Poverty turns our country into a foreign land, and riches our place of exile into our home. For the whole world, in all its diversity, is one. And all its inhabitants our brothers and neighbors. — Abu Muhammad al-Zahaydi, Seville, A.D. 926–989

Andalusia’s Journey

For 700 years, Muslims, Christians, and Jews flourished in the fertile landscape of southern Spain. Edward W. Said reflects on that rich past from the perspective of our own uneasily hybrid world
The 12th-century Giralda—once the main minaret of Seville’s mosque, now the bell tower of the city’s cathedral. Opposite: The red-and-white arches of Cordova’s Mezquita, which was begun in A.D. 785 on the site of a Roman temple and a Visigoth church.
OF AN ARAB, such as myself, to enter Granada’s 13th-century Alhambra palace is to leave behind a modern world of disillusionment, strife, and uncertainty. In this, the calmest, most harmonious structure ever built by Arab Muslims, the walls are covered with dizzying arabesques and geometric patterns, interspersed with Arabic script extolling God and his regents on earth. The repetition of a basically abstract series of motifs suggests infinity, and serves to pull one through the palace’s many rooms. The palace’s Generalife gardens, punctuated by cooling streams, are a miracle of balance and repose. The Alhambra, like the great ninth-century mosque-cum-cathedral of Cordova, La Mezquita, invites believer and non-believer alike with opulence and rigorous discipline of ornament, and almost imperceptible changes in perspective from one space to the next. The whole composition is always in evidence—always changing yet always somehow the same—a unity in multiplicity.

I have been traveling for four decades to southern Spain, Andalucía as it is called by Spaniards, al-Andalus by Arabs, drawn there by its magnificent architecture and the amazingly mixed Arab, Jewish, and Latin cultural centers of Cordova, Granada, and Seville. The turmoil of Andalusia’s extraordinary past seems to hover just beneath the surface of its pleasant landscapes and generally small-scaled urban life. In its medieval heyday, Andalusia, established by the Arab general Tariq bin Ziyad and continuously fought over by numerous Muslim sects (among them Almoravids, Nasrids, and Almohads) and by Catholics as far north as Galicia, was a particularly lively instance of the dialogue, much more than the clash, of cultures. Muslims, Jews, and Christians co-existed with astonishing harmony. Today its periods of fruitful cultural diversity may provide a model for the co-existence of peoples, a model quite different from the ideological battles, local chauvinism, and ethnic conflict that finally brought it down—and which ironically enough threaten to engulf our own 21st-century world.

When I first visited, in the summer of 1966, Franco-era Andalusia seemed like a forgotten, if wonderfully picturesque, province of Catholic Spain. Its fierce sun accentuated the area’s rigors: the scarcity of good accommodations, the difficulty of travel, the heavy-handed cuisine, the unyielding spirit of a people living in relative poverty and obdurate pride, the political and religious repression under which the country suffocated. The splendor of its great buildings was evident but seemed part of a distant backdrop to more urgent and more recent times: the Civil War of 1936–39 and Hemingway’s sentimentalized view of it; the burgeoning and quite sleazy mass tourist trade that had put down roots in Málaga (not to mention the ghastly
neighboring village of Torremolinos) and that was creeping slowly westward toward Portugal’s Algarve (from the Arabic al-gharb min al-Andalus, “west of Andalusia”).

Even in the summer of 1979, when I spent a few weeks in the area with my wife and two young children, the Alhambra was all but deserted. You could stroll into it as you would into a public park. (Today, visiting the place is more like going to Disneyland. There are five gigantic parking lots and you must reserve well in advance.) For its part, Seville was a pleasant, somewhat subdued city of modest restaurants and family-style hotels. Franco had disappeared in 1975, of course, but the prosperous Spain of solidly based, open democracy had not yet arrived. You could still feel the Church’s cold impress and the vestiges of the fascist dictatorship. Europe was a long distance away, beyond the Pyrenees, to the north.

In the 1980’s and 90’s Spain awakened into modernity and globalization. NATO’s Spain, the EU’s Spain, took over the peninsula’s identity. There is now no shortage of excellent hotels or good restaurants, although it must again be admitted, as the Michelin Guide put it in the 1960’s, that for the most part “Spanish cuisine is more complicated than it is refined.” But for me, and indeed for many Arabs, Andalusia still represents the finest flowering of our culture. That is particularly true now, when the Arab Middle East seems mired in defeat and violence, its societies unable to arrest their declining fortunes, its secular culture so full of almost surreal crisis, shock, and nihilism.

