

Linguistic Sciences in Andalusia During the Emirate and Caliphate Periods Through the Book Al-Muqtabis by Ibn Hayyan al-Qurtubi (d. 469 AH / 1076 CE)

Bushra Muhammad Hilal^{1*}, Prof. Dr. Wedad Kurdi Thalji¹

¹*Tikrit University, College of Education for Girls, Department of History, Tikrit, Iraq*

¹Email: bmhpedw5@st.tu.edu.iq | Email: Wedad.th@tu.edu.iq

***Corresponding Author:** Bushra Muhammad Hilal | Email: bmhpedw5@st.tu.edu.iq

Introduction

The linguistic sciences in Andalusia received great attention during the Emirate and Caliphate periods, as they contributed to serving the Arabic language and its teachings. These sciences witnessed remarkable activity in the fields of grammar, language, and prose. The book Al-Muqtabis by Ibn Hayyan al-Qurtubi contains a great deal of reports that highlight the Andalusians' interest in these sciences and reveal the role of scholars and scholarly circles in disseminating them. From this standpoint, the research addresses the most prominent manifestations of these sciences in Andalusia during this period, relying on what Ibn Hayyan recorded in his book.

1. Linguistic and Grammatical Sciences

Definition of language: Ibn Khaldun defined language, saying: Know that language, in common usage, is the speaker's expression of his intent, and that expression is a linguistic act arising from the intent to convey speech. It must therefore become an established faculty in the organ that produces it, namely the tongue, and this faculty varies among nations according to their conventions⁽¹⁾.

As for the science of language: it is the science concerned with explaining linguistic matters, since when the faculty of correct Arabic inflection—what grammarians call i'rab (declension)—began to deteriorate, rules were devised to preserve it⁽²⁾.

The science of language was not an organized discipline at the beginning of the Andalusian conquest, despite the arrival of many Arabs during and after the conquest. They came bringing with them their language, their poetry, their historical accounts (ayyam), and their reports, sowing its earliest seeds, until the arrival of the Umayyads, who established their state and sought to rival the Abbasids and Fatimids, whose civilization was a cause of the flourishing of scholarly activity in Andalusia. They accordingly summoned leading scholars from the East to contribute to spreading Arab culture⁽³⁾.

Language, grammar, and the linguistic sciences in general occupied second place after the religious sciences in terms of the Andalusians' engagement in scholarly activity—sciences that reached their peak during the Caliphate period⁽⁴⁾.

As noted earlier, among the earliest tutors was al-Ghazi ibn Qays (d. 199 AH)⁽⁵⁾, who arrived during the days of Abd al-Rahman al-Dakhil, founder of the Umayyad state, in the year 138 AH. He had traveled to the East, met al-Asma'i, debated with him in Basra, and took the Muwatta on jurisprudence from Malik. This indicates that scholars of a high level of linguistic and religious culture existed⁽⁶⁾.

Abbas ibn Nasih al-Jazari al-Thaqafi is mentioned as "the foremost poet in Andalusia, versatile in all the sciences, excelling in the preservation of language and the mastery of correct Arabic speech,"⁽⁷⁾ among the people of knowledge in language and Arabic—"one of the most eloquent and prolific poets, whose poetic approach followed the methods of the early Arabs in their poetry."⁽⁸⁾ Ibn Hayyan said: I read in the handwriting of Ubada the poet, who said: "He was a jurist following the school of Imam Malik ibn Anas, may God have mercy on him, a man of letters, an insightful grammarian well versed in jurisprudence and language, accomplished in literary arts, an excellent poet, and a fluent orator who was appointed judge over al-Jazira al-Khadra, his hometown, after his father Abd al-Wahhab."⁽⁹⁾

Sa'id ibn al-Faraj al-Azdi, known as al-Rashash, with the kunya Abu Uthman, is considered "among the most cultured people of his time, the most proficient in the Arabic tongue, the most knowledgeable in poetry, and the most accomplished in its various forms, and the fondest of rajaz poetry among them." Ubada also mentioned that he memorized four thousand rajaz poems, and that he was extremely formal and affected in his speech, deliberately seeking out obscure expressions. He became proverbial for eloquence in Andalusia, just as Bukayr al-Kinani, his rival, became proverbial as well—some said "more eloquent than al-Kinani" while others said "more eloquent than al-Rashash." Sa'id never abandoned his affected style under any circumstance, whether in ease or hardship⁽¹⁰⁾. He traveled to the East for pilgrimage, then traveled further in pursuit of knowledge, entering Baghdad and the two cities of Kufa and Basra, and returned upon hearing of al-Hakam's death and Abd al-Rahman's accession, who drew him close, befriended him, and frequently praised him in poetry. He died early in the reign of Emir Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman, though the exact date is not specified⁽¹¹⁾.

