p.38.

<sup>60</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*; Faber and Faber, London, 1974. p.211.

<sup>61</sup> M.L. de Mas Latrie: *Traites de paix et de Commerce, et Documents Divers, Concernant les Relations des Chretiens avec les Arabes de l'Afrique Septentrionale au Moyen Age*, Burt Franklin, New York, Originally Published in Paris, 1866. p.323.

<sup>62</sup> H. Terrasse: *Islam d'Espagne*; Librairie Plon; Paris; 1958; p. 243.

<sup>63</sup> R. Merriman: The Conquest of Granada; from R. B. Merriman: The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and in the New; New York; The Macmillan Company; Copyright; 1918; pp. 62-75; reprinted in *The Islamic World and the West*; Edited by A.R. Lewis; John Wiley and Sons, Inc; London; 1970; pp. 137-144; at p.138.

<sup>64</sup> S. Lane-Poole: The Moors in Spain; op cit; p.248.

<sup>65</sup> R. De Zayas: *Les Morisques et le racisme d'Etat*; la Difference; Paris; 1992; p. 182.

<sup>66</sup> J. Read: The Moors in Spain and Portugal,. Op cit; p.212.



Hassan 'Ali (Mulay Hassan), ruler of Granada, and his son Muhammad XII, known as Boabdil.<sup>67</sup> It was Boabdil's alliance with the Spanish Christian monarchs, which contributed as much as any other cause to the overthrow of Muslim power in Andalusia.<sup>68</sup> Whilst revolt and sedition were thus rife in the Muslim camp, the Christian side presented enthusiastic unity and devotion such as Spain had seldom witnessed before.<sup>69</sup> And to stimulate the spirit of unity, the sovereigns did their utmost to instil into their troops the conviction that the war was a war for religion.<sup>70</sup> Further impetus to the Catholic rulers was given by the Pope's call for a crusade.<sup>71</sup>

The end of Muslim Granada began in 1482, when the Christian armies of Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, Struck at al-Hammah in the Sierra of the same name, south west of Granada and deep in Nasrid territory.<sup>72</sup> The Muslims sought to resist awaiting Abu'l-Hassan with a relief force from Granada. He arrived too late. The Marquis and his troops broke out, burnt down the mosque, where the women and children had taken shelter, and massacred the remaining defenders after fierce hand to hand fighting in the streets.<sup>73</sup> Abu'l-Hassan returned to Granada after his unsuccessful attempt to relieve al-Hammah, to find that in his absence, the population has been swung against him in favour of his son, Boabdil and his mother Aisha. With the Alhambra's garrison ranged against him, Abu'l-Hassan was forced to take refuge with his brother, Muhammad al-Zeghal, governor of Malaga.<sup>74</sup>

Led by Abu'l Hassan and Al-Zeghal, Muslim forces fought with such determination, that despite the shortcomings and betrayal of some emirs, it took ten years of implacable struggle to secure the triumph of Christianity.<sup>75</sup> The seventeen strongholds and eighty boroughs of the Emirat (of Granada) had to be conquered one by one.<sup>76</sup> In Al-Zeghal, Lane Poole tells, we see `the last great Moorish king of Andalusia. He was a gallant warrior, a firm ruler, and a resolute opponent of the Christians. Had he been untrammelled by his nephew (Boabdil), Granada might have remained in the hands of the Muslims during his life.<sup>77</sup> It was Boabdil's war against his father and uncle, al-Zeghal, alongside Christian forces, which eventually led to the fall of Granada.<sup>78</sup> Boabdil, despised by the Christians, and hated by the majority of the Muslims, thanks to the money given to him by the Spaniards, and also their logistic support, worked towards destroying the last combative powers of the kingdom.<sup>79</sup> Boabdil both offered a promise to the Muslim populations of the Granada region that districts loyal to him would be spared the ravages of war.<sup>80</sup> He also did his best to foil the resistance of his uncle, Al-Zeghal, against the Christians who were gradually narrowing the circle that they had drawn round the doomed kingdom.<sup>81</sup> City after city fell into Christian hands. However led by El-Zeghal, the Muslim forces fought with great determination. The Spanish answered by using Boabdil to promise peace and safety to the Muslims who did not fight the Christians.