A spate of recent Arabic and Muslim writing has redirected attention to Andalusia as a mournful, tantalizing emblem of what a glorious civilization was lost when Islamic rule ended. This literature serves only to accentuate the conditions of decline and loss that have so diminished modern Arab life—and the conquests that have dominated it. Thus, for instance, the 1992 appearance of Palestinian poet Mahmud Darwish’s great qasida, or ode, Ahd Ashr Kawkaban Ala Akhir Almasheh Al-Andalusi (Eleven Stars over the Last Moments of Andalusia). The poem was written about—and served to clarify—what the Palestinians felt they had lost not just once but time after time. The Palestinian national poet seems to be asking, What do we do after the last time, after the new conquerors have entered our palaces and consumed our still hot tea and heard our mellifluous music? Does it mean that as Arabs we exist only as a footnote to someone else’s history?

Our tea is green and hot: drink it. Our pistachios are fresh; eat them. The beds are of green cedar, fall on them, following this long siege, lie down on the feathers of our dream. The sheets are crisp, perfumes are ready by the door, and there are plenty of mirrors: Enter them so we may exist completely. Soon we will search in the margins of your history, in distant countries, for what was once our history. And in the end we will ask ourselves: Was Andalusia here or there? On the land…or in the poem?

It is difficult to overestimate the searing poignancy of these lines. They recall not only the self-destructive demise of the Andalusian kings and their tawâ‘ī but also present-day Arab disunity and consequent
Seville's Alcázar palace, one of the best surviving examples of Mudejar architecture, a late Andalusian style.
Andalusia’s unthreatening landscape—tranquil hills, agreeable towns, and rich green fields—survived a turbulent and deeply unsavory history. Running through its convoluted past was a steady current of unrest, of trust betrayed. It seems to have been made up of composite or converted souls, Mozarabs (Arabized Christians) and muwals (Christian converts to Islam). Nothing and no one is simple. Several of its city-states (there were no fewer than 12 at the height of the internecine conflict) were occasionally ruled by poets and patrons of the arts, such as Seville’s 11th-century al-Mutamid, but they were often jealous and even small-minded schemers. Andalusia multiplies in the mind with its contradictions and puzzles; its history is a history of the masks and assumed identities it has worn.

Was Andalusia largely Arab and Muslim, as it certainly seems to have been, and if so why was it so very different from, say, Syria, Egypt, and Iraq, themselves great centers of civilization and power? And how did the Jews, the Visigoth Catholics, and the Romans who colonized it before the Arabs play their role in Andalusia’s makeup and identity? However all these components are sorted out, a composite Andalusian identity anchored in Arab culture can be discerned in its striking buildings, its tiles and wooden ceilings, its ornate pottery and neatly constructed houses. And what could be more Andalusian than the fiery flamenco dancer, accompanied by hoarse cantaores, martial hand-clapping, and hypnotically strummed guitars, all of which have precedents in Arabic music?

On this trip I wanted to discover what Andalusia was from my perspective as a Palestinian Arab, as someone whose diverse background might offer a way of seeing and understanding the place beyond illusion and romance. I was born in Jerusalem, Andalusia’s great Eastern antipode, and raised as a Christian. Though the environment I grew up in was both colonial and Muslim, my university education and years of residence in the United States and Europe allow me to see my past as a Westerner might. Standing before the monumental portal of Seville’s Alcázar (the Hispanicized word for al-Qasr, “castle”), every inch of which is covered in raised florid swirls and interlocking squares, I was reminded of similar

(Continued on page 190; see page 193 for The Facts)
(Continued from page 183) surfaces from my earlier years in Cairo, Damascus, and Jerusalem, strangely present before me now in southern Europe, where Arab Muslims once hoped to set up an Umayyad empire in the West to rival the one in Syria. The Arabs journeyed along the shores of the Mediterranean through Spain, France, and Italy, all of which now bear their traces, even if those traces are not always acknowledged.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Andalusia historically was the care lavished on such aspects of urban life as running water, leafy gardens, viewing places (miradores), and graceful wall and ceiling designs. Medieval Europe, all rough skins, drafty rooms, and meaty cuisine, was barbaric by comparison. This is worth noting, since the interiors of Andalusia’s palaces today are presented as out of time, stripped of their luxurious silks and divans, their heady perfumes and spices, their counterpoint of din and lyrical poetry.