Uthman ibn al-Muthanna al-Qaysi, the grammarian and poet, was a skilled grammarian, knowledgeable in language, broadly versed in linguistics, an accomplished poet of delicate verse and eloquent praise, foremost in his craft. He traveled far, meeting numerous scholars and learning extensively from them. He was among the tutors of the nobility and princes, and he educated the sons of Emir Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Hakam, and later his son Emir Muhammad⁽¹²⁾.

In the Caliphate era, a large number of grammar and language scholars emerged, the most prominent of whom was Abu Ali al-Qali, Isma'il ibn Abdun, who was sent to Andalusia during the reign of Caliph Abd al-Rahman al-Nasir. His father had been a client (mawla) of Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan. He arrived in

Andalusia in the year 330 AH, "so people listened to him and read under him books of language, historical reports, and dictations (amali), and they benefited greatly from him."⁽¹³⁾

Ibn Hazm says: "Abu Ali's book of Nawadir, which is a supplement to his Amali, rivals al-Kamil, compiled by al-Mubarrad. Though al-Mubarrad's book contains more grammar and historical reports, Abu Ali's book contains more language and poetry."⁽¹⁴⁾ Among his works is the Book of al-Mamdud wa al-Maqsur, an outstanding work on language arranged alphabetically, of which it was said no equivalent had been composed. He remained in Cordoba spreading his knowledge until his death in 356 AH⁽¹⁵⁾.

Among those who excelled in the field of language and grammar was the teacher from whom Ibn Hayyan himself learned and under whom he studied: Sa'id al-Baghdadi, who arrived in Andalusia during the days of al-Mansur ibn Abi Amir in the year 380 AH⁽¹⁶⁾. Al-Mansur honored him, just as he had honored Abu Ali al-Qali. He was Sa'id ibn al-Hasan al-Rab'i, the linguist, originally from Mosul, who had entered Baghdad. He was learned in language, literature, and historical reports, quick-witted in response, an excellent poet, and pleasant in company. He authored the Book of al-Fusus, modeled on al-Qali's Nawadir, as well as a work on al-Hajfahaf ibn Ghadqan ibn Yathri with al-Hanut bint Mukharrama ibn Anif, and his Book of al-Jawas, with which al-Mansur Abu Amir was so taken that he arranged for it to be read aloud before him every evening⁽¹⁷⁾.

Among the scholars of language and grammar was Muhammad ibn Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, known as Ibn al-Qutiyya (d. 367 AH / 977 CE) who excelled in grammar and was deeply versed in the linguistic sciences, becoming an unsurpassed authority in both. He produced numerous valuable books and works, including Tasarif al-Af'al (Conjugations of Verbs) and al-Maqsur wa al-Mamdud, among other important works⁽¹⁸⁾. It is worth noting that Ibn Hayyan drew on texts written by these scholars in historical works as source material for his book Al-Muqtabis.

Among Ibn al-Qutiyya's contemporaries was the literary grammarian Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Zubaydi al-Ishbili (d. 379 AH / 989 CE)⁽¹⁹⁾, who moved to Cordoba and studied under its scholars in grammar, language, and literature. His expertise in grammar brought him close to the court: "On Sunday, the fifteenth of Dhu al-Qa'da, an order was issued appointing Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Zubaydi, then of Seville, the grammarian, to permanent residence in Madinat al-Zahra to attend the sessions of Emir Abu al-Walid Hisham, Commander of the Faithful, and to engage in the study of Arabic. The residence formerly occupied by the chief of police Ahmad ibn Sa'id al-Ja'fari during his father's lifetime was prepared for him, generous stipends were granted to him, and on that day he was received with a splendid gift and a magnificent robe of honor in recognition of his abridgment of the al-Ayn of al-Khalil ibn Ahmad book... and from that day al-Zubaydi's connection with Caliph al-Hakam and his son Hisham the Emir continued, and he attained high favor."⁽²⁰⁾

These names indicate that the scholars who carried Eastern books with them meant that Andalusian culture drew nourishment from Eastern works, and that these journeys had a great impact on the development of

language and grammar in Andalusia. Grammar and Arabic studies entered Andalusia through the scholars who traveled to the East and studied under its scholars, introducing the book of Sibawayh and other renowned works famous in the East⁽²¹⁾.