<sup>67</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*.p.196.

<sup>68</sup> S. Lane-Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; op cit; p. 246.

<sup>69</sup> Roger B. Merriman: *The Conquest of Grenada*; op cit; p.139.

<sup>70</sup> Roger B. Merriman: *The Conquest of Grenada*: op cit; p.139.

<sup>71</sup> H. Terrasse: *Islam d'Espagne*; Librairie Plon; Paris; 1958; p. 243.

<sup>72</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*, .p.210.

<sup>73</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*, p.210.

<sup>74</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*, .p.213.

<sup>75</sup> M.L. de Mas Latrie: *Traites de paix*; op cit; p.323.

<sup>76</sup> M.L. de Mas Latrie: *Traites de paix*.p.323.

<sup>77</sup> S. Lane-Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; op cit; p.248.

<sup>78</sup> J. Read: *The Moors*. Op cit; P.215.

<sup>79</sup> R. De Zayas: *Les Morisques et le racisme d'Etat*; op cit; p. 184.

<sup>80</sup> L.P. Harvey: *Islamic Spain: 1250-1500*; The University Of Chicago Press; Chicago; 1990; p. 288.

This led to divisions amongst Muslims and renewed outbreak of civil war between them: the Muslims of Albaycin engaged in street fighting with the supporters of al-Zeghal in the rest of the city.<sup>82</sup> Granada fell to Boabdil with Christian help, the same Christians profiting from the civil war between Muslims occupied Loja, Illorca, and Moclin;<sup>83</sup> and were able to progress towards Malaga.<sup>84</sup> The Spaniards took possession of the city in August 1487.<sup>85</sup> All Christians who had converted to Islam found there were tortured with sharp pointed reeds, and then burnt alive.<sup>86</sup> Thousands of Muslims were massacred and young Muslim boys were picked up by priests to catechise them into Christianity, then Malaga was burnt down.<sup>87</sup>

Boabdil came to a further arrangement with the Catholic monarchs, that he would deliver Granada to them on condition that he retained some fiefdom, and his immediate supporters were to receive privileges guaranteed by the Christians, whilst the inhabitants of Albaycin would retain their properties and right to live in peace and practice their faith.<sup>88</sup> However, after the fall of Almeria and the surrender of Al-Zeghal he was called upon to deliver the city.<sup>89</sup> Boabdil handed over the keys of Granada, and left the Alhambra by a little frequented route. After a brief but courteous exchange with Ferdinand and Isabella, he continued his journey into exile, while the Catholic Monarchs made their triumphant entry into the city; the singing of the Te Deum and the hoisting of the banner of Santiago over the citadel symbolising the end of Muslim Spain.<sup>90</sup> A secret agreement had been concluded, guaranteeing the safety of Boabdil and his family and granting him the small principality of the Alpujarras on the coast south of Granada and the retention of 30,000 pieces of gold, together with certain other benefits.<sup>91</sup>

So ended almost eight hundred years of Muslim rule in Spain. Boabdil had surrendered the last outpost without a fight, and the bitter reproach of his mother `Aisha, who had herself played no little part in its downfall, rings down the centuries as his epitaph:

*`weep like a woman for what you could not defend like a man.*<sup>92</sup>

This was no end of the story of the Muslims in Spain, though. The Muslims submitted to the statutes of Limpieza de sangre (the purity of blood) i.e. they were banned from public positions and status.<sup>93</sup> They were required to wear upon their caps and turbans a blue crescent `of the size of an orange,' which constantly brought upon them the affronts of children, and not infrequently the taunts and violence of a fanatical populace.<sup>94</sup> Deprived of their arms, they were left defenceless at a time when to the Christians the

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<sup>81</sup> S. Lane-Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; op cit; p.251.

<sup>82</sup> L.P. Harvey: *Islamic Spain*; p. 291.