Except for Cordova’s immense Mezquita, the choice spaces of what has been known historically as Muslim Spain are generally not very large. Even Seville’s Alcázar, big enough as a castle or palace, doesn’t dominate at all. The Arabs who gave Andalusia its characteristic features generally used architecture to refashion and enhance nature, to create symmetrical patterns that echo Arabic calligraphy. Streets are pleasant to saunter in, rather than utilitarian thoroughfares. Curved ornaments—such as highly patterned vases and metal utensils—abound, all part of a wonderfully relaxed worldliness.

That worldliness, which reached its apex between the 9th and 12th centuries, testifies to the extraordinary diversity of Islam itself, so often thought of today as a monolithic block of wild-eyed terrorists, bent on destruction and driven by fanaticism. Yes, there were feuding factions, but rarely before or after did the Islamic kings and princes produce a civilization of such refinement with so many potentially warring components. Consider that in Cordova’s heyday the Jewish sage Maimonides and Islam’s greatest thinker, Ibn Rushd (Averroës), lived in Cordova at the same time, each with his own disciples and doctrines, both writing and speaking in Arabic. Part of the Damascus-based Umayyad empire that had fallen to the Baghdad-based Abbásids in 750, the Spanish territories always retained an eagerness to be recognized by, and an ambition to surpass the achievements of, their Eastern cousin.

Quite soon, Andalusia became a magnet for talent in many arenas: music, philosophy, mysticism, literature, architecture, virtually all of the sciences, jurisprudence, religion. The monarchs Abd ar-Rahman I (756–788) and Abd ar-Rahman III (898–961) gave Cordova its almost mythic status. Three times the size of Paris (Europe’s second-largest city in the 10th century), with 70 libraries, Cordova also had, according to the historian Salma Kahdir Jayyusi, “1,600 mansions for notables, 300 homes for ordinary people, 60,300 officials, and military commanders, and 80,455 shops.” The mystics and poets Ibn Hazm and Ibn Arabi, Jewish writers Judah ha-Levi and Ibn Gabirol, the colloquial but lyrical najs and wonderful strophic songs, or muwashshah, that seemed to emerge as if from nowhere and later influenced the troubadours, provided al-Andalus with verse, music, and atmosphere such as Europe had never had before.

The Arab general Tariq bin Ziyad and his desert army streamed across the Gibraltar straits in 711; on later forays he brought with him many North African Berbers, Yemenis, Egyptians, and Syrians. In Spain they encountered Visigoths and Jews, plus the remnants of a once thriving Roman community, all of whom at times co-existed, and at times fought with one another. No harmony was stable for very long—too many conflicting elements were always in play. Andalusia’s reign of relative tolerance (three monotheistic faiths in complex accord with one another) abruptly ended when King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella seized the region and imposed a reign of terror on non-Christians. Significantly, one of the towering figures of the Andalusian cultural synthesis, Ibn Khaldun, a founder of sociology and historiography, came from a prominent Seville family, and was perhaps the greatest analyst of how nations rise and fall.

The last king of Granada, the luckless Boabdil (Abu Abd Allah Muhammad), was expelled along with the Jews in 1492, weeping or sighing—choose your version. The unhappy Moor quickly became the emblem of what the Arabs had lost. Yet most people who are gripped by the pathos of the king’s departure may not know that Boabdil negotiated very profitable surrender terms—some money, and land outside Granada—before he left the city to the Castilian monarchs.}

A special poignancy hangs over Andalusia’s impressively animated spaces—a sense of pervasive grandeur and of what Andalusia tried to be...
AN DALUSIA

The Reconquista, depicted in a 19th-century engraving with the Greek scholar Porphyry. Above: Averroës, known for reconciling Islamic and Greek thought, in an imaginary conversation illustration showing Islamic philosopher Averroës, known for reconciling Islamic and Greek thought, in an imaginary conversation.

