

Foreword

The present book is the winner of the Award of 'Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain International Prize for Historical and Cultural Studies in Andalusia' that was granted for the first time on the 17th of February, 2009. The patron of the Award, Mr. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain presented, himself, the Award to the author of this book at a special celebration held at the University of Cordoba in Spain, and the Award was organized by the 'Chair of Arabic Studies' at the University of Cordoba, which is sponsored by Mr. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain, the President of the 'Foundation of Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain's Prize for Poetic Creativity' (Kuwait).

While organizing the Award, there was no plan to publish the book or translate it from Spanish into English. However, Mr. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain felt the need to translate the book into several languages and to publish it, keeping in mind the importance of its subject matter, the lack of similar studies, and the depth of analysis presented by the author.

The 'Chair of Arabic Studies' of the University of Cordoba was able to organize this Award, along with a rich variety of other cultural activities thanks to the generous financial support granted by the 'Foundation of Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain's Prize for Poetic Creativity' and Mr. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain, its founder and only financial sponsor. Special thanks are due to Mr. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain for his generosity and genuine willingness to support authentic research and cultural studies, in particular studies aimed at unearthing the rich and fascinating history and culture of al-Andalus.

February 2011
The Editors

Acknowledgments

This book project arose in part from my interest in Castilian Muslims throughout the Middle Ages, and has also grown out of all the research activity about Ávila's Muslim population that has been taking place in that city over the last few years. Like all such projects, it owes a great deal to all the specialist colleagues who have preceded me in working on this topic.

I offer special thanks to Serafín de Tapia, whose studies of the Moriscos of Ávila are an indispensable resource for all later scholars to build on. He showed me around the diggings at the Mudejar cemetery while they were still in progress, in the midst of his own battle to create an archeological park that would preserve the whole area. I am grateful to Carmelo Luis for all the books and articles that he supplied while I was becoming interested in this topic, before I even knew to what use I would put them. And as always I thank José Luis Martín, who still lives in our memory, for having showed me the importance of the Castilian area and all the current research surrounding it. Olatz Villanueva both encouraged me and included me in projects related to Ávila, while Francisco J. Fabián and Javier Jiménez Gadea kindly and generously shared information about the city's cemetery. Finally, Mercedes García-Arenal continues to be an inspiration.

Most of my research was carried out at the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), the Biblioteca Islámica Félix María Pareja, and the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) in Madrid, to all of whose librarians I am grateful for their efforts on my behalf. Likewise to the archivists of all the archives I consulted: the Archivo General in Simancas, Archivo Histórico Provincial in Ávila, Archivo de la Real Chancillería in Valladolid, and to a lesser extent the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid.

This book has formed part of the research project HUM2006-08644, 'Movilidad geográfica y social de la población musulmana de la Península Ibérica (siglos XI-XIII)' ['Social and geographic mobility of the Muslim population of the Iberian Peninsula in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries'], directed by Manuela Marín, and has also benefited from the conclusions of a second project, HUM2006-03038, 'El centro de la Península Ibérica entre la Antigüedad y la Edad Media: espacios, poderes y representaciones (siglos VII-XI)' ['The central Iberian Peninsula from Antiquity to the Middle Ages: spaces, powers, and representations in the seventh to eleventh centuries'], directed by Iñaki Martín Viso. I am grateful to all the participants in both for all that I have learned from them.

In conclusion I wish to thank my friends, my family, and particularly my husband José Manuel and my two daughters Beatriz and Sol for helping me to continue to write. For any errors that may be found in these pages, I alone am responsible.