<sup>83</sup> J. Read: *The Moors*; op cit; p. 215.

<sup>84</sup> J. Read: *The Moors*; op cit; p. 215.

<sup>85</sup> S. Lane-Poole: *The Moors in Spain*; op cit; p. 254.

<sup>86</sup> H.C Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; p.17.

<sup>87</sup> T.B. Irving: *Dates, names and places*; p.80.

<sup>88</sup> R. De Zayas: *Les Morisques*; op cit; p. 187.

<sup>89</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*, .p.216.

<sup>90</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*, .p.217.

<sup>91</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*, .p.219.

<sup>92</sup> J. Read: *The Moors in Spain and Portugal*,p.219.

<sup>93</sup> H.Kamen: *Spain: 1469-1714*; Longman; London; 1983. p. 176.

<sup>94</sup> S.P. Scott: *History of the Moorish Empire*; op cit; Vol II, op cit; p.225.

blood of the despised race was valued little more than that of a dog.<sup>95</sup> Their movements were restricted, too; in 1530 death threatened any Muslim found travelling without a permit in the region between the coast and the highway from Alicante to Barcelona, whilst Granada and Castilian Muslims were threatened with death for entering Valencia. This measure was extended to those of Aragon in 1545; and repeated in 1563 and 1586.<sup>96</sup> One law introduced on 25 May 1566 stipulated that the `Moors had to abandon the use of Arabic, change their costumes, that their doors must remain open every Friday and other feast days, and (of course) that their baths, public and private, will be torn down.<sup>97</sup> Doors and windows were to be left open on Friday and Islamic feast days to watch in case they prayed.<sup>98</sup> The possession of books or papers in Arabic was almost conclusive proof of disobedience with severe repercussions.<sup>99</sup>



### Torture Methods of the Inquisition

(source [http://www.columbia.edu/itc/law/witt/images/lect4/fx\\_inquisition.jpg](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/law/witt/images/lect4/fx_inquisition.jpg) )

Muslims, in their countless numbers, were burnt at the stake for pursuing the observance of their faith. Thus Hernando de Palma, a `Morisco,' accused of teaching and conducting Muslim ceremonies, denied and overcame severe torture.<sup>100</sup> He eventually confessed that, for seven or eighth years, he had practised some Muslim rites without regarding them as contrary to the Catholic faith and was eventually burnt in the

<sup>95</sup> H.C Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; p.190.

<sup>96</sup> H. C. Lea: *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, 4 vols; The Mac Millan Company, New York, 1907. vol 3; p. 377.

<sup>97</sup> Rodrigo de Zayas: *Les Morisques et le racisme d'etat*; Edt Les Voies du Sud; Paris, 1992. p.230

<sup>98</sup> T.B. Irving: *Dates, Names and Places: The end of Islamic Spain*; in *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine*; No 61-62; 1991; pp 77-93. p.85.

<sup>99</sup> H.C Lea: *The Moriscos of Spain*; op cit; p.131.

<sup>100</sup> Henry Charles Lea: *A History of the Inquisition*; op cit; pp. 199-200.



Toledo in 1606.<sup>101</sup> Over the period beginning in 1549, the Inquisition of Saragossa, alone had burnt 1,817 men; and 758 women.<sup>102</sup>

Burning Muslims had only been one method used to seek to extinguish their faith and presence. The cardinal-archbishop of Toledo, the inquisitor in chief of the kingdom, 'a man of great piety,' proposed 'to pass through the sword all Arabs non-converted, including women and children.'<sup>103</sup> The Dominican Bleda was more radical, even towards the Muslim converts to Christianity, proposing that it would be easier for God to differentiate in the other world those who deserved hell and those who did not, Bleda proposing to behead all Muslims without an exception; a measure wholly supported by the clergy.<sup>104</sup> In order to extinguish the Muslims, Garcia de Loaysa, Archbishop of Toledo, in 1598, proposed that the Muslims be prohibited from marriage.<sup>105</sup> Martin Salvatierra, Bishop of Segorbe, proposed the castration of Muslims.<sup>106</sup> In the 1560s King Philip II (1556-1598) consulted privately Dr. Otadui, professor of theology in Alcala and subsequently Bishop of Avila, who in his reply told the king that 'if any of the lords of the Moriscos cited the old Castilian proverb, "The more Moors the more profit" he should remember that there was an older and truer one-"The fewer enemies the better" and he could combine the two into "The more dead Moors the more profit, for there will be fewer enemies", which we are told pleased Philip greatly.'<sup>107</sup>