DESPITE THE RICHNESS of Andalusia’s Islamic past and its indelible presence in Spain’s subsequent history after the Reconquista, for years the Church and royalist ideologues stressed the purgation of Spain’s Islamic and Jewish heritage, insisting that Christian Spain was restored in 1492 as if little had happened to disturb its ascendency in the seven preceding centuries. Not for nothing has the cult of Santiago (Saint James) been highlighted in Catholic Spain: St. James was, among other things, the patron saint of the Spanish in their battles against the Moors, hence his nickname Matamoros, “Killer of Moors.” Yet, classical Mudéjar art, with its typically florid arabesques and geometrical architecture, was produced after the Muslims were defeated. As far away as Catalonia, Gaudi’s obsession with botanical motifs shows the Arab influence at its most profound. Why did it linger so if Arabs had represented only a negligible phase in Spanish history?

The Jews and Muslims who weren’t thrown out or destroyed by the Inquisition remained as conversos and Moriscos, men and women who had converted to Catholicism to preserve their lives. No one will ever know whether the identity they abandoned was really given up or whether it continued underground. Miguel de Cervantes’s magnificent novel Don Quixote draws attention to its supposed author, the fictional Arab Sidi Hamete Benengeli, which—it is plausibly alleged—was a way of masking Cervantes’s own secret identity as an unrepentant converso. The wars between Muslims and Catholics turn up again and again in literature, including of course the Chanson de Roland (in which Charlemagne’s Frankish army is defeated in 778 by Abd ar-Rahman’s men) and Spain’s national epic, El Poema del Cid. About 60 percent of the Spanish language is made up of Arabic words and phrases: alcáde (mayor), barrio (quarters of a city), aceite (oil), aceitunas (olives). Their persistence indicates that Spain’s identity is truly, if perhaps also uneasily, bicultural.

It took the great Spanish historian and philologist Américo Castro, who taught for many years at Princeton, to establish the enduring pervasiveness of the country’s repressed past in his monumental work The Structure of Spanish History (1954). One of Spain’s finest contemporary novelists, Juan Goytisolo, has also inspired interest in Andalusia’s Arab and Muslim origins, and done much to reassert Spain’s non-European past. His Count Julian, which centers on the treacherous Catholic whom Spaniards hold responsible for bringing in the Moors, challenges the myth that Visigoth Spain’s rapid fall in 721 can be explained by nothing other than the nobleman’s betrayal.

AN DALUSIA’S IDENTITY was always in the process of being dissolved and lost, even when its cultural life was at its pinnacle. Every one of its several strands—Arabic, Muslim, Berber, Catholic, Jewish, Visigothic, Roman—calls up another. Cordova was a particularly wonderful case in point. A much smaller city today than under Abd ar-Rahman I, it is still dominated by the mosque that he began in 785. Erected on the site of a Christian church, it was an attempt to assert his identity as an Umayyad prince fleeing Damascus, to make a cultural statement as a Muslim exiled to a place literally across the world from where he had come.

The result is, in my experience, the greatest and most impressive religious structure on earth. The mosque-cathedral, La Mezquita, stretches effortlessly for acres in a series of unending double arches, whose climax is an incredibly ornate mihrab, the place where the muezzin or prayer leader stands. Its contours echo those of the great mosque in Damascus (from which Abd ar-Rahman I barely managed to escape when his Umayyad dynasty fell), while its arches are conscious quotations of Roman aqueducts. So assiduous was its architect in copying Damascus that the Cordovan mihrab actually faces south, rather than east—toward Mecca—as it should.

The great mosque was later barbarically seized by a Christian monarch who turned it into a church. He did this by inserting an entire cathedral into the Muslim structure’s center, in an aggressive erasure of history and statement of faith. He may also have had in mind the legend that Muslims had stolen the bells of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, melted them down, and used them in the mosque, which also housed the Prophet Muhammad’s hand. Today, though the Muslim idea of prayer remains dominant, the building exudes a spirit of inclusive sanctity and magnanimity of purpose.

Beyond the mosque’s imposing walls, Cordova retains its memorial splendor and inviting shelter. To this day, the houses communicate a sense of welcome: inner courtyards are often furnished with a fountain, and the rooms are dispersed around it, very much as they are in houses in Aleppo thousands of miles to the east. Streets are narrow and winding because, as in medieval Cairo, the idea...
is to cajole the pedestrian with promises of arrival. Thus one walks along without having to face the psychologically intimidating distance of the long, straight avenue. Moreover, Cordova is one of the few cities in the Mediterranean where the intermingling of Arab and Jewish quarters doesn’t immediately suggest conflict. Just seeing streets and squares named after Averroés and Maimonides in 21st-century Cordova, one gets an immediate idea of what a universal culture was like a thousand years ago.