It can be said that the Andalusians contributed to the development of these sciences from the very beginning of the Emirate era, because scholarly activity was focused on religious sciences, literature, and linguistic sciences, since they saw the necessity of linking religious sciences with these disciplines in order to clarify many matters of religion in the Noble Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunna, to explain the meanings of their wording and facilitate their understanding. They reached an elevated level in scholarly research during the Caliphate era across various linguistic, literary, and grammatical studies, as evidenced by the emergence of prominent figures in literature, language, and grammar, who influenced the field of knowledge with their elevated scholarly output and added valuable studies to the Arabic library⁽²²⁾.

2. Literature

The Andalusians took great interest in literature, since it preserved for them the poetry and reports of the Arabs, and the practice of drawing on every branch of knowledge, whether from the linguistic sciences or the religious sciences⁽²³⁾.

As soon as the Arabs set foot in Andalusia, they imbued it with their Arab character and carried with them their customs and traditions, including their literature. Wherever the Arabs settled, they recalled their homelands and longed for them, so the early years after the conquest were years of bewilderment, the land being foreign to the Arabs, its landscapes, customs, and traditions differing from those of the desert. They needed time to adapt to the new life, which is why we find them sparing in composing poetry, as they had done in the [Arabian] Peninsula⁽²⁴⁾.

The literary movement did not begin its true activity until after the Umayyads entered Cordoba and made it the seat of their state, since the governors during the period of the Wilaya (provincial governorship) had been preoccupied with conquests and internal strife. During the Emirate and Caliphate eras, names emerged that shone in the fields of literature and poetry, forming the first generation of men of letters in Andalusia⁽²⁵⁾.

It is notable that engagement in literature was not confined to the common people but was shared by the rulers as well, and it was no longer restricted to those who had emigrated to Andalusia from the East but extended to encompass numerous segments of Andalusian society. The earliest features of Andalusian literature and its distinguishing characteristics also began to appear and increased over the ages, until Andalusian literature acquired its own clear and distinctive form⁽²⁶⁾.

Literature is divided into two types: prose and poetry.

First: Prose (Literary Prose)

Literary prose refers to the style of chancery correspondence (*rasa'il diwaniyya*), testamentary writings, and personal/fraternal letters (*rasa'il ikhwaniyya*), among other topics of literary prose. Ibn Hayyan referred to these letters⁽²⁷⁾, which belong to literary prose, in his biographies of scholars and men of letters—letters of congratulation, gratitude, requests for favor, political correspondence, and satire, all forms of literary work⁽²⁸⁾.

Given the importance of writing (*kitaba*) among the people of Andalusia, it attained a high status. Al-Maqqari said: "It holds a place in the hearts and eyes of the people of Andalusia, and its noblest title is 'the scribe (*al-katib*)'... The people of Andalusia are highly critical of those bearing this title, scarcely overlooking their lapses for a moment; if one fell short of the levels of perfection, neither his standing nor his position with his ruler would protect him from the wagging of tongues and criticism directed at him and his patron."⁽²⁹⁾

The first to write for Emir al-Dakhil, Abd al-Rahman ibn Mu'awiya, was Umayya ibn Yazid ibn Abi Hawthara (d. 154 AH)⁽³⁰⁾, a client of Mu'awiya ibn Yazid ibn Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, founder of the house of scribes for the Banu Marwan in Andalusia⁽³¹⁾.

Among the scribes of the Emirate period mentioned by Ibn Hayyan during the reign of Emir al-Hakam, he said: "In the letter of Qadi Abu al-Walid ibn al-Faradi: Hajjaj al-Mughalli was a chancery scribe who wrote on behalf of Emir al-Hakam alongside his chief secretary, the vizier Fatis ibn Isa, and Khattab ibn Zayd and others, and he lived on into the days of Emir Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Hakam. He was an eloquent and gifted speaker and an accomplished poet, a master craftsman, to whom al-Mu'min ibn Sa'id likened himself in tedious matters, saying:

And like him in subtle meanings,

And in tedium, Hajjaj al-Mughalli."⁽³²⁾

As for the writers of *zajal*-style names (*al-zajaliyyun*), many names appear in Al-Muqtabis, among them Muhammad ibn Sa'id ibn Abi Sulayman, whose name was Warashkin, of the Banu Yaqtuf of Nafza, known as Hamdun and nicknamed al-Asma'i for his intelligence and powerful memory (d. 232 AH). "He was the first of his line to be taken into service, appointed scribe by Emir Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Hakam, and he later wrote for his son Muhammad. His descendants included his two sons, Abd Allah, sons of Muhammad ibn Sa'id, who both became chancery scribes, each writing on behalf of the sultan..." It is related, citing the book of Qadi Abu al-Walid ibn al-Faradi: "...None of these *zajaliyyun*, who had been brought into the noble households of Cordoba, had any prior standing, ancient companionship with the ruler, or attachment to his service before their ancestor Muhammad; he was the first among them to rise and gain status with them. The reason, it is said, was that Emir Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Hakam's mount once stumbled while he was traveling on one of his journeys and nearly threw him forward, causing him great alarm, which left its mark on him; when his mount regained its footing, he recited half a verse that came to his mind:

"And what is unseen of what God protects against is greater."