And so, it was resolved to eliminate the Muslim presence in Spain. The Catholic Church played the decisive part in this, in a relentless campaign, which had stretched over several centuries: In 1337 Arnaldo Archbishop of Tarragona, in a letter to Benedict XII, implored the pope to order the King of Aragon to adopt such a policy.<sup>108</sup> A century after, Alfonso de Borja, Archbishop of Valencia (1429-1455), urged upon Juan II of Aragon the expulsion of the Mudejares of Valencia; in this gaining the support of Cardinal Juan de Torquemada, uncle of the celebrated inquisitor general.<sup>109</sup>

In the words of the Dominican inquisitor, Bleda, 'The Pope, Clement VII, who is known for his great piety and his courage, exhorted the Emperor Charles the Fifth, so as he orders them to leave his kingdom if they did not convert to Christianity, or be reduced to slavery.'<sup>110</sup> Archbishop of Granada, Gurrero, returning from Trente in 1563, passed by Rome, and paid a visit to Pope Pie IV. The Pope listened and praised the zeal of this preacher who told him that 'the flock was only Christian by name.'<sup>111</sup> So the pope gave him a letter for King Philip II, remonstrating the king, that the scandal had lasted too long, and that it was time to rid the land of that 'diabolical sect'.<sup>112</sup> The Inquisitors themselves described 'the Moriscos' as Moors who would always be Moors and, if the Inquisition did not convert them, it at least compelled them to sin with less publicity and thus diminished their evil example'.<sup>113</sup> In exchange with the king in December 1601,

<sup>101</sup> Henry Charles Lea: A History of the Inquisition in Spain; pp. 199-200.

<sup>102</sup> Les Morisques et leur temps; *Table ronde Internationale*: 4-7 July 1981; Montpellier; CNRS; Paris; 1983.P. 527

<sup>103</sup> G. Le Bon, La Civilisation des Arabes, Syracuse; 1884; p.205-6.

<sup>104</sup> G. Le Bon, La Civilisation des Arabes, op cit; p.205-6.

<sup>105</sup> H.C Lea: The Moriscos of Spain; op cit; p.293.

<sup>106</sup> H. Kamen: Spain; op cit; p. 177.

<sup>107</sup> Pedraza: *Historia ecclesiastica de Granada*; Granada, 1638.fol.238-9.

<sup>108</sup> H. Lea: The Moriscos of Spain; op cit; p.10.

<sup>109</sup> H. Lea: The Moriscos of Spain; p.15.

<sup>110</sup> In R. De Zayas: *Les Morisques*; op cit; p. 466.

<sup>111</sup> R de Zayas: Les Morisques; op cit; p.229.

<sup>112</sup> R de Zayas: Les Morisques; op cit; p.229.

<sup>113</sup> Archivo hist.nacional, Inq.de Valencia, Leg.5, fol.185. 186 etc.

Archbishop Ribera quotes the Old Testament texts ordering the enemies of God to be slain without mercy and setting forth the duties of kings to extirpate them.<sup>114</sup> Don Juan de Ribera, Archbishop of Valencia, owed much of his reputation for piety to the fact that he had denounced to the Inquisition more than four thousand alleged "Moorish apostates".<sup>115</sup> The energy of Ribera was incessantly exerted for the ruin of these supposed heretics, either by exile or extermination.<sup>116</sup> The Moriscos are obstinate, dogmatising heretics, and the only remedy is to drive them out of Spain: evils to be cured must be torn up by the roots, leaving no fragments to send up fresh shoots.<sup>117</sup> The Muslims were accused of every crime: treason, murder, kidnapping, blasphemy, sacrilege, and for Ribera, even the destruction of the Armada was a divine judgment for the indulgence exhibited towards the enemies of the faith, and that the recent occurrences of earthquakes, tempests and comets was also attributed to the same cause.<sup>118</sup> A letter from the king to Ribera confided `in the divine favour, he had resolved on the expulsion of this evil race.<sup>119</sup>