Only five miles outside Cordova stand the partially restored ruins of what must have been the most lavish, and certainly the most impressive, royal city in Europe, Madinat al-Zahra (City of the Flower). Begun by Abd ar-Rahman III in 936, it, too, was a vast echo of palace-cities in the Arab East, which it almost certainly overshadowed for a time. It is as if Andalusia’s rulers and great figures were unable ever to rid their minds of the East. They relived its prior greatness on their terms, nowhere with more striving for effect than in Madinat al-Zahra.

Now an enormous excavation, Madinat al-Zahra is slowly being restored. You can stand looking down on the symmetrical array of stables, military barracks, reception rooms, courtyards—all pointing at the great central hall in which the king received his guests and subjects. According to some scholars, Abd ar-Rahman wanted not only to assume the mantle of the caliphate, thereby wresting it from the Abbasid king in Baghdad (who couldn’t have paid much attention to »

![Image of Cordova](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**The Facts**

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<th>WHERE TO STAY</th>
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<td>In 1928, King Alfonso XIII of Spain commissioned what he hoped would be the most luxurious hotel in Europe. With 147 rooms and miles of marble, mahogany, and hand-painted tiles, the results couldn’t have been disappointing. <strong>DOUBLES FROM $281</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2 CALLE SAN FERNANDO, SEVILLE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>800/325-3535 OR 34-95/491-7000</strong></td>
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| **Hotel Hacienda Benazuza** |
| On a hill overlooking the Guadarrama River, this modernized hacienda makes for a peaceful rural retreat. Just 10 minutes south of Seville, iconoclastic chef Ferran Adrià (of Catalonia’s famed El Bulli) serves up his innovative version of Andalusian cuisine in the hotel’s restaurant, La Alquería. **DOUBLES FROM $144** |
| **DINNER FOR TWO $150** |
| **SANLÚCAR LA MAYOR, CALLE VIRGEN DE LAS NIÑAS, 800/223-6800 OR 34-95/570-3344** |
| www.labenazuza.com |

**Granada**

**Alhambra/Generalife Gardens**

The sprawling Alhambra—two awe-inspiring palaces, a fortress, and the elaborate gardens—is Spain’s most visited historic site. Begun in the 13th century by Ibn al-Ahmar, the first king of the Nasrid dynasty, it is also the best-preserved example of Moorish architecture. Only 2,800 visitors a day are allowed into the Alhambra, so buy your tickets well in advance. **CUENCA DE GOMÉREZ, 34-95/244-1221**

**Cortazar**

**Mezquita (Great Mosque)**

Begun in 785, this mosque has undergone ten centuries of construction and renovation. Witness the 16th-century Baroque cathedral in the center. **CUERDA TORRIJOS, 34-95/747-0512**

**Madinat al-Zahra**

Five miles outside Cordova, excavations continue to reveal new aspects of the Caliph Abd ar-Rahman III’s elaborate palace, a tribute to his favorite wife. **CARRETERA DE PALMA DEL RÍO, KM 6 34-95/732-9130**

**Seville**

**Alcázar/Reales Alcázares**

Built by the Moors under Christian rule beginning in the 14th century, this royal palace (do a tour of the Alcázar) is still the residence of Spain’s king. **PLAZA DEL TRONHO, 34-95/457-0300**

**Catedral/La Giralda**

The cathedral’s 12th-century tower, La Giralda, once a minaret, is notable for its unusual construction: instead of steps, 35 ramps led up from their way 326 feet to the top. Next door, the Archivo General de Indias houses some 38,000 documents relating to the discoveries and colonization of the New World, including Columbus’s will. **AGENDA DE LA CONSTITUCIÓN, 34-95/451-0478**

**Granada**

**Hotel La Bobadilla**

Designed by Granada architect Jesús del Valle in 1986, La Bobadilla, an hour’s drive northeast of Málaga,
ANDALUSIA

Abd ar-Rahman's posturings), but also to establish political authority as something that belonged in the West but had meaning only if snatched from the East. For an Arab visitor, it is hard not to be struck by the rather competitive Andalusian reference to the better-known Eastern Muslim empires, mainly those of the Abbasids and Fatimids, who to this day form the core of what is taught and propagated as Arab culture.