No one could complete the verse for the Emir except Muhammad ibn Sa'id al-Zajali, who said: "May God grant the Emir well-being—the beginning of this verse is:

*You see the thing you guard against, and so you fear it,
But what is unseen of what God protects against is greater."*⁽³³⁾

The Emir was delighted with him, kept him close in his pavilion, and afterward took him into special service, appointing him exclusively as his scribe after he had already made him a scribe for himself and his viziers⁽³⁴⁾.

During the governorship of Emir Abd al-Rahman al-Nasir, before he assumed the title of Caliph, Abd Allah ibn Muhammad al-Zajjali wrote on his behalf, including the Caliph's letter denouncing the doctrine of Ibn Masarra and his followers, the text of which reads:

*"In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.
To proceed: God, exalted be His majesty and glorified be His mention, made the religion of Islam the most excellent of religions, and made it manifest and supreme, and accepted nothing else from His servants...
Beware of showing indulgence toward people of suspicion and turning instead toward those of soundness and righteous conduct, for if you neglect either of these two matters, God absolves Himself of you and your blood becomes forfeit; so act and understand, God willing."*⁽³⁵⁾

In the Caliphate era, the duties of the scribe became even more significant. In the year 344 AH, Caliph Abd al-Rahman al-Nasir appointed four scribes, each bearing the title of vizier, with each assigned a specific responsibility: "The vizier Jahwar ibn Abda was charged with overseeing the correspondence of all the household staff, the vizier Isa ibn Fatis was charged with overseeing correspondence concerning the frontier regions, the vizier Abd al-Rahman al-Zajjali was charged with overseeing the execution of covenants and decrees, and the vizier Muhammad ibn Hudayr was charged with overseeing the people's requests and needs. Each of them adhered faithfully to his duties, so the balance of administration was set right, and the needs of the subjects were eased."⁽³⁶⁾

Among the scribes of the Caliphate era was Ja'far ibn Uthman al-Mushafi (d. 372 AH / 983 CE)⁽³⁷⁾, employed by Caliph al-Hakam al-Mustansir during his caliphate. He attained a leading position in chancery service, becoming a vizier-scribe, and beyond his role in private correspondence, he was entrusted with the supreme chancery (al-kitaba al-ulya). Correspondence took place between him and the Caliph during the Caliph's illness⁽³⁸⁾, in which he counseled him regarding his family after his death, and the Caliph wrote on the back of his letter: "We have read your letter concerning the worsening of your condition, the onset of your affliction, and your rising hope; this has grieved us and increased our sorrow, and it has caused us deep concern, but we hope God will bring good and grant recovery in its place..."⁽³⁹⁾

Andalusia knew many scribes from the Emirate era through the Caliphate era, and what has been mentioned here illustrates the pioneering role the state witnessed, to the point that a scribe could be appointed vizier—reflecting the elevated literary and intellectual renaissance that Andalusia achieved.

Second: Poetry

Poetry, linguistically: is metered speech that has come to predominate due to its nobility of meter and rhyme, though every field of knowledge has its own poetic expression⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Terminologically, according to Ibn Khaldun⁽⁴¹⁾: it is speech that is metered and rhymed, meaning that its meters are all built upon a single rhyme scheme (qafiya). He said: "The methods of poetry are characterized by wit, the blending of seriousness with jest, elaboration in descriptions, the use of proverbs, and an abundance of similes and metaphors."