The first Grand Inquisitor of Spain, Tomas de Torquemada

(Source: <http://www.defence.gov.au/news/dib/editions/2003/June/cast.htm>)

And so the Muslims were removed from Spain in 1609-10. How many died, or reached North Africa, and other parts of the Ottoman Empire is unknown. No Muslim historian has touched the question. Lane Poole tells us that no less than three million `Moors' were banished between the fall of Granada and the first decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>120</sup> Western historians, modern that is, from the 1950s to this day, in their daily re-writing of history, i.e. banishing dark pages of Western history away, and in fact sticking all the savagery to the Muslims, instead, only put the figure at few thousand Muslims who were carried by boats from Spain to North Africa, safely put on the seashore, but `their intolerant, fanatical Muslim brethren of the Maghreb

<sup>114</sup> H. Lea: The Moriscos of Spain; op cit; p.308.

<sup>115</sup> S.P. Scott: History; op cit; vol 3; p. 311.

<sup>116</sup> S.P. Scott: History; op cit; vol 3; p. 311.

<sup>117</sup> H. Lea: The Moriscos of Spain; p.308

<sup>118</sup> S.P. Scott: History; op cit; vol 3; p. 311.

<sup>119</sup> H. Lea: The Moriscos of Spain; p.316,

slaughtered them.<sup>121</sup> Other modern historians go even further. Thus, one of them, Conrad is in agreement, and with many others, with the 'authority' on the expulsion of Muslims from Spain, the French historian Lapeyre. Lapeyre reduced the expelled Muslims to just a few thousands, who suffered at the hands of other Muslims. He 'answered those who condemn the expulsion in the name of tolerance' by saying that that 'judging by the legitimacy or the opportunism of the operation in the name of principles foreign to the era, is a useless enterprise.'<sup>122</sup> By this, modern Western historians are telling us that the Muslims had to be expelled (in truth exterminated) because then, times were different. They also justify such an expulsion, again, as summed up by their leading authority, Lapeyre as follows:

*'The attacks on Muslims whether by religious or political figures were not alone. It was impossible to remain indifferent to such denunciations by ecclesiastic authorities who denounced the 'Moors' cold reaction towards Christianity, and their attachment to their old Muslim customs, denunciations which were in most cases justified. The dangers of Muslim violence, and intelligence with the enemy, which preoccupied the military were, maybe, a little exaggerated, but the memories of the [Muslim] rebellion at Granada, and the fact there were so many enemies facing the army justified such fears.'*<sup>123</sup>

One will counter this argument with the following: when the Muslim realm was threatened with extinction by the alliance of crusaders and Mongols in the 1250s, and when that alliance's shared plan was to exterminate the Muslims (e.g. one million Muslims were slaughtered in Baghdad alone), and when both Christian and Mongol armies entered Damascus and other Syrian towns, inflicting on them terrible woes,<sup>124</sup> the Muslims did not retaliate by mass extermination of the local Christian population.

When the Mamluks crushed both Crusaders and Mongols in the 1290s, they did not embark on a programme of mass extermination of local Christians, which they could have easily done. Christians survived in these areas even to this very day. In contrast to this the Muslims have been wiped out to the last wherever Christianity triumphed.

Yet, modern Western historians reach even further and lower in indecency and lewdness, such as when the Frenchman Conrad refers to Perez, who sees that with the elimination of the Muslims, Spain had become 'a nation like others in Christian Europe.' 'The Moors,' inheritors of the Mudedjares 'have refused to assimilate; they had to be expelled'.<sup>125</sup> Menendez Pidal in his *Historia de Espana*, concludes:

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<sup>120</sup> S. Lane Poole: *The Moors*; op cit; p. 279.