A special poignancy hangs over Andalusia's impressively animated spaces. It derives not only from a pervasive sense of former grandeur but also from what, because so many people hoped to possess it, Andalusia tried to be—and what it might have been. Certainly Granada's Alhambra is a monument to regret and the passage of time. Next to the wonderful 13th- to 14th-century Nasrid palace and superb Generalife gardens looms the ponderous 16th-century castle of the Spanish king and Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, who obviously wanted his rather ostentatious abode to acquire some of the luster of the Arab complex. Yet, despite the Alhambra's opulence and its apparently hedonistic celebration of the good life (for rulers, mainly), its arabesque patterns can seem like a defense against mortality or the ravages of human life. One can easily imagine the beleaguered and insecure Boabdil using it as a place of perfumed forgetfulness—perhaps even at times reexperiencing the studied oblivion cultivated by Sufi masters such as Ibn Arab.

The schizophrenia inherent in Spain's identity is more apparent in Granada than anywhere else in Andalusia. Because the Alhambra sits on one of several hills high above the city, Granada proper has paid the price in clogged streets and overbuilt residential and commercial quarters through which the Arab palace must be approached. Granada as a whole embodies this tension between high and low. A mazelike system of one-way streets connects the Alhambra to Albaicín, the old Muslim quarter. Despite the wonders of the Alhambra, being in Albaicín is like feeling the fantasy of summer and the realities of a grim winter very close to each other. The resemblances between Albaicín and Cordova's barrios are striking, except that, as the name suggests, Albaicín—Arabic for 'the downtrodden and hopeless'—was indeed an area for the poor and, one can't help feeling, where the last Arabs and Jews huddled together before their eviction in 1492. Nothing evokes Granada's riven history more superbly than the "Albaicín" movement in Isaac Albéniz's greatest musical work, the redoubtably difficult-to-perform piano collection Iberia.

By contrast, Seville's spirit is very much of this world—part feline, part macho, part dashing sparkle, part somber colonialism. Seville contains Spain's finest plaza de toros and also its largest cathedral. And it is here that all the archives of Spain's imperial conquests are housed. But before 1492, Seville was the administrative capital of the Arab monarchy that held sway over Andalusia. Where the Catholic empire-builders set their sights on the New World, the Arabs were taken up with the Old: Morocco, which before the final Reconquista was considered to be part of Andalusia. Similarities in metal, leather, and glazed pottery design between Spain and North Africa reinforce a prevailing unity of vision and religious discourse.

If Seville is a city where Catholic and Muslim cultures interact, it is to the decided advantage of the former—though given Seville's special status in the Western romantic imagination as an extension of the Orient, it's probably truer to say that Seville is the triumph of Andalusian style. This, after all, is the city of Merimeé's and Bizet's Carmen, the heart of Hemingway's bullfighting obsession, and a favorite port of call for northern European poets and writers for whom citrus blossoms represent the salutary opposite of their dreary climates. Stendhal's espagnolisme derives from Sevillian themes, and the city's Holy Week parades and observances have griped many peregrinating artists.

Not that the Arabs haven't made their own indelible mark on the city. Standing watch over the landscape is the four-sided Giralda, a minaret built by an Almohad (basically an austere fundamentalist sort of Islam) king in the late 12th century. Its upper third was added to, for purposes of "improvement," by zealous Christians 400 years later. Despite some unnecessary flourishes, the tower was so magnetic that a contemporary chronicler observed, "From a distance it would appear that all the stars of the Zodiac had stopped in the heart of Seville." Incorporated into the cathedral, whose awesome bulk testifies to Catholic ambition and consolidation of power (Christopher Columbus's tomb is inside), the Giralda leads an independent existence as an ornate symbol of how even the harshest of ideologies can be filled with grace.

In the long run, and almost in spite of its kings and magistrates, the Andalusian style seems to have fostered movement and discovery rather than monumentality and stability. It enacted an earlier version of our own hybrid world, one whose borders were also thresholds, and whose multiple identities formed an enriched diversity.