Most of the people of Andalusia were inclined toward poetry, to the point that nearly all of them were poets: "They are the most poetically gifted of all people, given what God Almighty made abundant in their land and set before their eyes—trees, rivers, birds, and goblets—none can rival them in this regard."⁽⁴²⁾

Princes and Caliphs

To discuss poetry in Andalusia, it must be noted that its earliest stirrings appeared in the Emirate era, as Emir Abd al-Rahman al-Dakhil himself was a man of learning, accomplished in composing poetry⁽⁴³⁾, as in his verses on a palm tree he saw at al-Rusafa, saying:

*A palm tree appeared to us in the midst of al-Rusafa,
Far away in the western land, from the homeland of palms.
I said: you resemble me in exile and separation,
And in the long distance from my children and my kin.
You grew in a land where you are a stranger,
Just as I am, in remoteness and distance, like you.
May the morning clouds water you in this far place,
Which pours forth and persists between the two stars, with abundant rain⁽⁴⁴⁾.*

Among the poet-princes was Emir al-Hakam al-Rabadi, of whom al-Razi said: "Emir al-Hakam was an eloquent, fluent orator and poet, with abundant poetry on descriptions of wars, on amorous themes (nasib), and other royal arts of expression." Among what was recited of his on the subject of pride, recorded by Mu'awiya ibn Hisham al-Qurashi al-Shabinisi, on courage, soundness of judgment, valor, manliness, and strength of spirit, mentioning war, he said:

*The clash of swords is more pleasing to the ear
than the melody of strings, amusement, and idle pleasure.
When the spear-points and lances mingle in battle,
you see stars rising from the thrusts of spears⁽⁴⁵⁾...*

And in love poetry, he said:

He remained, in the excess of his love, enslaved,

though before that he had been a king.

If he wept or complained of passion, the wrong increased,

and separation brought a swift death nearer⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Of Emir Abd al-Rahman al-Awsat, al-Razi said: "Emir Abd al-Rahman excelled in eloquence, was accomplished in writing, capable of the finest expression in both prose and verse, and favored those skilled in both, drawing them near through these two arts. He had a concise and elegant style of official decrees as well as fine poetry. Among his renowned concise decrees was one issued to a client of his who had requested an appointment for which he was unsuited: 'Whoever does not know the proper place for his request will find deprivation guiding him to it.'"⁽⁴⁷⁾

From his poetic compositions:

The paths of affairs have indeed diverged,

yet success leads them toward what is right.

And the elder, through experience, attains sound judgment,

while the views of youth fall short of theirs in their own youth⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Emir Abd Allah ibn Muhammad had interests in many fields, as Abu Salih Ayyub ibn Sulayman mentioned: "Emir Abd Allah was versatile in various arts..., taking from poetry a generous share, and he composed sound and worthy poetry..."⁽⁴⁹⁾

And in asceticism, he said:

O you whom the appointed term eludes,

how long will hope distract you?

How long will you not fear death,

as though it had already come upon you?

You have neglected the pursuit of salvation,⁽⁵⁰⁾

yet there is no salvation for one who is heedless.

Among the poets of the era of the Wilaya was Abbas ibn Nasih al-Jazari al-Thaqafi, with the kunya al-Ala, a learned poet favored by the caliphs, who frequented Cordoba, where men of letters would gather around him to learn from him and transmit his poetry. His famous ode rhyming in mim begins and ends with these two verses:

By your life, misfortune is no disgrace, nor is poverty,

when a man lacks piety toward God and generosity.

Turn away from this world, for there is no escape for the incapable,

nor for the resolute, except the one who set down the pen [i.e., death].

Yahya ibn al-Hakam al-Ghazal, then a sharp-witted, literarily gifted youth, asked him about it: what should the participle do with the active subject? Abbas replied: "And how would you say it, my son?" He answered: "I would say:

*Turn away from this world, for there is no escape for the powerless,
nor for the resolute, except the one who set down the pen."*

Abbas said: "By God, my son, your uncle [referring to himself] has sought this for many nights and could not find it."⁽⁵¹⁾

Abbas also recited:

*I have left my soul, though thirsting,
from a nearby, unguarded watering place,
and descended upon dense thickets uneaten,
among youths like the lamps of darkness, valiant,
disheveled men whose turbans are worn,
resolute when called upon, never deterred,
taking up the sword as refuge in moments of terror,
never losing their way when fear is sown.*

His fine verses are numerous⁽⁵²⁾.

Yahya ibn al-Hakam al-Ghazal (d. 250 AH / 864 CE)⁽⁵³⁾: "among the shrewd and learned poets, Yahya al-Ghazal, the sage of Andalusia, its poet and seer. He became renowned for his poetry during the days of al-Hakam, whom he praised with many fine eulogies, including his famous verse, well known among those who transmitted it:

*O son of those adorned from Seth to al-Hakam,
with kingship at times, and with prophecy at others."*⁽⁵⁴⁾

Al-Ghazal lived to a great age, witnessing five of the Marwanid caliphs, reaching the age of ninety-four, and composed verse on this:

*And this fifth one whom we now recount,
I lived to see four kings during my time*⁽⁵⁵⁾.