<sup>121</sup> So tells us the erudite modern French 'scholar' H. Lapeyre: *Geographie de l'Espagne Morisque*; SEVPEN, 1959. p.155, who is today the most quoted 'scholar' of all specialists on Spain.

<sup>122</sup> H. Lapeyre: *Geographie*; p. 213 in P. Conrad, op cit; pp. 120-1.

<sup>123</sup> H. Lapeyre: *Geographie*; pp. 130-1.

<sup>124</sup> For good details on such episodes, consult Baron G. D'Ohsson: *Histoire des Mongols*, in four volumes; Les Freres Van Cleef; la Haye and Amsterdam; 1834. vol 3;

or Ibn al-Furat: *Tarikh al-Duwal wal Muluk of Ibn al-Furat*; including the shorter version of it in U. and M.C. Lyons: *Ayyubids, Mamluks and Crusaders, selection from the Tarikh al-Duwal wal Muluk of Ibn al-Furat*; 2 vols, W. Heffer and Sons Ltd, Cambridge, 1971. 2 vols, W. Heffer and Sons Ltd, Cambridge, 1971.

<sup>125</sup> J. Perez: *Chretiens; Juifs et Musulmans en Espagne; Le mythe de la tolerance religieuse (VIII-XV e siecle)*; in *Histoire*, No 137; October 1990. in P. Conrad: *Histoire de la Reconquista; Que Sais je?* Presses Universitaire de France; Paris; 1998. p. 122.



*'that after many centuries of forced neighbourhood with the Christians, this exotic race has never integrated into Spain, neither to its faith nor to its collective ideals, nor to its character, the Moors never assimilated and lived like a cancerous growth in the Spanish flesh.'*<sup>126</sup>

Where, indeed, one has problem with these 'scholars,' men of the lowest orders, who use their scholarly positions to make genocide acceptable, and even justifiable, and hence prepare the ground for something similar to happen again: the elimination of a minority on the ground of their spoiling the purity of the nation. It is with these modern interpretations of the past, generally coming from non-Spaniards, that this author has problems with. There is, indeed, no problem with Spain, nor with what happened in the past: what happened in the past happened. No-one can change it. Furthermore, the Spain of today is a most welcoming land for Muslims. It is also mostly Spanish scholars, of the greatest calibre, the likes of Ribera, Juan Vernet, Millas Vallicrosa, Samsó, Castro, and many more, who have revived the Muslim heritage of the Iberian Peninsula, and are more passionate about this Muslim heritage than the Muslims themselves. Moreover, it is a sign of the greatness of Spain that not many people would have reacted as the Spaniards did towards their Muslim guests after the bloody train bombing incidents which hit Madrid in 2004: Not a single act of revenge against the Muslims was initiated. And Spain in the eyes of Muslims remains a great land, just as it once was.

And so, one concludes with Smith:

*'Yet even now the traveller in Spain feels as he approaches Andalusia that he is breathing a clearer atmosphere, that he is brought into contact with a finer literature, and is contemplating a far nobler architecture, than any which the more northern parts of the peninsula can boast. Moorish, not Catholic, is everything that appeals to his imagination and to his finer feelings; Moorish are the legends and the ballads of the country; Moorish are the Alcazar and the Giralda of Seville; Moorish everything that is not discordant in the once matchless Mosque, now the interpolated Cathedral of Cordova; Moorish all the glories of the Alhambra. And as the traveller passes the hill which is still called, with such deep pathos, 'the last sigh of the Moor,' he feels that the day which saw the fall of Granada is a day over which every Spaniard may well sigh for what it cost Spain, and every European for what it cost humanity at large.'*<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup>R. M. Pidal: *Historia de España dirigida por Ramon Menendez Pidal* Vol 2; Madrid; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition; 1966; p. 41.

<sup>127</sup>R.B. Smith: *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*; London; Smith, Elder & co; London; 1876; p. 287.

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