He was nicknamed al-Ghazal ("the gazelle") for his handsomeness, though it was also said "rather for his refinement of manner, fine appearance, and graceful movement."⁽⁵⁶⁾ Emir Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Hakam selected him, along with his companion Yahya, known as al-Minqala, to travel to Constantinople with the envoy of the Byzantine king Theophilos to confirm a peace treaty between them. Although this mission was burdensome to him, he undertook it, and during his sea voyage he encountered great hardship, composing verse about this situation:

*Yahya said to me, as we found ourselves
amid waves like mountains,
storms overtaking us
from the south-west and the north,*

*tearing the two sails apart
among the ropes' twisted strands,
and the angel of death stretched out
toward us from the ropes' midst*⁽⁵⁷⁾

Al-Ghazal had lengthy accounts and exchanges with the Byzantine king and queen, and he composed verse about the queen and her son:

*A slender, delicate one, dark-lidded, long of neck,
upon whose cheeks the water of beauty
gleams like the sheen of a polished sword,
of noble Caesar's lineage on both father's and mother's side,
as though half his form were forged
of dazzling silver and the finest gold*⁽⁵⁸⁾.

Ibn Hayyan devoted pages of his book, across several chapters, to al-Ghazal's many reports and anecdotes with the princes and jurists⁽⁵⁹⁾.

Also among the poets was Abbas ibn Firnas ibn Mirdas, "who was proverbial for his skill and his command of every branch of knowledge, ancient and modern. His means of access to Emir Abd al-Rahman was the science of prosody and the unraveling of its circles⁽⁶⁰⁾..." His ode known as 'al-Qafiya' brought him close to Emir Abd al-Rahman al-Awsat, in which he said:

*All God's creation came to flourish
through the generosity of Abd al-Rahim, blessed indeed,
he whose glory none has ever surpassed
in the loftiest of noble deeds,
his clouds pour forth pure silver
when the sky's seam splits open,
O heir of justice after four
who were true guides to the faith of guidance—
the Chosen One, the Seal of Prophecy, and
the second of the two, who was a true companion (al-Siddiq),
and the two Umars who together triumphed,
named al-Tayyib and al-Faruq*⁽⁶¹⁾.

Among the curious accounts and remarkable feats attributed to him: "he was the first to unravel the book of prosody by al-Khalil, and the first to grasp music among them, uncovering hidden matters, and he devised the instrument known as al-Minqana, to mark the times [of prayer] without precedent or model; he was the first among them to comprehend prosody, the meter of poetry, and to understand it, composing on it an excellent book that achieved the utmost refinement." He inscribed on the al-Minqana instrument⁽⁶²⁾, which he presented to Emir Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman, the verses:

*Indeed I am the best of instruments, for when
you are absent at every prayer's time,
and the sun is not seen by day, nor are
the stars of a dark, gloomy night visible,
through the blessing of the Imam of Muslims, Muhammad,
the times of prayer are made manifest through me⁽⁶³⁾.*

The poet Ibrahim ibn Sulayman al-Shami is also mentioned, who arrived in Andalusia at the end of the reign of Emir al-Hakam. He was a fine poet, accomplished and versatile in the arts of expression, inclined toward asceticism and admonitory verse, for which he became known among the people. Al-Razi is reported to have said: "He made frequent grammatical errors due to his deficiency in the Arabic sciences, and his poetry was not refined when he first arrived in Andalusia, but there his talent matured and his output grew abundant, though he was much given to plagiarism and poor at concealing it, drawing heavily upon Gharib [a predecessor poet] and borrowing extensively from him."⁽⁶⁴⁾

While in the East, he had met leading transmitters of poetry such as Abu Nuwas and Abu al-Atahiya. Ibn Hayyan selected from his ascetic verse the following:

*How strange is he who wails over others
in foolishness, yet does not wail for himself.
How does he weep for another and forget
that his own fate awaits him when his shroud is laid?
Cast your gaze—do you see anything but a mourner,
and one bereaved, weeping for a lost companion?
Everything—death comes upon it
at morning, if it has not already touched it.
How many a healthy man has died without illness,
and how many a sick man has lived on after his relapse?
Such has time always been, and today,
whenever you look, it is no different⁽⁶⁵⁾.*

Abu Umar Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abd Rabbih (d. 328 AH), ibn Habib ibn Hudayr ibn Salim, the eminent man of letters and author of al-Iqd al-Farid, was from Cordoba. Ibn Abd Rabbih was a great poet, among those poets whose literary output left a lasting mark, enjoying considerable renown. ⁽⁶⁶⁾...He praised his father—meaning the father of Emir Abd Allah—Emir Muhammad, the first caliph he praised at the outset of his rise, his poetry on him being scant; he first composed eulogy, descriptive verse, and praise for his brother al-Mundhir ibn Muhammad, giving free rein to his poetic gift and excelling in praise, exploring various themes; then thirdly for Emir Abd Allah, his verses growing more refined, his fine meanings and novel inventions coming readily to him, bringing genuine artistry to his craft; and he continued on into the days of Caliph al-Nasir li-Din Allah Abd al-Rahman, in whose era he poured forth his utmost expression, exhausted the vocabulary of praise, and surpassed the most formidable poets, so that his renown rose and the brilliance of his poetry spread far and wide. Ibn Abd Rabbih was fair-

skinned."⁽⁶⁷⁾ Among the finest verses with which he praised Emir Abd Allah ibn Muhammad at the very beginning of his rule as Emir, he said:

*My heart has been kept awake on your account and finds no rest,
while my enemies have been made joyful, and you remain a friend.
The vision of you turned away from me even in sleep,
as you turned away from me, and so my heart remains parched.
My heart learned estrangement from you when I estranged myself from it,
so it no longer finds its way to my eyes.
Yet the lover's soul refuses to yield to me, stubborn,
and a heart, gentle amid the burdens of sorrow, remains faithful⁽⁶⁸⁾.*

He also composed in praise of al-Nasir li-Din Allah when the latter went out hunting for the first time during his caliphate, riding to Munyat al-Janna east of Cordoba, saying:

*A sun that has risen from behind the veil of kingship, or a moon?
Or lightning amid clouds that dazzles the eye?
And he has another ode:*

*Through the generosity of the Commander of the Faithful, the paths of life
have flowed abundantly for me, brimming over.
He clothed me in the garment of wealth after deprivation,
and behold my fortunes restored after they had withered.
His gratitude and favor have so astonished me
that my reason is bewildered between the two⁽⁶⁹⁾.*

Ibn Abd Rabbih was given many titles, among them "the Poet of Andalusia" and "the Eloquent One of Andalusia," and his fame reached the people of the East, to the point that a poet named Nasr met the poet al-Mutanabbi, who asked him to recite for him the poetry of "the elegant one of Andalusia" (meaning Ibn Abd Rabbih). He heard verses that delighted him, asked for them to be repeated, and clapped his hands, saying: "O Ibn Abd Rabbih, indeed you bring Iraq to us on a platter."⁽⁷⁰⁾

At the beginning of the Caliphate era, numerous poets rose to elevated positions at the Caliph's court, which gathered a number of gifted poets. The Caliphate period was marked by a flourishing of poetry following security and stability and cultural prosperity, and the Caliphate was characterized by majesty and authority, which led poets to devote themselves to depicting these manifestations. When envoys of the Byzantine king arrived in Cordoba in the year 339 AH, the poet al-Mundhir ibn Sa'id recited an ode praising Caliph al-Nasir, extolling the power and influence he commanded, saying:

*You see the people in throngs converging on his gate,
all of them, between one hopeful and one fearful.
Delegations of the Byzantine kings stand within his courtyard,*

out of fear of his might, or in hope of his bounty⁽⁷¹⁾.

Ibn Hayyan provided us with a great wealth of accounts and information related to the Caliphate, describing how poetry was composed, depicting festivals and celebrations and what poets recited on such occasions. An example of this is what was said at the Festival of Fitr in the year 360 AH / 970 CE, where he wrote: "The orators and poets continued throughout this gathering, vying with one another in the speeches they improvised and the poems they recited, in great abundance and with excellence."⁽⁷²⁾

Conclusion

In conclusion, it has become clear that the linguistic sciences in Andalusia underwent notable development during the Umayyad Emirate and Caliphate periods, owing to the flourishing of scholarly activity and the rulers' attention to the Arabic language and its sciences. The book Al-Muqtabis by Ibn Hayyan al-Qurtubi contributed to documenting this development through the reports it preserved of scholars, poets, and grammarians, making it an important historical source for studying the scholarly and cultural life of Andalusia, and affirming the importance of the linguistic sciences in the building of Andalusian civilization.

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² Ibn Khaldun, Al-Ibar, vol. 1, p. 756.

³ Duwaydar, Husayn Yusuf, Al-Mujtama' al-Andalusi fi al-Asr al-Umawi (138-422 AH / 755-1030 CE), p. 418.

⁴ Al-Bishri, Sa'd Abd Allah Salih, Al-Hayat al-Ilmiyya fi Asr al-Khilafa fi al-Andalus (316-422 AH / 928-1030 CE), Institute of Scientific Research and Revival of Islamic Heritage, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Makkah al-Mukarramah, 1997, p. 48.

⁵ Ibn Hayyan, Al-Muqtabis (Part Two), edited by Mahmud Ali Makki, Part 1, King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, 2003, p. 225.

⁶ Shawqi Dayf, Tarikh al-Adab al-Arabi fi Asr al-Duwal wa al-Imarat – al-Andalus, Dar al-Ma'arif, p. 91.

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⁸ Ibn Hayyan, Al-Muqtabis, edited by Makki, Part 1, p. 231.

⁹ Ibn Hayyan, Al-Muqtabis, edited by Makki, Part 1, p. 235.

¹⁰ Ibn Hayyan, Al-Muqtabis, edited by Makki, Part 1, p. 236.

¹¹ Ibn Hayyan, Al-Muqtabis, edited by Makki, Part 1, pp. 371-372.

¹² Ibn Hayyan, Al-Muqtabis, edited by Makki, Part 1, p. 381.

¹³ Ibn Hayyan, Al-Muqtabis, edited by Makki, Part 1, pp. 382-383. (Note: Original text has a typo "382-382")

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¹⁵ Ahmad Amin, Zuhur al-Islam, vol. 3, p. 83.

¹⁶ Duwaydar, Al-Mujtama' al-Andalusi, p. 419.

¹⁷ Mustafa al-Sha'ka, Al-Maghrib wa al-Andalus: Afaq Islamiyya wa Hadara Insaniyya wa Mabath Adabiyya, Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyya, 1987, p. 351.

¹⁸ Al-Humaydi, Muhammad ibn Futuh ibn Abd Allah ibn Futuh al-Azdi (d. 488 AH), Jadhwa al-Muqtabis fi Dhikr Wulat al-Andalus, al-Dar al-Misriyya lil-Ta'lif wa al-Nashr, 1966, p. 240. Al-Dabbi, Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn Ahmad ibn Umara (d. 599 AH), Bughyat al-Multamis fi Tarikh Rijal Ahl al-Andalus, Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, Cairo, 1967, p. 319. Al-Marrakushi, Al-Mu'jib, p. 19.

¹⁹ Ibn al-Faradi, Tarikh Ulama' al-Muslimin, vol. 2, pp. 78-79, biography no. 1319. Al-Humaydi: Al-Jadhwa, p. 26. Al-Dabbi, Abd al-Wahid ibn Ali al-Tamimi (d. 647 AH), edited by Salah al-Hawari, al-Maktaba al-Asriyya, Sidon-Beirut, 2006, p. 112.

²⁰ Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Zubaydi al-Ishbili received his education in Cordoba and was a contemporary of al-Qali. Al-Zubaydi was one of the most prominent language scholars produced by Al-Andalus. Among his works: Tabaqat al-Nahwiyyin wa al-Lughawiyyin, Al-Istidrak ala Sibawayh, Al-Wadih fi al-Nahw, Lahn al-Awwam, and Mukhtasar al-Ayn. Ibn al-Faradi, Tarikh Ulama' al-Andalus, vol. 2, p. 383. Al-Humaydi, Jadhwa al-Muqtabis, p. 43.

- ²¹ Ibn Hayyan, *Al-Muqtabis fi Akhbar Bald al-Andalus*, edited by Abd al-Rahman Ali al-Hajji, Dar al-Thaqafa, Beirut-Lebanon, Part 5, pp. 133-134.
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- ²³ Sa'd al-Bishri, *Kitab al-Hayat al-Ilmiyya fi al-Andalus*, pp. 261-262.
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- ²⁵ Amin Muhammad, *Zuhur al-Islam*, p. 543.
- ²⁶ Duwaydar, *Al-Mujtama' al-Andalusi fi al-Asr al-Umawi*, p. 463.
- ²⁷ Ahmad Haykal, *Al-Adab al-Andalusi*, pp. 80-81.
- ²⁸ Fraternal Epistles (al-Rasa'il al-Ikhwaniyya): These are letters written by literary figures in general, not those working in state offices. They are not limited to specific topics but are written by literati on special occasions, literary discussions, or rhetorical debates among themselves. As for Official Diwan Letters (al-Rasa'il al-Diwaniyya): These are written on state affairs and record historical events, official orders, and directives to governors, emirs, commanders, and senior state officials. Anwar Mahmud Zanati, *Al-Thaqafa al-Sha'biyya fi al-Andalus: Rasd Waqi'i min Khilal A'mal Ibn Hayyan al-Qurtubi*, *Kan Historical Journal*, Issue 18, December 2012, pp. 61-62.
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